

CENTRAL SOUTHERN ADVANCED MOTORISTS

www.iamroadsmart.com/groups/centralsouthern

NEWSLETTER WINTER 2018

iam
RoadSmart

Official Provider

PRESIDENT

Dennis Clement

CSAM COMMITTEE

Chairman
01243 699976

Tony Higgs
chair.csamcar@iamgroups.org.uk

Vice Chairman
07786 266541

Tom Stringer
vicechair.csamcar@iamgroups.org.uk

Secretary
07455 826862

Dave Stribling
secretary.csamcar@iamgroups.org.uk

Treasurer
07920 534475

Duncan Ford OBE
treasurer.csamcar@iamgroups.org.uk

Chief Observer
01243 376569

Phil Coleman
chiefobserver.csamcar@iamgroups.org.uk

Membership
02392 595817

Matthew Pitt
membership.csamcar@iamgroups.org.uk

Social Media

Tom Stringer
media.csamcar@iamgroups.org.uk

OTHER OFFICERS

Associate Liaison
01489 808617

Glenda Biggs
associate.csamcar@iamgroups.org.uk

Newsletter & Website Editor
01243 533092

Tina Thurlow
newsletter.csamcar@iamgroups.org.uk



From the Editor

As winter approaches with all its little excitements and surprises on (and off) the roads, I'm pleased to provide Members with something to while away a little time when you're sitting in the warm and dry.

It's been a good year for CSAM. The report from Phil Coleman, our Chief Observer, is very encouraging: we are reaching out and attracting more people to improve their skills - increasingly important in these days when there are more and more cars travelling often too fast on roads many of which are really not fit for purpose.

Many thanks, as always, to all the contributors, and especially to Oliver Farley, whose well researched and eminently readable articles form such an important part of each issue.

For me the AGM was a great highlight among our events - a good social event, of course, but what a delight it was to listen to Paddy Hopkirk's recollections of his life in motor sport. I felt it was a huge privilege to hear him speak, and wish that more Members could have been there.

The next issue will, of course, be "Spring": doesn't that sound good ...!

Best wishes;

Tina



IN THIS ISSUE

CSAM Committee and other contacts	2
From the Editor and Contents	3
CSAM Events Diary	4
From the Chairman	6
Chief Observer's Corner	8
Membership Mumbblings	10
Associates' News	11
From Reflector: Blue Signs and Blue Lights - Beyond the Highway Code in the Blue Yonder	12
Useful resources and links	17
Review of CSAM events during the Autumn	18

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.csamcar@iamgroups.org.uk

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 18 November

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 20 November

7.30 for 7.45 pm

[BH](#), Burgess Hill

A talk on the work of **West Sussex Fire & Rescue**. A West Sussex Fire and Rescue fire-fighter from the Burgess Hill Fire Station will give us an insight into the daily life and working of the fire station. This should be fascinating - do come along!

Thursday 22 November

7.00 pm

[BC](#), Billingshurst

CSAM Committee Meeting - all Members are welcome.

Sunday 9 December

9.30 am - noon

[NCP](#), Chichester

Free Observed Runs - see 18 November or [website](#) for details.

Tuesday 8 January

7.45 for 8.00 pm

[PCC](#), Pagham

A talk from the **Road Safety Partnership**, when we will learn about, among other things, their new 360° Camera.

Thursday 17 January

7.00 pm

[BC](#), Billingshurst

CSAM Committee Meeting - all Members are welcome.

Thursday 14 March

7.00 pm

[BC](#), Billingshurst

CSAM Committee Meeting - all Members are welcome.

Tuesday 12 March

7.45 for 8.00 pm

[PCC](#), Pagham

Talk by Sally Botwright, Blue Badge Guide for London, on the **Old London Docks and New Docklands**.

Saturday 13 April

9.00 am - 4.30 pm

[BC](#), Billingshurst

Observer Training Day.

For further details of venues please see page 5

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

Free Observed Runs - see 18 November or [website](#) for details.

Sunday 12 May
9.30 am - noon
[NCP](#), Chichester

Free Observed Runs - see 18 November or [website](#) for details.

Thursday 16 May
7.00 pm
[BC](#), Billingshurst

CSAM Committee Meeting - all Members are welcome.

Saturday 18 May
7.00 pm
[BC](#), Billingshurst

CSAM Film Night. The title is yet to be announced, but this will be a very enjoyable Group evening: put the date in your diary now! It will be a ticketed event, so watch the website for further details. (NB - The start time is yet to be confirmed)

Sunday 9 June
9.30 am - noon
[NCP](#), Chichester

Free Observed Runs - see 18 November or [website](#) for details.

CP: Car Park

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

BH: [HAMSVA Committee Room](#), 2nd floor, Delmon House, 38 Church Road, RH15 9AE - above Lloyds Bank, entrance at rear of building.

Free car parking available in Church Road car park, behind offices.

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

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



Let's hope we don't get too much of this in the coming months ...

From the Chairman

I apologise to those who were at the AGM for reiterating below some of what I said on that occasion, but I consider it most important. To those who were unable to attend the AGM, you missed an excellent evening. Paddy Hopkirk gave us an amusing insight into his life with some excellent repartee illustrated with pictures and video. An astonishing gentleman at 80-plus.



Our succession planning for members of the Committee runs on a 3-year cycle. This means that the Secretary is due to retire at the next AGM as well as the Treasurer. CSAM is not unlike other organisations who struggle to keep going because there are not those among the membership willing to fill the various positions. I would ask you to think really hard as to whether you could help in any way. If you are able to help, we can let you have job descriptions to consider, knowing that we do have succession planning so that jobs should not last for ever.

Before I finish on this topic, two other positions become vacant at the end of 2018. They are the Team Leader positions in the East and the West. We thanked Jean Clark and Bernard Timbers at the AGM for all their work in these positions. These vacancies have led to an experimental year in 2019, as far as events are concerned. Events are likely to alternate between West and East, and some new venues will be tried. Please keep an eye on the [website](#) for up-to-date information.

While talking about the AGM I must mention one other retirement, that of Andy Wilson. For twenty years Andy has served both the Chichester Group and now CSAM as Membership Secretary. He has been the one person who has come into contact with all new Associates and those joining the Group from other Groups. Andy has done his job with a smile and offered wise counsel to his colleagues. He was the first recipient of the new President's Trophy, kindly donated by Dennis Clement. It is awarded by the Committee, and this year for 'outstanding service' both to the Chichester Group and CSAM. Andy, I know you are not going anywhere, but your contribution will be missed, particularly by the Committee. We all wish you a happy retirement, with the feeling that you can go anywhere whenever you want! I wish Matt Pitt all the best as he takes over as Membership Secretary.

For the first time we raffled two Skills Days at the AGM. They were won by John Chisholm and Joseph Cook. I hope you have a great time at Thruxton, gentlemen.

Something else we would like help with is towing the Mobile Display Unit. This is a valuable asset and we would like to make more use of it. I would like us to set up a register of members who are able to tow so that, depending on where it is to be used, we can ask someone in the appropriate area. To this end we are considering storing the unit more centrally: if you know of anywhere where a small caravan could be stored, ideally free of charge, please let me know.

We had the best Sunday morning on 14 October at Northgate car park that anyone present could remember, with 16 people coming for drives. Most of those coming for public assessments or Taster Drives said they would sign up. This is good news, with Associate numbers seeming to be very high and Observer numbers being maintained.

I suppose it is not too surprising that as winter approaches people are reminded to check their cars. Perhaps it's important that this happens at specific times of the year because it may have more impact but, as we all know, the POWDER-Y checks are not just for Christmas but for every

journey. Something else that has hit the papers is the eye test requirements. The police are checking this. It is interesting how far 20 metres is when measured out. I did this at Northgate car park, to make sure the Observers were testing those they were going for a drive with correctly. It was one of the things that featured at the recent Observer Training Day. Clearly our eye-sight is even more crucial as the nights draw in and many more drives will be undertaken in the dark.

If you have thought, while you read this article, 'yes, I could help run the Group' do give me a ring: it will be a pleasure to speak to you. In the meantime, may I wish everyone a merry Christmas and a happy New Year.

Tony Higgs
Chairman



PLEASE NOTE

The deadline for contributions to the next Newsletter is **Thursday 31 January 2019**



Nostalgia's not what it used to be ...

Chief Observer's Corner

So far this reporting year (starts September), we have had 5 Associates take their tests; two of them passed with a F1RST. This is a very good start to the year: the CSAM pass rate is something to be very proud of - well done to all Associates that have now become Full Members, and to the Observers who have provided the guidance.



We have 64 Associates assigned to Observers and who are currently working toward their tests. We have 13 Associates on our waiting list: apologies to the Associates for the wait and, thank you for your patience - we will get to all of you.

We have a total of 40 Observers, of which 16 are Nationals, 14 are Locals and 10 are Trainee Observers. If you have ever thought about becoming an Observer please give me a call: we are always looking for new Observers and have a couple of hot spots in the East of our region where your help would be much appreciated.

We held our second Observer Training of the year on 20th October. 26 Observers attended plus Colin Thaxter, one of our local examiners. We hold these events at the Billingshurst Centre, which is central for our area, provides lots of interesting route options and very good food.

The day started with a competition in the car park to see who could best guess what 20 metres looks like - you may have seen recent press reports that the police are cracking down on people who cannot pass the eye sight test. We always check our Associates before we drive with them, so it is important that we know how to set up the test. Kevin Hopkins, Tom Stringer and Duncan Ford (team 8) won the prize. Prizes were also presented to Oliver Farley, David Stevens and Maurice Upton for the number of Associates that they have got through their tests and for all the other hard work that they do in and around the Group. The Observer Team is proud to provide help with whatever, and wherever, the Group needs us.

We continue to tweak the revised Observer Training process through the rollout and have already made some important improvements; unfortunately this means yours truly has more typing to do. Indeed, recently a lot of us have had to spend a lot of time discussing these changes and I thought this might give some of those people a chuckle or two.

The regular Northgate Sunday runs have continued. We have seen a steadily increasing number of people taking advantage of the runs. In October we had 17 runs - quite a few as a result of people that we spoke to at the Emsworth Show. It just goes to show that it pays to advertise. If you would like to have your driving assessed please contact Glenda Biggs to book a session.

A photograph of a white card with black text. The text is a parody of the lyrics to the song 'Santa Claus is Coming to Town'.

He's making a list
He's checking it twice
He's gonna find out who's naughty or nice
Santa Claus is in contravention of
article 4 of the General Data Protection
Regulation (EU) 2016/679

Phil Coleman
Chief Observer

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](#).



Paul Singer happily receiving his ADT certificate from Tony Higgs during the CSAM event on 13 November



UNDERSTANDING ENGINEERS

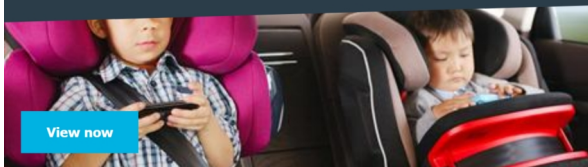
*What is the difference between mechanical engineers and civil engineers?
Mechanical engineers build weapons and civil engineers build targets.*

Normal people believe that if it ain't broke, don't fix it.

Engineers believe that if it ain't broke, it doesn't have enough features yet.

Tips and blogs

Our media team provides stories, comments and advice around the issues facing drivers and riders on the road today.



*There are, as always, some very interesting and useful tips and blogs on the IAM website.
[Here](#) is a link to the page.*



*What to give the man who has everything?
Penicillin.*

Membership Mumblings!

Those hoping for the latest Membership Mumblings from Andy may find similar phrases below, but it's the end of an era as I have recently been handed over the reins to continue and celebrate his 20-year legacy. He has left some very large boots to fill and a high standard to maintain. The willing support from Andy and the rest of the Committee is gratefully received; I cannot thank you enough, and look forward to working with you all.



Where to start ... well, maintaining the usual trend, let's start with the membership figures. Central Southern Advanced Motorists has 307 Full Members, 72 Associate Members and 1 'Friends' Member, giving a total current membership of 380.

I would also like to send a huge warm welcome to our new members to Central Southern Advanced Motorists: Amanda Stafford, Jacqueline O'Tolle-Quin, Rita Hendy, Mike Rusby, Alice Du Port, Lisa Elliot, Geoff Osborn, Brian Dean, Aaron Smith, Ros Bower, Maurice Kifford, Michael Feetham, Jakub Dano, Fay Caddy, Alex Willis, Carol-Anne Daniels, Thomas Coghlan and Graham Baker who have joined as Associate Members, and also Martin Leworthy, Richard Johnson, Robert Johnson, Jan Rowley, Simon Wingett, Philippa Gray, George Hillman and Robert Maby who have joined as Full Members since the last Newsletter's editorial deadline. I look forward to meeting you all in person at various events the Group will be holding.

I have just returned from a holiday in Peru. Whilst mostly trekking through the jungles and over the Inca trail, providing some of the most amazing experiences of my life, it did expose me to a 10-hour coach journey driving through cities, cross country and at high altitude. While the highways allowed for progressive driving, the cities were a free-for-all, with drivers creating their own lanes, the most forceful drivers moving into gapless areas. It has made me appreciate just how well organized our road systems are. I was impressed with the smart traffic lights in Peru, informing road users and pedestrians how long they have before the lights change. In an organized system these would work very well, and I look forward to the results and later implementation of the ones being trialled in the UK.

Back to reality, I have returned to work and also look forward to embark on my rôle as Membership Secretary. Members, or drivers wishing to become members, or anyone requiring more information can reach me by email at membership.csamcar@iamgroups.org.uk or by 'phone on 02392 595817.

Safe driving;

Matthew Pitt
Membership Secretary



Why?

Why don't you ever see the headline 'Psychic wins lottery'?

Why is 'abbreviated' such a long word?

Why is it that doctors and lawyers call what they do 'practice'?

Why is the man who invests all your money called a broker?

Associates' News

Advanced Driving Test results since the last Newsletter are as follows:



Associate	From	Observer	Examiner
Brenda Edge	Crawley	John Chisholm	Andrew Pike
Paul Singer	Rottingdean	Anthony Platts	Andrew Pike
* Joseph Cook	Midhurst	Gordon Egerton	Colin Thaxter
Vicky Slater	East Grinstead	David Stevens	Andrew Pike
Claire Card	Shoreham by Sea	Derek Williams	Richard Mansfield
** Christopher Kent	Midhurst	Phil Coleman	Colin Thaxter
* Martin Leworthy	Crawley	John Chisholm	Andrew Pike
Martin Secrett	Henfield	Oliver Farley	Adrian Short
Keith Watson	Havant	Matthew Pitt	Colin Thaxter

* Passed with a F1RST

** Members will be interested to know that Christopher is aged 19. He joined in June, hoping to complete his course by September as he was starting university. His parents and brothers are advanced motorists and he wanted to be the same. Special congratulations, Christopher!

As always, many congratulations to our hard-working Observers and Associates.

There has been a lot of activity, with nine passes including three with F1RSTS, which is a great achievement.

It has been interesting comparing the ages of some of our Associates - some very senior and one who is very young and who received a F1RST pass into the bargain.

Phil Coleman, our Chief Observer, has done a cracking job keeping me up-to-date with the progress of each Associate and advising how best to approach some of the allocations.

We will miss Andy Wilson, who has always had all the relevant information at his fingertips. He has patiently helped me to sort out data which I had been unable to retrieve when my computer was 'playing up'. I wish him well in his well-earned retirement, and look forward to working with Matt Pitt, our new Membership Secretary.

I have enjoyed chatting with our new Associates in order to gain necessary information so that I can place them with the appropriate Observer. They come from all sorts of interesting backgrounds and have some interesting stories to impart.

Some people who work full-time can only go out at the weekends, and of course our Observers have private lives too, so weekends can be a bit tricky. However, it all gets sorted out in the wash.

I note that the Sunday free observed runs at Northgate Car Park are popular after events have been held where CSAM have exhibited. The feed-back has been encouraging.

Thank you to all Observers for keeping me updated, which enables my job to flow more easily.

Best wishes;

Glenda Biggs
Associate Liaison



BLUE SIGNS AND BLUE LIGHTS:

Beyond the Highway Code in the Blue Yonder



Like them, loathe them, they're here to stay and we use them by the billion. That is, by the billion passenger miles per annum. Everything about motorways is bigger and better than other roads, including the scale by which we measure them. They account for about 4% of the road network by length in England and Scotland and carry 20% of all traffic. Yet only 6% of fatalities are attributable to them. They are also easily the preferred mode for truck movements: 50% of all lorry traffic is by motorway.

So far, so encouraging.

Well, what is a motorway?

The Highway Code (HC) doesn't say. Its ten pages on the subject simply kicks off by stating "Many other Rules apply to Motorway driving ...". A cursory search on the internet fails to yield a definition either. We have to be content with that old fall-back position used by geneticists trying to define a species: a species (or a motorway) is what we say it is.

Of course we all know when they began in England with the opening of the M1 in 1959. The real aficionados will tut tut, and claim the Preston by-pass which opened in 1958 gave Lancashire, and Britain, the first motorway. No matter. The M1 was the first full length one, and long after our Continental friends had opened theirs. The famed Autobahnen appeared in the Reich in the 1930s, and Italy's autostade are triumphs of engineering, even if not all their bridges have stood the test of long use.

The shrill press at the time criticised the UK authorities for being slow to follow where others had demonstrably led, yet as is often the case the facts are more complex and policies more nuanced than fits the simple requirements of populist headlines.

Yes indeed, Germany had its motorways, though they did not live up totally to our concept of a motorway. Most of those built before WWII were little better than our dual carriageways with restricted access, and a glance at the map shows their real purpose: most pointed straight as a die at the eastern borders. They were the launch pad for motorised military action rather than convenience for the private motorist. These early motorways still made up about 40% of the German total until well into the 1980s.

Now back to us and the present day.

Motorways are multi-laned carriageways, with a central reservation - a term of great amusement for our North American friends with First Nation citizens in mind - which restrict the persons and vehicles who may use them, and where specialised signalling prevails. Multi-lane can mean anything from two each way to any number desired, and the police now call them by number, counting from the left, so we have lane one, two three and four.

Or more.

Or changing when a smart motorway (Active Traffic Management) switches the hard shoulder into use as a running lane; now lane one becomes lane two and the hard shoulder is lane one.



All very obvious, but the HC says nothing about it, referring only to left-hand and right-hand lanes.

You're driving on a motorway and there's commercial traffic ahead. Are heavy vehicles forbidden from lane three?

Most of us would instinctively say yes, they are. But rule 265 of the HC states that heavy trucks plus some other vehicles must not use the right hand lane on a motorway with three or more lanes. That's lane three, or four or five or six on a multi-lane motorway. If you're using a rule of thumb which says trucks are forbidden lane three you'd better revise it on the multi-lanes.

Which brings us to the Theory of Clusters, or Driving in the Hole.

Next time you're on a motorway, look out for commercials. By commercials, we mean any vehicle which is not a car and is bigger, so coaches, trucks and vans with trailers are all included. You'll notice that these vehicles soon acquire a cluster of cars around them, all travelling together with the cars gradually filtering past the moving obstacle. Usually the cars are too close to each other, bunching up behind the commercials and pulling out carelessly to squeeze into gaps in outer lanes to file past. There's too much traffic in too little space, not enough distance between them and less time to react than is prudent.

Glance in your rear mirror. You may well see a similar grouping about a quarter mile behind, all doing the same. So here's your strategy. Back off a little from the group in front, then close up as the cluster moves through, pass the commercials yourself and then adjust speed to drive in the hole between groups. You won't always stay at the maximum speed, or even the highest speed you might in the circumstances, but you will have much less traffic around you and a much more relaxing drive. And if the unfortunate does occur, you've more time to react, more space to avoid collisions and less probability of being involved at all.

Speed and space differentials are the main considerations in handling motorway traffic. Speed as such is not the problem; inappropriate speed is. Space is generous across the lanes, but distance is travelled in much shorter time so more space is needed. Lengthen the gap between you and the vehicle in front, and lengthen it even more in the rain.

Taking motorway driving as a whole, over a journey of some hours we can resolve to be guided by the six problems of M-driving.

Risks: junctions, overtaking, close-following

Time: light, dark, in-between

As most M-driving is spent with everyone going in the same direction and separated from oncoming traffic, the main areas of danger are where there is cross movements, and most of those come at entrances and exits. Approaching an exit, take a glance well in advance and check if there's anyone likely to slice across you for the exit as you drive past it. Minimise the danger by taking lane two if it's clear. The exit plunger from speedy lane three has less prospect of clipping you. Beyond the exit and before the entrance slip road, glance again and see if there's traffic coming down to join you. Give them room. Move over to two if you can. This time the entry plunger has more chance in case of misjudgement, and you've got more space to manoeuvre. A glance always includes a quick look over your right shoulder.



Be as careful of an overtake as you would be on a non-motorway A road. Be as confident as you can that the other vehicle knows you're there and adjust accordingly. Remember the cluster group? Frequently, at least one or two of the cluster get 'wiped off' on the back of the trucks: that is, they are left stranded behind the commercials with insufficient space to see round or speed up to overtake. Many risk pulling out anyway. So if the distance between the stuck followers and the trucks is short and getting shorter by the second, you know one of them is bound to make a break for it and into your path. Glance in your mirror and hang back a bit. A little acceleration control works wonders and smoothes your passage, and theirs.

Close following is probably the most irritating of all motorway ill-manners. It's often done just to be annoying, usually when you're doing close to seventy in lane two and the follower thinks you should be faster. He hounds you for a while and then lunges past, sometimes ostentatiously swinging across your path into lane one and back out again just to show how smart he is. If there is space and a clear chance, you're better off moving over and letting him go, even at the price of having to negotiate back out from the commercials in lane one; without that space you just have to double the space between you and the car in front so that the close follower can have extra time to react when you do have to brake. In effect, you have to take some responsibility for his safety, and yours. His loudness is unsettling but you must reduce his vulnerability by adjusting your own space and distance. Sometimes the highly vulnerable are not the people you first think of, or even much care for, but collision avoidance is the principle trumping all other emotions.

Now for light, dark and in between. Speed and distance are our primary guides as we gather information, and observation rests at the centre of all we do. The M-way problem is that the usual clues provided by lateral contrasts are either extended further apart or are missing altogether. We can estimate quite readily the speed of other vehicles in urban or semi-urban circumstances, and even country lanes are made easier by the proximity of hedges and trees. The closer a passing feature is, the faster we think we're going. Most of us make allowances and adjust accordingly.

M-ways are different, because not only are the edges further away and less obvious but the lane markings are further apart and often seem to tick past hypnotically as we progress. That progress can slide deceptively upwards, and our speed can advance way beyond what we think or feel. We need to regularly repeat IPSGA to ourselves and add in "far, near, here and rear" = distance, close, instruments, mirror. You can harmlessly practise speed calculation by observation by trying it out from a train window. Guess the speed and then watch out for the white distance markers which are a set fraction of a mile apart. Record the seconds between and see if your guess at the train's speed was close or not. In a car, of course, the speedometer does it for you, though enhancing your own inner sense of speed is always a good skill.



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

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

The Newsletter and its contents are copyright of
Central Southern Group of Advanced Motorists

Registered Charity No.1079142 ~ ©2018 ~ All Rights Reserved

In daylight, dangers are more obvious, and M-ways are safer roads than most. A potential problem can be their long continuous direction. Travelling for hours westwards can leave you dazzled by the setting sun, or your mirror set gleaming by the light of dawn. Calculate a coffee break to reduce your exposure, and be sharply aware of the worst hazard of the in-between times - the careless driver with no lights while everyone else has. He's a menace and near invisible, yet surprisingly common, worst luck.

Then there's the dark. Darkness brings distinct advantages over daylight and a journey by night can be easier and safer than during the hectic daytime. At night all traffic has lights, so the lane plungers mentioned above at the exit and entrances to M-ways cast an apron of light ahead of them. That warns you of their presence well before they're in potential conflict with you and you can be wary of their movements.

Unfortunately, the close follower becomes even more of a bother at night, as his bright lights may be used to intimidate and you have to evade his lane promptly before the unwelcome lights distract you from the traffic in front.

Estimating the distance to the car in front when many spatial clues are hidden in darkness isn't easy. M-way bridges come in most usefully at this point, because it's quite easy to count the seconds which elapse from when the lights sweep the bridge in front and when you reach it; with practise, you can use those well spaced out lane markers if it's a question of a bridge too far. At M-way speeds a vehicle at a modest pace becomes a moving obstacle, and a stationary one in the dark can be lethally difficult to spot in time. There's just the dark and red tail-lights ahead until all too suddenly you're enmeshed right in them.



We've said 'like them or loathe them', so which M-ways do drivers like or loathe?

The A66 from Penrith to Scotch Corner, all 115 miles of it, has been termed Britain's favourite motorway, with the M40 London to Birmingham coming second. The reasons given have little to do with the countryside they pass through and a lot to do with simple things such as lack of debris, good service stations and good lighting.

No prizes for guessing the least popular M-way, which as you all know is the much derided M25. At 122.5 miles long, it's the world's longest ring road and one of the busiest. Junctions 15 to 14 link the M4 and the A3113, and carry 114 vehicles a minute, or 165,000 a day. Despite being a motorway, the average speed on the M25 is, suitably enough, only 25 mph. The second least liked M-way is Britain's longest, the M6, and both it and the M25 are criticised for debris and poor signage. Lack of speed cameras is regularly cited as a flaw, which we might well take as shorthand for too much speeding, and speeding which goes unpunished at that.

To finish, we'll add the record for the longest traffic jam in England: it happened on 17 August 1988, when a jam between junctions 8 and 9 of the M25 was 22 miles long. I don't know how long it took to clear, but it helps clarify why I always carry an emergency pack in the boot: food, a drink and a bottle for unavoidable waste. A 22-mile jam and hours to while away sound like everybody's grimmest journey, preferably avoided.

Motorways - like them or loathe them, we still need them.

Oliver Farley
Reflector

A police officer pulls over a speeding car. The officer says, "I clocked you at 80 miles per hour, sir."

The driver says, "Goodness, officer, I had it on cruise control at 60; perhaps your radar gun needs calibrating."

Not looking up from her knitting, the wife says: "Now don't be silly, dear - you know that this car doesn't have cruise control."

As the officer writes out the ticket, the driver looks over at his wife and growls, "Can't you please keep your mouth shut for once?!"

The wife smiles demurely and says, "Well dear you should be thankful your radar detector went off when it did or your speed would have been higher."

As the officer makes out the second ticket for the illegal radar detector unit, the man glowers at his wife and says through clenched teeth, "Woman, can't you keep your mouth shut?"

The officer frowns and says, "And I notice that you're not wearing your seat belt, sir. That's an automatic £75 fine."

The driver says, "Yeah, well, you see, officer, I had it on, but I took it off when you pulled me over so that I could get my license out of my back pocket."

The wife says, "Now, dear, you know very well that you didn't have your seat belt on. You never wear your seat belt when you're driving."

And as the police officer is writing out the third ticket, the driver turns to his wife and barks, "WILL YOU PLEASE SHUT UP??"

The officer looks over at the woman and asks, "Does your husband always talk to you this way, Ma'am?"

"Only when he's been drinking."



USEFUL RESOURCES AND LINKS

CSAM website Homepage:

<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>

Searching depends on the device and the pdf reader in use

Hard copies of the **Highway Code** may be purchased here:

https://www.amazon.co.uk/DVSA-Official-2015-Highway-Code/dp/01115533427/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1513299425&sr=8-1&keywords=highway+code

but this is printed on dead trees and has no search facility

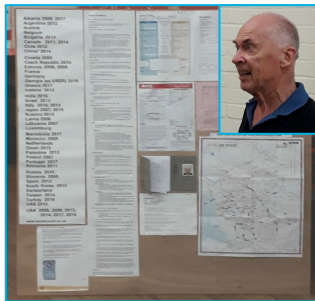
For anyone who may be interested in becoming an Observer:

<https://www.iamroadsmart.com/campaign-pages/end-customer-campaigns/becomeanobserver>



CSAM Events during the Autumn

To read about the events which we've enjoyed since publication of the Autumn Newsletter, simply click on the links below. Do read about the events, and about Advanced Test passes and so on, on the [News](#) page of CSAM's [website](#). The 'thumbnails' below give only the smallest flavour of what - if you weren't able to get along any event - you missed!



*Pagham, 11 September - **Driving and hiring cars abroad:** an illustrated talk by CSAM Member Bevis Billingham. Read about it [here](#)*



*Destination Henfield, 14 August - **A classic summer evening's drive:** an 'unofficial' event organised, just for the fun of it, by Gary Smith. Read more about it [here](#)*



*Burgess Hill, 18 September - **A talk covering all aspects of road safety,** given by **Graham Feast***

iam
RoadSmart



*Billingshurst, 9 October - **CSAM 2018 AGM,** with a hugely enjoyable talk by **Paddy Hopkirk MBE**, who kindly agreed also to present the awards. Read about the event [here](#) and see the pictures overleaf. (Members may also be interested to see this [YouTube clip](#) found by Malk)*

CSAM AGM, 9 October



*The President's Trophy: **Andy Wilson***



*The Geering Salver: **Tom Stringer***



*Observer of the Year: **Kevin Hopkins***



*The Vice President's Trophy: **Ros Parker***



*Certificates of Appreciation: **Jean Clark** (notable to be present) and **Bernard Timbers** (pictured)*



*Advanced Test Pass, with a **FIRST**: **Joseph Cook**, now a Full Member of the Group*

*The Raffle was won by **John Chisholm** and **Joseph Cook**, each of whom won a Skills Day at Thruxton*