

The Road Safety Wales Low Down

"What's happening in the world of road safety?"

October 2007 — Issue 6

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Road Safety Wales Conference



Over 150 road safety professionals from the Principality gathered in Caernarfon on 17/18 September for the inaugural Road Safety Wales Conference.

Topics included: The Evaluation of the Kerbcraft Scheme, Children's Understanding of Risk, Road Safety in the Primary Curriculum, A Paramedic's Perspective and the Driving Test: A Changing Agenda.

A highlight of the event was a performance of the production, **'Wasted'** by Walking Forward Theatre Company.

New Look for Pass Plus Cymru

Hundreds of visitors to the Royal Welsh Show and National Eisteddfod have received information regarding Pass Plus Cymru; the scheme, an enhanced version of the DSAs standard Pass Plus Course, allows young drivers (aged between 17-25 and living in Wales) to discover more driving techniques, hints and tips for just £20.



A new series of publicity material has been designed to promote the ever-growing national scheme. The bilingual resources include leaflets, posters and credit card sized information for distribution by Approved Driving Instructors.

The supporting website www.dragondriver.com will shortly undergo a makeover to reflect the new design style.



pass plus cymru

New Mobile Exhibition

Cardiff Council's Road Safety Unit has taken delivery of a new 'state of the art' 7.5 tonne mobile exhibition vehicle the first of its type in Wales.



The vehicle is air-conditioned and has facilities for disabled people, and its distinctive exterior livery depicts local landmarks in Cardiff. Resources include a driver simulator, three 'touch screen' computers, and a DVD/video linked to a 42-inch plasma screen and surround sound speakers.

The flooring of the vehicle has been designed to simulate a road with pavements, allowing practical pedestrian safety demonstrations to be undertaken using model pedestrian crossing facilities. For further information contact Dave Evans or John Goff on 02920 619907, or JGoff@caerdydd.gov.uk

The first revised Highway Code in eight years has been unveiled by Road Safety Minister Jim Fitzpatrick. The updated Code offers the latest road safety rules and advice, as well as promoting greater courtesy and understanding among all road users, particularly those who are most vulnerable.



A new Safety Code for Novice Drivers, to help motorists better navigate their first few months behind the wheel, has also been added. It offers practical advice like "If you are driving with passengers, you are responsible for their safety. Don't let them distract you or encourage you to take risks" and "Never show off or try to compete with other drivers, particularly if they are driving badly".

Road Safety Minister Jim Fitzpatrick said:



"The Official Highway Code is for life, not just for passing your driving test. It is a crucial tool for all road users - car drivers, motorcyclists, cyclists, horse riders and pedestrians alike - and applies to every stage of your life. Road safety is a responsibility we all share and everyone should have a copy of the Code to keep their knowledge up-to-date.

"However, we know that the first few months after passing your driving test can be a risky time. This is reflected in the latest Code which offers practical safety advice and reminders of the rules new drivers must abide by."

The Code has also been updated to include new legislation that has been introduced on vehicle emissions and smoking in vehicles that are work places, as well as the provision of new stopping/directing powers to VOSA and Highways Agency Traffic Officers. Alongside this, it references new initiatives like Quiet Lanes, High-occupancy Vehicle Lanes, Home Zones and Active Traffic Management schemes that people should be aware of, as well as increasing, re-writing or enhancing existing advice to promote greater co-operation between road users and further promote safety.

The Code is substantially updated every 8-10 years. The last significant revision was in 1999.

View the revised [Highway Code](#)

Mini Bikes

Under-pressure parents buying mini motorbikes will not always be aware that they may be encouraging their children to break the law and are putting them at risk of severe injury.

RoSPA has produced a startling leaflet called **'Mini Bikes, A Guide for Parents and Owners'** in order to combat the lack of awareness surrounding the legal and safety issues of mini bikes.



If you advise the public or distribute road safety educational resources to children and their families, then this is a vital addition to your portfolio.

Any powered vehicle used on the public highway must comply with all aspects of road traffic law, including road tax and insurance. This leaflet comprehensively addresses these issues alongside essential safety advice.

www.rospa.com

Peak Protection for Motorcyclists

BikeGuard, a continuous barrier attachment specifically designed to offer protection to motorcyclists, has recently been installed on one of the most hazardous stretches of road in England for motorcyclists.

Highway Care have supplied and fitted the barrier attachment on the A537 in the Peak District National Park. Cheshire County Council chose the site as a prime location needing this preventative measure against motorcyclists suffering high severity injuries from impacting the support posts on the existing safety barrier.

With BikeGuard in place, a fallen biker will be redirected along the smooth continuous surface of the barrier and no longer be highly vulnerable to severe injury or worse from contact with vertical barrier posts. This system is approved for use in the UK by its inclusion on the HA list of Approved Road Restraint Systems.

Jim Gibbins, a Senior Road Safety Engineer for Cheshire County Council commented: "During the summer, groups of motorcyclists effectively use the A537 as a 'race track' as the route is considered to be quite challenging in places. Motorcyclists on the A537 make up less than 2% of road traffic but account for 75% of deaths or seriously injured collisions that have occurred on the route between 2004 and 2006. It is hoped that providing BikeGuard at this location will reduce the severity of any future motorcycle collisions."



Before



After

For more information, visit the [Highway Care website](#)

Road Safety Expo '07

Road Safety Expo '07 will include a conference and an exhibition to provide an opportunity for professionals in road safety education, promotion and enforcement to meet and work with those responsible for research, innovation and design.

The event will also bring together the many organisations with a common commitment to accelerate the reduction in road casualties.

Jim Fitzpatrick, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State with responsibility for Road Safety will be keynote speaker at the event, which takes place on 22 November in London. The [Conference Programme](#) focuses on influencing Road Safety both now and into the future.

To find out more and reserve a place log onto:
www.publicationsuk.co.uk



Nissan technology identifies drink drivers



A car that can tell when a drink-driver gets behind the wheel - and immobilises the vehicle has been developed by Nissan. It uses a combination of electronic 'noses' to sniff the air and cameras and behavioural detectors to decide if a driver is inebriated.

The system can even differentiate between the driver's breath and that of passengers who may have had a drink.

Some cars are already being fitted with 'alco-locks', which require the driver to blow into a tube to give a breath sample before they are allowed to start off. But the Nissan technology is different because it does not need any action by the driver. Instead, motorists are monitored from the moment they get behind the wheel. An alcohol odour sensor checks the breath while another tests for alcohol in the sweat of a palm touching the gear stick.

A tiny dashboard-mounted camera monitors the driver's face and eye movements and detects whether they are fit to drive. It measures the rate of blinking - an indicator of drowsiness - and examines features such as the droopiness of the mouth to check for yawning. When the detected alcohol level is above a preset threshold - which can be at or below the legal limit - the system locks the transmission, immobilising the car. A 'drink-driving' voice alert is sounded via the car's satellite navigation system.

Find out more [here](#)

New tool in the fight against uninsured drivers

The Association of British Insurers estimates that the total cost of uninsured motoring in the UK exceeds half a billion pounds each year. During 2006 the Motor Insurers' Bureau levy alone on the honest motorist to cover the cost of uninsured and untraced driving in the UK exceeded £350 million.



A total of 36,000 uninsured claims were reported to the Motor Insurers' Bureau during 2006. This represents a 4.7% reduction in the number of uninsured and untraced driver claims on the previous year.

In April this year the Motor Insurers' Bureau launched the Police Helpline, which is a dedicated 'hot line' for the Police to call when they stop a vehicle on the suspicion of no insurance.

A quick call to the 0845 MIB Police Helpline will enable dedicated call handlers to make additional enquiries to insurers to ascertain the validity of insurance cover. The officer is called back in minutes to confirm the validity of the cover. If no cover can be confirmed the officer may decide to seize the vehicle. The MIB Police Helpline is currently being rolled out to all Police forces in UK.

For more information please visit www.mib.org.uk

Revolutionary child car seat

The new Aprica child car seat is revolutionary in its ability to lay an infant in a flat position, protecting the baby's fragile head and spinal cord. Researchers have also found that sitting a baby in an upright posture can lead to compression of the abdomen and oxygen de-saturation.

The seat, which complies with current European regulation ECE R44-03, also has a 360-degree swivel base, which allows forward and rear facing options and makes it easier for parents to get the child in and out of the vehicle.



[Click here](#) for more detail.

Sat Nav advice

A well-used satellite navigation tool can help drivers plan routes and prevent drivers from hesitating or making last minute lane changes; however a badly used Sat Nav can cause a distraction and increase the risk of an accident.

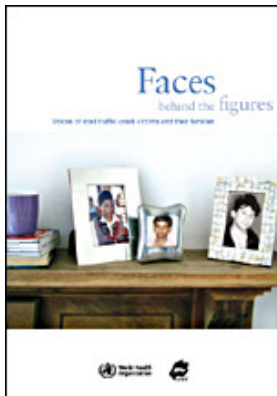


RoSPA's **Using Sat Navs Safely leaflet** is the ideal resource for managers to distribute to their fleet drivers, and for Local Authorities to offer to people in their areas. Any organisation resolved to manage its road risk will benefit.

The leaflet includes guidance on how to position a Sat Nav in relation to air bags and a driver's position, as well as tips to avoid distraction while driving.

[Visit the Online Shop](#)

Faces behind the figures



The Association for Safe International Road Travel and the World Health Organization have jointly developed a book entitled "Faces behind the figures: voices of road traffic crash victims and their families", to put a human face on the statistics presented in the many road safety reports published around the world.

The stories demonstrate the physical, psychological, emotional and economic devastation that results from road traffic injuries. These stories deepen our understanding of the enormous suffering behind each of the 1.2 million deaths and 50 million injuries every year.

For more information [click here](#).

Contact the Editor

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