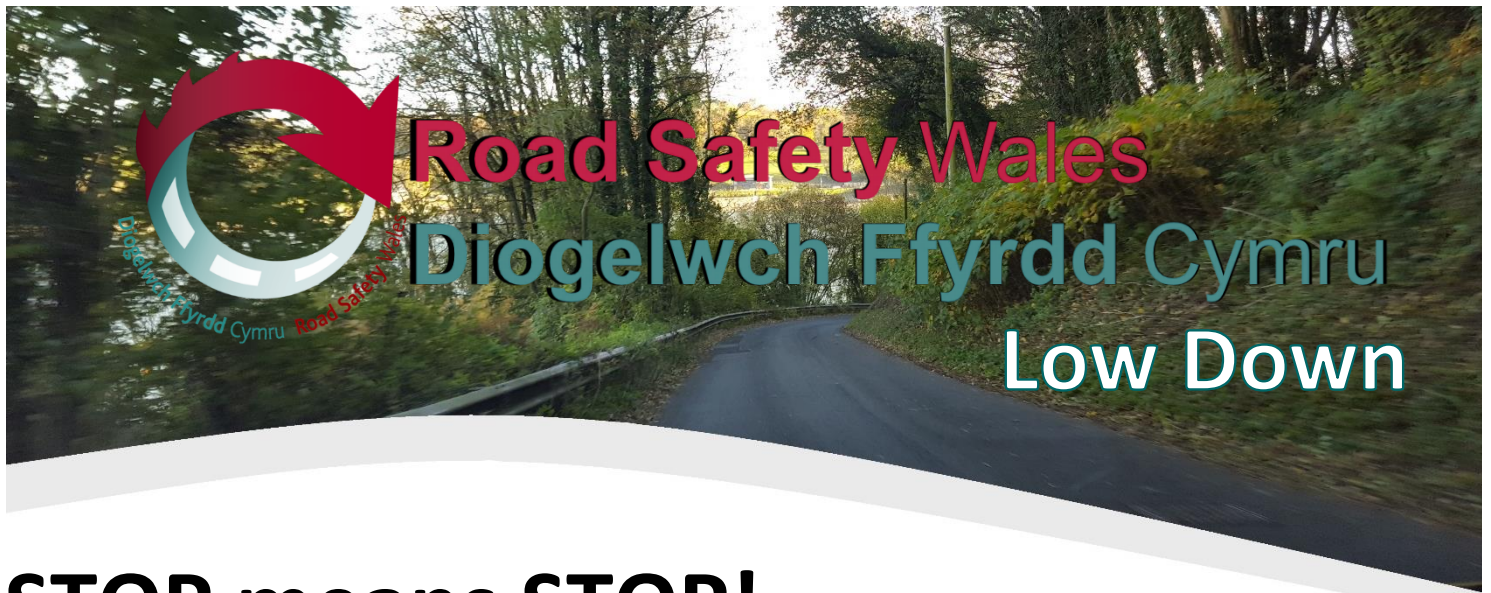




Road Safety Wales

Diogelwch Ffyrdd Cymru

Low Down

STOP means STOP!

Road Safety Wales is reminding drivers of their responsibilities when encountering School Crossing Patrols.

School Crossing Patrol officers are an integral part of the community in many areas of Wales; they have often assisted the children, and even the grandchildren, of those that attended the same school many years ago. They are that friendly face that always greets us when we arrive at school and the one we say goodbye to as we make our way home.

They are dedicated and much-appreciated members of the school and wider community who turn out, despite the weather, to keep us all safe when crossing the road.

Thankfully, the majority of motorists are law-abiding, courteous and will stop as instructed. But it is vital that drivers and riders comply with the law to improve road safety around schools.

It is essential that motorists understand that they are legally obliged to obey the signals given by a School Crossing Patrol (SCP). As soon as the SCP officer raises their sign, even if they have not stepped into the road, motorists must be prepared to stop.

Once the SCP is in the carriageway and displaying the sign in the upright position, traffic **MUST** stop and not proceed until pedestrians have finished crossing the road and the SCP has returned to the pavement.

Teresa Ciano, Chair of Road Safety Wales, said: "There is no excuse for failing to comply with the School Crossing Patrol's instructions. Whether you are running late or didn't realise you **MUST** stop, you have a responsibility, legally and morally, to avoid putting other road users at risk.

"Every child and their guardian in Wales should be safe when crossing the road to school."

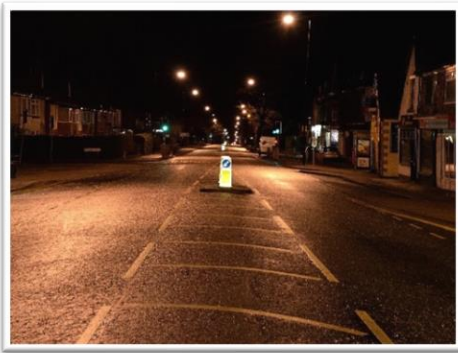
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Looking out for vulnerable road users as the clocks change

The arrival of autumn often brings worsening weather and reduced visibility, increasing the risk of collisions, particularly involving vulnerable road users such as children, older people, pedestrians, cyclists and motorcyclists.



Teresa Ciano, Chair of Road Safety Wales, called for extra vigilance as darker evenings begin; “Darkness creates more challenging conditions for road users. Motorists should drive considerately and reduce their speed to meet the traffic and weather conditions. Drivers should also ensure that their vehicle is prepared and well maintained.”

For optimum visibility of the road environment, vehicle lights need to be in good working order, clean and correctly adjusted. Windscreens and windows should be demisted, unobstructed and clean inside and out, with wipers operating correctly.

Inattention or poor visibility from the driver’s perspective can lead to slower reaction times, increasing the risk of a collision.

Teresa Ciano added, “Drivers should avoid in-vehicle distractions and slow down, so they are able bring their vehicle to a stop within the distance they can see to be clear. Simple regular checks on a vehicle take just a few minutes but can help ensure that the driver’s view of potential hazards is not compromised.”

Other road users can contribute to casualty reduction by playing their part. For cyclists the use of a white front light, a red back light and a red rear reflector are a legal requirement at night. For pedestrians many outdoor coats, bags and shoes incorporate reflective materials which will make them more visible in the glow of vehicle headlights.

Choosing routes that are well-lit by streetlights and crossing at designated crossing places is good practice for road users of all ages. Being visible and looking out for other people might sound simple, but not doing these things can lead to avoidable road casualties.

Officers ride public buses to catch motorists committing ‘Fatal 5’ traffic offences

South Wales Police Roads Policing Unit teamed up with First Cymru for Operation Routemaster, which aims to change driver behaviour and keep motorists safe.

Officers were on a bus recording passing motorists to detect those who were committing ‘Fatal 5’ traffic offences, which include using their mobile phone, not wearing a seatbelt, driving carelessly, speeding or drink/drug driving.

South Wales Police, in just one day, found 26 motorists committing one of the Fatal 5.

Police Constable Nick Thomas, from the Road Safety and Commercial Vehicle Unit who led on the operation, said: “Motorists are four times more likely to crash if they use their phone behind the wheel and South Wales Police are committed to targeting dangerous driving behaviours to keep our roads as safe as possible.



“Operation Routemaster is a new initiative where we have police officers gathering evidence of Fatal 5 offences. Working with First Cymru bus company who share our passion for road safety, we had a successful day engaging with and educating drivers around the city of Swansea. With a successful trial of the operation, we intend to roll out the operation to other areas across the force.”

National Eye Health Week

A week promoting the importance of good eye health and the need for regular eye tests for all, ran from the 23rd to the 29th September 2024.



Whatever your age, good eyesight is vital when using the road. Drivers and motorcyclists must be able to read a vehicle registration plate from a distance of 20 metres (or 20.5 metres if the vehicle was registered before September 2001) wearing glasses or contact lenses if required.

If you find it difficult to read road signs, particularly those with text, it could indicate that your eyesight has deteriorated and you may require corrective lenses. If you are finding it harder to see clearly in the dark, this may also mean you need to wear glasses or contact lenses.

Although eyesight often deteriorates as we get older, eye conditions can develop at any age. Glaucoma and cataracts are well-known but other age-related diseases, if left untreated, can also affect your ability to use the road safely.

Teresa Ciano, Chair of Road Safety Wales, said, “We would recommend having an eye test every two years whether you already have corrective eyewear or not, or more often if your optician suggests it.

“This can not only help to make sure you meet the minimum eyesight standards for driving or riding but may also identify some other health conditions that you may not yet be aware of, such as diabetes or high blood pressure.

“Please be aware that if you drive with eyesight below the minimum legal standard, you are increasing the risk of a collision, a fine, penalty points and potential prosecution depending on the severity of any incident that may occur.

“Road Safety Wales will be supporting National Eye Health Week through its website and social media channels, giving reminders of the importance of regular eye tests and common conditions that could compromise the safety of all road users.”

Know the law on e-bikes and e-scooters

Leading up to the summer holidays, Road Safety Wales shared information to highlight the law surrounding e-bikes and e-scooters with secondary schools, colleges and organisations working with young people.

Some people may have innocently purchased an e-bike or e-scooter, unaware that they could be breaking the law when riding it and putting members of the public at risk of being injured if they are involved in a collision.

The Road Safety Wales partnership developed a bilingual information sheet and short educational films, with the assistance of the road safety team at Carmarthenshire County Council.

The films are available to view on the Road Safety Wales YouTube channel in Welsh and English and a bilingual information sheet can be downloaded [here](#).



We would like to see as many people as possible travelling actively, particularly as the health benefits far outweigh travelling in a vehicle, but we want everyone to ensure that they are staying safe and legal.

One year on: Transport Secretary sets out next steps on 20mph

Ahead of the anniversary of the introduction of the 20mph default speed limit in Wales, Cabinet Secretary for Transport and North Wales, Ken Skates, set out the next steps.



Earlier this year, the Cabinet Secretary announced a three-phase plan on 20mph, including a National Listening Programme over the summer, which encouraged people to get involved and have their say. Welsh Government published revised guidance for highway authorities in July.

The first two phases of the plan are complete. Local authorities are now in the process of reviewing feedback from people, business, and communities across Wales to ensure 20mph is targeted on the right roads.

A number of councils are now starting to set out the final stage of the plan by publishing information on the amount of feedback received and the next steps.

Once their review is complete, if local authorities decide to change the speed limit on an individual road, a statutory Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) process will commence - providing a further opportunity for engagement with local people.

The latest statistics provide encouraging signs that things are moving in the right direction, with a fall in collisions and a reduction in speeds.

Speaking ahead of the one-year anniversary, Ken Skates said: "I wanted to give people a voice on 20mph in their area and I am grateful to everyone who has shared feedback with their local council over the past few months.

"I want to build from the broad consensus that 20mph is right where people live, work and play - this is about getting the right speeds on the right roads.

"I want to pay tribute to our partners in local government. I'm pleased that local authorities are starting to move into the final stages of the plan.

"This will move at different paces in different places, according to local circumstances and the amount of feedback received".

Chair of the Welsh Local Government Association, Cllr Andrew Morgan added: "Local authorities welcome the further funding and support offered by the Welsh Government to get the right speeds on the right roads but are faced with challenging decisions.

"We will need to carefully balance the benefits and disbenefits of raising speeds. Safety of all road users will be at the heart of the decisions we take".



Reducing the number of motorcyclists injured or killed in Wales remains a priority

With its breathtaking scenery and varied road network, Wales holds a major attraction for both local motorcyclists and those from further afield.



Although Welsh roads are among the safest in the world, a motorcyclist is 58 times more likely to be killed or seriously injured in a collision than a person travelling in a car or taxi. Reducing the number of motorcyclist casualties across Wales therefore remains a priority.

There were 536 motorcyclist casualties recorded by police in 2023 with 268 of those being killed or seriously injured.

To address this disproportionate risk, Road Safety Wales is encouraging motorcyclists to ride defensively and always within the law. Drivers can play their part by taking longer to look for motorcyclists, especially when pulling out of junctions, changing lanes or when opening vehicle doors - a motorcycle may not be as visible as a

larger vehicle and may be in the space you intend to drive in to.

Always check your blind spot and look twice for bikes.

While the vast majority of motorcyclists demonstrate a good standard of riding, a small minority choose to use the roads irresponsibly, putting themselves and other road users in danger. Police across Wales will target these individuals, giving the clear message that poor and anti-social riding behaviour will not be tolerated.

Even the most experienced motorcyclist can benefit from post-test training, or an assessment of their riding, and we are urging motorcyclists to take advantage of the opportunities made available in Wales - many of which are supported with Welsh Government funding - to enhance rider skills and knowledge.

Before every ride, preparation is key to your safety. Take a close look at your kit and your bike to ensure that everything is in full working order, paying particular attention to the condition of the tyres, brakes and lighting - it could save your life.

Just as important is ensuring that you are well prepared; never ride angry, tired, or impaired by drink or drugs.

Partners in Road Safety Wales share a common goal - that residents and visitors to Wales use the roads responsibly and arrive home safely.

For information about safer motorcycling, please visit walesbybike.com

