



# Newsletter ~ August 2016

**St Helens Group of Advanced Motorists**  
*Working to make our roads safer every day...*



## Chair's Remarks

Hello everybody and welcome to the August edition of the Newsletter.

Congratulations to Stephen Molyneux, Jack Trainer and Mark Haslam on their recent Test passes. Mark obtained a FIRST which is a fantastic achievement. Also congratulations to Lee Westhead who has been appointed as an IAM Examiner. Lee took on this role under the condition that he could continue to be our Lead National Observer and be involved with Associate Training. This was accepted so Lee will not be the IAM Examiner for our Associates to avoid the obvious conflict of interest. Lee has also been appointed a RoSPA so congratulations for this as well.

The Group's AGM on the 9th June went very well and we had the pleasure of welcoming the Mayor and Mayoress of St. Helens, Councillors David and Jannette Banks, to the meeting.

Our guest speaker was David Collins from the North West Air Ambulance (NWAA). David said that that a high proportion of incidents attended were road collisions serious enough to require an air ambulance for speed of on-site doctor attendance or hospital delivery and that, with two bases and three helicopters

being available in the North West a vast area can be covered. Unfortunately a site in Wirral has not yet been found for a third base which could extend the range considerably. Of the three helicopters used, two are coloured bright yellow, as a gesture to the AA who were originally sponsors and the third is a maroon/red provided by the Bond Helicopter group when becoming surplus to requirements. The raffle at the AGM produced £68 for the NWAA.

On Sunday 17th July, IAM Northern Region Quality Manager Peter Serhatlic visited the Group and gave the Observer team a presentation about the new RoadSmart Advanced Driver programme in which all our Associates will be engaging from September. The following week the Observer team met again to discuss how we plan to implement the new scheme. The plans are now in place for a smooth implementation.

As I mentioned in the last Newsletter, the Group has a new website and in the last two months the site has been further updated. The address is:

[www.shgam.org.uk](http://www.shgam.org.uk)

The website is now largely complete but if you have any ideas for further improvement

then let me know. What I think would be nice to see on the site would be some testimonials/experiences of members who have done one of our Courses. What motivated you to do an Advanced Driving Course? What were your experiences of doing a Course and, having completed the Course, what changed attitudes and skills remain with you to this day?

The website also contains an updated list of Group events so please check periodically and if you have any suggestions for Group events then let Kay Heppenstall know.

Our next Course starts in September and thanks to all those involved with our promotional event at TESCO on Saturday 30th July. We are in the process of putting together a list of names of those joining us in September. If you know of anyone who may like to do a Course then let them know or, if you have a suggestion about how we can promote our Courses, then let me know.

Well, that's it from me. Good driving and good observing.

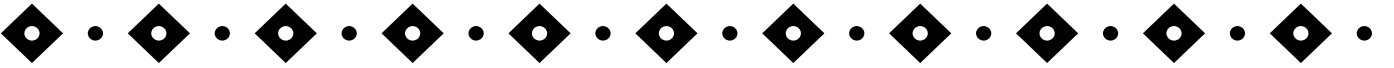
**Mark Farnworth,  
Group Chairman**



**St Helens Group  
Celebrating  
30+  
Years**

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## Associate Coordinator's Corner

Congratulations to Stephen Molyneux, Mark Haslam and Jack Trainer on their recent Test Passes. Well done Mark for getting a F1RST. I would also like to give my congratulations to Oliver Fullerton, Phil Sharples, and Fred Fitter who won the Driver of the Year, Observer of the Year, and Associate of the Year awards respectively.

I would also like to congratulate Lee Westhead on his appointment to the role of IAM Examiner. Lee, of course, will not be testing anyone from our Group due to his involvement with us as Lead Observer.

I must also thank Paul Griffiths who has stepped down from the position of IAM Examiner. Paul took several

*Meet The Examiner* Evenings for us and was always very thorough. He also put everyone at ease as he covered the details of the Test. He also conducted many of our Tests and proved himself to be a very able and fair Examiner. He will always be welcome at the St Helens Group.

As always, I am writing this before most of those who joined the Spring Course have taken the Test. However, I would like to thank the Associates for the commitment they have shown, in both their regular attendances on Sunday mornings and at the Training Evenings.

This Course, like the last one, has been very busy. There have been

occasions when an Observer has had to take out two Associates, and have done so without complaint. For that I do thank them and, indeed, all the Observers for their support during the Course.

Naturally, I hope that all our Associates have passed (or will soon pass) the IAM Test. However, if that is not the case, please don't give up! You will be welcome to our Autumn Course, where you can take as many Observed runs as needed.

**Alan Prescott**  
**Associate Coordinator**

## AGM Photos and Competition Winners

The Group's AGM was held on Thu 9th June at the ibis Hotel, Haydock.



The Mayor of St. Helens, Councillor David Banks and the Mayoress, Councillor Jannette Banks with Group Chair Mark Farnworth



Driver of the Year: Oliver Fullerton (right) with Competition judge Mark Farnworth



Associate of the Year: Fred Fitter (left) with Competition judge Alan Prescott



David Collins (Right) with Group Secretary John Matthews



Observer of the Year: Phil Sharples (right) with Competition judge Alan Phillips





# Autumn 2016 IAM RoadSmart Advanced Driver Course

## Course Programme – Starting September 2016

*The Introduction and System Evenings will be held at 8pm at the ibis Styles Hotel, Haydock and the Meet an Examiner Evening at the Millennium Centre, St. Helens Town Centre. For all Observed Runs, meet at the ibis hotel for 10.00am.*

### Thu 8th Sept - Introduction Night

Sun 11th Sept - Run 1, Human Factors / Core Driving Skills (1)

Sun 18th Sept - Run 2, Human Factors / Core Driving Skills (2)

Sun 25th Sept - Run 3, Junctions and Roundabouts

### Thu 29th Sept - The System of Car Control

Sun 2nd Oct - Run 4, Bends and Cornering /Overtaking (1)

Sun 9th Oct - Demonstration drive

Sun 16th Oct - Run 5, Motorways and Dual Carriageways / Overtaking

Sun 23rd Oct - Run 6, Bends and Cornering /Overtaking (2)

### Thu 27th Oct - Meet an Examiner / Revision Night

Sun 30th Oct - Run 7, All road types / Application of System / Timing and Flow (1)

Sun 6th Nov - Run 8, All road types / Application of System / Timing and Flow (2)

Sun 13th Nov - Run 9, Consolidation run if waiting for test

Sun 20th Nov - Run 10, Consolidation run if waiting for test

### Congratulations to:

Stephen Molyneux,  
Jack Trainer  
Mark Haslam

on passing the  
Advanced Driving Test

## Notice Board

### Visit to the Radio City Tower and the Echo Wheel of Liverpool

**Saturday 6th August**

Do you have a head for heights? If you do then why not join us for our outing in August to the Radio City Tower, followed by a visit to the Echo Wheel of Liverpool and an optional bite to eat at Liverpool 1. The entry fee for the Radio City Tower is £5.50 for adults with concessions at £4.50. For the Echo Wheel of Liverpool it is £9 for adults & £7.50 for concessions. Or we could have a private capsule for up to 6 adults for £45. Contact Kay Heppenstall on 07843 051468 if you plan to attend.



### Lancashire Canal Cruise

**Bank Holiday Monday  
29th August**

Departing from Ring O'Bells Lane, Lathom, L40 5TE at 12 noon.

The price is £14.50 per person & includes a glass of sparkling wine, tea/coffee, a 1.5 hr cruise & sandwiches/scones.

We will meet at 11.30am

Please contact Kay Heppenstall if you are your interested. Places are limited.



[www.lancashirecanalcruises.com](http://www.lancashirecanalcruises.com)

### Ormskirk MotorFest

**Sunday 28th August**

Now entering its sixth year, Ormskirk MotorFest is run and organised by Aintree Circuit Club in conjunction with West Lancashire Borough Council. St. Helens Group Members and Sefton Group Members are attending the event and will be based in a gazebo in Coronation Park.

### Mersey Tunnel Walk

**10am Saturday 24th  
September**

£6 per person

A unique behind the scenes tour

- See the Control Room in Operation.
- Go beneath the city and walk under the Tunnel road surface
- Visit a new Emergency Escape Refuge.
- See the giant ventilation fans working.

Contact Kay Heppenstall

## IAM News Releases

### **IAM RoadSmart Chief Executive Sarah Sillars OBE has been named in Autocar's Great British Women in the Car Industry 2016.**

**13th July 2016**

The awards, which named 100 inspirational British women from the automotive industry, were celebrated at a reception at the SMMT on Friday (08/07) afternoon.



Sarah was recognised in the Executive category, alongside leading industry figures such as Alison Fowler, Ford of Europe, Nikki King OBE, Honorary Chairman of Isuzu Truck UK and Wendy Williams, Chief Executive and Company Secretary of the IAAF (Independent Automotive Aftermarket Federation).

Sarah joined IAM RoadSmart in February 2015, having previously overseen the commercialisation of Semta, the sector skills council for engineering and advanced manufacturing. She has a long and illustrious career within the automotive sector, having been CEO and Executive Chair of the Institute of the Motoring Industry (IMI). They made her an Honorary Fellow and Vice President on her departure in 2012. She was awarded an OBE in the Queen's Birthday Honours List in June 2008 for services to skills training and the retail motor industry.

Sarah has more than 25 years of experience within the motor and retail industries, having begun her

career with Marks & Spencer, managing stores in England and later as Operations Director at automotive management consultancy Anne Gray Associates.

Sarah said: "What can I say? It's a fantastic honour to be recognised alongside so many brilliant women, from across the industry. Automotive is a great sector to work in, because of the diversity of roles and the opportunities to progress. Just look at the Autocar list!

"While the car industry is often perceived as male dominated, these awards demonstrate that there are opportunities for all".

### **UK motorists downbeat over EU exit – IAM RoadSmart survey finds**

**14th July 2016**

IAM RoadSmart members have a pessimistic view of how the country's exit from the European Union will affect them as drivers, according to a survey.

The road safety charity conducted a poll of over 1,000 members and visitors to its website between 27 June and 12 July, asking their views of how the decision by UK voters to leave the EU would affect them as drivers.

Of the 1,093 respondents, when asked if they thought the exit would have an impact on drivers and riders in terms of costs, nearly 50% said prices would rise. In contrast less than 4% said they would fall.

In terms of road safety, UK drivers and riders did not feel leaving the EU would change things for the better. Nearly 65% said there would be no difference, while 16% said road safety would deteriorate. Some 11% said road safety would improve.

When asked if the UK would have a better influence over other key issues affecting motorists and riders, again they were not convinced leaving the EU would improve the situation.

Slightly over 40% thought there would no change in the UK's ability to control prices at the fuel pumps as a result of our exit. Again slightly

over 40% thought there would be no change in vehicle emissions when we leave.

And more than half of those surveyed thought there would no change in standards of driver and rider training and testing.

Neil Greig, IAM RoadSmart director of policy and research, said:

"It appears that UK motorists are not fully convinced that they will benefit from us leaving the EU. At the very best they feel nothing will change, but at worst they think they will lose out. Although our survey paints a rather downbeat picture of how UK motorists feel it does give us a strong remit to represent their needs as key Brexit issues are debated in the months ahead. Ensuring that past road safety and air quality gains are maintained will be a key challenge but we can now explore new ideas to regain the downward trend in road deaths and serious injuries on British roads. Ideas such as reduced VAT on safety kit, incentives for training and embedding good road safety practice into procurement rules are all now firmly back on the table. It's an interesting time to be in road safety."

### **Don't GO searching for Pikachu on the M25, says IAM RoadSmart**

**14th July 2016**

With the world going Pokemon GO crazy, UK road safety charity IAM RoadSmart is urging motorists not to go on the hunt for Squirtle on Spaghetti Junction, Jigglypuff on the Hangar Lane gyratory or Magikarp on the M4. The new Pokemon GO mobile phone craze has swept the world





## IAM News Releases

this week, and is available in the UK today (14 July) – but IAM RoadSmart has reminded drivers not to play the game while at the wheel of their cars. The game allows you to seek out Pokemon characters in real life settings via your mobile phone. But IAM RoadSmart fears that young drivers especially could go on the search for Pikachu and his friends on the roads.

Samson Ruwangu, IAM RoadSmart digital content executive, 23, said: "Kids and adults alike are going crazy for this game. But the risk is that some people are going to be playing it at the wrong time – and driving a car is the last place you should be looking for Pidgey, Rattata or the others.

"I nearly tripped over playing this game. Pokemon GO makes you concentrate on catching characters and it takes both hand and eye coordination." Research conducted last year by IAM RoadSmart showed the extent to which smartphone use had become an addiction to some.

Eight per cent of drivers admitted to driving while using a video-calling application such as FaceTime and Skype to make and receive video calls, rising to 16 per cent among 18 to 24 year olds.

It found nine per cent of drivers admitted to taking a selfie while driving within 'the last month'. This increases to 15 per cent of young drivers aged 18-24 and 19 per cent of 25-35 year olds.

Women are less selfie obsessed than men, with just five per cent of women citing they have taken a selfie while driving compared to 12 per cent of men.

Samson added: "While looking out for Eevee, Weedle and the rest is great fun, it is important to keep concentration on what matters – and that's keeping your eyes on the road. Psyduck can wait for later."

### Coping with driving in wet weather: advice from IAM RoadSmart

23rd June 2016

With wet weather engulfing the UK today, IAM RoadSmart looks at how drivers can best prepare for driving in heavy rain.



Richard Gladman, head of driving standards said: "Before setting off, check for any weather alerts, traffic updates or planned road closures that may affect your journey. Only travel in extreme adverse weather conditions if it is really necessary.

"Check the lights and windscreen wiper blades are clean and working properly. Also check the tyre pressure and tread depth to ensure the best possible grip on wet surfaces.

"Plan your route in advance and try to avoid any roads that are prone to flooding, even if it extends your journey.

"Heavy rain often leads to damaged road surfaces and puddles can hide deep potholes – look for clues such as loose chunks of tarmac. "In heavy rain, don't forget to switch on your dipped headlights so other motorists can see you easily. Reduce your speed when travelling in the rain to decrease your stopping distance. This will also help you pass through large puddles and potholes smoothly, without spraying other road users or risking aquaplaning.

"Torrential rain may interfere with the electrics of a vehicle causing a breakdown. Prepare for the worst by keeping your mobile phone charged and with the number of your breakdown service provider already saved on it. While you wait for help keep your bonnet closed as soaking the engine will only make it worse."

### IAM RoadSmart response to DfT reported road casualties in Great Britain 2015

30th June 2016

Independent road safety charity IAM RoadSmart has responded to the Department for Transport's (DfT) reported road casualties in Great Britain (2015).



The 2015 figures show there were 1,732 reported road deaths – 2% fewer compared with 2014. According to the DfT, this is the second lowest annual total on record after 2013. The number of people seriously injured in reported road traffic accidents also saw a decrease by 3% to 22,137 in 2015, compared to 2014. And a total of 186,209 casualties of all severities in 2015 – a 4% decrease compared to 2014, and the second lowest level on record. However, the latest figures also reveal a total of 365 motorcyclists were killed during 2015 – an 8% increase from 339 in 2014.

IAM RoadSmart's director of policy and research, Neil Greig, said: "Five years of flat lining on road deaths is unacceptable. Whilst 2015 was a relatively good year the huge gains in road safety made in the past now seem a distant memory.

"The government must show more leadership to really drive down road deaths in the future. Key trends still show the increasing risk to vulnerable road users, particularly motorcyclists, and big increases in fatal crashes involving vans and lorries. The rise in goods vehicle related deaths is worrying and is probably linked to the surge in van sales and use on Britain's roads. IAM

RoadSmart supports police campaigns to crack down on those driving for business, but we also need more firms to step up the plate and take occupational road safety more seriously."



## Commercially available DVD Resources

**Ultimate Driving Craft (DVD 100 minutes):** Chris Gilbert has a relaxed teaching style which is very suitable for a DVD audience. The DVD covers many advanced driving techniques throughout the range of driving environments (urban, rural, motorways, bad weather, progressive etc.) with an initial emphasis on the benefit and development of commentary as a method of driving "self development". The DVD instruction is given in the form of an Instructor's style of commentary which Chris delivers in a very listenable manner.

**Advanced Roadcraft (DVD – 68 minutes):** This DVD features general skills and techniques for driving safely and progressively in the range of road environment and includes tips for driving at night. The techniques and skills presented cover much of the syllabus of the Police Roadcraft Manual including a section including demonstration of safe overtaking, a twenty minute

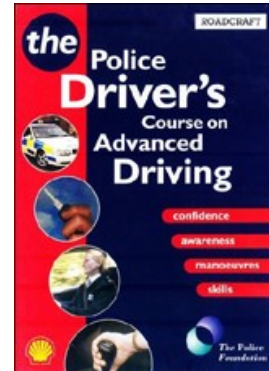
demonstration of advanced driving through busy city traffic and a section on motorway driving.

**Commentary Driving (DVD- 75 Minutes):** This programme presents the development and expert examples of driving commentary. The programme features 3 commentary sections.

**Roadcraft - The Police Driver's Course on Advanced Driving**  
Rather than being purely instructional this DVD follows police candidates on an advanced driving course run at the Metropolitan Police Motor Driving School, Hendon.

The DVD complements "Roadcraft: The Police Drivers Handbook" by showing the instructors coaching the candidate through advanced driving techniques and particularly the System of Car control. The course includes the range of driving situations covered by the Group

and additionally includes sections on night driving and skid pan training.



Contact Phil Sharples on  
01744 29886 or  
philetsan187@gmail.com

## Courses and Discounts

### Young Driver Group discount

Due to a generous donation to the Group, we are able, **subject to funding availability**, to offer the following discounts to younger drivers who fall into the following age ranges at the start of the course.

#### Age 26 to 35

Skill for Life Course is initially reduced to only £124 (£25 discount). After completing the Course and taking the Test a generous £35 refund is paid (irrespective of outcome) making the course only £89

#### Age up to 25

Skill for Life Course is initially reduced to only £109 (£40 discount). After completing the Course and taking the Test a generous £50 refund is paid (irrespective of outcome). Phone Julie Brown on 07849 674939 (after 6pm).

### IAM Young Drivers Assessment

*Momentum* is designed for 17-25 year olds who have passed their driving test, and incorporates two modules: an interactive online assessment, followed by an on-road session with an IAM examiner. *Momentum* does not involve an exam and there is no risk of failure; it offers a quick, low-cost option for improving the confidence, awareness and safety of younger drivers.

*Momentum* costs £45, a sum that will be taken off the full Skill for Life programme if purchased within 12 months of the *Momentum* assessment. *Skill for Life* will develop on feedback from the *Momentum* assessment and will help drivers to safely predict hazards, anticipate other drivers' behaviour and more accurately assess road and traffic conditions.

### Employer sponsorship

If you drive, even very occasionally, for an employer they may be a source of sponsorship for the SfL. This is particularly relevant for small to medium organisations without a vehicle fleet that rely on employees to use their own or company vehicle on company business.

Health and safety legislation places a responsibility on employers to assess risk and provide suitable measures such as training to minimise such risks. So if you are considering further driver training and your employer requires you to make occasional deliveries, go for the post, pick up visitors or visit customers then you could ask your employer for help to cover all or part of the cost.

The sponsorship you gain, however, is a matter between you and your employer.



## Ormskirk Motorfest - Sunday 28th August 2016

### What?

Looking for a great way to spend the August Bank Holiday? Come along to Ormskirk MotorFest. With everything from motorcycles, super cars, classics and bubble cars, there is something of interest for everyone.

**Town Centre:** Come and find us in the town centre near the clock tower. We take over the streets of Ormskirk for the day, where you can get up close to the cars, motorcycles and their enthusiastic owners.

**Coronation Park:** More great cars and motorcycles located in the park, nestled between food and drink venues and a variety of stalls. Live music will be provided in the band stand. All in all, a great atmosphere.

**Parade:** The highlight of the day for many people is the afternoon parade. We close the one way system to the public, to provide space for the world's best cars and bikes to parade through the town. This is one of the few places you can see a F1 car being driven through a town centre; not something you would want to miss!

### When?

Ormskirk MotorFest takes place on August **Bank Holiday Sunday 28th August 2016**. Classic cars and bikes are on display in the town centre and Coronation Park from 11am. The afternoon parade begins from 2:30pm onwards – although we recommend getting here earlier to soak up the atmosphere and grab yourself a prime spot

Now entering our fifth year, Ormskirk MotorFest is run and organised by Aintree Circuit Club in conjunction with West Lancashire Borough Council. The Ormskirk MotorFest was first held in 2011, where an estimated 7,000 people wandered through the streets of Ormskirk, soaking up the atmosphere and taking in the sights of hundreds of cars and motorcycles, lining the town's streets.

After that first successful year, the event has gone from strength to strength – 17,000 visitors in 2012, rising to 25,000 in 2013 and a mas-

sive 30,000 attendees in 2014. The numbers in 2015 are expected to exceed last year's total!

Of course there wouldn't be an Ormskirk MotorFest if it wasn't for the petrolheads who proudly display and parade their cars around the town. Last year a record number 300 people volunteered to show their vehicle at the festival.

The Aintree Circuit Club has a proud and interesting history. Officially opened by Earl Howe and Raymond Mears in 1954, the three mile track remains Britain's only purpose built Grand Prix circuit and still exists in its entirety. In 1955 the Club held the British Grand Prix and proudly witnessed the first time a British driver – Stirling Moss – had ever won the title at home.

The Aintree Circuit Club has at its heart the core values to maintain and promote the credentials of North West motoring heritage and works with many organisations to promote motor sport in the area. Thanks to the coordination, management and team work from Aintree Circuit Club and partners, Ormskirk MotorFest 2015 is set to be another resounding success.

[www.ormskirkmotorfest.com](http://www.ormskirkmotorfest.com)

### Road rage – don't be a victim

13<sup>th</sup> July 2016

In this week's driving tips IAM RoadSmart head of standards Richard Gladman talks about how to avoid becoming a road rage victim, and what to do if it does escalate.

If someone is being confrontational or aggressive, don't make eye contact and don't react visibly.

Let the other driver go on ahead. You might feel wronged, but letting the other party go will make no difference to the rest of your day.

Name and shame! If you or better, your passengers, can film any behaviour on your mobile phone it will help in terms of evidence, including the registration number of the other vehicle involved.

If the conflict is more serious and other processes aren't working; call

the police, especially if you feel there is a threat or possibility of violence against you.

Sorry helps. If you were at fault, admit it and apologise. If you feel upset or emotional pull over and get some fresh air or walk around if you need to before resuming your journey.

Again find some distraction, like listening to the radio - move your mind deliberately onto something else – deliberately driving well would be a good example – but don't dwell on the incident.

Richard said: "Road rage does not affect everyone every day. If you're finding it is happening very often, you might want to think about how you engage with other road users." He concluded: "No-one need experience road rage, but it us up to each of us to ensure it stays that way."

### A poem by Pam Ayres (<http://pamayres.com>)

I have a little Satnav, it sits there in my car. A Satnav is a driver's friend it tells you where you are. I have a little Satnav, I've had it all my life. It's better than the normal ones, my Satnav is my wife. It gives me full instructions, especially how to drive "It's sixty miles an hour", it says, "You're doing sixty five". It tells me when to stop and start, and when to use the brake And tells me that it's never ever, safe to overtake. It tells me when a light is red, and when it goes to green It seems to know instinctively, just when to intervene. It lists the vehicles just in front, and all those to the rear. And taking this into account, it specifies my gear. I'm sure no other driver, has so helpful a device. For when we leave and lock the car, it still gives its advice. It fills me up with counselling, each journey's pretty fraught. So why don't I exchange it, and get a quieter sort? Ah well, you see, it cleans the house, makes sure I'm properly fed. It washes all my shirts and things, and keeps me warm in bed! Despite all these advantages, and my tendency to scoff, I only wish that now and then, I could turn the bugger off.

**Submitted by Julie Brown**



# Driving Tips

## A simple explanation of vehicle stability in bends

Normally the faster you want to go, the *higher* the gear you use. But have you noticed that the faster you want to go around a bend the *lower* the gear you have to use? Why? ...because of vehicle stability.

### So what is stability?

Imagine a wine bottle sitting on a table; a slight nudge on the table produces no reaction; it is in a stable condition. Now stand the bottle on its neck and nudge the table, it easily falls over; it is in an unstable condition.

Stability is the ability to resist external forces, and this applies to your car too. It is at its most stable when travelling in a straight line at constant speed with the weight evenly distributed across all the wheels.

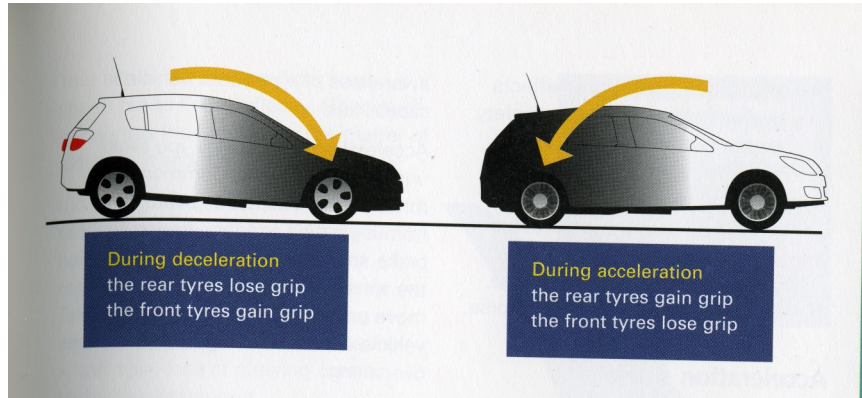
### Weight Transfer

When you brake the car becomes unstable, weight shifts to the front (increasing grip) and comes off the rear (reducing grip). When you accelerate the opposite is the case, but as weight shifts to the rear, the front tyres not only lose grip but also steering control! If you happen to be in a bend and you brake, the general tendency is for the rear to slide outwards, or if you accelerate, the general tendency is to 'run wide'. The answer is to go round the curve at constant speed with the weight evenly distributed between front and rear.

### Gravity

So why do you have to 'accelerate' around a corner - you don't! What you do is press the accelerator pedal to deliver more power to maintain your speed.

Think of going up a steep hill and not losing speed. As you begin, speed falls off and you press the accelerator more and more just to keep up your speed - you are not 'accelerating' and increasing speed, even though you are pressing the pedal further - you are giving more



power to the engine. Why?

The answer is simple, you have to overcome the force of **gravity** pulling the car back down the hill. At some point as the hill gets steeper and gravity is stronger, you might have to change into a lower gear so the extra engine revolutions give extra power to overcome that gravity.

### Momentum

It is just the same for bends, only now gravity is replaced by **momentum** as the external force that has to be overcome. Momentum shows itself as the tendency for the car to continue in a straight line when you want it to turn.

The faster you are travelling, the heavier your car, and the sharper the turn, the greater the force of momentum that has to be overcome.

### 'Acceleration'

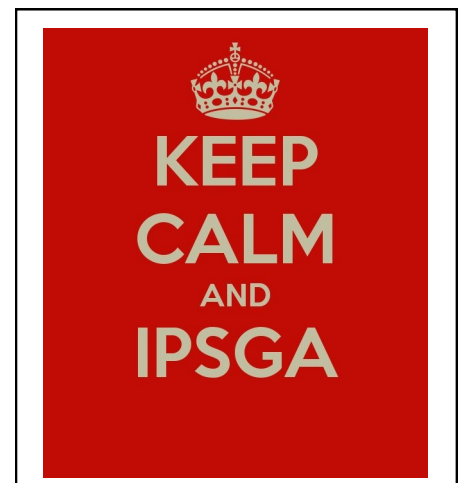
We tend to think that pressing the accelerator always increases road speed (acceleration). But we have seen (on the hill) that pressing the accelerator just delivers more engine power, which may or may not result in an increase in road speed.

As you approach a bend and begin to turn the steering wheel, momentum will resist you and push you straight on. The more you turn the wheel the greater the force becomes, and, just like gravity, it will

slow you down. Slowing down will transfer weight to the front, and the rear will become more and more unstable and want to slide outwards. To prevent this weight transfer and maintain stability, your car has to be travelling at a constant speed - not slowing or accelerating. So, just like on a hill, you have to press the accelerator down further just to overcome the force of momentum to maintain a constant speed. The force of momentum can be so great in these conditions that lower gears have to be used to access more engine power to overcome that force and keep a constant speed.

And that's why the faster you want to go round a bend, the lower the gear you have to use.

**Jim Cunliffe**  
**National Observer**







## Driving Tips - contd.

### Applying The System of Car Control

The 'System' is a systematic method of driving which, if used correctly, will substantially reduce the risk of a driver being the cause of a collision.

An explanation of the System is given in the IAM's How to be a better Driver book and it is to this you must refer if you want a greater understanding. There are five phases of the System which must be considered on the approach to any hazard. A hazard can be the presence and / or movement of any vehicle or pedestrian, a road feature such as a roundabout or a climatic feature such as a sudden downpour of rain.

The five phases are: Information, Position, Speed, Gear, Acceleration. The Information phase overlaps every other phase.

**Take information** by looking at traffic signs and looking at the position and movement of vehicles and pedestrians. Be aware of observation links i.e. the hazards associated with what can be seen e.g. parked vehicles, a pedestrian flagging a taxi, a garage forecourt, a pedestrian walking to the front of a bus or roadside telephone poles formed into a curved line in the distance. Use your mirrors at any point in the System but particularly before changing position, before slowing or after changing gear i.e. a final check behind before the hazard is reached.

**Use the information** you have gathered by making a plan to deal with the identified hazards and making contingency plans for dealing with the unexpected e.g. car doors opening, a taxi suddenly stopping, a car shooting out of a roadside garage, a bus suddenly stopping or a car coming fast out of a bend ahead.

**Give information** to other road users e.g. using your indicators to inform them that you are going to change position, using your horn or flashing your headlights to let them know of your presence. Position your vehicle to re-enforce any other form of signal.

**Position** yourself so that you can pass hazards safely and smoothly. Give a good clearance when passing

parked vehicles, cyclists or when overtaking moving vehicles. Follow the advice given in the Highway Code for positioning on the approach to roundabouts. Position yourself when approaching bends in national speed limit areas so as to maximise your view of the road ahead-taking account of oncoming / following vehicles and near-side hazards. Good observation will allow you to make the most effective use of available (legal) road space e.g. taking a clear lane at traffic lights on a dual carriageway. Good positioning allows smooth progress.

**Speed:** Obtain a safe speed to negotiate the hazard. Reduce speed, if need be, by either easing the pressure on the accelerator pedal (deceleration) or by braking. Whatever method is used it is essential to lose speed smoothly.

**Gear:** Once you have the correct speed for the hazard, engage the correct gear for that speed. The aim, almost all of the time, is to have a clean separation between braking and changing gear i.e. no overlapping. Slight overlapping when going downhill into a corner or a bend is acceptable PROVIDED you do the gear change when most of the braking has already been done.

The selected gear should take you through the hazard without a further need to change gear. However, selection of a higher gear on a roundabout may be necessary, particularly if the entry gear was 1st or 2nd. Changing gear should be carried out when the steering is constant (simultaneous movement of the steering wheel with gear changing should be avoided).

**Acceleration:** Consider accelerating away from the hazard after taking account of your speed and the position / movement of other road users. The accelerator pedal is NOT an on / off switch to be suddenly pressed to the floor when a hazard has been negotiated. Use the pedal smoothly.

### Terminology

**A hazard:** can be the presence and / or movement of any vehicle or pedestrian, a road feature such as a roundabout or a climatic feature such as a sudden downpour of rain.

**10-2 or 9-3 Position:** These numbers describe the recommended positions for hands on a steering wheel. Imagine the steering wheel as a clock, the hands for straight driving being placed at these clock positions. A tall person will probably feel most comfortable with their hands at the 10-2 position, whilst a small person will probably adopt 9-3.

**Overlapping:** A potential fault. This occurs when two or more phases (other than information) of the System of Car Control are carried out at the same time. Overlapping situations may include braking whilst changing position or changing gear whilst braking (but only for reasons of safety).

**Secondary Braking:** A fault. This occurs when the foot brake is applied twice for a particular hazard. According to the 'System' braking should be considered before a gear is selected. Secondary braking occurs when the original braking is too late and/or too light. The hazard is therefore approached too fast, regardless of whether a lower gear had been selected. The driver has to apply the brakes a second time (usually hurriedly) so that the hazard can be approached safely.

**The limit point of observation:** As you approach a bend you will see the road disappearing to the left or right. At the point where the road disappears, pick out one feature on each side of the road - as seen from your vantage point. As you get nearer to the bend, these two features will appear to get wider apart. The slower they separate, the tighter the bend. The faster they separate, the more open is the bend.

**Mark Farnworth,  
National Observer**



## COMMITTEE MEMBERS & CONTACT DETAILS

### Group President

**Lady Kirsty Pilkington**

### Group Vice-President

**Mark Farnworth**

### COMMITTEE OFFICERS 2015/2016

#### Chairman

Mark Farnworth 07929 978788  
editor@shgam.org.uk

#### Vice Chairman

Ken Nevitt

#### Secretary

John Matthews secretary@shgam.org.uk

#### Treasurer

Alison Matthews

#### Membership Secretary

Julie Brown

#### Lead National Observer

Lee Westhead

#### Associate Co-ordinator

Alan Prescott 01744 756298

#### Training Officer

Ken Nevitt

#### Group Contact

Julie Brown 07849 674939 (after 6pm)  
contact@shgam.org.uk

Jim Cunliffe 01744 733485  
Sue Hunt 01942 724627  
Philip Sharples 01744 29886  
Frank Rigby 01942 256274  
Kay Heppenstall 07843 051468

#### TRAINING TEAM

Ken Nevitt (Chair) 01744 756298  
Alan Prescott 01744 733485  
Jim Cunliffe 07929 978788  
Mark Farnworth 01942 655825  
Alf Birtle 01942 256274  
Frank Rigby

#### Newsletter Editor

Mark Farnworth editor@shgam.org.uk

#### Web Manager

Nicky Farnworth webmanager@shgam.org.uk

#### EVENTS TEAM

Kay Heppenstall 07843 051468  
Sue Hunt 01942 724627

#### HEAD OF FIELD OPERATIONS

David Shenton Dave.shenton@iam.org.uk

#### NORTHERN AREA MANAGER

Toby Shaw Toby.Shaw@iam.org.uk

#### REGION 5 FORUM

Chair: Julie Williams jly2958@hotmail.com  
Secretary: Alan Filson aafilson@btinternet.com

#### DISCLAIMER

*The contents of this Newsletter are purely the views of the members and do not necessarily constitute the views of the IAM or the St Helens Group.*

#### Newsletter Contact Details

**Newsletter Editor, Mark Farnworth**  
**Tel: 07929 978788**  
**Email: editor@shgam.org.uk**

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**Group Website: [www.shgam.org.uk](http://www.shgam.org.uk)**  
**Email: [webmanager@shgam.org.uk](mailto:webmanager@shgam.org.uk)**