

CENTRAL SOUTHERN ADVANCED MOTORISTS

www.iamroadsmart.com/groups/centralsouthern

NEWSLETTER SPRING 2017

iam
RoadSmart

Official Provider

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From the Editor



As I write this it is damp and cold outside and the Met Office is warning of a storm (later - it went to France instead!). We have had some pretty awful driving conditions this winter and I have been amazed to see how many motorists still use only side lights in poor visibility (see Mark Lewis's piece on page 14) and whose number plates - the plates, never mind the writing on them - are quite invisible behind all the mud and salt.

Many thanks to all the contributors to this edition of the Newsletter, especially our new ones. Thanks also to Glenda for her fascinating story (see page 20). I wonder if anyone else has had a similar interesting experience they'd like to share?

Best wishes;

Tina

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*IAM RoadSmart officers

Forthcoming CSAM Events

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

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). Please click on the links to find maps showing approximate location of venues.

CSAM Diary

Tues 14 Feb

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

A talk by **Alan Hiscox** from the British Horse Society 'Dead Slow' campaign. Come along and hear how the BHS is educating horse-riders and motorists in a effort to reduce the number of accidents on our roads.

Sun 12 Mar

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 14 Mar

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

A talk by **Mike Curtis**, entitled '**Life on a Submarine**'. Learn what life in a submarine is like - and what sort of person you need to be to survive (or even enjoy?) spending a large amount of time in such a challenging environment.

Thur 16 Mar

7.00 pm
[BC](#), Billingshurst

CSAM Committee Meeting - all are welcome.

Tues 21 Mar

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

A talk by **Squadron Leader Bill Ragg** (rtd) on the RAF transport force (Hercules) and transport of vehicles, airland and air dropped.

Sun 9 Apr

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

Free Observed Runs - see 12 March or website for details.

Tues 11 Apr

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

Our annual **Desktop Rally**. Bernard is preparing another very enjoyable and challenging desktop rally - always a popular event. It's a good idea to bring your OS Map (No. 197) and a magnifying glass, but no specialist knowledge is needed. It's amazing what you can learn about map-reading, in these times when the satnav rules.

Fri 14 - Mon 17 Apr

Horsham Town Centre

Horsham Piazza Italia 2017: It is hoped that the Group will have a stand at this event. Please contact Oliver Farley at randofarley@talktalk.net if you can help man the stand, or go along to support the Group. You will also see some great cars.

/continued ...

Tues 9 May

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

Western Forum event: details to follow.

Sun 14 May

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

Free Observed Runs - see 12 March or website for details.

Tues 16 May

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

"The Life and Times of a Motoring Journalist: the history of motor sport in one evening!" - talk by **Graham Bengé**

Thur 18 May

7.00 pm
[BC](#), Billingshurst

CSAM Committee Meeting - all are welcome.

Sun 11 June

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

Free Observed Runs - see 12 March or website for details.

Tues 13 June

Time and
Location tba

Western Forum event: details to follow

Sun 9 July

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

Free Observed Runs - see 12 March or website for details.

Tues 11 July

Location and time
to be advised -
watch the website

Walking Treasure Hunt. Maurice and the Chairman are devising an interesting themed 'walk' for us. There are usually several groups of two or three people following the clues, so you can choose your team members beforehand or just come along and take pot luck. We normally end up at a watering-hole somewhere, so it's always a very enjoyable social occasion.

Tues 18 July

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

Eastern Forum event: speaker details to follow.

Tues 10 Oct

7.30 pm
[BC](#), Billingshurst

EARLY NOTICE OF THE CSAM 2017 AGM

This year we are delighted that our Guest Speaker is to be a **British Airways pilot**. Get the date in your diary now!

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

From the Chairman



By the time you read this I will be on holiday, yes again, this time skiing in Sri Lanka. When I told my son that we were going skiing in Sri Lanka there was a long pause before the penny dropped. He told me to have a good time but "don't be too extravagant, Dad" typical! I am not over enthusiastic about the grey weather here at present so am only going for medical reasons, purely to top up the Vitamin D level. I am sure it will be a painful exercise but someone has to do it. Will let you know in due course if it is successful!

As a side issue, my vehicle tax is due for renewal before I get back and, as you know, it is dependent on having an up to date MOT. The timing of my holiday has not fitted in with this exercise with the days' grace that are allowed, so am having to have the service and MOT done the day before I go on holiday so that I can re-tax my car through DVLA Swansea while I am away. If I hadn't brought everything forward then I wouldn't have been allowed to drive the car on my return other than to the MOT station - I come back on a Friday. So if you have a long holiday and the anniversary of the car is while you are away beware: it is not as simple as you think.

It has been relatively quiet over Christmas and the New Year driving wise but there is lots going on in your Group. January two years ago was exceptionally busy, with new Members being seen every day of the month. That huge blip has not been repeated since but we are still getting a good flow of new Members. Our three new Committee Members have settled in well and I am sure that over the coming months you will see more activity on the social media front as Tom Stringer is revamping our Facebook and Twitter feeds: please get involved. We have set up a small sub-committee to look at ways of using our available funds effectively for the benefit of our Group aims. We are also going to offer some financial support to all the National Observers if they want to proceed to Masters level to raise the driving standards within the Group still further.

The restructuring of the field officers at IAM RoadSmart continues and the Area Service Delivery Manager for our region is Stuart Haythorn. Stuart has had a close relationship with the IAM, being a member of Wey Valley Advanced Motorcyclists, and was recently their Chief Observer. In addition to a Police Advanced Car ticket - Class 1 - Stuart holds a Masters (Distinction) Motorcycle. He will be our first port of call on all operational matters and I am looking forward to meeting up with him. I think this is the end of the staff changes for the time being but I might regret saying that. There are, however, some membership changes on the way which I will tell you about next time.

As I have said in previous Newsletters, the day to day source of information for you is the Group's website www.iamroadsmart.com/groups/centralsouthern, where you will be able to read the Newsletters with just one click on the Homepage, and again with just one click on the Homepage for Events. There is now a wide range of events across the Group, with some interesting speakers lined up. All meetings are open to all Members, and if the meeting is "on the other side of the patch" why not share cars? If you have any ideas about possible speakers then please let either Jean or Bernard know, as they are always grateful for suggestions. Why not set up a shortcut on your desktop so that access to our site is just a double-click away? Tina has made everything so easy for quick access to the areas you frequently need, unlike many sites we can all think of.

/continued ...

So, by the time I read this Newsletter I will be back full of Vitamin D and a few other "Vitamins" - red and white ones. Most wines in Sri Lanka seem to come from Chile ... I wonder why? Perhaps Sri Lanka has a good trade agreement with Chile, but with all the never ending arguments about access to markets going on now I don't think we want to enter into that debate, and we have another two plus years to go - ugh! Perhaps I should do some research while I am there. No, on second thoughts I will just drink it and enjoy it.

Hope the weather is kind for you here.

Drive carefully.

Dennis
Chairman



PLEASE NOTE

*The deadline for contributions to
the CSAM Summer Newsletter is
Sunday 30 April 2017*

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

east.csamcar@iamgroups.org.uk

WESTERN FORUM

Team Leader

BERNARD TIMBERS

west.csamcar@iamgroups.org.uk

01243 527562

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 further copy of the form, please get in touch with Duncan on 07920 534475 or email

treasurer.csamcar@iamgroups.org.uk

Vice Chairman's Jottings



What a joy it has been to join CSAM. That is not to say I did not enjoy my time with the Gloucestershire Group, I did; but you have all made me feel very welcome here on the south coast. I am a little surprised that I find myself as your vice chairman after such a short time but it has helped me make the change. As you are all aware, CSAM has been at the forefront of the evolution of IAM. I was impressed by a Dennis Clement standing up at the National Conference and telling us how the work to bring about the first large Group was progressing. Now from the inside I can see the enormous amount of work that has gone on and is still going on to continue the evolution of the IAM RoadSmart Central Southern Advanced Motorists. One of the joys for those who began the journey is that people are being found to fill the jobs that continue the heart beating.

Tom Stringer, as our new Social Media Officer, is doing a great job, getting to grips with this area, which will get us out to the world and perhaps be able to reach a younger age group with our message that Advanced Driving is great fun as well as making us safer drivers.

Now the Group is running reasonably well we are keen to move on and make it even better. The two Forums in the east and west of the region are seeking to run varied evenings which will be of interest to you. However, if you have ideas for speakers do let the Forums know. You can reach them by using the following email addresses: east.csamcar@iamgroups.org.uk or west.csamcar@iamgroups.org.uk. Equally you would be most welcome at a Forum meeting.

Sadly, we have lost our venue for both the skid pan evening and, more importantly, the Manoeuvring Event. If you have any suggestions for venues for these events that will not cost a fortune do let us know.

Finally, to grow the Group we need to get out there and sell our wares. The Committee think the way to do that is to revive the post of **Publicity Officer**. We are looking for a Member who can work with me finding new venues to put the MDU and set up our gazebo offering the general public a try drive with an Observer and publicizing what IAM RoadSmart is all about.

If this appeals to you and you would like to work with a great group of people do contact me, vicechair.csamcar@iamgroups.org.uk, or any member of the Committee and we can take it from there.

I look forward to seeing you at one of our meetings. Do come up and say hello.

Tony Higgs
Vice Chairman

As a three-year programme of conservation work starts on the [Elizabeth Tower and Big Ben](#), Members may be interested to see the following YouTube video:

https://www.youtube.com/embed/Qad6Q_RbQQ0?rel=0

Chief Observer's Corner

We currently have a total of 36 Observers: 11 'National', 17 'Local', and 8 Trainees.

Our next Observer Training Day is on Saturday 22 April. If anyone is interested in becoming an Observer, or would just like to see what goes on, then please get in touch with me.



I thought it would be good to share with you the recent feedback from an Associate of our Group:

"This has been an excellent experience - originally thought it would judge my driving ability as I'd been driving well over 50 years - was I safe etc? However it soon became totally absorbing insofar as although I was informed I was 'safe', I still wasn't observing the road conditions or indeed the car mechanisms as best as they could be, so I'd recommend this course to everyone and anyone who wants to be a better driver. I know I have benefited without doubt and all IAM Observers I have met have been tremendously supportive and informative as well as relaxed and 'human'!! Thanks to all."

Well done, team!

Gary Smith

Chief Observer

Don't blame the Editor ...

John told his wife, "I've got a problem".

She stopped him right there. "No, dear, WE have a problem. We're in this together, John. We married for better or for worse. Therefore, your problem is our problem".

John sighed with relief. "Well, now it's hardly worth mentioning."

But his wife was insistent. "Go ahead, John, tell me. What's wrong?"

John answered, "Well, somehow we got your sister pregnant!"

Thanks, Malk

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

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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 358: 297 Full Members, 60 Associates and 1 'Friend' Member.



The following are our new Members since the last Newsletter: David Jones, Heather Goodyear, Sally Palmer, Robert Head, Peter Maclaurin, Mark Andrew, Sheila Shephard, John Cope, Stephen Cole, Mareen Cranch, Steve Malone and Debs Weynberg, who are all new Associate Members. As usual, a warm welcome to you all and I look forward to meeting you all at our regular Members' meetings listed elsewhere in this Newsletter.

It is good to see that we are still attracting new Members at this time of year, when traditionally recruitment drops off.

I am now in my nineteenth year in the role of Membership Secretary, originally with Chichester District Group and more recently with Central Southern Group since the merger. In that time many people have joined and worked towards their Advanced Test and then have subsequently left the local Group having achieved their goals. So today my question to all Members is: how would you like to see your local Group develop? What would you want the Group to be doing in order for you to remain Members after passing your test?

Some newly passed Full Members remain and undertake further training to become Observers themselves; this is great for the Group and allows us to grow and undertake the coaching of even more Associate Members. It is not just the Group that grows, though: the new Observers also develop additional skills and grow into new rôles along with the Group.

Other newly passed Members settle into a pattern of attending occasional meetings, reading the Newsletters, undertaking occasional checks of their driving and supporting the Group through their £10 per year membership fee - which can be Gift Aided to increase the value to the Group. These people are the solid backbone of our membership.

Any ideas for retaining more members after passing their test would be welcome.

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, Monday to Friday evenings after 1730 or please try any time at weekends. There is an answerphone for when I am not in.

Safe Motoring.

Andy Wilson
Membership Secretary

Associates' News

There have been six successful tests taken since the Winter Newsletter. Very well done to you all.

**Associate**

Gillian Twiss
John France
Howard Marchant
Deanne Cushion
Stephen Turner
Joanna Schmidt

From

Emsworth
West Chiltington
Haywards Heath
Hayling Island
Horsham
Crawley

Observer

David Stribling
Sheila Girling
David Stevens
Malk Monro
Derek Williams
Oliver Farley

Examiner

Colin Thaxter
Adrian Short
Tony Richardson
Colin Thaxter
Adrian Short
Tony Richardson

Advanced Driving Tests have been fewer during the last quarter, but a lot of training has been going on as well as completion of the re-branding. As Associate Liaison officer I have noticed slicker procedures, and communication is on the whole improved which makes for better understanding of how the Associates are progressing, or possibly why they feel unable to proceed. There is still the old chestnut about packages being given as (unwanted) gifts, and some Associates buy the course but do not understand what they are taking on.

All the best;

Glenda Biggs

Associate Liaison

Publicity Officer required

Are YOU looking for a new challenge?

Central Southern Advanced Motorists is looking for someone to promote the activities of the Group to the General Public.

We are keen to widen the area in which we offer try-drives and to seek new people who want to improve their driving skills. Is this the opportunity you have been waiting for?

If so, contact the Vice Chairman on vicechair.csamcar@iamgroups.org.uk or any other member of the Committee for more details

NEWS FLASH

YOUNG DRIVERS offer EXTENDED!

Your children, grandchildren and young friends are very important to you, and CSAM is pleased to be able to offer

50% off

for new Associates
under the age of 30 at time of joining

CSAM is very pleased to be able to extend
its offer of up to twenty cut-price

[IAM RoadSmart Advanced Driving Courses](#)

packages to

Members' friends and family living in the CSAM area
who are sponsored by one of the Group's Full Members

The CSAM member pays the full price, then once the
Advanced Driving Test has been passed we will refund **£75**

It's so simple -

pay now and get **£75** back when the Test is passed

To take advantage of this offer, contact

Andy Wilson

Membership Secretary

membership.csamcar@iamgroups.org.uk

01329 483661

Don't forget to keep an
eye on the following useful resources:

IAM RoadSmart's "[Advice and insights](#)" pages

Driver & Vehicle Standards Agency: sign up for [Highway Code email alerts](#)

Operation Crackdown, where drivers can
report illegal/unsafe driving: www.operationcrackdown.org

Advice from Mark Lewis, CSAM's former Director of Standards, which appears on our website "[Road Tips](#)" page, courtesy of the IAM:

In a different light

Lots of cars now have dashboard warning lights to let you know of a bulb failure; however, you should still check your lights manually on a regular basis. If any bulbs need replacing, change them beforehand to reduce the risk of any road incidents taking place.

Use your full beam lights only when you're driving on an unlit road and where there is no vehicle in sight ahead of you. However, remember to switch back to your dipped headlights to avoid dazzling other road users, including pedestrians and cyclists.

Dipped headlights can be used during any time of the day and should be switched on in poor weather conditions. Don't rely on daytime running lights as the rear lights will not switch on with them – they are not sufficient in reduced visibility conditions.

If you cannot see beyond 100 metres switch on your fog lights. It's illegal to drive with fog lights on in clear visibility so don't forget to turn them off.

Hazard warning lights may be used when your vehicle is stationary to warn that it is temporarily obstructing traffic. However, don't use them while you're driving or being towed unless you are on a motorway or unrestricted dual carriageway and you need to warn drivers behind you of a hazard.

**It is so important to make sure you can
see and be seen at all times, so keep all lights
working correctly and use them when you need to**

*A few more motoring-related gems,
with Malk's comments.*

[Railway crossing near-mishaps](#)

[Negotiating the Arc de Triomphe road junction](#)

*"This actually works very well - just remember that in France,
in the absence of any other instruction, give way to the traffic on the right."
(Personally, I think it's just as well it's not possible
to hear some of the drivers' comments! Ed.)*

[A quick spin round San Francisco](#)

"A bit like an IAM Skills Day?"

SMART MOTORWAYS

No they are not clean and tidy: they think - or more accurately those who sit in control rooms do. In short, the flow of traffic is controlled by means of variable speed limits and use of the hard shoulder as another lane. The term 'Controlled Motorway' is used when variable speed limits are used but hard shoulder running is not possible.

When driving on a Smart Motorway, pay particular attention to the overhead gantries. If the speed limit is lower than 70 and you fail to observe it you are likely to receive a request through the post for some of your cash plus an award of points onto your driving licence.

Points to remember:

- Never drive in a lane closed by a red 'X' shown above it on the gantry. Move to another lane.
- The hard shoulder is shown by a solid white line. Do not use it as a running lane unless there is a speed limit shown above it on the gantry.
- Normal running lanes are indicated by broken white lines.
- If you have a problem with your vehicle or another emergency and the hard shoulder is being used as a running lane, or if there is no hard shoulder, try to leave the motorway. If that is not possible, use the nearest emergency refuge area (ERA). These are marked with blue signs featuring an orange SOS telephone symbol on them.
- If you cannot get to an ERA but the vehicle can be driven, move it to the hard shoulder (where provided) or as close to the nearside verge or other nearside boundary as possible.
- In all cases, switch on your hazard warning lights.



The above covers the main points to be considered when using a Smart Motorway; additional information is available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/how-to-drive-on-a-smart-motorway>

Other material can also be found on the [AA](#) and [RAC](#) websites.

Bernard Timbers

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](#).

The following is a Blog posted on the IAM's website on 9 November 2016 which was passed on by Malk Monro as it may be of interest to Members.

Brake Gear Overlap – still separating and confused?

A subject worthy of hours of discussion is the 'brake gear overlap'. It is often described as using the brakes and changing gear at the same time. Whilst there are some who still condemn this, the average motorist might be staring blankly at you as you try and describe something to them that seems perfectly normal and a sensible operation of their car's controls. However, those of us who are aware know that this phenomenon is only to be used in 'certain circumstances' – right?

I went looking for advice, casting my eye over Roadcraft 1960. It makes absolutely no mention of 'brake gear overlap' but says: "With the exception of the combined use of the accelerator, clutch and gear lever during the operation of gear changing, it will be seen that a systematic driver may use different controls in quick succession but need never use two at any one time". There you have it, clarity. However, crash gearboxes, maybe some early synchromesh, cars with a mind boggling 40 brake horse power and puny drum brakes were on the roads. Interestingly there was no mention of automatic gearboxes. That modern trickery was yet to come across the pond.

Again searching for guidance I moved on to Roadcraft published 1983. On page two it only says that the "features of the system must always be in the correct sequence". This is interesting as I clearly remember it being discussed by my instructor on several occasions. "Heel and toe okay then Sergeant?" Okay I'll get my coat. Hurrah for the new Roadcraft dated 1994. Suddenly the publication grew in practical content and IPSGA appeared as the system of car control. No more 'features only to be considered in sequence by the driver at the approach to any hazard' any more. Driving by numbers was out and the thinking 'overlapping of phases' driver was in.

So the big revelation of the 1994 edition was that brake gear overlap was now openly being discussed in print and no longer in hushed tones rather like an advert for Schweppes Tonic. It even proclaimed that: "Sometimes it is helpful to overlap braking with the gear change". Roadcraft went on to develop even further in later editions (2007 and 2013) stating that brake gear overlap was indeed acceptable. Other than a few suggestions it provided no definitive list of when and where, allowing the thinking driver to decide. However, the overriding factor was that it must be "part of a planned approach to a hazard" and further that "applied carefully in certain circumstances, brake gear overlap takes less time". May I ask then why do people still tell me I must not overlap my brakes and gears even at low speed?

Moving on to 2016 and IAM RoadSmart released the updated training material for the advanced driver course. We now have cars on the road with modern synchromesh gearboxes, clutch systems that are light and leg friendly, remote gear linkages that are both smooth and precise and ABS braking systems that are simply superb. On the subject of brake gear overlap the course material says simply: "Understand when a planned overlap is appropriate. At slow speeds for simple junctions it will be safe to overlap brakes and gears. The gear change needs to be finished and the clutch engaged before steering".

/continued ...

Hopefully that is clear, applying all the principles in the evolution of Roadcraft and condensing it to a succinct statement. So no longer shall we speak of 'brake gear overlap', now we will talk of 'brake steer overlap'.

Enjoy the drive.

Shaun Cronin, Area Service Delivery Manager

From IAM RoadSmart's Weekly News - 1 February 2017



SERVICE, I SAY, SERVICE!

Tips from IAM RoadSmart's head of technical policy and advice, Tim Shallcross

Being safe, reliant and efficient road users are the key things that enable greater safety on the roads and allow them to run smoothly. It is vital to continue this mission of endless safety by maintaining your vehicle and ensuring that is serviced and up-to-date.

- Make sure the oil and oil filter are changed on time and the correct engine oil is used; neglecting an oil change or using the wrong oil is the quickest way to increase wear on a modern engine, especially for highly stressed parts such as turbochargers and pistons.
- Anti-freeze must be checked every year and should be changed every other year. It does much more than protect the engine in winter; it prevents corrosion inside the engine. Blown head gaskets are a typical symptom of not enough or old antifreeze.
- Change the timing (cam) belt on time, when the mileage or age limit is reached. It might look OK, and it's an expensive job, but if the belt breaks, it generally means you need a new engine.
- The alternator drive belt must be inspected at each service and changed if worn or when the manufacturer recommends. If it suddenly snaps, you suddenly lose power steering on most cars.
- The cabin air filter or pollen filter keeps clean air coming in through the heater vents. If it isn't changed on time, you may get debris in the heater unit which is expensive to remove and clear and you will be more prone to misted up windows, restricting your view.

Tim says: "Make sure the service is noted properly in the car's record book and the garage stamps it. A full, documented service history makes the car much easier to sell; no history or gaps can knock hundreds or even thousands of pounds off the price you'll get."

From "Reflector" ...

BEYOND THE HIGHWAY CODE

(continued from the Winter 2016 Newsletter)



Plates and Lanes - can you see yellow?

At one time it happened three times every twenty-four hours on the M 25, so the Highways Agency reported. Three times a day, one of the most horrific collisions you can have - being side-swiped by a heavy truck. The Agency were called out again and again to help clear up the consequences, and each collision happened in almost identical terms. An unwary and unfortunate car driver was overtaking a truck, passed beyond the range of vision in the high-set wing mirrors and entered the total blind side for a left-hand drive truck. The trucker glanced in his right mirror, all clear, and swung out from lane one to two to pass another vehicle. Even with all the protections of modern cars, airbags and crumple zones, the tremendous blow to the side of the victim always had serious results. The Agency went to the lengths of giving away crude plastic sheets to fit in the truck passenger window which acted as primitive mirrors. The sheets had multiple concentric rings in them, rather like old vinyl L.P.s, and they provided an indication of the vehicle alongside, not clearly, but sufficient to show something was there, and that lane two definitely was not yet available for passing. The sheets cost pence, the collisions cost a fortune.

There's an easy precaution for all motorists which saves trouble, lives and costs. When glancing ahead to see hazards to come, flick a glance over the rear of any commercial vehicle. If the number plate isn't yellow then it's a foreign truck and a left-hand drive. Often the script on the rear is in a foreign language so that's a simple give-away, but a truck may well be carrying a container with a well-known international logo and the tractor unit (the cab) could be U.K. or foreign. So look for the number plate and don't rely on a familiar name. Practise checking comfortably in advance and you'll soon get used to calculating on using lane three to pass a truck in lane one. It's a detour but a safe one, and one always advisable where several trucks are travelling in convoy. One of them in the middle might be tempted to swing out beyond its fellows, and you're better off a lane away.

Entries and Exits - lanes again

Most collisions happen at junctions, and the absence of junctions in the normal sense helps to make motorways the safest of all roads, measured by user miles. There are junctions of a type, however, and they can be dangerous. Exiting and entering the motorway presents hazards all of their own, in particular in trusting or not the judgement of others. We know from our own experience how tricky it can be to get the speed right to join the fast flow of a busy M-way and equally we've all been guilty at some stage of misjudging the distance to a desired exit. Others do the same, and being aware of them suggests evasive manoeuvres, both timely and prudent.

Approaching an exit is where our caution begins; the first objective is to know how far away the exit is and how close accompanying traffic is to us. Assuming the surrounding flow is well spread

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out, it is advisable to move over to the number two lane and check mirrors for traffic behind. The vehicle we're trying to avoid is the Late Lane Changer - the chap who zooms along in lane two or three and then plunges out to the exit, slicing across the traffic to his left utterly carelessly. If he escapes a collision he's lucky, but far from lucky are those who take sudden evasive action to avoid his impulsive move and collide themselves with another innocent. By moving to lane two before the exit we can reduce the source of the Late Lane Changers to the single third lane rather than both three and two. At the other end of the junction we have the opposite problem and one more likely to cause trouble. This is where others try to join the M-way and have to judge their entry as they accelerate up the slip road. Staying in lane two makes sense here and extends the simple courtesy of giving others a greater chance to execute a risky move. We're aware of the danger of being abandoned at the end of the slip road, slowed to a crawl or even stopped and left to wait for a gap long enough to get onto lane one and accelerate up to acceptable speed with as little disruption as we can manage. By staying in lane two ourselves as we approach the junction we're doing our part to save others from that embarrassment.

Markings and Meanings

At one time, and I mean within living memory, the police used to decide where road signs should be displayed. They had no discretion as to the format of the sign but they did elect the location. That discretion has now being lodged with the highways authorities at local councils, usually at county level, and most of the country has been generously evaluated and bedecked with signs. There has to be consistency about this so that what counts as a severe bend in Yorkshire is much the same as in Surrey, so that what counts as a parking space in Birmingham is the same in Glasgow. Given this close similarity I wondered are there guidelines for the instruction of local authorities; there are for road signs, the 'Traffic Road Signs General Directions', and I've left the question about bends and road markings with West Sussex County Council to ponder. However, we don't need to know how the angles of corners exactly increase because the signs and markings tell us of a bend's progression. A shallow bend changes the centre line to a hazard, a sharper bend changes from centre to hazard to solid white which may be a double or solid to us and broken to approaching traffic. The most severe has all of the latter plus chevrons on boards, where the more boards and the more highlight surrounds, the more acute the angle.

So what of no road markings at all? Many of our small lanes in Sussex are innocent of such aids, so what does it tell us of the width of the road? The clear implication is that the road is less wide than double the maximum width of vehicle permitted on the roads so they can't be separated if two such vehicles approach at once. Most of us drive cars well within those limits so passing each other is possible. Without a central road marking who's to say which vehicle impinged on the other's space if there's a collision, even a minor one such as a tangle of wing mirrors? Our best policy is to draw into the side and stop: the moving vehicle has to then be the guilty party if there's a scrape.

Discretion is the better part of valour indeed.

Oliver Farley



One 'Lion's' moment of Pride

In April 2015 I attended an event organised jointly by The Friends of Chichester Hospitals and the Lions Club of Chichester. The aim was to raise funds for a Surgical Specimen Radiography System, and the proceeds of the evening were £1,760.25. Some of this staggering amount was raised by a raffle of various donated prizes: one of these, which I was fortunate enough to win, was a gift voucher for an Advanced Driving course with the Institute of Advanced Motorists.

At the time I was 78 years old. I have been driving for sixty years, having passed my first and only driving test in Portsmouth in 1956 in a Standard 8. In the whole of my driving career I have only been involved in two accidents. One was in Scotland in the depths of winter, when a car with balding tyres left its lane to come crashing into me head on; the other was when I was in my early 20s, and again a car came across the centre of the road and wrote off my very first car, which was a 1936 MG VA saloon. On the whole I considered myself a safe a competent driver. In the '80s I taught all three of my sons to drive.

My wife was quite surprised at my delight in receiving the prize: "You're not going to learn anything at your age"! Nothing daunted, I purchased an up-to-date copy of the Highway Code (I hadn't looked at it for years, and perhaps I needed to check a few things out ...) and got in touch with the IAM to enquire how to go about starting the course.

In due course I was allocated an Observer from Central Southern Motorists, one of the IAM's 'local groups'; he immediately put me at my ease. We had a general chat in the car, when he checked my vehicle documentation etc and explained the paperwork and other procedures; then off I drove, feeling as if I was taking my first driving test all over again! As time passed, and I had more 'observed runs', I enjoyed the drives more and more, and I certainly became more aware (perhaps more critical ...) of the driving of others.

After a while, my original Observer's increased work commitments meant that I had to be transferred to another Observer, Gordon Egerton. I also spent a short time 'grounded' by a ruptured tendon in my shoulder. These events slowed my progress down a little, but I was not to be deterred, and continued my observed runs with Gordon until he felt it was time for a 'pre-test run'. It was decided at the pre-test that perhaps I wasn't quite ready to take the test (the whole point of the pre-test run, of course) and a few points still needed a little brushing up, so I had a few more runs until I was deemed to be ready. Finally The Day arrived - goodness, this was it!



Richard with his second Observer, Gordon

My Examiner was Tony Johnson (a qualified Police Driver). Tony explained what he wanted from me on the drive and took me on a route around Horndean. This is an area not so familiar to me, but I felt good and I really wanted to pass.

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Thanks to the IAM for all their patience. Overall it was a very good experience and I would thoroughly recommend it to anyone who thinks their driving is 'okay ...'. As we all know, there is always room for improvement. Oh, and I think my wife also feels a little safer too!

Richard Hall

Read more about the fantastic work of Lions Club International [here](#). Ed



It's one 'L' of a driving lesson!

SHE described the drama as rather exciting. Well, it's not every day that a standard driving lesson suddenly turns into a cops and robbers chase. But that was the scenario in Southampton city centre in 1963 when Glenda Sherin, the daughter of a well known Southampton butcher, suddenly heard a cry of "Follow that bike!"

The 17-year-old clung on tightly in the passenger seat as her instructor Michael Whitfield demonstrated his skills as they pursued a tearaway biker who had just stolen a high powered motor bike and was riding at speed around town.

The teenager had been driving in Above Bar when PC Robert Woodward commandeered her father's van. Ms Sherin exchanged places with her instructor who set off in pursuit - down East Street and finally into Duke's Road.

Ironically, they stopped outside the Ministry of Transport's driving test centre where the teenager was scheduled to take her test.

A 20-year-old subsequently appeared before the magistrates where he admitted taking the bike without consent.



Stranger than Fiction

This event took place in September 1963, which just happens to be 50 years before I started with the IAM in September 2013.

The chase ended outside the Test Centre where I was to take my test the following week, which thankfully I passed first time.

I had been thinking about joining the Institute of Advanced Motorists soon after I took my test, but as it happens being a teenager took priority, then of course boyfriends and eventually marriage and family.

It just proves that a small thought in the back of our minds can eventually develop and we can achieve whatever we want if we keep at it and want it enough.

I am now Associate Liaison officer, which is a job I love doing because I can encourage and reassure late starters that an Advanced Driving Course is a good and sensible (and fun) challenge to take up. Not forgetting that our new and young drivers also need support to keep safe, and to enjoy their driving skills.

Glenda Biggs

CSAM Quiz Night - 10 January

Thanks to Bernard for producing another very enjoyable quiz for us: the questions were many and varied - such as identifying real or spoof car names (eg Dranreb - think about it), naming the tribe which [Boudica/Boudicca/Boudicea/Boadicea](#) led, and calculating stopping distances. A really good work-out for the brain - and the memory.



There was a good turn-out for this annual favourite, and the usual good-natured banter and argument/discussion about some of the answers.

Congratulations to the winners: Sally Franks, Glenda Biggs, Ros Parker and Bevis Bellingham (pictured below, celebrating their success).

All in all a very good evening: thank you, Bernard. Here's to next year's ...



Opening the car door safely - Dutch-style

CSAM Member Richard Keeling has brought the Chairman's attention to a letter in *The Guardian* dated 16 December 2016 responding to a report in that newspaper on the previous day about Chris Grayling, the Transport Minister, knocking a cyclist off his bicycle when opening the door of his ministerial car.

The correspondent says in his letter that in the Netherlands car drivers are taught always to open a car door with the opposite hand, making the driver turn his body and look back and therefore be far more likely to see an approaching cyclist. Apparently this is known as the "Dutch reach".

Such a simple idea!

Thank you, Richard. Ed.

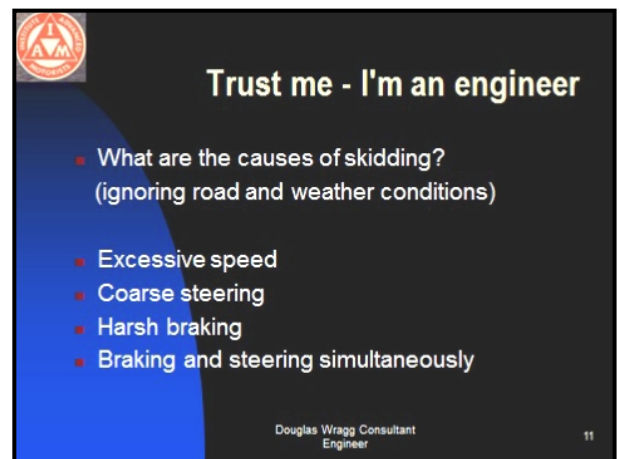
"Coarse hands and thick boots"

(or Trust me - I'm an Engineer)

a talk given by Douglas Wragg, 24 January 2017

This title is how Douglas described the engineering profession, quoting from Dickens with more than a little tongue in cheek. His audience of twenty at the Eastern Forum's January meeting certainly didn't think so after an hour and a half of intriguing stories of investigations into accident and disaster. Douglas has spent a lifetime examining the results of others' mishaps and has applied his engineering knowledge to reconstruct the most likely sequence of events. There have been investigations and reconstructions as well as failure analysis and the determination of provenance.

We heard about the Datsun with chronic brake failure which only came to light after a major accident. Would you have remembered to examine all four brake pads to find that the rear ones had never worked, they were as good as new? Their relative condition showed that the brake cylinder was mal-functioning, applying all the braking effort to the front wheels only. Would you have thought to test whether a bus driver really could punch an angry motorist from his driving seat through the access door? Well, he couldn't and the case against him was dropped. And how about the 1928 Bentley Speed Six which turned out to be a Bentley alright - not one, but several joined together to make one entire car. That collapsed its antique value.



There was more obvious fraud with the VW driver who claimed that a Hyundai had caused extensive damage by driving into the back of his car. Yet, strangely, the number plate of the colliding car was unbroken - and it was supposed to have hit a tow bar.

We learnt a lot from this talk but I want to share with you just two things: witnesses are not reliable and tyres do funny things.

First the witnesses: a white Transit van hit a Range Rover and two accounts of the collision appeared. The Range Rover driver said he was stationary and in the correct lane for a right turn, while the four employees of a roadside garage said the Range Rover jumped the crossing, hit the van and wound up down an embankment. Douglas went through all the dynamics of two colliding bodies and showed that the witnesses couldn't possibly be right because the two vehicles would not end up where they did if their version of events were true. They weren't being duplicitous. They just heard the collision, saw momentarily the vehicles spinning and assumed a possible version of what had happened. Once that explanation was fixed in their minds, repetition confirmed it into a belief. The physics of the event proved them wrong.

Now tyres: Douglas explained in great detail, using physics and mathematics, the science behind a skid: how it happens and how to deal with it. We were all transfixed at his explanations,

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incredulous at what was happening to our tyres and vehicle in fractions of a second, and determined to recall Douglas's wise words when encountering potential skid conditions.

How fast does your tyre move? Same as your vehicle? All of it? All of the time?

In fact, if you travel at 60mph, then the tyre is moving at different speeds per segment starting from the leading edge a quarter way round. That's going at 60mph, then successively each segment travels at 30 then 0 then 30 then 60 then 90 then 120 then 90 and back to 60. That sounds

impossible, but here's a simple demonstration. Watch a tracked vehicle as it passes you. The track moves over the driving wheel and then is laid on the ground. It doesn't move but the vehicle itself moves over the stationary track. The track is then picked up by the rear driving wheels and moves across the upper line of the vehicle faster than the vehicle is moving to reach the front again. From the observer's point of view all this is perfectly true. What we must not forget is the mechanical pressure on a tyre. It may be momentarily stationary but it is doing useful work, namely propelling the vehicle forward. If it didn't, say on ice, then the wheel would accelerate, the sudden

wheel spin we're all familiar with. And if the tyre was unable to withstand these flexing forces on it as the vehicle speeds forward, then the tyre itself will shred, a feature of lower grade tyres on a vehicle too fast for them. It's also why a tyre accelerates past you if it comes off the axle, overtaking you alarmingly.

We could go on, but must leave it at that.

We hope you've got a flavour of our successful meeting here in the East; that you will be encouraged to come to future ones; that you'll join me in thanking Douglas for his shared expertise, whilst certainly not forgetting to mention all who worked so tirelessly behind the scenes to make our evening so enjoyable. Jean Clark and the Eastern Forum team have notched up another triumph.

Oliver Farley

