

In This Issue:

- Road Safety Framework for Wales • CrashMap Updated
- All Wales Anti Drink Drive Campaign Results
- Drink Drive Rehabilitation Scheme (DDRS) • Sleep Apnoea
- Research Centre Secures Grant • UK Vehicle Numbers Reach Record High
- Mobiles Causing Child Pedestrian Accidents • Get A Grip Campaign
- Record Number of Older Drivers

New Plan to Reduce Casualties on Welsh Roads



In July, Transport Minister Edwina Hart published the Welsh Government's Road Safety Framework for Wales, which sets targets for a substantial reduction in road casualties - with an aspiration to reach zero fatalities on Welsh roads in the future. Mrs Hart said:

"Road traffic collisions happen every day with potentially tragic consequences, but almost all are entirely avoidable. We want to reduce the number of road traffic collisions, particularly those which result in serious and fatal injuries.

"Wales' roads are amongst the safest in the world and we can all be rightly proud of this. However, I do not think that we should settle for what has been achieved to date. I believe that we all have a responsibility to try and stop these unnecessary deaths and injuries.

"This framework identifies two groups that are most at risk – young people, aged 16-24, and motorcyclists. Young people are at significantly greater risk of being involved in a collision than any other age group. Motorcyclists account for only 1% of road traffic in Wales, but 37% of those killed or seriously injured in motor vehicle collisions.

"I do not believe these statistics are inevitable and that is why I have set specific targets for casualty reduction amongst these two groups."

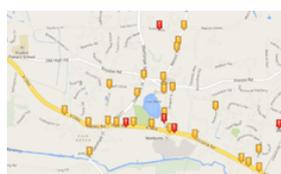
The Framework, which sets out the Welsh Government's priorities for road safety until 2020, also includes:

- An aspiration of no fatalities on Welsh roads in the future
- Targets for casualty reduction
- Actions in respect of vulnerable road user groups, causes of collision and road safety engineering in order to reduce casualties

Mrs Hart added:

"We had a very good response to the consultation on the framework and the final version reflects this and the active involvement of our partners. By continuing to work together I believe we can build upon the progress made so far and ensure that everyone is safe on Welsh roads."

CrashMap Updated With 2012 Data



'Crashmap' has been updated with DfT 2012 data which is now free to view on the [Crashmap website](#). CrashMap allows users to search the UK to see where crashes have occurred. The user can also filter crashes by the year in which they took place and identify the most serious and the date when the incident occurred.

Over 400 Fail Breath Tests in Summer Crackdown

Welsh Police report that over 400 drivers were caught over the drink drive limit in the recent summer crackdown. The four Welsh forces stopped 20,000 drivers in the month long campaign which launched on the 1st June.



The police forces said they were also receiving more tip-offs from the public on drink-drivers. But the number of arrests has remained stubbornly similar to previous years, at about 2%.

Chief Inspector Darren Wareing from North Wales Police said: "We are disappointed that there is still a group of people who are not listening or ignoring the consequences and continuing to drink or take drugs and drive. It is socially unacceptable. There is a small hardcore of individuals who persist in drink-driving"

In total, 420 people were arrested for failing roadside breath tests, while other arrests pushed the number up to 436.

Inspector Lee Ford of Gwent Police's road policing unit said he believed more people are willing to report those they think may have been drinking and driving.

"We have seen a rise in the amount of information that is coming into us. A lot of that has been down to us publicising the single non-emergency number, 101," he said. We have good intelligence where we can target these individuals and place them before courts."

As in previous years, it was the North Wales force that carried out the most roadside tests, stopping 8,281 motorists, with 109 failing.

The legal limit for alcohol consumption and driving in the UK stands at 35 micrograms of alcohol per 100 millilitres of breath.

In South Wales, of the 2,023 people stopped - 105 drivers were over that limit. The Gwent force stopped almost exactly the same number of drivers, and 64 were arrested. The most arrests were in the Dyfed-Powys force area, where 7,544 motorists were tested and 142 failed, or 1.9% of those tested.

Chief Inspector Wareing of North Wales Police added: "We want to get the message across that drinking alcohol and driving or driving under the influence of drugs is unacceptable and that it puts other roads users' lives at risk.

"It can also lead to a lengthy driving ban and possible loss of jobs and livelihoods with some even facing imprisonment."

Drink driving is responsible for 1 in 4 deaths on Welsh roads

As of 24 June 2013, responsibility for Drink Drive Rehabilitation Scheme (DDRS) courses is devolved to and administered by the Welsh Government.

The courses offer an educational opportunity to those convicted of relevant drink offences, in order to reduce the likelihood they will reoffend. The approved DDRS courses are not available to those who have committed drug-drive offences. For more information visit the [Welsh Government website](#)

Sleep Apnoea

A new guide has been put together to help inform truck drivers of the dangers of sleep apnoea and answer the most commonly asked questions about the condition.

Called [Sleep Apnoea and Driving – The Facts](#), the document has been written to demystify Obstructive Sleep Apnoea Syndrome (OSAS) – a condition particularly prevalent among HGV drivers and thought to be a contributing factor in a significant percentage of motorway traffic accidents. The document, developed following collaboration between the OSA Partnership Group and DVLA, has taken into account input from clinicians and the haulage industry.

Professor John Stradling from the Oxford Sleep Clinic played a prominent role in agreeing the wording. He said: "It is vital we do not push the problem underground by making it difficult for commercial drivers to admit they have symptoms. Therefore, members of the OSA Partnership Group have worked closely with the DVLA to agree a consistent process that highlights the importance and the longer term benefits of seeking treatment quickly."

Experts said those most at risk of having the condition are overweight middle-aged men – and due to the sedentary nature of their job, HGV drivers are at higher risk of OSAS. However, OSAS can be fully treated quickly and easily; and when the symptoms are controlled, quality of life can improve considerably. However, if left untreated, OSAS is likely to impact on overall health and wellbeing, and can impact on life expectancy. [Read more](#)

Research Centre Secures Grant for Road Safety Work



The Dyscovery Centre at the University of South Wales has been awarded a grant to carry out research into how children can learn about road safety more effectively.

Dr Catherine Purcell, a post-doctoral researcher at the Centre on the University's Caerleon Campus, will build on her previous research into how children and adults with Developmental Coordination Disorder (DCD) tackle the task of crossing the road.

DCD, also known as Dyspraxia, is a movement disorder than significantly impacts on everyday functioning and is thought to affect around 6% of the UK population.

Dr Purcell will look at the developmental readiness of children with and without DCD to acquire new knowledge and skills through different methods of teaching road safety. By developing virtual reality environments using specialist technology, Dr Purcell will carry out studies into whether children aged six to 13 have learning preferences for the ways in which road safety is currently taught in schools. She aims to position children in different situations in virtual roadside environments and ask them to work out their safest crossing routes.

As part of the three year grant, Dr Purcell and co-investigator Professor Amanda Kirby hope that their findings will help inform the methods used to teach road safety in schools. They will also take into consideration the views of parents and children on their experiences of walking to school and crossing the road.

UK Vehicle Numbers Reach Record High

The number of vehicles on UK roads is at its highest ever level, according to figures published by the DVLA (motoring.co.uk)

DVLA data shows there were 35 million licensed vehicles as of 30 June 2013 - a 1.3% increase compared with the second quarter of 2012.

Of these, 29.1 million were cars - a new high. These figures were boosted by relatively strong new car sales in the period April-June 2013 when 546,000 cars were registered, a 12.9% increase over the corresponding period in 2012. In contrast, the number of registered buses and coaches fell by 1.1%, the number of heavy goods vehicles fell by 0.4% and the number of motorbikes also fell by 0.3%.

[Click here](#) to read the full motoring.co.uk news report.

Mobiles Causing Child Pedestrian Accidents

ROADSAFE



A report, written by AXA Insurance and road safety partner RoadSafe, highlights the danger to children of being distracted by smartphones whilst walking to and from school.

Texting, tweeting, checking Facebook, surfing the internet and playing games on mobile phones could be responsible for a rise in the number of 11-12 year old children suffering road traffic accidents, says the report.

It states that 32% of all pedestrians seriously injured or killed during school run time are 11-12 years old and an 11 year old pedestrian is three times more likely to be killed or seriously injured during the school run than a 10 year old - this is a sharp increase from a decade ago, when an 11 year old pedestrian was twice as likely as a 10 year old to be killed or seriously injured.

The report investigated the ways in which children are distracted by mobiles during their daily walk to school:

- An 11 year old is six times more likely to text on the way to school than a 10 year old.
- 32% of 11 year olds log on to Facebook via their mobile while on the way to school.
- 25% of 11 and 12 year olds say they have been distracted when crossing the road due to technology such as mobile phones and MP3 players.

Adrian Walsh, director of RoadSafe, confirmed that the report, "shows a correlation between mobile phone use and a slight increase in teenage casualties."

The report recommends that parents of primary school age children should be particularly encouraged to educate their children about road safety - and that teaching responsible smartphone usage should be a priority during school road safety lessons.

Get A Grip



Road users on two wheels will know how important it is to have consistent grip under their tyres. Slipping on gravel or a manhole cover, especially in the wet, can be frightening at best, catastrophic at worst. If visibility is good a motorcyclist will probably try to take avoiding action, but that can make their line alter - a potentially hazardous activity too!

MAG – The Motorcycle Action Group are campaigning to raise awareness and create change.

Across the UK there are in excess of 10 million inspection covers. Worn, cracked and displaced manhole or inspection covers create a hazard by creating areas of low skid resistance – often at key points along the carriageway. Covers are placed where the utility companies need to change the direction of pipes and drainage – usually on corners and often in the crown of the road. The appearance of a worn or damaged inspection cover in the path of a motorcyclist will often lead to an instinctive swerve which could be potentially hazardous – as is the sudden variation of traction and the resulting loss of control.

The Get A Grip campaign calls for action by utility companies and highways authorities to consider alternatives to the traditional metal covers, a range of excellent cost effective alternatives are now available, which have the added bonus of not being a target for metal thieves. To find out more, or to sign the petition, visit [Get A Grip](#)

The number of older people with driving licences has hit a record high, exceeding the four million mark. Data analysed by the RAC Foundation shows there are now 4,018,900 men and women aged 70 or over who hold a valid full British licence and of those, 191 are aged 100 or over. The oldest licence holder is recorded as being a woman aged 107, with the oldest licence-holding man 106 years young.



While not all of these licence holders will be active drivers the statistics illustrate the growing number of older people who still use a car. And the total is set to increase with the Government's recent prediction that of the UK citizens alive today, around ten million will reach their 100th birthday.

It is at age 70 - and every three years thereafter - that drivers must declare whether or not they are fit to drive. This self-declaration is not made on the basis of any formal medical or driving test, but relies on the judgement of the

individual. To help people make the right decision, Rica, a national research charity providing information to older and disabled consumers, has, with support from the RAC Foundation published 'Driving safely for life'.

Many people continue to drive safely and with confidence as they age. However, experience in Australia and America suggests an estimated one in ten drivers continues to drive when they are not fit to do so. Also a third actually hang up the keys too early and risk exclusion from essential services and social activities.

The guide explains to older drivers exactly what the law says about ability to drive, how they can best assess their capabilities, for example, by visiting a mobility centre, what modifications can be made to their vehicles and their driving habits to keep them on the road longer and how, if they do stop driving, they can still maintain a good quality of life.

Professor Stephen Glaister, director of the RAC Foundation, said: "All drivers should regularly consider their fitness to drive, but matters come to a head when we reach 70 and have to declare that we should be on the roads. For those reliant on a car, giving up driving will have a huge impact on their ability to live an active life so it is important that they get all the help and support to make the right decision at the right time."

Dr Jasper Holmes, co-director of Rica said: "We're really pleased to launch this new guide with the RAC Foundation that gives clear and trustworthy advice on a sensitive issue affecting older people. The guide sits alongside other useful information on our website to help people stay independent and involved, including a unique car measurement search tool."

View the pdf [here](#)

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