

# The Road Safety Wales Low Down

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

January 2008 — Issue 7

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## New look for JRSOs in Swansea

The city and County of Swansea's Junior Road Safety Officers Club has now been running for 7 years. At present, over 40 primary schools in the Swansea area are members of the scheme with more schools wishing to join for 2007/08.

There is a new look to Swansea JRSO Club, with the launch of a "cool" streetwise uniform. The JRSOs will be given a baseball cap, satchel and t-shirt. All the uniform will be branded with JRSO in the style of the New York Police Department (N.Y.P.D)



[Full Story](#)

## School Bands Shine in Anti-Drink Drive Music Challenge



The second Gwent Road Safety Music Challenge took place on Monday 26th November at The Congress Theatre Cwmbran. It was an exciting evening full of nerves, adrenaline and high spirits. However, above all this merriment came a serious message about the risks of drink driving.

Eleven bands from schools across Gwent met the Challenge. Each band had composed a piece of music on an anti drink drive theme, often as part of their school work. Their songs were performed in front of a panel of four judges, each an expert from the field of music or road safety.

A wide variety of music genres were demonstrated and all were performed with individual style, talent and tremendous enthusiasm. The judges had a difficult task deciding the winners but eventually the results were as follows: -

**1st** Angels of Chaos from Ebbw Vale Comprehensive with 'Just Stop'

**2nd** Abersychan School Band with 'Please Stop This'

**3rd** Diminuendo from Tredegar Comprehensive with 'Crisis'

## Drink Drive Poster Competition



Thousands of children from around Wales took part in the 2007 Drink Drive Poster Competition, resulting in 16 regional winners who attended a presentation ceremony at the Christmas Drink Drive Launch on 3 December at All Nations Centre, Cardiff.

A poster by Toby Williams of Ysgol Uwchradd Tywyn, Gwynedd, was selected for distribution throughout Wales.

[Download the 2007 poster](#)  (PDF format 305kb)

View all the winning posters [here](#)

## Road Safety Fundraisers



Carmarthenshire schoolchildren have been learning about road safety - and raising money for charity at the same time. Pupils from across the county have raised thousands of pounds for Children In Need. Road safety quizzes and sponsored events have raised a huge £9,515 in recent weeks. And more money is still being sent in to road safety officers at Carmarthenshire County Council.

The county's road safety mascot Gari Gosafe teamed up with the BBC's Pudsey Bear for the council campaign.

Primary schools across Carmarthenshire took part in fundraising activities with a road safety message. The cash was collected during a whistle-stop tour of 62 primary schools during Road Safety Week. Road Safety Manager Keith Griffiths said: "We are constantly looking at new ways of educating children about road safety issues and we were absolutely delighted by the response from schools. We never expected to raise so much money and we are hoping to top £10,000. It has been a very valuable exercise in terms of educating children and raising money for charity at the same time."

Gari Gosafe is the face of the council's road safety education programme. The seven foot dragon is used by officers to raise awareness among schoolchildren and reduce the number of road injuries. The council's Transport Executive Board Member cllr Pam Palmer said: "It is vital to educate children about road safety from an early age. "A huge amount of work is underway in Carmarthenshire and this campaign was a fantastic way to engage with young people. I congratulate everyone involved for their efforts."

## Multi-purpose Test Centre Opens

**A Multi-Purpose Driving Test Centre has been opened by the Driving Standards Agency (DSA) in Gwent, the first of its kind in Wales.**

The Newport centre is one of a national network being developed by DSA to improve road safety by incorporating space for the requirements of the new Motorcycle Test (which becomes effective in 2008) and providing improved facilities for customers.



**Under Secretary of State for Transport Jim Fitzpatrick MP opening the new test centre in Newport.**

The new centre is situated at Stephenson Street, Newport, NP19 4XH. Information about DSA multi-purpose test centres can be found at [www.dsa.gov.uk](http://www.dsa.gov.uk)



## Cycle Instructors Meet the Standard

**Twelve North Walian cycling enthusiasts from a variety of backgrounds recently successfully completed a four-day training course as part of their accreditation process to becoming National Standards Cycle Instructors.**

The course held at Denbigh Rugby Club and organised by Cycle Experience [www.cycleexperience.com](http://www.cycleexperience.com) was funded by a number of North Wales authorities in readiness for the gradual implementation of National Standards Cycle Training in schools and other organisations.





The British Horse Society has shown its appreciation to the individuals and organisations who have supported the leading equestrian charity's work - at an awards ceremony in London. The BHS presented 26 awards to individuals or organisations who have made an outstanding contribution to the BHS's work, at the event at Saddlers' Hall in the City of London.

The prestigious awards – presented by the Society's President Desi Dillingham - highlighted the amazing work that goes on behind the scenes on behalf of Britain's horses and riders.

Patrick Print, Chairman and a Fellow of The British Horse Society, said: "These award winners are the unsung heroes of equestrianism – people who quietly and ceaselessly graft away for the good of all riders and drivers. Their achievements are immense and we thank them for all they have done."

In this Diamond Jubilee Year of the British Horse Society, Terry Jones (Ceredigion County Road Safety Officer) was honoured with the Safety in the Community Award, for his dedication to the promotion of road safety. Road Safety Wales members extend warm congratulations to Terry on this memorable achievement.

Caerphilly County Borough Council was also awarded as the Local Authority most active in opening up equestrian routes. Caerphilly County Borough Council has promoted the interests of equestrians for a number of years. They took on board the results of the BHS Headcount survey (in which they had played an active part themselves) and have endeavoured since to provide new riding routes in many areas of the county, as well as improving the existing network of bridleways.

## Driving for Work: Fitness to Drive

RoSPA's new '**Driving for Work: Fitness to Drive**' contains practical advice to help employers place fitness to drive within the overall context of managing occupational road risk and organisations' occupational health policies.



The free resource, available from the **RoSPA website** helps employers produce practical systems to assess the fitness-to-drive of their staff and to provide necessary help or adjust work tasks. It also helps them to raise awareness amongst staff of the importance of this issue.

It includes advice on physical and cognitive conditions that may affect driving. For example, a survey found that 90% of drivers (of company cars, motorcycles, buses and HGVs) said their employer did not require them to have their eyes tested. Over half had not had an eye test in the past year, and almost one in five not for over 5 years. 4% admitted to an accident or near collision caused by poor eyesight.

Visit the RoSPA website for a **downloadable PDF** and view other **free road safety resources**

## Traffic Levels Keep on Rising



Between 2005 and 2006, road traffic in Britain rose by 1.4% to 506 billion vehicle kilometers – the first time it has exceeded 500 billion km.

Car traffic accounted for nearly four-fifths of the total. Car traffic has grown by 12% since 1996, and a massive 850% since 1951. However, light van traffic has shown the greatest growth in recent years, up by nearly 40% since 1996.

[Road Traffic Statistics for Local Authorities can be viewed here](#)

## MoT extension plan 'could cause 150 extra deaths'

Government proposals for cars to undergo an MoT every other year and not until they are four years old could result in 150 additional road deaths and thousands more injuries, according to experts who have condemned the idea on safety grounds.



The idea, which has emanated from the Treasury, follows MoT schedules in many European countries where an inspection is required only every other year and on vehicles over four years old. The MoT Trade Forum has forecast that if the move to a two year check is adopted and delayed by an additional year there will be up to 150 more road deaths per year and a further 1,400 major injuries and 11,000 slight injuries as a result of more crashes.

TyreSafe, formerly the Tyre Industry Council and the UK's leading tyre safety organisation, called the idea 'a serious retrograde step' and said it could increase the number of road crashes, notably skidding accidents in the wet. Defective tyres - having a tread depth below 1.6 mm - says TyreSafe, are a contributory factor in many road accidents particularly on wet roads.

A spokesman said: "Any change to the annual MoT check could increase the number of vehicles on the road with badly worn or illegal tyres." According to the latest figures from the Department for Transport, almost one in three vehicles fail the MoT with more than 7% of cars failing the annual inspection because of tyre problems. Research by TyreSafe estimates that 12% of vehicles on Britain's roads have at least one defective tyre, and a further 12% have at least one badly worn tyre.

The spokesman added: "Many drivers do not routinely check the tyres on their vehicles, and the MoT test is the only time the tread, sidewalls and pressures of tyres are examined. For this reason, TyreSafe is strongly opposed to extending the period between tests."

The Treasury says that consultations will take place with the police and road safety groups before any changes are introduced. The recommendation was one of the proposals from a Government commissioned report by Lord Davidson into the implementation of European Union legislation in the UK.

The changes to the MoT could, it is claimed, result in savings of around £465 million for businesses and consumers. The report said: "Given that the frequency of vehicle testing is among the highest in the European Union and that cars have changed a lot since 1968 [when the MoT system was established], it could be argued that UK drivers face unnecessary costs by comparison to their counterparts in other member states."

Visit [www.tyresafe.org](http://www.tyresafe.org) for further details

## Beyond 2010



**Beyond 2010 is PACTS most recent research report, released on Tuesday 16th October. The report and the executive summary are now downloadable in PDF format via the links below. Beyond 2010 is also available in full copy, CD-rom or via email upon request.**

The Beyond 2010 research project is a broad-ranging analysis of the future issues that will shape road safety policy. It aims to highlight the key areas where action is needed to continue the United Kingdom's excellent work in reducing death and injury on our roads.

[Beyond 2010 - Executive Summary](#)

[Beyond 2010 - Full Report](#)

**A new survey shows the number of car drivers using hand-held mobile phones at the wheel has fallen by 40%, Road Safety Minister Jim Fitzpatrick has revealed.**

**Just 1% of car drivers were observed using a hand-held mobile while driving, compared with 1.7% last year, a survey conducted in August found.**



Speaking at the Annual Lecture of the Parliamentary Advisory Council for Transport Safety, Jim Fitzpatrick said: "Since February, drivers illegally using their mobile phone have risked three points on their licence and a £60 fine. The Government introduced this tough penalty to stamp down on mobile phone use at the wheel and this survey suggests more and more motorists are getting the message.

"Using any mobile phone when driving is distracting - it stops you giving the road your full attention and slows reaction times. Research shows it can make a crash four times more likely, so it is vital motorists do not use their phones while driving."

The survey, commissioned by the Department for Transport and published by TRL, showed that between September 2006 and August 2007 observed numbers of:

- Car drivers using hand-held mobiles dropped from 1.7% to 1%
- Car drivers using hands-free mobiles dropped from 0.9% to 0.4%
- Other drivers using hand-held mobiles dropped from 2.9% to 2.4%
- Other drivers using hands-free mobiles halved, from 1.2% to 0.6%.

### Cycle Routes Win £50m Public Vote



**A scheme which will improve cycling and walking routes across Wales is part of a winning bid for £50m from the Big Lottery Fund. It follows a massive telephone and internet vote by the public backing the Connect2 scheme put forward by the charity Sustrans.**

The money will be spent on at least ten routes created across Wales, building bridges and crossing points. The Sustrans bid beat off three other schemes in the public vote.

The winning Connect2 scheme includes a long-awaited pedestrian bridge between Cardiff and Penarth, two bridges over the River Wye at Monmouth and Tintern, a link between Newport and Caerleon, and, in north Wales, a bridge linking Rhyl and Kimnel Bay. Altogether, 79 towns and cities across the UK will benefit.

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