

CENTRAL SOUTHERN ADVANCED MOTORISTS

www.iamroadsmart.com/groups/centralsouthern

**NEWSLETTER
AUTUMN 2017**

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RoadSmart

Official Provider



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From the Editor



Welcome to the Autumn Newsletter. I hope you'll feel that this issue is full of the usual mix of good things: it's always great fun putting it together.

Thank you, as always, to the contributors, especially this time to Sheila Girling for her very interesting and readable article on page 12. I don't remember ever actually being encouraged to break the rules before, and wonder if Sheila might be able to find any other areas where it might be beneficial. A way of eating cake which is good for you and makes you lose weight might be worth a bit of research ...

In Oliver Farley's 'From Reflector', starting on page 13, he mentions lucky numbers and refers to the fact that we in the English-speaking world think thirteen is unlucky (see history.com on this subject). Our 'town house' is in a small cul-de-sac where there is no No.13. However, the architect wasn't superstitious enough not to put in two flights of stairs each of which has thirteen steps!

I for one am looking forward to some good events over the winter. As well as making a note of those listed in the following pages, do keep an eye on the website [Events](#) page for additions and updates. Events are always good social occasions as well as being informative, and many of them take a huge amount of effort to put together for **your** enjoyment!

Best wishes;

Tina

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Forthcoming CSAM Events

Members are advised to check the [Events](#) page of the CSAM website before setting out in case of last-minute changes.

Please click on the links to find maps showing approximate location of venues. Unless otherwise indicated, events and activities are open to all Members. Everyone is encouraged to come along and, if they wish, to bring a guest or family member(s).

CSAM Diary

- Sun 3 Sept**
9.30 am - noon
[NCP, Chichester](#)
- Free Observed Runs** with one of our highly qualified Observers for Associates and members of the public. Full Members are also encouraged to book a refresher drive. Contact [Glenda Biggs](#) or [Gary Smith](#).
- Tues 12 Sept**
7.45 for 8.00 pm
[PCC, Pagham](#)
- Talk by a Alan Ware of Solent Advanced Motorcyclists.** Come along and learn what motoring is like from the rider's perspective. In the meantime, have a look at their excellent website: [Solent Advanced Motorcyclists](#).
- Tues 19 Sept**
7.30 for 7.45 pm
[MH, Burgess Hill](#)
- "Powering the Future" - a talk by Jean-Pierre Pirault.** *Powering the Future* describes the probable evolution in the next twenty years of internal combustion engines and fuels for on and off road use.
- Thur 21 Sept**
7.00 pm
[BC, Billingshurst](#)
- CSAM Committee Meeting** - all are welcome.
- Sun 8 Oct**
9.30 am - noon
[NCP, Chichester](#)
- Free Observed Runs** - see 3 September or [website](#) for details.
-
- Tues 10 Oct**
7.30 pm
[BC, Billingshurst](#)
- CSAM 2017 AGM** Arguably the most important event in CSAM's calendar when, after the business meeting and the guest speaker's slot, there is a chance to chat and socialise. We are delighted that this year's Guest Speaker is to be **British Airways Captain Dominic Howard-Jones**, who flies Airbus 320/319s out of Gatwick. It promises to be both informative and entertaining, so don't miss it!
-
- Sun 12 Nov**
9.30 am - noon
[NCP, Chichester](#)
- Free Observed Runs** - see 3 September or [website](#) for details.

CP: Car Park

BC: [Billingshurst Centre](#), Roman Way, Billingshurst, RH14 9EW

MH: [HAMSVA Offices](#), Martlet Heights, 4th floor, 49 The Martlets, Burgess Hill, RH15 9NP
(opposite Iceland food store)

NCP: [Northgate Car Park](#), Chichester (exit from eastern side of large roundabout)

PCC: [Pagham Church Centre](#), Nyetimber Lane, Pagham, PO21 3JT

Tues 14 Nov
7.45 for 8.00 pm
[PCC](#), Pagham

A visit by **Stuart Haythorn, Area Service Manager**. Stuart will talk about his rôle as Area Service Delivery Manager and the greater picture of IAM RoadSmart.

Thur 16 Nov
7.00 pm
[BC](#), Billingshurst

CSAM Committee Meeting - all are welcome.

Tues 21 Nov
7.30 for 7.45 pm
[MH](#), Burgess Hill

Eastern Forum event - watch the [website](#) for details of this event.

Tues 5 Dec
7.30 for 7.45 pm
[MH](#), Burgess Hill

Electric Cars - a presentation by **Chris Skerry**: your chance to glimpse into the future - and see how we'll get there!

Sun 10 Dec
9.30 am - noon
[NCP](#), Chichester

Free Observed Runs - see 3 September or [website](#) for details.

2018

Tues 9 Jan
7.45 for 8.00 pm
[PCC](#), Pagham

CSAM Quiz Night. Bernard has 'offered' to provide another work-out for our grey matter. This is always an enjoyable social occasion.

Thur 18 Jan
7.00 pm
[BC](#), Billingshurst

CSAM Committee Meeting - all are welcome.

Tues 13 Feb
7.45 for 8.00 pm
[PCC](#), Pagham

Electric Cars - a presentation by **Chris Skerry**: your chance to glimpse into the future - and see how we'll get there!

Tues 20 Feb
7.30 for 7.45 pm
[MH](#), Burgess Hill

Katy Bourne, Sussex Police and Crime Commissioner. The Eastern Forum are delighted that Ms Bourne has accepted their invitation to come and speak. She is an engaging and enthusiastic speaker and this promises to be a very interesting event.

Sun 11 Mar
9.30 am - noon
[NCP](#), Chichester

Free Observed Runs - see 3 September or [website](#) for details.

Tues 13 Mar
7.45 for 8.00 pm
[PCC](#), Pagham

"Trust me - I'm an Engineer" - a talk by **Douglas Wragg**. A repeat of the enjoyable January 2017 Eastern Forum event. Douglas has spent a lifetime doing forensic examinations of the results of others' mishaps on the road for the purposes of insurance claims, giving evidence in court cases, etc. Come along and learn how it's done.

For dates and details of events further ahead, please see our [website](#)

From the Chairman



Well, as you know, this is my last murmuring as your Chairman of CSAM, as I am stepping down from the rôle at the AGM in October. It has been an honour for me to represent you all as Chairman and I have enjoyed every moment of it. No, that is not entirely true, as from time to time in the early days there were a few tricky issues that had to be addressed with our IAM colleagues. However, they were resolved and I like to think that we have, as a result, had some influence in how RoadSmart now operates across the UK. RoadSmart is moving forward in a very positive direction, which bodes well for the future.

During the last four years I have been very lucky to have had the excellent support of the Trustees, who have all worked so hard to develop and make this Group as successful as it is. Without their continuing drive and enthusiasm we would not be where we are now. I am not going to single out anybody, as all have contributed greatly in their different rôles. Thank you to all the Trustees for your guidance and support.

Alongside the Trustees are many others doing a huge amount work and here I will single out two (if you can single out two ...) who have worked tirelessly for a large part of my Chairmanship. They are, of course, Glenda Biggs, our Associate Liaison officer, and Tina Thurlow, our Newsletter and Website Editor. Without those two rôles being so well covered we would not have all the new Associates allocated and looked after and we would certainly not be communicating as well as we do. Well done girls - oops, that's not PC and I shouldn't say that ... but my daughters won't be reading this! A sincere thanks to all the other "background officers" and of course our most important Members, our Observers. Without Observers we wouldn't have a Group. Many, many thanks to all of you.

Well, who is going to be your new Chairman? Only you can decide, and to do that you will need to attend the AGM on Tuesday 10th October at 7.30pm at the Billingshurst Centre. The best part of the evening, however, is always after the formal business has been concluded, and this year we have a very good speaker coming to talk to us: Dominic Howard-Jones. He is a British Airways Captain and I am sure his presentation will be most interesting and amusing. Dominic is a very experienced pilot and flies Airbus 320/319s out of Gatwick - and back of course.

I have been reading that we will all be moving to electric cars soon. This will certainly bring significant changes to how we and RoadSmart meet our aims, which will be most interesting. However, if memory serves me correctly, it was only about 12/18 months ago that there were acres of press comment that we were running out of electricity production capacity and we should be prepared for power cuts in the winter; now we are all going to be driving electric cars(?). I just wonder where all the electricity is going to come from, as nobody seems to have mentioned that recently - and also we mustn't forget that a lot of electricity plants put nasties into the atmosphere just as well as cars do. I always believed that from conception of a new power station, whatever sort, to roll-out took 10/15 years, so something doesn't quite seem to balance here - or is it just me being cynical?

Finally, I ought to finish with a holiday story, as they appear to have been a theme flowing through previous pieces that I have written. I have told you about being stopped by the police in Sicily with a Kalashnikov (or its equivalent) pointed at my crown jewels until I provided the correct paper-

/continued ...

work, and also being taken hostage by a “mental Buddhist Monk” and a “mad Muslim” in the north of Sri Lanka. However, I haven’t told you about my visit to Scotland in the Spring. We went to Seil Island on the west coast, and very picturesque and relaxing it was. One morning we decided to go to Luing Island not far away, a very quiet and tranquil place. To get there you go on a ferry - a very small ferry, just two cars. There was about three inches either side of the car to get on, which was particularly interesting as the ferry was also bobbing up and down at the quayside. Across the water I thought we would just drive off: wrong, I had to reverse off. I offered Joey the chance to take over but she declined and just closed her eyes and muttered; after all, it was her car! On the return journey it was just the same. Then a couple of days later we were talking to a local resident about this ferry and he told us “Oh, the real ferry is being repaired: that was the cattle ferry”. I know my place!

Thank you so much all for your support over the last four years.

Drive carefully.

Dennis
Chairman



PLEASE NOTE

*The deadline for contributions to
the next CSAM Newsletter is
Tuesday 31 October 2017*

NOTICE OF THE 2017 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN by order of the Group Committee that the fourth Annual General Meeting of **CENTRAL SOUTHERN GROUP OF ADVANCED MOTORISTS** will be held on Tuesday 10th October 2017 at 19.30hrs at the [Billingshurst Centre](#), Roman Way, Billingshurst, West Sussex, RH14 9QW to enable the Trustees of the Group (Registered Charity No. 1079142) to present their Annual Report and Accounts for the year ended 31 August 2017 for approval by the Group Full Members.

Secretary: David Stribling
3 Haywards Court
Armory Lane, Portsmouth
Hampshire, PO1 2PH

Date: 1 September 2017
Group No: 2010

All Group Full Members, Associates and Friends are invited to attend but only Group Full Members (i.e. current Full Members of both the [iAM](#) and of the Group) may vote.

A Member entitled to vote at the General Meeting may appoint a proxy to vote in his or her stead. A proxy need not be a Group Full Member.

Nominations are invited from Full Members to stand as Officers or Committee Members. Nomination Papers are available from the Secretary, [Dave Stribling](#), and must be returned to him **at least seven days before the election** either by post or by email (Rule 3.5).

Vice Chairman's Jottings



In my last Jottings, I said I was going to join the IAM Fellowship. That has now happened and my new certificate states that I have 'inaugural IAM Fellow status'! I hope more of you will follow me and become Fellow members. You will remember that for an increased membership fee Fellows are tested every three years. You need to have taken your test recently to join the Fellowship.

We, as a Group affiliated to IAM RoadSmart, are about the promotion of safer driving and the improvement of road safety generally. This very much means we are seeking new Associates all the time. We do this by attending events where we can promote our aims. I hope we can attend more such events in the future. To this end, if you are aware of an event where you think it would be a good idea if we had a stand do let us know. This can be done direct to a Committee member or through your local Forums.

We have some good offers on at the moment.

Any Associate who is under thirty upon passing their test can claim back £49 of the initial cost of their Advanced Driving Course. A good time for young people to take the Advanced Driving Course.

The other offer is that any Member or Associate who introduces a new Associate will receive a £10 gift token. These offers expire in March 2018, after which the Committee will appraise the effectiveness of these offers.

I would like to thank those of you who completed the recent questionnaire. I know lots of people are asking for information, but it is a way for the Committee to become aware of what you, the Associates and Members, want from the Group. In a future article, I will share an analysis of the results.

We know that many of you joined just to improve your driving. That is great, and one of our purposes, but as your Committee we are also aware that the Group does not run itself. We have a succession policy so that no-one stays in office for too long. This is on my mind as we begin preparation for the next AGM on 10th October at Billingham Community & Conference Centre. I look forward to seeing you at the AGM. If you would like to help in running the Group we would be delighted to hear from you. By the way, we are still looking for a Publicity Officer!

We have recently taken delivery of two blue gazebos with our name on the front and two flags, both of which should draw people's attention when we attend events. They will be sited one in the east and one in the west to make attendance at events easier. Look out for us as you travel around the area - or, better still, volunteer to help us promote what we do.

Tony Higgs
Vice Chairman

Anyone for Tee?

Golfer: Do you think my game is improving?

Caddy: Yes, you miss the ball much closer now.

Chief Observer's Corner

We have a total of 40 Observers - 12 National Observers, 19 Local Observers, and 9 Trainee Observers.

We have welcomed some new trainee Observers, some trainee Observers have qualified as Local Observers, and Kay Barfoot and Kevin Hopkins have qualified as National Observers.



As I said in the last Newsletter, "we have no Observers in Brighton and there is currently a waiting list of Associates in Brighton waiting for an Observer, so we desperately need Observers in Brighton". Unfortunately no-one has contacted me, so if you were thinking about it and never got round to making contact then please do so now! I look forward to hearing from you.

Our next Observer training day is on Saturday 4 November, and this time the venue is in Billingshurst. If you are interested in becoming an Observer - or just interested in what we do - then you are very welcome to come along: just get in contact with me for further details.

As always, if you would like to ask me anything then please feel free to contact me.

Gary Smith
Chief Observer

Members are reminded that they are very welcome to attend meetings of the Eastern and/or Western Forums. For details of meeting dates, etc, please contact:

EASTERN FORUM

Team Leader

JEAN CLARK

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WESTERN FORUM

Team Leader

BERNARD TIMBERS

west.csamcar@iamgroups.org.uk

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This is the official Newsletter of the Central Southern Group of Advanced Motorists

Opinions and ideas expressed are those of the individual correspondents and do not necessarily represent the views of the Group nor of IAM RoadSmart

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Membership Mumblings!

First the figures: the current Membership of our Group stands at 363, of whom 292 are Full Members, 70 are Associate Members and 1 'Friends' Member.



The following are our new Members since the last Newsletter: Andy Fairweather, Neil Walford, Claire Gordan, Sarah Smith, Dave Sands, Christine Nonoo, Scott Shortland, Ivana Bolkova, Allan Collins, Zell Jeffery, Iain Tindall, Rachel Wyndham, Koren Evans, Itziar Goitia Medina, Regan Du Closel and Peter Wyllie, who are all new Associate Members, and also Keith Bute, Douglas Wragg, Ian Wilson, John Inman, Murray Inglis, Steve Conlay, Trevor Goodchild and Mike Duffin who join us as Full Members. As usual, a warm welcome to you all, and I look forward to meeting you at our regular Members' meetings, listed elsewhere in this Newsletter.

When this Newsletter is published we will be looking forward to the new school year. Some parents will no doubt be glad that the school holidays are almost over and the need to entertain school age passengers will be reduced. Please remember, however, that all children who are not otherwise entertained could be watching mum's or dad's driving and will be thinking that whatever they see is the standard that will need to be attained before they themselves will be allowed on the road. Each and every trip is your opportunity to demonstrate good driving and to influence the next generation of drivers; and just remember - some day these next generation drivers could be driving in your car.

Whilst on the subject of others driving your vehicles, do you always check the insurance of anyone borrowing your car? You should! You cannot assume that the borrower is covered unless they are a named driver on your own policy. If they are stopped by the police while driving your car without valid insurance you could possibly lose that car and face a fine yourself.

Finally, Members, or drivers wishing to become Members or requiring more information, can reach me by e-mail at membership.csamcar@iamgroups.org.uk or by phone on 01329 483661. There is an answerphone for when I am not in.

Safe Motoring.

Andy Wilson
Membership Secretary



Associates' News



There were fewer entries for the Advanced Driving Test during the past few months. However, very well done to everyone that has passed, and of course to your Observers! Particular congratulations to David Burden and Olivia Pembrey on her F1RST.

Associate	From	Observer	Examiner
Tim Van Riell	Worth	Sheila Girling	Tony Richardson
Peter Hynes	Chichester	Matt Pitt	Adrian Short
* Olivia Pembrey	Emsworth	David Burden	Tony Johnson
Sheila Shephard	Hove	Derek Williams	Adrian Short
* F1RST pass			

Eleven Associates have abandoned their course or their membership has lapsed. Some of these were due to moving away or because of work commitments.

Our waiting list is moving along well, but I regret that we have a bit of a back-log in the Brighton area due to two of our Observers from that area having to step down through ill health. As we are all volunteers, our Observers have day jobs as well, so their time is also limited.

Several of our Associates have not responded to messages allocating them to Observers, which is such a pity. I cannot understand why people pay their membership and then miss a great opportunity. Perhaps someone out there could answer that query for me.

Thank-you to my IAM colleagues who have supported me through a house move and then my computer being wiped clean. My PC and landline were down for over a month. In one way this seemed a blessing, with peace and quiet, but the stress of wondering what needed to be done by me was as bad as the stress of my actual move. I apologise for some of the delays in my responses to messages, but all is well now. The packing boxes have nearly all gone, and the TalkTalk engineer has helped us through the trials of setting up broadband in a new property. There are thirty-two apartments in our block and it would seem that the BT engineers must have been having a party when they initially installed the phone lines, as mysterious happenings had been occurring. However, all seems to be settling down now, and life continues in the fast lane again!

All the best;

Glenda Biggs
Associate Liaison

Anyone for Tee?

Golfer: This is the worst course I've ever played on.

Caddy: This isn't the golf course. We left that an hour ago.



SOMETIMES IT'S GOOD TO BREAK THE RULES!

Always break the two-second rule:
it just isn't enough time to react on today's roads

The road safety charity *Brake* recently asked the Transport Research Laboratory (TRL) to investigate the stopping distances set out in the UK Highway Code. Overall stopping distance is made up of two components - thinking distance and braking distance. *Brake* concluded that the UK stopping distances are "woefully inadequate" as the thinking distances have been seriously underestimated. *Brake* has urged the Department for Transport to increase the stopping distances when the Highway Code is next updated.

Thinking distance is the distance we travel before our foot actually starts the emergency braking: we have quite a bit to do, especially when taken by surprise:

- a) Perceive the hazard
- b) Recognise that action is required
- c) Decide what action is needed
- d) React and apply the brakes

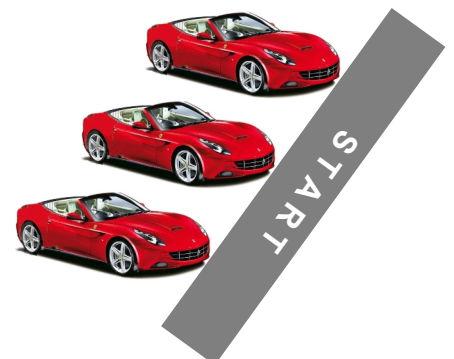
Stopping distances were first calculated in the 1940s and have remained unchanged in the Highway Code. *Brake* states that "even though car braking technology has improved in recent years, the majority of the overall stopping distance at most speeds is actually made up of the time taken to perceive the hazard and react".

The TRL concluded from reviewing a number of academic studies that thinking distances should be just over double those used in the current Highway Code. Instead of 0.67 seconds to react, TRL consider we need 1.5 seconds. This means that at 30 mph, overall stopping distance increases to 34 metres instead of the Highway Code 23 metres. At 70 mph the overall stopping distance would increase from 96 metres to 121 metres. Far safer then to keep a "three-second rule" - and that is of course on a dry and level road with a good surface, good tyres and a very alert driver!

The cause of the increase in estimated thinking time proposed by TRL is not discussed in the report but must be partly due to the growing number of distractions for the modern driver both in and outside the vehicle. Many in-car features on new cars are useful and legal, such as Sat Navs, but they still distract and draw the driver's eyes. Distractions outside the vehicle on today's congested roads are myriad.

Speaking of useful distractions, next month I am attending the IAM Roadsmart Skills day at the Thruxton Circuit. I hope to see how emergency braking works in a safe and speedy environment!

Sheila Girling
Approved Driving Instructor



From "Reflector" ...

LOOK AND LEARN



We're regularly reminded that information is the chief ingredient in good driving: observe what's happening and plan appropriately. We tell our associates that information is embedded in all we do and it bathes the other parts of IPSGA, reaching the parts other instructions can't get to. We've all realised that the sources of information are myriad, that the occasions for observation extend well beyond the hours of our own driving, and that we can learn so much from others' experiences. Vicarious learning is a lot cheaper than bitter events, and someone else's bent metal or broken limb can teach us valuable lessons if we'll stop and ponder. On almost every trip we see somebody's driving which leaves us staring in disbelief or surging with anger at the stupidity of risk takers.

Over the last month I've kept note of a few incidents which have filled me with an excess of dismay, and heard a tale or two of idiotic behaviour which seriously questions the rationality of some road users.

1. Grey Peugeot/Double Line

Some of us may be familiar with the A281 from Guildford to Horsham. It's a strange road, heavily used and now with speed limits on most of its length after years of abuse. The oddity of it is that it goes through several small villages, winds through open countryside and then dips up and down like a switchback railway for miles before reaching Horsham.

It has bends. It has blind summits. It has junctions. It has a lethal record.

Much of it is easier to drive at night than in the daylight because the oncoming lights show as a beam against the heavens before the opposition crests the ridge and plunges down our side of the hills and dales. Caution is always advisable and the liberal use of double lines should be warning in themselves. Added to these admonitions are the dumb witnesses of past excess and disaster. The valley bottom of each of the dips, just before the road rises again, has a smear of oil and deep scratches: they were left by the sump guard of speedsters scraping the surface as they hit the rising portion when coming too fast down the dipping portion. Skid marks and rubber trails tell tales of near misses and real collisions, of unknown damage and painful injury.

You and I have long since learnt to read these extra warnings and to heed their silent import, but not the driver of a grey Peugeot last month. I was wending my way carefully from Surrey to Sussex, and I say wending advisedly. I was part of a string of traffic, about twenty vehicles in all, stuck behind a road maintenance truck with an amber flashing light. It was leading the pack at about forty miles an hour where allowed, but no faster on the short lengths of the national limit. That tardiness was too much for our Peugeot pilot. He swung out and charged past a dozen cars, me included, on the wrong side of a double solid line, down into the dip and then perilously upwards to a blind crest. His rashness failed him short of the top and he braked briefly, squeezed into the line, then sped off again once over the top. He stood no chance whatsoever if someone was

/continued ...

coming the other way, even well within the speed limit. By the time they would have seen each other there would have been less than twenty metres between them, and their combined speed would have been close to 100mph (40 for the hapless approaching vehicle, 60 for Mad Max in the Peugeot).

The obvious lesson is not to do the same ourselves - but I don't need to say that. What could we do as part of the slower column this idiot is overtaking? The danger to us is that a vehicle does appear coming the other way and the Peugeot simply tries to force his way back into our line to avoid a head-on collision. We get side swiped. He may get a half head-on as well anyway, being unable to get out of the way in time. Remember the old motto "Protect the vulnerable"? (One of the three phrases we repeat before starting every trip: Avoid an accident; Protect the vulnerable; Obey the law.) The Peugeot is certainly vulnerable and is in dire danger of enmeshing us into the horrid consequences of his actions.

So if you see the same idiotic driving in your right wing mirror, brake straight away and open a gap between you and the next vehicle. The Peugeot may well need it, and with a modicum of luck he'll get in without getting you.

2. The Lancing Lurcher

To be totally honest, I don't know if it was really a lurcher. But it definitely was a dog and it was in Lancing. We were on one of our training days and were taking one another out for a drive and scolding each other afterwards. All very good for the soul, and deflating for an over-confident ego. I drove up to the roundabout coming to the sea front and there was this canine. I could see it clearly, brown fluffy head and eager paws, eyes all lit up and mouth agape. As well it might be, for it was hanging out of the driver's window in the small Nissan in front. The dog was half out of the car, implying perhaps that it had more sense than the owner, and was poised to make good its escape in the event of disaster. The driver was in a less favoured position: distracted by the dog, not concentrating on driving, unable to control fully either the car or the dog, an unhappy interruption to their progress seems inevitable. Perhaps not on that Saturday afternoon, but a culpable collision is a betting certainty.

What did I do about it? Tempted as I was to holler at the driver, I took the easy way out. I stayed where I was, let the bus from the right cruise through the roundabout and only proceeded once the Canine Collision Course was safely some way up the sea parade.

How many other ways are drivers distracted, usually much less obviously than this? We all have seen far too many using mobile phones while in motion; we've seen the fast driver in front inexplicably slow down, probably to take a call; we've seen the bending head and hunched shoulders of the CD changer, and the twisted figure of Mum in the 4X4 reaching to the back seat for wipes or bottle for the infant passengers. There's not much we can do about such errant behaviour once it's happening, though there are many little tell-tale signs which may or may not give a clue as to likely behaviour. 4X4s are often driven by Mum with young, Dad relying on the theory that surrounding the family with two tonnes of steel gives them protection from diffident driving. Colour can be a give away: today's horror was a Fiat 500 in a shade of pink to make a lingerie manufacturer blush, and predictably there were pretty baubles hanging from the rear view mirror. A filthy motor with a hub cap or two missing tells you all you need to know, just as clearly as the proverbial white-van-man with ladders on the roof rack and rust up the wheel arches.



/continued ...

Sounds are an equally reliable warning, from the go-faster exhaust to the boom-boom music freak. I came across the ultimate boom-boom merchant in the Caribbean. His music was so loud that we in the coach in front had to hold our ears; we pulled over to let him pass and thunder off into the dismaying jungle.

Putting stickers on the body-work was once a common sight, with rear windows ringed with triangular labels. That's as rare now as a furry tail from the tiger in your tank, but it does heighten our sensitivity to those few who do decorate their vehicle with slogans. The fish in outline may be benign, but not the Confederate flag, nor the cherished plate with HH or 88 in it (H is the 8th letter of the alphabet), though I have been told that 8 is considered a lucky number in Chinese. 4 is unlucky in Japanese, like our 13, because it's a homophone for the word for death, so no hospital ward 4.

Cars have become as much fashion statements as clothes these days, and perhaps more cars than ever are sold now on their projected image. The Mini Cooper is trumped by the signed version with "works" added, even on the unlikely rear of a mimic Countryman. France allows the registration of a number as a trade mark, which would probably be questionable here - though we have our own version in a fairly harmless way of adjusting the registration plate layout to make a word. This practice is prohibited by DVLA, which seems a trifle humourless, and some have got round the ban by having two versions of their plates, one in the prescribed format to be attached at MOT time, the other in the distorted variant for the rest of the time.

They are all telling us something, and few more vocally than the super-car of ludicrous cost and complete impracticality. Be warned by all and act accordingly. The signs won't always be as obligingly obvious as the lurcher.

3. Rumble and Bumble

An advantage of our regular meetings is the opportunity to share the experiences of those involved in traffic work outside our usual sphere. One of our police examiners is also concerned with the investigation of major road collisions, a gruesome and unsettling task. All too often the collision is the consequence of some piece of unbelievable foolishness. Mention was made of this when we discussed trucks and how to deal with them on motorways. The Highways Agency is acutely aware of the danger of foreign trucks and the limited vision to the right of a driver seated on the left. We've advised before to look for the registration plate and if it's not yellow then assume that's a foreign truck and give it extra room.

Our police colleague told us of far worse than the misfortune of not seeing an overtaking car. Some completely irresponsible truck drivers deliberately drive with the nearside wheels on the edge rumble strip, and then proceed to 'steer' with one hand while fumbling in the cab for something else - be it phone, tea bag, music or food. The danger of such a tactic hardly needs emphasising. So easily someone else could be stationary on the verge with a breakdown, or could move innocently into the number one lane unaware that the truck is in fact being driven blind. We don't need much reminding that the laws of physics apply as much to forty tonnes of truck as to any other moving body and the inertia of that energy has to be dissipated somehow. In a collision it means death and destruction for anything in the juggernaut's path. We can recall the careless driver who was filmed texting in the cab while he drove straight into a car stopped in a traffic queue, killing mother and three children and badly injuring the father. Such carelessness should be treated as culpable homicide and punished as such. No driver can claim they are

/continued ...

unaware of the consequences of their actions, and carelessness on this scale is similar to carelessness with a hedge trimmer or electric hammer which seriously injures a bystander.

4. Quite New and Looks too Old

Aygo is a nice little car, now pleasingly designed and made by a popular manufacturer. I rather like the revised rear and the singular X formation of the front. One passed me in the Carfax the other day, very slowly and deliberately. I was on foot yet this progress was at best 10 mph, which is probably slow even for a central town square.

The Aygo was brand new, all shiny and white. Not so the driver.

I could see her clearly for a moment or two as the vehicle passed, and here the behaviour of the vehicle rather than its appearance gave a clue as to the quality of the driver. She was of definitely advanced years and was crunched up against the dashboard, peering anxiously out of the windscreen. It was a decidedly uncomfortable drive and the wavering route of the car spoke volumes about the anxious state of the driver's mind. She wasn't doing anything dangerous, and quite likely she only drives certain set routes and no more. She's more likely to aggravate some other impatient drivers and prompt them into doing something rash just to get past her. Her passivity might well become provocation.

It's easy in these circumstances to advocate re-testing for the elderly with more emphasis on speed of reactions and acuity of vision. Remember the most dangerous hazard is the one you haven't seen: you won't do anything about something you know nothing about. But the elderly are reluctant to agree to this added surveillance. In today's world there is a greater and greater dependence upon the car, particularly by the elderly. Living in a suburb a mile or two from shops and the centre, a car becomes an essential tool for the old: the more infirm they become the more they depend on their car. Take their licence away and their entire lives have to change: move house, perhaps, or even town. Their dependence is lessened a little by the arrival of supermarket delivery services, and we welcome anything which makes life more bearable for those of severely limited life expectancy. All that said, the fact remains that a wandering car at an uncertain pace driven by someone well below full fitness can and does pose a threat to many others.

Slowness can provoke a rash overtake, and not only by a grey Peugeot.

Oliver Farley
Reflector

The Treasurer asks Members and Friends of CSAM who are able to Gift Aid their subscriptions or donations kindly to return the form, if they have not already done so, in order to enable the Group to claim back from HMRC 25p on every £1 paid.

If you are unsure whether you are eligible to help in this way, or would like a copy of the form, please get in touch with Duncan on 07920 534475 or email

treasurer.csamcar@iamgroups.org.uk

"A chance to try out my speed skills!"

Alan Burt enjoys one of the courses on offer at Speedskills in Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire

I was recently asked to come along to a taster session of protection training. Being a member of the IAM for over 20 years as an Observer, Senior Observer and now National Observer, I thought I was at a reasonable standard and had a good understanding of how a car is balanced under most circumstances. I now realise how little I actually know!



The guys that run Speedskills are Roger Croome and his son Michael Croome, both long-serving police drivers and instructors in car and on motorcycles. They are also involved in setting up the National Protection Drivers course.

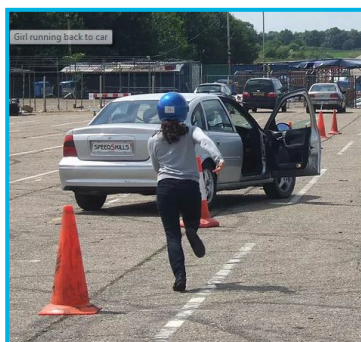
The course is run on a disused airfield - in their cars, so you won't be worrying about your tyres, but if you hate the smell of rubber this course is not for you.

We discussed the effects of ABS and speed on steering, then put it into practice. I could not believe the control at speed that these guys can get. Then it's your turn.



"J" turns are up next. I thought I was pretty good at these. Not so good on a real road. A slalom course is up next, then in reverse!

The most important thing about the day - a smile!



I didn't get everything right on the day. As I said, it was a taster for only 3½ hours. There is a lot of banter, and some leg-pulling, but it's always about fun.

For more information visit

www.speedskills.co.uk

email: enquiries@speedskills.co.uk ~ tel: 07904 678 556

Alan Burt

The images show just a few of the activities in the various courses available. Ed.

DATA PROTECTION ACT

Members are reminded that Group records are held on computer. Anyone who objects to their details being held in this way may request that they be held instead on a manual system by writing to the [Group Secretary](#).

Driving in the 21st century

For the benefit of those who, like me, don't follow blogs and the like, Dennis has suggested that I should include in the Newsletter [this blog](#) posted on the IAM's website on 21 April. Ed.



If you didn't know, the Practical Driving test is changing on December 4th 2017.

The intention is to make the driving test similar to “real life”. I am sure most of you have heard people say: “you learn to drive after passing your test”. These changes will make the test more realistic to the candidate demonstrating that they are ready to face driving in today's modern driving conditions.

So what's changing?

In comes ...

- ▶ 20 minutes of independent driving following a Sat Nav
- ▶ Driving in and reversing out of a parking bay
- ▶ Parking on the right
- ▶ Candidates will need to show the examiner that they can perform certain “show me” questions while driving i.e. using the windscreen wipers, opening the windows

Increasing the independent driving element will allow examiners to assess the candidate's ability to manage distractions and drive safely on higher-risk roads where statistically, new drivers have the most crashes.

Out goes ...

- ◀ Reversing around the corner
- ◀ Turn in the road (three point turn to some of you)

Sat Navs are now used by the majority of drivers and, whilst useful, if you have used one I am sure you agree that they can be a massive distraction – “turn left now” I have sometimes thought do you really mean now? And In 300 yards turn... some people would struggle to judge this.

/continued ...

Introducing using these in the driving test all helps the examiner to assess if the candidate has the ability to manage this distraction safely.

The ability to use certain controls while driving can potentially take your eyes off the road – so all a positive step to ensure drivers can manage distractions i.e. fumbling for fog lights or opening the window whilst driving.

Parking on the right on a busy road can have some challenges with oncoming traffic including then moving away.

The new driving test means there will be less time driving around the back streets during driving tests looking for a suitable place to carry out a manoeuvre.

I can only speak for the Cardiff area, but currently many driving tests in Cardiff do not allow the candidate to go above 30 mph. The new test will allow time to get onto open and rural roads meaning that examiners can test a more realistic drive in situations where new drivers are more likely to crash.

As an experienced driving instructor, I have spent several hours with some learner drivers practicing reversing around a corner, all taking time away from developing the forward drive. If people are going to drive into the supermarket bay frontwards so they can get their shopping in the boot and reverse out it makes sense that people are taught this skill, so that they are aware of how to carry out the manoeuvre safely.

The new driving test will encourage driving instructors to teach certain skills, rather than just practice certain manoeuvres and test routes, all helping to better prepare the new driver to manage distractions and drive independently.

These changes will help to make the driving test more realistic to the challenges of modern driving. This all assists to better prepare the learner driver to be able to drive on their own in that critical period after passing their test. This is all in a concerted effort to help reduce the number of people killed or injured on our roads making our roads even safer.

Some residents should be delighted as examiners won't be using residential areas for reversing around a corner and the turn in the roads, so consequently I am sure Driving Instructors will not be on these roads as much.

If you are a qualified driver or rider reading this – look out – as I am sure you will notice an increase in learner drivers in car parks and driving on faster roads.

I believe these changes are a positive move to raise standards and improve the chances of newly qualified drivers remaining safe once they pass their driving test.

To read the full details of the new test click [here](#).

Sarah Fisk

IAM RoadSmart's DDR training and driver education manager

Everyone wants peace, and they will fight the most terrible wars to get it.

Miles Kington

How men and women record things in their diaries

The wife's diary

Tonight, I thought my husband was acting weird. We had made plans to meet at a nice restaurant for dinner. I was shopping with my friends all day long, so I thought he was upset that I was a bit late, but he made no comment on it. Conversation wasn't flowing, so I suggested that we go somewhere quiet so we could talk. He agreed, but he didn't say much.

I asked him what was wrong; he said, 'Nothing'. I asked him if it was my fault that he was upset. He said he wasn't upset, that it had nothing to do with me, and not to worry about it.

On the way home, I told him that I loved him. He smiled slightly and kept driving. I can't explain his behaviour - I don't know why he didn't say, 'I love you, too'.

When we got home, I felt as if I had lost him completely, as if he wanted nothing to do with me any more. He just sat there quietly and watched TV. He continued to seem distant and absent. Finally, with silence all around us, I decided to go to bed. About 15 minutes later, he came to bed but I still felt that he was distracted and his thoughts were somewhere else. He fell asleep; I cried.

I don't know what to do. I'm almost sure that his thoughts are with someone else. My life is a disaster.

The husband's diary

A two-foot putt ... Who the hell misses a two-foot putt?

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

And now a little culture, courtesy of Malk, for lovers of Shakespeare, or camping, or humour, or both



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Lipstick in School

According to a news report, a certain private school in Newcastle upon Tyne was recently faced with a unique problem.

A number of the 12-year-old girls were beginning to use lipstick and would put it on in the school 'rest room'. That was fine, but after they put on their lipstick they would press their lips to the mirror, leaving dozens of little lip prints. Every night the maintenance man would remove them, and the next day the girls would put them back.

Finally the Headmistress decided that something had to be done. She called all the girls to the rest room and met them there with the maintenance man. She explained that all the lip prints were causing a major problem, as all the mirrors had to be cleaned every night. (You can just imagine the yawns from the little Geordie Princesses.)

To demonstrate how difficult it had been to clean the mirrors, she asked the maintenance man to show the girls just what was required.

*He took out a long-handled squeegee, dipped it in the **toilet**, and cleaned the mirror with it.*

Since then, there have been no lip prints on the mirror.

There are teachers - and then there are educators.



CSAM Events during the Summer

We have had some interesting and enjoyable events since publication of the Summer Newsletter. If you don't (or maybe can't) get along to CSAM events, do read about them, and about Advanced Test passes and so on, on the [News](#) page of CSAM's [website](#). The 'thumbnails' below give only the smallest flavour of what you're missing!



"The Life and Times of a Motoring Journalist: the history of motor sport in one evening!" - talk by Graham Benge **Eastern Forum - 16 May**

Graham covered a wide range of cars, eras, drivers and tracks in his fascinating and evocative two-hour walk down memory lane. The cars they drove and the races they won are memorable, as sadly is the long list of those who gave their lives for the sport.



Manoeuvring Event **Western Forum - 13 June**

Sadly only nine Members put their skills to the test at this year's event; nevertheless, it was very enjoyable. It was won by Tom Stringer, with the Vice President's Trophy going to Tony Higgs. CSAM is very grateful to the Bognor Regis Fire Service for the use of the Fire Station Yard for the event. *(Photo from 2016 event)*



Walking Treasure Hunt **Western Forum - 11 July**

Very sadly, due to inclement weather on 11 July this event had to be postponed.



Smart Motorways - a talk by Brian Barton, formerly of the Highways Agency **Eastern Forum - 18 July**

An interesting and informative evening about this fast-changing aspect of the motoring environment.

Followers of CSAM on Facebook (this does not include the Editor) may have spotted a link to an article on the "petrolprices.com" website about new number plates which might have included the figures '67'.

Hmmm ...



When I was a boy, like many young children I used to gaze around the church during the sermons.

Having an enquiring mind, I asked my mother, "Mummy, what are all those pieces of stone around the walls with writing on them?"

Mother replied, "Those are in memory of people who died in the Services".

Goodness - I had realised that the sermons were sometimes long and boring, and that people had been known to fall asleep, but I hadn't realised they'd actually died ...

