

IHE SW BRANCH NEWSLETTER



In this issue:

Don't be a PRATNAV

Toad Road Signs

Highways on Fridays – Budget Cuts

Events – National & Local

Contacts

Welcome!

To the SW branch newsletter

This is a newsletter for technician's and engineers to keep up-to-date with news and events. It is also a chance for us to share special news – got your EngTech or IEng or CEng recently, let us celebrate with you so let me know!



Message from the Editor:

I'm back from Maternity Leave now so the newsletter will recommence! So, anything that you think would be good to feature in the newsletter, make sure you let me know! Email me Helen.pickett@wiltshire.gov.uk

IHE SW BRANCH NEWSLETTER**DON'T BE A PRATNAVI!**

The IAM is urging drivers not to be over-reliant on their satnavs.

Satnavs are a major cause of driver distraction. Drivers are putting their lives at risk by operating them while on the move, or by blindly following instructions and not anticipating the road ahead.

IAM chief examiner Peter Rodger said: "Satnavs should aid navigation and safety by helping drivers to make decisions early. They should not distract you from the road. At 70 miles an hour you will travel the length of a football pitch in the three seconds it takes to press a satnav button."

The IAM recommends that drivers:

Practice driving with the satnav on while ignoring the display. You should be able to use just its voice directions without taking your eyes off the road. If you're not careful, a satnav display will draw your attention from road conditions and traffic. Use the display only to confirm the instruction. This only needs a glance.

What you see takes priority over what the satnav says. We've all heard the stories of people being stuck in narrow lanes, driving into rivers and directed into oncoming traffic. If the road looks wrong, don't take it.

Only operate the satnav when you're parked. Even if it's a one-touch satnav, operating it draws too much attention from the road.

Always check the route before you set off. Some satnavs have a habit of occasionally picking unsuitable routes and won't know the latest road closures or the restrictions on the vehicle you are driving. Always take a map as back up.

Don't rely on safety features such as rest-break information. You should be able to drive safely without these. Take your rest-breaks when you feel tired and at least every two hours.

If you are about to miss a turn, don't attempt a dangerous manoeuvre to comply with the instruction. The satnav will always recalculate a new route, so drive on until it does. If you need to turn or change direction make sure it is safe and legal to do so.

If you are using a mobile phone satnav app, don't use it hand-held while driving.

Mount your satnav properly where you can see it without moving your head but where it doesn't interfere with your view. Make sure it isn't in the airbag's way and that the power leads do not interfere with the car's controls.

Don't use satnavs as a speedometer as they can be inaccurate.

Toad road signs



Warning signs have been installed on two Carmarthenshire roads to help toads looking for love to cross in safety.

The roads at Burry Port and Ammanford bisect areas registered as important migration sites.

So Carmarthenshire council put up the signs warning motorists to drive carefully as hundreds of the creatures cross every spring.

Each year volunteers collect the toads in buckets to help them across the highway en route to breeding ponds.

But they cannot always be on hand around the clock to help the common toad, which was listed as a threatened species in 2007.

So important sites are being registered with national wildlife charity Froglife as part of its [Toads on the Roads](#) mapping scheme and signs erected to help publicise migration routes.

Froglife has mapped more than 700 crossings using satellite technology, via website Google Earth, including active routes staffed by volunteers in Wrexham, Ceredigion, Powys, Neath Port Talbot and Newport.

Conservationists hope to use the data to learn more about toads' migration routes and any problems encountered crossing roads during their breeding season in spring.

Toad tunnels were built last April to help amphibians avoid a busy road to reach Llandrindod Wells lake

"We already have an otter crossing built into a new industrial development site at Burry Port and now will have toad crossing warning signs too," said Carmarthenshire councillor Philip Hughes, executive board member for transport services.

"It just goes to show how far we go in the county to protect our biodiversity."

The two Carmarthenshire crossings are among 43 toad crossings being introduced nationwide this year.

IHE SW BRANCH NEWSLETTER



The cost of repairs needed to fix roads across England and Wales has risen to £10.65bn even after more than two million potholes were filled last year.

The latest local authority road maintenance (ALARM) Survey highlighted a worrying deterioration in the nation's network during the last 12 months.

Local authority highways departments quizzed across the country said the total number of potholes filled over the last year reached 2,202,000 – an increase of 59% over the previous year following a series of cold snaps.

Councils said the cost of the 2010 winter damage is £362m, adding to the cost of the previous year's winter damage of £400m.

Authorities continue to report an annual shortfall in the highway maintenance budget they receive from central government.

This year it amounts to £895m, an increase of 12% on last year's shortfall.

Councils said the the level of one-off investment needed to get their roads back into reasonable condition is £10.65bn – an increase of £1.15bn on the amount estimated last year.

Under funding of highway maintenance programmes is believed by 90% of local authorities to create a threat to road user safety.

Asphalt Industry Alliance Chairman, Colin Loveday, said: "Local authorities are doing what they can, but reactive maintenance – such as simply filling potholes when they appear – is at least 20 times more expensive than planned preventative maintenance.

IHE SW BRANCH NEWSLETTER

"The annual shortfall in budget has increased this year and spending review cuts translate to a potential loss of another £440m over the next four years.

"The additional £200m announced in February and March this year is welcome but if the government wants to save the country money it should be investing in local roads now to save a massive repair bill later on."

Highway engineers in England said one in five local roads were in poor condition with a remaining life of less than five years.

In Wales 17% of roads were considered to be in poor condition and in London the figure was 25%.

AA president Edmund King said: "The ALARM figures show that £100m here and there, although welcome, simply isn't going to fix a problem of this scale.

"Lack of preventative maintenance and harsh winter weather over three years has clearly taken its toll, with our members reporting a marked deterioration in road condition.

"We have to keep up the battle against this blight which damages cars and risks road safety, especially for those on two wheels."

IHE - Saving lives, saving money

[RACF/RSF/ADEPT report](#) urges Local Authorities to move on from 'first year rates of return'.



IHE SW BRANCH NEWSLETTER



NATIONAL EVENTS

Please see: <http://www.theihe.org/events/courses/>

LOCAL EVENTS

Environmental Day – late June or early July 2010 at DCC's Littlemoor House, Sowton, Exeter:

Subjects to include:

- Sustainability, Drainage, East Devon Floods, Drainage Law, Materials - what is in and what is out?

Limited to the first twelve people.

An evening meeting, in Cornwall with the Institution of Lighting Professionals (ILP).

A visit to WDM in Bristol – to arrange a visit to their Bristol operation - WDM are a leading manufacturer and provider of highway survey and monitoring equipment - also asset management system.

YOUNG PROFESSIONALS GROUP

I really would like to get this group off of the ground this year, please email me if you would be interested so we can arrange a meeting to discuss how best to go forward. Either Helen.pickett@wiltshire.gov.uk or ihieswyoungprofessionals@googlemail.com

HOW FAR WOULD YOU GO?

We are looking at different places to hold events, some of these could possibly be in the Bristol area, would this put you off of going to it? Please let me have your opinion on that?

Helen.pickett@wiltshire.gov.uk

Issue 17

June 2011

IHE SW BRANCH NEWSLETTER



CONTACTS:

CHAIRMAN – Peter Dipper

SECRETARY – John Dymott 07811519254
IHE.south_Western@yahoo.co.uk

TREASURER – Stephen Webb (Atkins)

COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER – Helen Pickett
Helen.pickett@wiltshire.gov.uk

YOUNG PROFESSIONALS GROUP – Helen Pickett
ihieswyoungprofessionals@googlemail.com

NEWSLETTER – Helen Pickett
ihieswnewsletter@googlemail.com

Branch Sponsor:

