

# CENTRAL SOUTHERN ADVANCED MOTORISTS

[www.iamroadsmart.com/groups/centralsouthern](http://www.iamroadsmart.com/groups/centralsouthern)

NEWSLETTER  
SUMMER 2019

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RoadSmart

Official Provider

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## From the Editor

I am delighted that this issue of the Newsletter is absolutely packed with interesting goodies for CSAM Members - and others who may light upon it via our [website](#). Along with the officers' reports, 'From Reflector' and other interesting and/or amusing pieces, this edition contains several contributions from some who have not appeared before within these 'pages'.



I am, as always, grateful to you all for sharing your thoughts - in many cases I would go so far as to say wisdom - with us; apart from anything else, it makes putting the Newsletter together a thoroughly enjoyable task for 'yours truly'.

I hope you will all have a good and safe summer, whether on the roads, in the air or just enjoying getting away from it all in your back garden.

Best wishes;

Tina



### PLEASE NOTE

The deadline for contributions to the next Newsletter is **Wednesday 31 July 2019**



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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

**Sunday 9 June**  
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 [Phil Coleman](#).

**Tuesday 11 June**  
From 6.30 pm  
**Car park next to Crawley Town Hall, [RH10 1UZ](#)**

**Manoeuvring Challenge**, Crawley.

**Sunday 14 July**  
9.30 am - noon  
[NCP, Chichester](#)

**Free Observed Runs** - see 9 June or [website](#) for details.

**Thursday 18 July**  
7.30 pm  
[BC, Billingshurst](#)

**CSAM Committee Meeting** - all Members are welcome.

**Sunday 11 August**  
9.30 am - noon  
[NCP, Chichester](#)

**Free Observed Runs** - see 9 June or [website](#) for details.

**Sunday 8 September**  
9.30 am - noon  
[NCP, Chichester](#)

**Free Observed Runs** - see 9 June or [website](#) for details.

**Tuesday 10 September**  
7.45 pm  
[Lavant Memorial Hall, East Lavant](#)

A talk by **Liam Greaney**, an instructor with "driving-pro" in Portsmouth, who will talk about, among other things, smart motorways. See the [website](#) for more details.

**Thursday 19 September**  
7.30 pm  
[BC, Billingshurst](#)

**CSAM Committee Meeting** - all Members are welcome.

**Tuesday 8 October**  
7.30 pm  
[BC, Billingshurst](#)

**CSAM Annual General Meeting.** Guest Speaker: Mike Quinton, Chief Executive, IAM RoadSmart.



# CENTRAL SOUTHERN ADVANCED MOTORISTS

**Sunday 13 October**

9.30 am - noon

[NCP](#), Chichester

**Free Observed Runs** - see 9 June or [website](#) for details.

**Saturday 19 October**

9.00 am - 4.30 pm

[BC](#), Billingshurst

**Observer Training Day.**

**CP:** Car Park

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

[Crawley Town Hall](#), The Boulevard, Crawley, RH10 1UZ - adjacent car park

**NCP:** [Northgate Car Park](#), Chichester (entrance on eastern side of large roundabout)



*Dave Stribling, Tony Higgs and Phil Coleman  
staffing our Mobile Display Unit at the Horsham Piazza Italia this Easter*

## From the Chairman



I began my remarks in the last Newsletter by being cheered by the passes that the Observers have achieved. This has continued. Congratulations to all concerned. We have also had success in finding people prepared to stand for the positions of Secretary and Associate Liaison Officer. David Stribling will have completed his three years at the next AGM and Glenda Biggs has decided that it is time to give up the excellent job she has been doing over the years liaising with our Associates and our Observers. I am pleased to say that Sheila Girling has agreed to be nominated as Secretary and John France as Glenda's replacement. Sadly, we have not had the same good fortune in finding a Publicity Officer.

While we accept that the flow of Associates goes in peaks and troughs it would be great if we could be more proactive. Ideally, we would like to target the areas of the Group where the flow of Associates is falling. We are working on this.

We had a good *Piazza Italia* in Horsham either side of Easter and will be present at the Pagham Fête, the Racton Fête and the Emsworth Horticultural Show. (Do drop by if you are in the area.) We are considering other shows as well. I thank those who have shared their ideas about publicity: we are considering them. If you have an idea, I would be pleased to hear from you.

At its last meeting your Committee agreed to continue the £50 grants to those under thirty who pass the Advanced Test. IAM RoadSmart are encouraging all its Members in 2019 to find another person to undertake the Advanced Course this year, thereby having the potential to double the membership. Do you know someone who would benefit/enjoy taking the Advanced Driving Course? If so, why not ask them? If it's a young person, they will benefit from the grant. If anyone has a Taster Drive on a Sunday morning they will get 10% off the full cost of their course if they subsequently enrol.

Do not forget that there are various ways in which people can benefit from what IAM RoadSmart offer. There are the [Modules](#) which allow people to home in on areas of driving about which they feel least confident. Taking a Module might lead to them deciding to complete the full course. There is the [Fellowship](#), which requires the Member to retake a test every three years and encourages Fellows to stay at Advanced level. The Fellowship has been running for three years and some of us who joined at the beginning are coming up to our first re-take. If you are in that position it is a good idea to book in for a Check Drive on a Sunday morning, and if needed the Group are happy to offer a couple of observed drives to hone skills before the re-test. Have a word with [Phil Coleman](#) to set this process up. There is, of course, the ultimate level course, the [Masters](#), which might be your next driving challenge.

Several of us have just been to the Spring Forum run by IAM RoadSmart. We learnt that there have been a number of changes of personnel at head office. The most significant is the change of Chairman. Ken Keir has handed over to Andy Barratt who is the Managing Director of Ford Britain. I am sure there will be much more about the changes in the next edition of RoadSmart Magazine.

Some of the other things that were mentioned at the Forum were that Road Traffic deaths and injuries have flat lined at 1793 and 170,000 (2017 Figures) respectively. Over the years 500,000 drivers have obtained Advance Standard but this is still only 0.6% of the driving population.



Still much work to do. An area that IAM RoadSmart are trialling is the use of Telematics to monitor advanced driving, which may prove that Advanced Drivers are safer drivers. Some of the other work that RoadSmart are doing is lobbying the various authorities about further training for drivers, the repair of potholes and the design of roads to make them safer. Let's hope those they lobby listen!

You will have heard that we have cancelled the Film Night that was due to be held on 18<sup>th</sup> May 2019. This was due to lack of support from CSAM Members, despite the idea for the night being one of the suggestions mentioned in the survey we did of the membership back in 2017. I was disappointed, as I was looking forward to meeting Members in a social situation. Clearly this is not something that Members were prepared to support. In this experimental year for events, it gives the Committee more information for its future planning.

I do hope that the Manoeuvring Event on 11<sup>th</sup> June will be something Members will support. Please note the new venue - on the top floor of the car park next to the Town Hall in Crawley. I look forward to seeing you there. You might get your name on one of the trophies!

**Tony Higgs**  
Chairman



*A lovely photo taken by Malk in the New Forest in early April.*

## Chief Observer's Corner

Since the start of the current reporting period - in September 2018 - we have had 34 Associates pass their test, of whom 14 were awarded F1RSTs. The number of passes and F1RSTs continues to be a fantastic effort by Associates and Observers. Congratulations to all our Observers for the great work they do, and welcome to the 34 new Members who passed their tests.



We have a total of 37 active Observers, including 4 Trainee Observers.

We had our last Observer Training Day on Saturday 13 April at Billingshurst. A total of 25 attended, including Mark Andrew, Chief Observer at Southampton Advanced Motorists, Tony Johnson and Colin Thaxter, two of our local Observers, our Chair, Tony Higgs, plus twenty-one Observers. The day was spent discussing a number of subjects, including vehicles with automatic transmissions, and the best way to advise Associates how to make 'Spoken Thoughts' a more enjoyable part of the driving experience for Associates and Observers. In teams of three we put some of what we learnt into practice, with everyone having at least one drive. Our next Observer Training Day will be on Saturday 19 October.

There are 46 active Associates assigned to Observers: several of them are coming up to test-ready. As we have had 14 Associates pass their test since the beginning of January I am expecting the number of tests to diminish in the next three to four months. If you know of anyone who has been thinking about taking the course, now would be a good time to start - especially in the west of our area where we have several Observers available immediately.

Our Northgate Sunday sessions are well underway; please check the [website](#) for dates. If you would like to take advantage of a free run out to check that your standards are still up to scratch, or know anyone who might like a free taster, please let me know and I will book them a place: our Observer team is always keen to see old and new faces.

**Phil Coleman**  
Chief Observer

*Finnegin: My wife has a terrible habit of staying up 'til two o'clock in the morning. I can't break her out of it.*

*Keenan: What on earth is she doin' at that time?*

*Finnegin: Waitin' for me to come home.*

*Murphy told Quinn that his wife was driving him to drink.*

*Quinn thinks he's very lucky - his own wife makes him walk.*

*Boy waiting outside the grocer's is approached by a man who asks if he knows where the post office is.*

*Boy answers, "Yes - straight up the road for two blocks, then turn right".*

*Man replies, "Thank you. I'm the new Vicar, and I'd very much like to see you in church on Sunday - I can show you the way to Heaven".*

*Boy says, derisively, "Nah - c'mon: you don't even know the way to the post office!"*

## Membership Mumbblings!

Let's start with the membership figures. Central Southern Advanced Motorists has 322 Full Members, 55 Associate Members and 1 'Friends' Member, giving a total membership of 378. This is up by 1 member from the Spring Newsletter, but of course all the time people are joining, leaving or allowing their membership to lapse. I welcome all our Associates who have become new Full Members, and Members who have relocated and joined CSAM, including Chris Haylor and David Smith.



Well, finally the nights are drawing out, the weather is warmer, and apart from a few downfalls that remind us that summer is not quite here we are approaching that time when we have successfully overcome the challenges faced in the winter months, only to be surrounded by new challenges. I was reading articles on summer driving, and really homed in on the dangers that drivers face during the warmer months of the year: heat, glare, hayfever and the multitude of different types of vehicles to share the road with, to name but a few. Reflecting on what I read, it emphasized the importance of still conducting your POWDER checks, and how IPSGA really stood out as a crucial part of staying safe on the roads all year round. Personally, I think there is lot more red mist at this time of the year and certainly a lot more impatience from those I share the road with.

Summer driving is fun, though, and I have just come back from a weekend on the Isle of Wight to celebrate my Mum's 70<sup>th</sup> birthday. Anyone who has driven over on the island will realize what fun it is to drive out there. We decided to take my Mum's car over, and this was actually the first time I have properly driven an automatic for a decent length of time. Once my left foot had finally got over being redundant I started to test the paddles and the different modes, and learn how an automatic responded to the different terrains across the island. I will honestly say I did enjoy the different gearbox - I saw the advantages, and would happily drive one again - but I am still a manual driver at heart: it was not enough to convert me and will be back to my trusty manual tomorrow!

I hope you found the blogs I sent useful. I have been having a few issues with emails bouncing back from Members' emails. If you want to keep hearing from me, please add my new email address to your contacts list. Moving forward, I will send the weekly blogs on a monthly email so as not to over-fill your inboxes. It is also good to hear from you all: I have had some interesting chats to Members over the last few months, from discussions about Fellow and Master Membership to light-hearted chats about the possibility of using homing pigeons for Membership payment as a solution for online banking issues.

Finally, Members, or drivers wishing to become Members, or anyone requiring more information can reach me by my new email address at [membership.csam@gmail.com](mailto:membership.csam@gmail.com) or by 'phone on 02392 595817. If you are transferred to voicemail, please leave a message and I will pick it up out of my working hours.

Safe driving;

**Matthew Pitt**

Membership Secretary and Observer

## Associates' News

Advanced Driving Test results since the last Newsletter are as follows.  
Those marked \* passed with a F1RST.



Associate	From	Observer	Examiner
* Alex Willis	East Grinstead	David Stevens	Peter Sturgess
James Smith-Wright	Saltdean	Oliver Farley	Andrew Pike
* Carol-Anne Daniels	Horley	John Chisholm	Richard Mansfield
Derek Riches	Horley	Oliver Farley	Richard Mansfield
* Tony Smith	Waterlooville	Jill Irwin	Colin Thaxter
* Claire Mowl-Seegobin	Billingshurst	Sheila Girling	Richard Mansfield
* Eddie Bullock	Oving	Duncan Ford	Colin Thaxter
Brian Dean	Chichester	John France	Colin Thaxter
Fay Caddy	Haywards Heath	Derek Williams	Richard Mansfield
Peter Serna	Chichester	Phil Coleman	Tony Johnson
David Pang	Henfield	Vince Clarkson	Richard Mansfield

Many congratulations to our hard-working Observers and Associates, and to all the Observers for keeping me updated.

Best wishes;

**Glenda Biggs**

[Associate Liaison](#)

## A recent Presentation



*Wendy McFadyen being presented with her FIRST pass certificate  
by her Observer Duncan Ford (right) and CSAM Chairman Tony Higgs*

### 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](#).

## FROM REFLECTOR

### TRIALS, TRIBES AND TRIBULATIONS:

#### What might lie ahead for us and our motors?



Mr Toad sat in the road.

He sat in a swirl of dust from a passing motor.

All he could manage in choked admiration was "Poop! Poop!"

For those of you who can still recall your *Wind In the Willows* story, Mr Toad went on to achieve his motoring ambition and to morph from toad to hog as a truly awful example of a wild driver.

We might hesitate to use Mr Toad as a metaphor for the last century of the car and its drivers; yet there's a partial truth in the general impression of ambition expressed as irresponsible, unsocial behaviour, and more than a partial truth in the threat of dire environmental consequences.

The evolution of the car to its present form is a long tale of trial and errors, of serendipity, success and looming failures. Electric propulsion seemed the logical way forward in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, when the motor was as yet a play-thing of wealthy men with a mechanical bent, who experimented profusely with power and forms. The demonstration of the practicality of the four-stroke cycle pushed the nascent industry towards internal combustion and petroleum, an inclination emboldened by the exploitation of abundant, cheap oil in the U.S. The expanding population and vast spaces of the American continent gave fertile ground for the assembly line and production in gargantuan numbers. The Model T was more than a car - it was a social transformation extending car ownership to the population at large and networking a nation of far flung settlements into a connected entity. Resources, ingenuity and geography combined to alter the quality of life through every level of society and to link a disparate country together through the veins of its roadways far more uniformly than the linear arteries of the railways had achieved.

What began in the Americas spread in the fullness of growing wealth to Europe, and Britain's cars were numbered in the millions by the time of the first driving test in 1935. The ominous side of this new freedom of the road was also painfully present by then in road deaths and casualties. Motoring deaths were over 9,000 in 1941, yet thanks to improved roads, vehicles and driving that total had fallen by 80% to under 2,000 by 2013, a period when car ownership rose by a factor of ten.

The path to better safety in use was paved with regulation and inventiveness, as authorities controlled roads and behaviour while manufacturers improved driving control and limited passenger damage in collisions.

Success in this area left a stark contrast with failure elsewhere - that is, the polluting effects of burning fossil fuels on such a scale. Diesel power held promise as a lower emitter of carbon dioxide and by the 21<sup>st</sup> century about half of Europe's car production was diesel. Harmful nitrous particles demolished diesel's claim to acceptance, and the evasions of the car manufacturers of pollutants regulations showed the desperation of a vast industry with a prodigiously vast sunk capital in a now-decried product.

The problem of huge resources in men and machines committed to a given technology makes change all the more difficult for their host countries and at the same time yields an opening



for the investors in new technology to side-step the traditional producers and leap ahead on their own merits. This has happened in many other industries before now: think of the Swiss watch industry as one example, where digital watches made of plastic, sand and batteries almost overnight annihilated the mechanical bejewelled product and made watches a disposable frippery.

Motor manufacturing is certainly huge and it's been concentrated for a long time. Ever since the 1920s, when Chevrolet first out-sold Ford, General Motors made more vehicles per annum than any other manufacturer. That endured for almost a century until the financial crisis of 2008 near bankrupted GM and Toyota (momentarily) took over the global volume crown.

Who wears it to-day?

The figures by country are revealing. In 2018, North America produced about 12.5 million passenger cars, Europe about 18 million - well over double the Japanese total - while the maximum output was scored by China at 23 million. That number translates into two cars every three seconds.

The quality may not be great, and they're not household names in the West, but they are produced in volume.

Now look again - look at what is being sold and what the forecasts are for the future.

World deliveries of electric vehicles last year (both battery and plug-in hybrids) came to 2 million and just over half of that was to China. The Chinese are betting on the future of a technology still in the trial stages but gaining acceptance daily. Both Britain and France have ruled out internal combustion engines from 2040 onwards and sales of electric vehicles are forecast to reach 60 million world-wide per annum by then. On these forecasts China will produce 15 million, a quarter of the total.

Those of a reflective nature amongst my readers may well murmur that electric vehicles merely displace the polluting power generation away from the vehicle up-stream to the fixed power plant, which may be coal or gas fired. The CO<sub>2</sub> emissions are transferred, not necessarily reduced. This is where battery technology comes in. If vehicles rely on re-chargeable batteries and they can be quickly, easily and readily re-powered then the re-charging power can come from the intermittent sources such as wind, wave and solar, and hence cut the CO<sub>2</sub> impact. The internal combustion engine has a coincidence of power generation and use, both at the same time; batteries break that coincidence. Power is generated, power is stored, power is used. The sequence is vital but the timing is incidental.

Look yet again at those numbers for vehicle production, and reflect on the differences between the geography of the US and Europe - as well as China. The latter have large concentrations of populations in cities, while the US/Canada have well spread out habitations, even in their larger cities, many of which have both big populations and a very big topographical footprint. Not for nothing has Los Angeles endless six-lane highways: back in the early days of Alistair Cook's *Letter from America* we were reminded of that city's belt of suburbs, twenty miles deep. Today, Phoenix, Arizona, is the fastest growing city in the US, and it gobbles up acres of desert every hour.

Now do a simple sum.

A citizen in the UK commutes by car for an hour each way twice per working day - total: 10 hours. He drives four hours per day over the weekend - total: 8 hours. Overall total: 18 hours. There are 168 hours in a week, so this car is used for about 10% of that time. For near 90% of its life, it's idle.



Can we afford to go on like this? Can the planet tolerate car production at an enormous scale for a product which is un-used for most of its existence and which pollutes venomously when it is in use?

Hardly.

Now consider transport and car use in those big cities and concentrations in Europe and China. Public transport is part of the answer but a large part may well come from hail and ride services.

Two considerations enter our field of vision here. One is the maligned but formidable Uber type service, the other is Autonomous Vehicles.

Uber claims to control 65% of the ride hailing market in the US, Canada, Europe, Australia and New Zealand. It sees its future as Uber becoming a brand product just as ubiquitous as a Hoover, as familiar as your phone and, like your phone, just as handy, just as dependable and just as utilised in a semi-automatic response for personal needs. Transport is to move into that category of products which we pick up and drop as and when we require and the vector -- the vehicle and its driver -- are left for the next customer. It's a personalised taxi service for every one, covering all of a town not only the inner areas of concentrated populations and not served only by closely regulated service providers.

So much for the starry vision.

Some hard numbers have recently emerged from the documents accompanying the filing for an initial offering of shares to the public. Since 2009 Uber has lost \$7.9 billion, and its fellow traveller, Lyft, admits to losing \$2.9 billion in seven years. Investors have to truly believe in a transformed public use of transport if they concur that Uber is worth the \$100 billion it hopes for.

Comparisons have been drawn between the familiar taxi business and Uber's ambitions. Most taxi companies are small scale affairs, serving a local area and usually closely regulated. City authorities found they had to regulate the industry because when the business was free for all too many accidents happened involving poorly maintained private cars being used as a family run taxi business. New York introduced a medallion system with a strict limit on the number of medallions issued. That began in the 1930's and by the end of the 20th century medallions were changing hands for several hundred thousand dollars apiece. Their scarcity reflects the perennial problem of a regulated market: how to protect the public as to quality of the service provided and how to prevent an exploitative oligopoly limiting the supply of the service. There were similar difficulties closer to home when the London black cab had a six mile maximum for a single hire, a left over from the days of horse drawn vehicles when six miles was thought to be the reasonable limit for a horse to travel without rest.

Right now, the next stage looms with the increasing viability of the autonomous vehicle (AV). This could up-stage Uber and its drivers completely. The aim is the fully autonomous version which will drive automatically from place to place without human supervision. A few years



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ago the concept of autonomous was split into partial and complete, with a driver taking over in some instances, and the AV doing the work the rest of the time. Since then, the industry has opted much more for the completely autonomous ambition, as the half-way version proved more difficult to develop reliably than total automation. These vehicles would supply the ideal customised service - that is, be available anywhere when wanted and left at the customer's destination to await the next call. Mobile 'phones would indicate the location of a free vehicle and order it to the customer, and similar advanced electronics would guide the vehicle along its route.

The Chinese interest comes in here again, with Huawei's advocacy of G5. The combination of communication electronics, battery technology and saving the planet's environment is driving the Chinese ambitions ever onward. If an integrated system can be built for the densely populated and heavily polluted Chinese cities then that system can be exported to cities around the world.

There remains for the time being a big problem of convincing the public that these systems are safe and can be relied upon perhaps to the point of abandoning private car ownership, at least for dwellers in large conurbations. As people become more used to the interfaced world of personal need and electronics (epitomised by GPS and on-line banking), then maybe these fears of AVs will vanish. Advocates of this future point out that at one time people refused to travel in a lift without an operator; now such operators don't exist and we all cheerfully trust our lives to sky-high elevators.

More than just the present Chinese industrialists might be promoters of near total reliance upon AVs. Last November, Waymo obtained a permit to test driverless AVs in California, having already run a commercial service with paying passengers in Phoenix, Arizona. The lesson is not lost on town planners and suppliers of public transport. Imagine how towns could be reconfigured in future if the traffic were solely AVs. Many towns would have networks of one-way streets and no parking spaces at all. AVs would trundle silently along with no traffic lights and no road signs. Far fewer vehicles would be needed than the car totals of today and transport would be available twenty four hours a day. Multiple use AVs with several passengers at once would further reduce the traffic volume and congestion might disappear.

The implications are huge. Many present producers would go out of business, cities would be much quieter and greener, the air would be breathable and we would all get to our destinations on time at our personal whim. Whole cities would be redesigned for people and living, with the heavy current reliance on myriads of vehicles greatly reduced. Manufacturers may well be rightly worried that this future spells the end of their existence unless they change with the times and become a supplier to a whole new concept of wheeled travel. Forecasts have been produced which show the world-wide total of urban vehicle peaking at 1.2 billion by 2025 and going into steep decline to less than half that number by 2035.

Whatever the way the position pans out over the next few decades, we can be sure that cars, car-ownership, and car driving will change out of all recognition.

Value your IAM skills while they're still needed.

**Oliver Farley**

Reflector

**Sources:** *The Economist*, *Scientific American*, *Which*,  
West Sussex County Times, Department for Transport

## POLE POSITION

If only our esteemed Editor could have been with me 'Down Under' this January on [Pitt Street](#), Sydney - the equivalent of our Oxford Street: pedestrians only walk on the left of the pavement. Shopping and strolling was such a joy: no 'sorry's or sudden swerves.

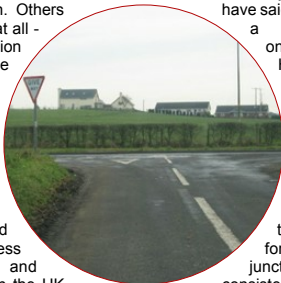
The road junctions in Australia were generally more spacious and much quieter than in the UK. The drivers negotiated them quite briskly but their positioning and signalling looked "text book" to me - except that they call them "intersections".

In the congested UK, however, we seem to spend an eternity at T-junctions waiting for a safe space to emerge. In the previous issue of this Newsletter, our Editor observed that vehicles frequently position randomly and without a signal, keeping us guessing to the last second as to their intended course. She queried if the rules were being taught by Driving Schools. They certainly are, and our UK authority (The Driver & Vehicle Standards Agency) instructs that for going left drivers must "keep well to the left", and for right must "position in good time as close to the centre of the road as is safe". As always, drivers should signal if another road user would benefit.

So why do we struggle to follow these simple rules?

I have asked a number of my learner drivers why they don't follow the kerb line around when turning left (as instructed) and several have told me it's because they kept hitting the kerb so they now give it a very wide berth. Others have said they hadn't actually noticed the curve in the kerb lines at all - a possibly more worrying response! My own confession on this subject is that if any more houses are built in the Horsham area I soon won't be able to emerge right from the T-junction at the end of my road without breaking the "Give Way" rules of the position. Very occasionally I turn right but still keeping a left turn as an option. Sorry Tina!

Could it be that pedestrian awareness of others is schools 'Down Under' and then when the youngsters reach driving age it is effortless for them to follow the rules when negotiating roads and junctions? The only pedestrian rule we seem to observe in the UK consistently is standing on the right and walking on the left on the escalators of the London Underground. After that, it is a free-for-all even though the benefits of following positioning rules on our congested streets and junctions would be enormous.



Perhaps in the UK we should look for a technological solution. Modern Navigation systems give plenty of early information to help lane selection and positioning and amazingly will devise a new route whenever a blockage is spotted. Tina and I could also embed an extra algorithm into the system that will subtly improve driver behaviour: whenever drivers fail to indicate, or not notice a cyclist sliding along the nearside, they will be advised!

**Sheila Girling**

Approved Driving Instructor

## HOW WILL WE CHARGE ALL OUR ELECTRIC CARS?



In the future there will be more and more electric vehicles (EVs) and all will need charging. Although they are now more expensive to buy, the overall running cost might well be lower for you today. This is because the cost of fuel will be about one tenth of the petrol/diesel you buy now. Servicing is about the same as an ICE (internal combustion engine) car, but the mechanicals are much simpler, so in theory there will be much less to go wrong. In time, independent garages will start to offer servicing and running costs will fall.

When a significant number of vehicles are electric, how will the national grid be able to charge them all? I believe that economics and technology will solve the problem. Today, a French company is working on V2G (vehicle to grid) systems. If your EV is equipped with V2G, and very few are, you will leave your car plugged in when parked. When there is a peak demand, the electricity company will take a little of your stored energy: this together with a similar amount from many other cars will help smooth out the peak. This pioneering company has also discovered that old lead-acid batteries, which are very cheap, can be used in an energy bank to help smooth out peaks in the same way as V2G.

A downside is taxation. The number of ICE vehicles will decrease as the number of EVs increases. The government will start to lose significant amounts of tax revenue. Unfortunately they will design and implement new taxation systems to recover the lost revenue from EV drivers. As we know, death and taxation are the two certainties.

Tesla in the US is supplying their battery storage units to EV charging stations. This enables the charging company to smooth out their demand and avoid paying the extra costs that are imposed on large consumers when demand is high. The most well known project is in Australia, where Elon Musk offered to supply a 100-megawatt system in 100 days, or free of charge if it took longer. It took 60 days. A wind farm built by the French company [Neoen](#) charges the batteries. If you have solar panels on your roof, you can store the energy in batteries and charge your EV for nothing.

Some EV owners use off-peak electricity to charge their cars because it is cheaper. In, say, five years, if all EVs used off-peak, the demand could be too high. I predict that in the future, new dynamic tariffs will be offered to charge or just top up an EV at various times of the day. You will have a special dynamic tariff controlled by your smart phone to keep your EV charged to the amount you need for say, your journey home.

Today you can buy a [Zappi](#) EV charge point. It will integrate the grid supply with your solar and/or wind if you have them. It can be set to take renewable power when it becomes available and charge your car; it will also throttle down the grid supply to the car if your total house consumption goes over a set amount. [Octopus Energy](#) offer a tariff where you can reduce your demand at peak times to save money; you will need a smart phone to control this.

'Interconnector' is the name for systems which connect power grids of different countries together. France, with 80% nuclear, are keen to export their surplus to the UK. We already have two links to Europe, one to France, and one to the Netherlands. Geothermal electricity generation in Iceland is cheaper and cleaner than our coal, gas and nuclear.



For the past 30 years it has been concluded that such a project could be made to work, but that the economics would make it too expensive. In 2015, higher electricity prices in Europe and the demand for clean energy made the idea more acceptable. [IceLink](#) would join Iceland and Scotland with an 800- to 1200-megawatt capacity, which would be over 1000 km long. I believe exchanging electricity with neighbouring countries is a positive way of overcoming the increasing demand caused by more and more EVs.

A German company, [Sono Motors](#), has the most amazing new car design. It is covered with solar panels. They don't provide much energy for the battery, but they do work all the time in daylight, and you don't have to do anything. It can also be charged conventionally. You will have an app on your phone so that you can gain access to one and use it for trips: you don't have to own one. It has V2G, so can support the grid; you can also plug in any 3-kW domestic appliance to the car. Sono's philosophy is that they are providing a service; they are not a big corporation making money from the public. It is a very practical car - not fast, not a big range, but all the seats fold down giving a huge luggage capacity.

These new technologies will create new businesses and new financial opportunities. Life will be greener, cleaner, safer, and more interesting.

**Chris Skerry**

*My therapist says I have a  
preoccupation with vengeance.  
Hmm. We'll see about that.*



## ALWAYS READ THE INSTRUCTIONS!

Members who have visited Bosham will be familiar with the potential hazards involved in trying to avoid paying for parking by instead leaving the car on the foreshore.

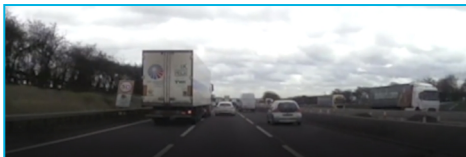
As reported recently in the [Chichester Observer](#),  
one unlucky visitor didn't read the signs.

*Shared by Malk!*

*The biggest lie I ever tell myself is "I don't  
need to write that down - I'll remember it".*



## HOW TO AVOID WHAT YOU SEE IN THIS VIDEO



*Click on the picture or follow this link:*

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/av/uk-england-beds-bucks-herts-47615086/ml-milton-keynes-amazing-escape-from-lorry-and-car-crash>

The dashcam clip in this BBC link shows a horrible collision in a roadworks section of motorway. It is testament to modern car safety systems that nobody was seriously hurt. Airbags, side impact bars, seat design, headrests and of course seatbelts have all helped.

The driver of the lorry is clearly at fault and our legal system took care of that, but there are things that as a car driver you can do to reduce the risk. Most vehicles have a blind-spot not covered by the mirrors even if they are correctly adjusted; bigger vehicles, with the driver higher up, have bigger potential blind-spots, and left hand drive vehicles have an even bigger blind-spot on the right side (but a much smaller one on the left side).

As you approach a large vehicle to overtake on a motorway or dual carriageway, use your observation skills. Is it left-hand drive? Does it have foreign language sign-writing or non-UK numberplates? Can you see the driver's head in the mirror - and is the driver on the phone, eating or otherwise distracted? You are in the blind-spot when you can't see the driver's head: don't enter the blind-spot until there is room to get forward of it, and back into the driver's view. There is no need to brake and accelerate to do this - just use acceleration sense to ease off a little, then gently pull into the clear gap ahead. Keep an eye on the front indicator of the vehicle you are overtaking - that might just give you an early warning. Before you pull into that danger zone, check the next lane to your right (if there is one): is it clear; and could you move into it if you had to?

You will notice when you are overtaking a modern bus or coach that you can see the driver's head much further along the side. Because the driver is sitting much lower the blindspot is much smaller.

Be especially careful in roadworks, where traffic tends to bunch up moving all at the same speed, and as you pass slip-roads, where a joining vehicle could force a lane change from your left. Try not to be three abreast by a slip road.

Modern cars with properly adjusted mirrors have a very small blind-spot - it has to be a small car to manage to hide in it, but there is plenty of room for a motorbike. That is why you always do a shoulder check at the last second before you start to change lane. (You do don't you? Every time?)

So, minimise the risk by being observant: be more cautious when there is more risk. Check your mirror adjustment before you drive off, and always do a shoulder check before pulling out or changing lane.

**Malk Monro**

## THERE ARE NO POT HOLES DOWN-UNDER

When I was Chairman I often referred to my holidays in my articles, but now not in that rôle I have time to do a proper holiday - just under six weeks on the other side of the world, New Zealand. Well that is not quite true, as we stopped off for two days in Dubai and then another two days in Bali to break the journey, but still a total of 24 hours in the air.



Joey and I arrived in Auckland, the largest city in New Zealand, which has over 1.6 million inhabitants. Wellington, the capital at the south of North Island, has 210,000, and Christchurch on South Island has about 375,000, so out of a total of 4.8 million there are not many left to populate the remainder of the two islands which in area are about 10% larger than the UK. Additionally, there are over 30 million sheep and over 10 million cattle keeping the grass under control. Total road mileage in New Zealand is about a quarter of that in the UK but there are lots ... and lots ... of mountains and beautiful scenery - it just goes on and on and on.

Out of the main towns driving is free and easy. We travelled one Saturday for an hour on a highway without seeing another car on our side of the road in front of us, nor was there one in the rear view mirror. We then came across a small town which created severe congestion - i.e. we had to slow down. Highways, the equivalent of our A-roads, are very well signed and on the mountain/hill roads have recommended speed limits on virtually all tight bends, so progressive advanced driving was possible for long periods.

However there is a downside, and the government is concerned about the road death rate, which is more than twice that of the UK both by population and per vehicle comparisons. According to the Ministry of Transport the main causes of fatal and serious-injury crashes were speeding, alcohol, drugs, failing to give way or stop and not paying attention. I can easily see how a driver alone in a vehicle could lose concentration - i.e. not paying attention - with so little activity on the road when driving long distances. Failure to use a seatbelt is also playing an increasing rôle. Unfortunately the figures are still rising, which is of real concern. So, driving according to the conditions and directions/instruction is the way to do it.

We think there are not many traffic police around in the UK, but seeing a traffic vehicle away from a major town in New Zealand is as rare as spotting a Kiwi - who only venture out at night; I wonder if that is also a contributory factor. Most place names are in Maori, so getting one's tongue round some of them was an interesting exercise. Road signs are often more casual than here - just two examples being where we would say 'No Exit' they simply say 'Wrong Way', and where we would have a variety of signs for a land slip onto a road they just say 'Washout'. The signs certainly make you pay attention: say it as it is.



The Treasurer asks Members and Friends of CSAM who are able to Gift Aid their subscriptions or donations kindly to return the relevant 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.csam@gmail.com](mailto:treasurer.csam@gmail.com)

So what is New Zealand like? It is absolutely brilliant. We both said that if we were 30 or so years younger it is a place to emigrate to. It is a beautiful country, varying scenery throughout, relaxing and with lovely people. Everybody is friendly and helpful, no aggression at all. Everybody smiles - and of course it costs nothing to smile; we could certainly take a leaf out of their book. Also no litter or graffiti anywhere, which was a delight. New Zealanders take a real pride in their country are proud of it, and proud to tell you it certainly pays off. Something else we could learn.

We spent the first week on North Island working our way down to Wellington, where we picked up the [ferry](#) to cross the [Cook Strait](#), which fortunately was calm for us as it is notoriously rough. Tip: if you are self-driving then I recommend you use a New Zealand car hire company if you need to cross the water, as the international companies insist you give the car back at Wellington, lug your cases onto the ferry, then pick up another car on the other side. What a waste of time and effort - and, of course, Joey doesn't travel light. We used Apex Car Hire, probably the biggest in New Zealand, who are quite happy for you to take a car over the water and leave it wherever on South Island. (There are other car hire companies in New Zealand - must say that these days!)

We went whale watching off Kaikora and had to travel 13/14 miles off-shore - much further and we would have fallen off the edge of the world. (Think about it.) We were so lucky to see a Sperm Whale, the highlight of the trip and, yes, we saw it dive.



As you all know, Christchurch suffered an horrendous earth-quake in 2011, so seeing the damage that still remains was quite sobering. They have worked extremely hard to rebuild the city and that work continues and will go on for some years to come, but they are making real progress. A temporary



'Transitional Cathedral' has been built out of cardboard - yes out of cardboard - and it is expected to last for about 60 years. One of the Trustees I spoke to said, somewhat cynically, that it will probably take most of that time to decide what to do with the existing damaged Cathedral, as it has become a very political issue. Have I heard of political decisions becoming rather protracted somewhere else? It is rapidly deteriorating and an agreed decision appears a long way off. They still can't enter it as it is too dangerous, so structural surveys are being done with drones: restore or demolish, that is the question. We stayed in Christchurch for only a couple of days, and the subsequent disaster which followed our departure was indeed very thought-provoking for us as our guest house was just on the other side of Hagley Park and we drove past the Al Noor Mosque on our way to the station to take the very scenic 5 hour Trans Alpine Railway to Greymouth: that was a beautiful trip.



We toured [Mount Cook](#) (13,000 feet) by helicopter from Fox Glacier, and actually stood on the glacier at about 12,000 feet. Apparently it was the first completely clear day for about six weeks, so we were so lucky - even though Joey was petrified in the helicopter having never been in one before. A lasting memory for both of us ... although in a different way for Joey - but she did enjoy the view!



We then travelled further south to be able to fly from Queenstown back to Auckland for our final week in the beautiful Bay of Islands - frolicking dolphins etc - before returning to the UK again via Bali and Dubai. It was a daytime flight to Bali and we passed over Australia from the east coast to the north west. So arguably we have also done Australia, as we crossed it from side to side and quite clearly saw the Sydney Harbour Bridge and Alice Springs, albeit from 42,000 feet.

Better finish off by returning to roads. Road improvement is ongoing and continuous but it does result in them being in excellent condition, with no pot-holes: seriously, we failed to find any - no pot holes at all. However, we did spot a bit of top surface that had come away on South Island, but not to worry - it had a painted circle round it and I am sure it will have been repaired by now. Oh to be driving on New Zealand roads.

For those of you that have not been to New Zealand, it is certainly worth a visit if you can. It is a beautiful, clean, relaxing country with lovely people ... and nobody mentioned the B word!

**Dennis Clement**  
President



The editor is very grateful to **Graham Feest**, whose [Consultancy](#) publishes the monthly 'Traffic Safety Roads', for permission to reproduce this article on 'tailgating' from his May issue.

Graham is currently working as road safety consultant organising and leading accredited low cost high value events around the UK, speaking at national and local conferences/seminars and workshops both in the UK and overseas and providing support and guidance to other people drawing on more than forty years' experience in the field of road and traffic safety. He is a former County Road Safety Officer and Head of Road Safety for IAM RoadSmart and is currently, among other positions, Chairman of the Institute of Master Tutors of Driving and Chairman of RsSPA's National Road Safety Committee.

Graham has kindly given CSAM permission to reproduce future excerpts from 'Traffic Safety Roads', so his name will become very familiar to Members.

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## Tailgating

Our guest contributor this month is Tom Murphy who is the Chief Executive Officer of Airport Driving School Ltd based in Ireland. In his article he discusses the issue of Tailgating and expresses his own personal thought on the matter. Tailgating is a very common menace on roads today, both nationally and internationally and causes other road users to feel uneasy and creates a sense of insecurity. It can also be dangerous especially you are driving closely behind a large vehicle (such as a tractor-trailer, or gas tanker). If the leading vehicle decelerates suddenly there is a higher risk of causing a rear-end collision.

When drivers get too close behind other road users it immediately removes the thinking and braking distance away from the vulnerable driver. In such a scenario a driver must increase their distance from



the vehicle in front by at least double the distance. Therefore in the event of the driver in front having to slow suddenly the vehicle travelling in the rear will have time to slow down or if necessary stop comfortably. Remember a driver must never drive at a speed that they cannot stop well within the distance they see to be clear. At all times a driver needs a two second gap although driving experts within the driving tuition industry promote the 3 second rule as the norm. This will provide the driver with time to find an escape route and slow down to avoid an incident. Note the 3 second rule changes in accordance with road conditions; i.e. double the distance on wet roads and ten times the distance in freezing temperatures or other treacherous road conditions. There is a well-known saying within good driving practice "only a fool breaks the 2 second rule!". Speaking at a normal voice speed this should take about 2 seconds to say. Drivers should practice saying this phrase out loud. The more they practice, the more it will become second nature for the driver to assess their distance from the vehicle in front. The phrase should be said twice when it is wet or damp and five times in freezing or treacherous road conditions.

## Road Rage

This is something many drivers are experiencing on a daily basis and is most common in the form of tailgating. This can occur when the tailgating driver (the driver in the following vehicle) threatens to cause damage to the leading vehicle and its passengers by driving aggressively.



The aggressive driver may with use of the headlights and horn, bully the leading vehicle's driver to get out of the way. The driver being tailgated might not wish to comply especially if doing so would involve breaking the law such as by increasing speed beyond the speed limit or changing lanes without due regard for safety. Drivers must be educated to remain calm and not allow other motorists with uncontrolled aggression provoke them to leave their position on the road or reduce their safety gap. In their own interest however the driver must let tailgaters overtake at the earliest and safest opportunity. Drivers are by far more in control when watching a reckless driver in front rather than from behind!

## **When Does Tailgating Occur?**

Tailgating can occur because of a lack of perceived risk in so doing. Therefore motorists tailgating can be acting because of intentional road rage but other road users may be acting unconsciously or negligently. It is often the case that more experienced drivers are more likely to be involved in rear-end collisions possibly because they overestimate their skill and become complacent about allowing sufficient distance to avoid an incident.

## **Excuses for Tailgating**

It seems as if everyone comes up with excuses for driving too closely after they rear-end another road user. Sometimes they might seem like good excuses, but no excuse is a good excuse when the actions lead to a preventable collision or even a fatality. The mind set of tailgaters often carry the following perceptions:

- By following too closely, I'm encouraging the driver ahead of me to move out of my way. (This pressure will cause the driver to reach cracking point and be less likely to see or plan for the real hazards ahead.)
- I know how to control my vehicle, and I will be able to stop if I need to avoid a crash.
- I have really good reflexes so I don't have to worry about getting into a crash.
- I wanted the driver who just cut me up to notice that they caused a problem on the road.
- I've never had to worry about following too closely before as I do it all the time.
- The pressures of daily life; "I'm late for school, work, class, meetings etc."

The trouble with these kinds of excuses is that they can and often do lead to poor decisions and negligence on the road leading to collisions and deaths, and remember tailgating carries very serious driving offence convictions such as driving bans, penalty points and increased insurance premiums.

## **How Can Tailgating Be Prevented?**

Motorists need to practice driving in a proper manner by keeping a safe distance from the leading vehicle and applying the two second rule. I advise all drivers to lead by example. Drivers thrive on following the good driving practice of other motorists. It is commonly known that motorways are some of the safest roads in Europe. If this is the case; one must ask why were one in eight fatalities last year in the European Union caused by TAILGATING? Most humans travel on the roads daily, maybe as a driver, passenger or cyclist, but each person has a responsibility to deal properly with tailgaters. Excellent driving and car control require time and distance to anticipate and plan.



Anticipation and planning provides the motorist with the ability to:

- Anticipate – to predict something may happen such as a potential hazard ahead whilst driving and to allow the driver the time to alert other road users as to the actions the driver will need to take in order keep safe and all round them.
- Plan – to take appropriate action before the situation has occurred

Anticipation and planning are a driver's ability to be constantly aware of their surroundings. The more space a driver allows around themselves the more it will help them to have time to make safer informed decisions. This will result in very enjoyable driving, less stress, more fuel efficiency, be kinder to the environment but most of all a safer driver with other road users on the road sharing space which is limited in modern congested road infrastructure.

## Conclusion

I believe the two second rule should be applied and policed every day. Drivers must keep a safe distance from other road users whom they share the road with. Together we can make a difference.



## How do Court Reporters keep a straight face?

*More allegedly true witness statements from the US courts*

Attorney: This *myasthenia gravis*, does it affect your memory at all?

Witness: Yes.

Attorney: And in what ways does it affect your memory?

Witness: I forget.

Attorney: You forget? Can you give us an example of something you forgot?

Attorney: Now doctor, isn't it true that when a person dies in his sleep, he doesn't know about it until the next morning?

Witness: Did you actually pass the bar exam?

Attorney: The youngest son, the 20-year-old, how old is he?

Witness: He's 20, much like your IQ.

Attorney: Were you present when your picture was taken?

Witness: Are you kidding me ...?

## WELL IT SEEMED LIKE A GOOD IDEA AT THE TIME ...

### Michael Coombes 'enjoys' some track time at Castle Combe on an Audi Drivers' Day

Someone once told me that you should do something that makes you scared every day, and that this would help you feel alive! Well, I have no idea who exactly told me this because people's names just seem to enter my brain as scattered letters and invariably fail to reassemble themselves into any meaningful order when an attempt is made to associate them with a recognised face. However, I really quite liked the idea, and every now and again I remember this saying and it makes me get myself into a situation that I really wish I hadn't.



So when the Audi TT Owners' Club organised track time at the Castle Combe circuit for its members at the Audi Drivers' Day I decided to sign myself up, quite assured that this would be something that would make me feel alive. Having said that, I have to say that at this time I felt no fear. It would be true to say that my only track experience was an afternoon at Silverstone driving an Aston Martin for three laps with a guide from the 'Experience Day' sitting next to me making sure that I didn't do anything stupid. The thought of popping round a circuit with a few other Audi TT owners who cared far too much for their cars to be hacking round a track in any manic way was OK with me.

The problem with my life is that things rarely seem to go quite as planned. Now I won't bore you with the disasters that confront me on an almost daily basis, but I will recount this one episode at the Audi Drivers' Day, if you'll oblige me for just one moment. I guess it all started when I picked up my friend who had agreed, despite being an S2000 driver, to come along with me to this event. I arrived at his house at a time on a Saturday morning that I am quite unfamiliar with and to this day can't remember but understand it to have been well before 9 a.m. I had never witnessed any clock displaying an earlier time than this on a weekend before, but have been assured by others that some consider it to be quite normal. Of course, having been drinking Whiskey until the early hours the night before, my friend was not at all ready and so I waited in the car whilst he tried his best to rouse himself into a state not dissimilar to consciousness.

As we left I realised I'd left my track and entry passes behind and so headed back to my house to get them. On the way I was flagged down by a crazy woman in a black Mercedes whom I later found to be my wife who had given chase after seeing that I'd left them at the house. Apparently I was the second person in a Glacier Blue Audi TT that she'd forced off the road that morning in an attempt to get my paperwork to me.

So we eventually found the circuit, at which point I realised I needed fuel or I'd run out on the track which would be highly embarrassing. With the memory of the remap specialist's words ringing in my ears, I was hoping to find a Shell station or even a Tesco with 99 ron fuel, but the closest we could find was called 'Murky'? Perhaps 'Murco'?, or something like that anyway, and



this appeared to specialise only in fuel for the local tractors, combine harvesters and farmers' pick ups. We travelled further down the road to find an Esso station, and as I knew my tuning specialist couldn't see me from Staines I proceeded to fill the tank with the 97 ron stuff whilst whistling nonchalantly.

Arriving at the circuit, there was a massive turnout for the Audi TT stands, so I proceeded to park up and was very pleased to be given a front row slot as I needed to get out for the track. Perhaps all was going to go well after all.

A short while later I was tucking into a lovely sausage baguette with garlic and a cup of coffee when my local owners' club rep informed me that our track space was on in half an hour. This was a little alarming as I still needed to complete the paperwork, have a briefing, attend the sound check on the car and put the towing hook in the front of the car, etc, etc. So I hurried off to find the place to register. This was not easy: there were no signs and the rest of the track people from the owners' club had already left to queue for the track. I eventually found it and was squeezed into a briefing immediately.

The briefing was given by an older fellow, who proceeded to explain how this was the most dangerous circuit in the country and that one corner alone was responsible for 25% of all the motor racing accidents. Apparently there are no gravel run-offs and just a thin sliver of grass before you hit the tyre wall. I started to feel like my stomach was slipping a little lower than normal, and it was at this point that I began to think that I'd got myself into one of those situations that I'd really rather I hadn't once again.

After hurriedly completing forms to assure the circuit owners that anything that happened to me next would be entirely my own fault and promised I wouldn't sue them, I learned that I needed to hire a helmet too. This was all beginning to seem a bit more dangerous than I'd originally thought. I was offered two options - one that was so big it didn't move around when my head did or one that was so small it would restrict blood to my head. I chose the small one, thinking a restriction of blood might stop me thinking about the whole episode too much.

Back at the car, tow hook attached, car numbers stuck in windows and helmet on, I headed out to find the track. Now this should be an easy task for most, but for some reason they didn't sign the pit entrance; however, on my way through the crowds and stands I found the noise testing station, and so I drove in. I was asked to set the revs to 4,500 and so obliged, and was promptly asked if I'd actually turned the engine on yet. I took that comment to mean I had passed, and so headed off to the track. Well there was a gap under a bridge that looked like it went to the track so I started towards that, but soon heard someone shouting "Excuse me, sir" in quite a panicked voice. Catching his breath after he'd run to stop me, he explained that that entrance was the one used by cars coming **off** the circuit - but what do they expect if they don't sign these things properly ...?

So, finally I reached the pits, where they explained that I'd missed the owners' club session but could join in with the last session before lunch. Whilst I was sitting in the line waiting to go onto the track I really couldn't help but notice that the cars queuing with me seemed a little different. The Mk 2 TT RS in front of me appeared to have a full roll cage inside and numbers all over the doors and bonnet. Then there was the Audi Quattro in full race livery with driver and co-driver in radio contact. In fact to tell you the truth I couldn't see a single car without plastic windows for that matter, either, and a little maintenance wouldn't have gone amiss too: from the sound



of some of them their exhausts were broken. I gained the distinct impression that these people may not be as concerned about over revving or slight scratches on their cars as perhaps I or other TIOC members might be. However, these feelings of bottom clenching concern were beginning to fade as the small crash hat I was wearing started to do its work and prevent enough blood from reaching my head to allow normal thought any more - although the slightly faint and tingling sensation was moderately disturbing.

Then, as I looked through the flashing white stars in my eyes, I saw that the lights in the pit lane had turned green and we were off. Entering the track the cars in front hit their accelerators and shot off, as I did, right behind them. The DSG made up for a lack of power, and experience helped me to fly rapidly through the gears. Now this was good! I kept it up for a bit, and remembered to go steady for the first lap while I got used to the track and warmed the tyres up. Of course I'd spent the night before watching YouTube footage of people going round the track and learning about the corners. Quarry was the one I was warned about - a steep rise as you go round Avon Rise and over the crest. This would be your braking zone as you approach the sharp right corner (Quarry) but the car is now light and less balanced as it's just come over that crest of Avon Rise so can be tricky on braking. I took the safe route and started braking before the crest, and this seemed to work well.

However, for me the tricky bit was the chicanes. You see they put them in to slow the track down - for safety I guess - but this was the only place I nearly fell off the track. Accelerating out of Quarry you think, lovely, a nice bit of straight track, then a chevron arrow appears on the left with no visible corner. As you come closer you realise there's something there and feel you should slow down a little ... however, you should in fact, slow down a lot! As I fought to get the car round I could see someone else on the grass who clearly hadn't. After that slightly hairy moment I just kept going and loved every single minute of it. I forgot any feelings of apprehension I may have had before.

Afterwards, it was interesting to hear people talking about the markers for breaking points being very useful, as I hadn't seen any of those. It was really only after about 15 minutes that I remembered I should be looking out for flags and things like not driving over the pit lane exit line. I was quite convinced I'd missed the chequered flag at one point as I'd found a bit of space where there were no other cars, but then saw it and caught up with a few cars making sure I followed them to avoid not finding my way off the track. I made my way back to the owners' club stand and parked up in the front row where there were spaces left for us. I opened the bonnet, as this seemed to be the thing to do afterwards - I think to help cool the engines off. The problem with this is that being on the owners' club stand everyone seems to come and look at the engine to see which bits you've replaced with chrome or red piping and how shiny it is. I noticed their faces drop into disappointment as they looked in and soon decided to close the bonnet to prevent causing the club members any further distress.

Talking to the others as I picked the warm bits of shredded rubber from my front tyres, I agreed that this had been a fantastic day and whoever that person was who told me to do something that might scare me every day was quite right: on this occasion, it had made me feel alive, very alive.

**Michael Coombes**

*I read that 4,153,237 people got married last year.  
I don't want to make trouble, but shouldn't that be an even number?  
If you think nobody cares whether you're alive, try missing a couple of payments.*

## USEFUL RESOURCES AND LINKS

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<https://www.iamroadsmart.com/groups/centralsouthern>

### CSAM Newsletter page:

<https://www.iamroadsmart.com/groups/centralsouthern/about-us/our-community/newsletters>

### IAM website homepage:

<https://www.iamroadsmart.com/>

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

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

[Operation Crackdown](#), operated by **Sussex Police**, where drivers can report illegal/unsafe driving. Some pdf readers will try to block access to this site, but if you type 'www.operationcrackdown.org' into your search engine this should bring up the website

### Online Highway Code:

<http://www.highwaycodeuk.co.uk/>

(There are some other interesting links here, too)

### Online pdf of Highway Code to download:

<http://www.highwaycodeuk.co.uk/download-pdf.html>

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[https://www.amazon.co.uk/DVSA-Official-2015-Highway-Code/dp/0115533427/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1513299425&sr=8-1&keywords=highway+code](https://www.amazon.co.uk/DVSA-Official-2015-Highway-Code/dp/0115533427/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1513299425&sr=8-1&keywords=highway+code)

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