

Wales - Grey drivers safest on our roads

Figures published today by the Institute of Advanced Motorists (IAM) Motoring Trust turn on its head the myth that older drivers are more dangerous than others. In fact, a new IAM Trust publication reveals that drivers over the age of 70 are significantly safer than those under 30 and no greater risk to other road users than middle-aged drivers.

The report, *IAM Motoring Facts 2008*, shows that as car drivers grow older they become less of a risk to other road users and less likely to be injured in road accidents themselves. However, any injuries they sustain are likely to be more severe due to age-related frailty.

Despite a doubling to 50 per cent over the past two decades in the level of those over 70 in Britain holding a licence, these drivers are responsible for just six per cent of pedestrian deaths. Male drivers under 30 are those most likely to be in a fatal collision with a pedestrian and are responsible for 30 per cent of such deaths.

In the past 20 years the percentage of all adults holding a driving licence has risen from 57 per cent to 72 per cent.

All too often older drivers are criticised for poor driving standards and for being a danger on our roads, says Neil Greig, director of the IAM Motoring Trust. The statistics explode that myth. Older drivers have a wealth of motoring experience and knowledge and the vast majority self-regulate the extent of driving in relation to their ability.

Wales's Injury Record

Wales has the lowest rate of death and serious injury in Britain, according to research by the IAM Motoring Trust.

The latest figures published in the IAM Trust's new compendium of road statistics, *IAM Motoring Facts 2008*, shows that Wales has a lower rate of deaths and serious injuries on its roads than both England and Scotland and a rate 15 per cent lower than the average for Britain as a whole.

During 2006, there were 46 people per 100,000 population killed or seriously injured on Wales's 34,000km of roads. In England the figure was 54 and in Scotland it was 57. Wales was also below the average rate for Britain when it came to all levels of severity of casualties on its roads; with 426 casualties per 100,000 people compared to the average of 439 for Britain as a whole.

Commenting on the findings, Neil Greig, said: It is good news that deaths and serious injuries are lower in Wales compared to the rest of Britain, but the toll among young drivers and on rural roads is still far too high. The long term solution lies in investment in multi-agency working to deliver safer roads, safer cars and safer drivers

The figures in the IAM Motoring Trust's report highlight the vast improvements in road safety in the past two decades. The number of people per 100,000 population killed or seriously injured on roads in Wales in 1990 was 106, nearly two and a half times the current rate.

Just under one and a half million cars are registered in Wales, yet the country's motorways are some of the least densely used network in Britain. The figures on road use and safety are included in the IAM Motoring Trust's definitive reference guide to life on the UK's roads now and over the last 50 years. Published today, *IAM Motoring Facts 2008* brings together data from vehicle manufacturers, government bodies and trade associations.

IAM Motoring Facts 2008 provides a one-stop data source and aims to provide straight answers to many controversial issues such as vehicle noise and particulate pollution; road deaths, congestion and road construction. It is available online at www.iamtrust.org.uk

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A full copy of the IAM's Motoring Facts is available at: www.iamtrust.org.uk

The IAM Motoring Trust is the research and advocacy arm of the IAM (Institute of Advanced Motorists).

Institute of Advanced Motorists

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