Llanelli North 20mph Campaign

Speeding drivers have been educated by children in Llanelli for exceeding the 20mph limit outside their schools.

Pupils from Ysgol Penygaer, Ysgol Dewi Sant and Ysgol Y Felin have been taking action to slow down motorists, supported by Carmarthenshire County Council's road safety unit and officers from Dyfed-Powys Police, GoSafe, and Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service.

A total of 33 drivers were stopped during the initiative, including five for not wearing a seatbelt.

The children used a Speed Indicator Device to find out what speed passing motorists were travelling and offending drivers were given the option of speaking to the children to explain why they were exceeding the speed limit or receiving a fine of £100 and three penalty points.

The initiative is part of a wider education and awareness campaign in the Llanelli North area, which is part of a Welsh Government rollout to reduce the national default speed limit. The area has been chosen as one of eight communities in Wales to trial a reduced national speed limit from 30mph to 20mph in residential areas and busy pedestrian streets.

Council Leader Cllr Emlyn Dole, said, "Evidence shows that lower speeds result in fewer collisions and reduces the severity of injuries, and in particular, where 20mph limits are introduced there is a reduction in the number of casualties."

The Deputy Minister for Climate Change with responsibility for Transport, Lee Waters added, "We've already seen the effects current 20mph limits have had in reducing speeds and serious incidents on our roads. I believe this innovative enforcement initiative at the site of one of our 20mph pilots will encourage motorists to drive responsibly, placing the safety of children at the forefront of their minds at all times."

Find out more here.

IN THIS ISSUE:

Children Educate Speeding Drivers
Driver Safety Advice for Pet Owners
New HSE Driving for Work Guidance
Look Once, Look Twice, Think Bike
Progress on Zero-emissions
Consultation on Collision Investigation
40 Years of Seatbelts

Never Drive With An Unrestrained Pet In Your Vehicle

Safe driving demands your full attention and an unobstructed view of the road; anything less increases the risk of a collision and potential injury.

We all know that using a mobile phone at the wheel and other in-vehicle distractions are significant risk factors, but have you thought about the importance of carrying your pet safely in your vehicle?

It's an issue often overlooked, but even the most well behaved animal can become frightened by something unusual and react in a way which compromises the safety of the driver, passengers and other road users.

Teresa Ciano, Chair of Road Safety Wales, gave the following advice to pet owners, "It is vital to ensure that your pet is safely secured, using a seatbelt harness, a pet carrier, a dog cage, or a dog guard when travelling in a vehicle. In the event of a collision, an unrestrained pet can become a dangerous projectile, continuing their forward motion at force within the vehicle interior and striking other occupants.

"Road Safety Wales is reminding drivers to check that pets are safely secured before every journey."

The forces involved in a collision make the consequences significant - at 30mph, an unrestrained dog weighing 50lb (22½kg) would be thrown forward with a force equivalent to almost nine 12 stone (80kg) people. The potential for serious harm to your dog and people in the vehicle can be mitigated by safely securing your pet using the correct restraint.

Teresa Ciano added, "If a collision occurs when a pet is loose in the vehicle, they could escape, be hit by another vehicle or cause a further collision.

"To protect your pet, choose a position in the vehicle where they won't be injured if an airbag deploys and don't allow them to travel with their head out of the window - not only will they be exposed to grit and debris, there is a risk of them jumping or falling from the vehicle or being hit by an oncoming vehicle or object."

Wayne Tucker, Road Safety Officer at South Wales Police said, "During our recent Operation Options interventions, where we educate and inform road users on the importance of wearing seatbelts, we have identified a number of drivers with pets unsecured in the vehicle.

"We have also observed small dogs travelling while sat on the driver's lap, something which is extremely dangerous and particularly concerning. Drivers are putting themselves at risk of being prosecuted for not being in proper control of their vehicle, which carries a fine and endorsement on their licence.

"It is essential that drivers secure their pets correctly – you are protecting them, yourself and other road users."

HSE Issues New Driving for Work Guidance

Launching its new and expanded guidance for Driving for Work, the Health and Safety Executive highlights that driving is likely to be the most dangerous activity most workers will undertake.

The updated guidance on work-related road risk has been issued to clear up confusion over where responsibility for legal compliance lies when employees use personal vehicles as part of their job. The move is a result of the growing gig economy and an increasing grey fleet. Visit the new website here.

Look Once, Look Twice, Think Bike

By distance travelled, motorcyclists have the highest rate of death or serious injury of all road users.

Gwent Police has launched a campaign emphasising the need for car drivers to take a second look for motorcycles, and for bikers to take personal responsibility for riding safely.

The campaign is reminding drivers that under the crash helmet is a real person with a job, commitments, a valued place in their community, and loved ones who are waiting for them to come home. Alongside this, a parallel campaign will target motorcyclists, encouraging them to 'read the road, reduce the risk'.

According to road safety charity Brake, almost four-fifths of motorcycle collisions involve another vehicle – mainly car drivers failing to look properly for bikes.

In serious collisions where a four-wheeled vehicle is not involved, the cause is usually rider error, including poor road positioning, being insufficiently visible on the road, and poor judgement of speed into bends. There is a lot that bikers themselves can do to reduce the risk.

Sergeant Leighton Healan, Gwent Police, said, "There were 25 serious road traffic collisions involving motorcyclists in the Gwent Police force area in the 12 months to 8 September 2021, resulting in three fatalities and 25 serious injuries. Motorcyclists are around 45 times more likely to be killed or seriously injured on the road than car drivers.

"Those fatalities and serious injuries leave loved ones suffering. Every collision involving a bike is one too many.

"Car drivers: let's commit to making a simple change by looking twice for bikes.

"Motorcyclists: please commit to taking responsibility for riding safely and defensively."

For more information on safer Motorcycling in Wales visit www.walesbybike.com

Progress on Zero-emissions

At COP26, the UK Government announced that all new heavy goods vehicles in the UK will be zero-emission by 2040.

Combined with the UK's 2030 phase out for petrol and diesel cars and vans, this represents a world-leading pledge to end the sale of all polluting road vehicles within the next two decades.

This comes as new research, commissioned by the UK COP Presidency, shows the progress made in the passenger vehicle market:

- **31% of the global passenger vehicle market is now covered by vehicle manufacturer commitments to end sales of fossil fuel-powered vehicles, up from a near zero share of the market at the start of 2021**
- **global sales of zero emission vehicles (ZEVs) have grown dramatically since 2019 from 2.1 million to 5.3 million**
- **ZEVs are forecast to be 70% of all new car sales in 2040, with this projection having doubled in the last 5 years.**

DfT Launches Consultation on Road Collision Investigation Branch

A new investigation branch dedicated to learning lessons from road traffic collisions, could be established under plans being unveiled by the UK Government.

The Department for Transport (DfT) has launched a consultation on proposals to set up a Road Collision Investigation Branch (RCIB), which would carry out thematic investigations and probe specific incidents of concern to establish the causes of collisions and make independent safety recommendations to help further improve road safety across the country.

The RCIB would operate much like the similar independent bodies that already exist for air, maritime and rail accidents.

Roads Minister Baroness Vere said, "The UK's roads are among the safest in the world, but we're always looking at ways to make them even safer.

"A new investigation branch would play a huge role in this work by identifying the underlying causes of road traffic collisions, so we can take action to prevent them from happening again.

"It would also provide us with vital insight as we continue to modernise our road network to ensure better, greener and safer journeys.

The consultation, which will run until 9 December 2021 can be accessed here.

40 Years of Seatbelts

Following a long period of campaigning, in 1981 Lord Nugent of Guildford, RoSPA's President, seized his chance with an amendment to the Transport Bill which introduced seatbelt wearing for a trial period of three years. RoSPA's president triumphed and the Bill became law…at last.

At the end of the trial both Houses of Parliament voted overwhelmingly to retain the requirement for drivers and passengers (adult and children) to wear seatbelt in the front of vehicles. The law extended to the rear of vehicles a decade later in 1991. A further 10 years passed until seatbelts were required to be fitted to all minibuses and coaches.

While over 90% of vehicle occupants are complaint, a stubborn minority fail to recognise that seatbelts are highly effective at reducing injuries and fatalities in the event of a collision. It's estimated that approximately 300 lives could be saved in collisions if all occupants wore a seatbelt.

40 years on from the first seatbelt law, is it now time to consider emphasising the significance of non-compliance and risk through an increase to the current £100 fine and the addition of three penalty points?