

# The Road Safety Wales Low Down

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

April 2009 – Issue 12

## In This Issue:

- Top of the Lollipops •Road Safety Awards •Sustainable Travel Plan for City •Motoair Biker Jackets • Walking and Cycling Action Plan •New two-part motorcycle test
- Uninsured Drivers • Intelligent Speed Adaptation • On-The-Spot Fines

## Top of the Lollipops – George Bateman Voted Best in Wales!



**Pontardawe school crossing patrol George Bateman has been recognised as 'Top of the Lollipops' in Wales following Kwik Fit Insurance's annual search for the UK's Lollipop Person of the Year.**

The Kwik Fit Insurance Lollipop Person of the Year Awards launched recently with the help of TV star Lorraine Kelly. Now in their fifth year, the awards have once again been hailed a huge success with over 15,000 nominations flooding in from primary school pupils, teachers, school councils, parents and members of the community right across the UK.

Despite tough competition, George (84) scooped the regional prize for Wales winning £500 in travel vouchers for himself, not to mention £100 in book vouchers for his school and a specially engraved silver trophy in the shape of a lollipop. George, who is employed by Neath Port Talbot Road Safety Team has patrolled outside Ysgol Gymraeg in Pontardawe, for 14 years, is delighted to have been recognised in the awards, where many of the pupil entries for him showed great creativity including poems, paintings and drawings endorsing his good work.

George said: "I am amazed at the number and quality of votes made by pupils, parents and teachers alike. Ysgol Gymraeg has put great effort into nominating me and simply for the job that I do everyday. I love the job - it's wonderful to see the children growing up. I'm thrilled to be recognised as the best patroller in Wales.

"It's a serious responsibility making sure the children get to school safely and part of my job is to gain the children's trust and respect. It's nice to hear that the children think a lot of me."

Myfanwy Rees, Headteacher at Ysgol Gymraeg, added: "Our pupils put tremendous effort into nominating George for this award so it's brilliant to see their hard work rewarded in this way.

"Everyone at the school loves George. He does a fantastic job looking after our pupils and is a very important member of our school family."

For further information on Kwik Fit Insurance's Lollipop Person of the Year Awards 2008, please log onto [www.bestlollipop.co.uk](http://www.bestlollipop.co.uk).

## Road Safety Awards 2009



**The annual Welsh Road Safety Awards recognise the good road safety practice, innovative projects and personal contributions being undertaken in Wales. The Award Scheme publicises and raises awareness of the contributions towards road casualty reduction targets.**

Nominations should be submitted on the form, (accompanied by any relevant supporting material) no later than **Friday 21 August 2009**. The Award winners will be invited to receive their Award at the Road Safety Wales Conference dinner on Monday 28 September at the Celtic Royal Hotel, Caernarfon. Award winners will receive £100 and a souvenir gift.

Download the Nomination Form [here](#)

## Sustainable Travel Plan for City

**Cardiff has been selected to become Wales' first "sustainable travel town" by the Assembly Government. The £28.5m scheme aims to provide free cycle hire, bus travel around the city centre, and improved bike and walking routes.**

The city will receive the funding from the government and the county council over the next two years.

The money will pay for improvements to public transport, including a new park and ride facility.

If the scheme is successful, it could be repeated in other areas of Wales.



The plans will see free circular bus shuttles introduced in the city centre, a free bike hire scheme, new park and ride facilities in Pentwyn to serve the east side of the city and measures to tackle congestion.

The money also gives the go-ahead for the Pont-y-Werin pedestrian and cycle bridge across the Ely river between Cardiff's sports village and Penarth. The council hopes to include further phases once the initial two-year plan is complete.

### Scheme Highlights

- Free city centre bus shuttle service
- A new park and ride facility at Pentwyn
- Improved cycling and walking routes
- Final go-ahead for the Pont-y-Werin pedestrian and cycle bridge over the Ely river between Penarth and the Sports Village

The initiative will see £14.5m from the Welsh Assembly Government and £14m from Cardiff Council, initially for two years but the council hope to include further phases after that.

Announcing the money, the transport minister Ieuan Wyn Jones said: "Commuter levels in and around Cardiff have increased significantly over the past few years.

"This is an exciting opportunity to develop and implement a range of innovative transport solutions which will benefit the 210,000 people who travel into the city on a daily basis.

"This scheme will also support our physical activity action plan, which is currently being developed."

Improvements to the infrastructure will include better bus lanes and the future pedestrianisation of High Street and Mary Street. There will also be incentives to travel sustainably, car clubs, journey sharing schemes and free bike hire.

Jane Davidson, minister for the environment and sustainability, called the scheme a "win-win situation" for health and congestion, with increased bus and cycle use and fewer cars on the road.

"We have become far too reliant on using the car and we need to consider alternative, greener ways to travel," she said.

## Motoair hits UK



**Having already saved motorcyclists from death and serious injury in the USA, the revolutionary range of Motoair biker jackets incorporating a unique personal airbag system are now available for the first time in the UK from [Wairbag.com](http://Wairbag.com)**

Wearing and operating the jacket is simple. Fitted with a ripcord which clips directly to the motorcycle, should there be an ejection from the bike a small CO2 cartridge is triggered inflating the jacket as quickly as 0.2 of a second. The motorcyclist is therefore provided with a firm and strong airbag cushion fully protecting the torso before impact with another vehicle or the road surface. All areas are protected from the chest, the side ribs and the back, as well as increased support for the neck and spine areas.

View demo video [here](#)

## Assembly Government Plan to get Wales Walking and Cycling



**This Action Plan explains how the Welsh Assembly Government and its partners are supporting walking and cycling in Wales. Launching the plan at the Wales Millennium Centre, the Deputy First Minister Ieuan Wyn Jones and Environment Minister Jane Davidson underlined the importance of the initiative.**

Jane Davidson also revealed new targets:

We will take action to encourage people to change their behaviour when it comes to travelling to work or picking up the children from school. Currently, only 39% of children walk to school. I want to see this figure increased to at least meet the UK average of 46% by 2013. Only 10% of adults walk to work, and I want to see this doubled to 20%, again by 2013. I also want to triple the number of people who use a bike to get to work.

The Walking and Cycling Action Plan identifies a number of actions, including:

- Prioritising walking and cycling in public transport investments
- Encouraging employers to offer incentives to employees; for example through the tax free bike purchase scheme and the use of a mileage expense rate for cycling
- Introducing National Standards for cycle training and supporting cycle instructor training
- Ensuring that local authorities provide and maintain high quality routes and facilities for cyclists
- Increasing provision of safe traffic free walking routes to schools and workplaces through continuation of the
- Assembly Government's Safe Routes in Communities Programme
- Using EU funding to improve the quality of the cycling and walking tourism product
- Opening an all Wales Coast Path, including provision for bikes in appropriate places, which be complete in time for the 2012 Olympics
- Implementation of Rights of Way Improvement Plans by all local authorities
- Introduction of the Sustainable Travel Town project in Wales

Download the Action Plan <http://wales.gov.uk/docs/desh/publications/090223walkingactionplanen.pdf>

## Two wheeled changes - New two-part motorcycle test

**Ministers have announced their decision to introduce a two-part modular practical motorcycle test following a consultation paper published in November 2008. The existing single practical test will be replaced by a new test that will be taken in two modules:**

- **Module 1** will contain the specified manoeuvres element of the test, which will be conducted off-road at specialist examination centres. It will include exercises designed to assess the rider's ability to control their machine safely, including avoidance and emergency stop exercises
- **Module 2** will include an eyesight test and at least 30 minutes of on-road riding, assessing the rider's ability to interact safely with other road users



Bookings commenced from 30 March, 2009 and the first tests will take place on April 27.

The DSA's Chief Executive Rosemary Thew said: "We have listened to the motorcycling industry and introducing a two-part test means we can provide more locations from which to conduct tests and offer a step-by-step, considered approach to learning to ride. Candidates will have time to absorb each separate important stage."

Further details on the new two-part test, and test centre locations, can be found on the DSA's [website](#). For advice on motorcycling and road safety from RoSPA, visit the [website](#).

## Uninsured drivers left with nowhere to hide by new crackdown

**Tough new powers to tackle the selfish minority of uninsured drivers who cost law-abiding motorists £400m each year have been set out by Road Safety Minister Jim Fitzpatrick.**

The new measures will make it an offence to keep an uninsured vehicle - rather than just to drive when uninsured - making it easier to catch uninsured drivers and keep them off the roads.

Jim Fitzpatrick said:

"The selfish minority of drivers who refuse to insure their cars push up premiums for other motorists and kill or injure thousands of people each year.

"Increased police powers already mean more than 400 uninsured vehicles are seized every day but these tough new measures will leave uninsured drivers with nowhere to hide."

Under the new system:

- The DVLA will work in partnership with the insurance industry to identify uninsured vehicles
- Motorists will receive a letter telling them that their vehicle appears to be uninsured and warning them that they will be fined unless they insure it within a set period
- If the keeper fails to insure the vehicle they will be given a £100 fine
- If the vehicle remains uninsured - regardless of whether the fine is paid - it could then be seized and destroyed.

Uninsured driving adds around £30 a year to every motorist's insurance premium - amounting to more than £400m a year in additional premiums. It is also estimated that uninsured and untraced drivers kill 160 people and injure 23,000 every year.

The Government has already given the police powers to seize and destroy vehicles being driven uninsured, along with improved access to the Motor Insurance Database to enhance their capability to detect uninsured driving by using Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) equipment. Police removed around 150,000 vehicles in 2007 - more than 400 a day.

Last year a new offence of causing death by driving while unlicensed, disqualified or uninsured was introduced.



## Report on Intelligent Speed Adaptation



**The Commission for Integrated Transport (CfIT) and the Motorists' Forum (MF) decided jointly in 2007 to consider what impact the voluntary introduction of an Intelligent Speed Adaptation (ISA) system across the entire road network would have in reducing deaths and injuries on the UK roads and in reducing carbon emissions, other pollutants and fuel consumption.**

The Institute for Transport Studies, University of Leeds was commissioned to report on this matter.

The resulting report is available online and is titled [Speed Limit Adherence and its Effect on Road Safety and Climate Change](#)

## On-The-Spot Fines

**Foreign drivers will have to pay on-the-spot fines of up to £900 for flouting traffic laws under new legislation introduced on 1 April. If they do not have enough cash or a working credit card their vehicles will be clamped until they pay – and they will face an additional £80 release fee.**



The law will also apply to British residents who cannot prove at the roadside that they have a valid address in Britain. The fines will be described officially as “deposits” because the money would be refunded if the driver went to court and was found not guilty. In practice, very few foreign drivers are likely to return to Britain to contest their cases.

Foreign drivers are rarely prosecuted because police cannot take action against them if they fail to respond to a summons. Instead, officers often merely give verbal warnings.

Three million foreign-registered vehicles enter Britain each year. Polish vehicles account for 36 per cent, French vehicles for 10 per cent and German vehicles for 9 per cent.

Foreign vehicles are 30 per cent likelier to be in a crash than a British-registered vehicle, according to research by London Councils. The number of crashes caused by foreign vehicles increased by 47 per cent between 2002 and 2007. There were almost 400 deaths and serious injuries and 3,000 slight injuries from accidents involving foreign vehicles in 2007.

The new law is partly intended to tackle the problem of foreign lorry drivers ignoring limits on weight and hours at the wheel and driving with faulty brakes. Foreign lorries are three times more likely per mile travelled to be in a collision than British lorries, according to an insurance industry study in 2007. Recent spot checks at Holyhead, in Anglesey, found that three quarters of lorries that failed safety tests were registered overseas.

Inspectors from the Vehicle and Operator Services Agency, which enforces lorry safety rules, will have the same powers as police to demand payment of deposits and to clamp the vehicles of non-payers. Drivers observed committing more than one offence will pay a maximum of £900 at the roadside.

The standard deposit for a careless driving offence – including driving too close to the vehicle in front or reading a map at the wheel – will be £300. Deposits for speeding offences and using hand-held mobile phones will be £60, in line with existing fixed penalties. Foreign drivers will not have penalty points added to their licences, however, in contrast to British drivers.

Richard Brunstrom, chief constable of North Wales and national police spokesman on traffic enforcement, welcomed the change. He said: “This will enable the police to enforce the law fairly and consistently, regardless of where drivers are from.”

A separate European Union enforcement plan is eventually expected to allow police to issue fines to foreign drivers caught by speed and red-light cameras.

## Contact the Editor

Copyright © 2009 by RoSPA Wales - All Rights Reserved.

Editor: Steve Baker, RoSPA  
[sbaker@rospa.com](mailto:sbaker@rospa.com)

02920 250 600

