



Newsletter ~ December 2017

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



Chair's Remarks

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

As we approach the end of another calendar year it is reassuring to know that the Group is well placed for the coming year. We have had three full courses this year and the Associates who joined our Autumn course are now waiting for their tests. We will have only one or two Associates that are continuing onto our Winter Course starting early January.

The Group has been participating in a trial of 'Group-sign' off with Associate Mark Grove. At the time of writing this is in its final stages and I will provide more information about this later. A new method for providing written feedback to Associates has been developed from this trial in consultation with Area Service Delivery Manager Steve Ellis. This new approach will soon be communicated to all the Observers so that it will become our standard as we enter 2018.

The Group has significantly increased the amount of promotional activities

over the last 12 months. Jim Cunliffe, Anita Clift and Martin Brady have all given presentations at Senior Road User Meetings across Merseyside. This intensity has been paying off with an increase in the number of Senior Road Users participating in our Advanced Driver Course. We initially discounted the course for those aged 60+ from Group funds but the need for this was removed following a donation for this purpose.

A promising end to the year was a road safety event at the St. Helens College that SHGAM and St. Helens Fire and Rescue were invited. One of their crews demonstrated how cars are 'opened up' to extract victims of road traffic collisions. Very impressive! Managers at the college are very supportive of our desire to help young drivers, the most vulnerable age group, and we hope to develop this relationship in 2018.

It just remains for me to wish you all a happy and safe Christmas and New Year.

Mark Farnworth, Group Chairman

St. Helens Group website
www.shgam.org.uk

Contacts:

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

editor@shgam.org.uk

More Information (click links)

[Winter Course dates](#)

[Up and coming events](#)

[SHGAM News](#)

[IAM News Releases](#)

[SHGAM Driving Tips](#)

[IAM RoadSmart Advice](#)

An L of a change: IAM RoadSmart blog

It's often easy to forget as advanced drivers that our journey started, as did everyone else's, as a learner driver. The kind of assessment that we had when learning to driver varies from person to person depending on how recently you passed your test. Britain's young drivers are facing an imminent change to their driving test. The date the DVSA driving test will change is 4 December. The new test will be adopting different manoeuvres and scrapping some of the old ones, and it will include a section where the candidate has to follow sat-nav instructions.

There will also be two vehicle safety questions asked during

the test; a "tell me" question where the candidate will explain how they carry out a safety task at the start of the test, and a "show me" question where the candidate demonstrates how to perform a safety task such as using the wind-screen washers whilst driving.

When I took my driving test in 2011 there was a change to the test incorporating more independent driving into the test, naturally this caused a lot of uncertainty with learner drivers who were scared that if they couldn't remember specific instructions they might fail a test that they'd otherwise pass with the old format.

Amazingly not one of the people I

spoke to (out of about 30) were worried or concerned about facing the new test. Most people said that they would prefer to pass under the old system but that was because they hoped to be at a standard to take their test before the changes were in place.

Learners felt that it was important to embrace vehicle technology rather than discourage it and some even felt that existing licence holders should undergo some kind of assessment to prove that they are competent using the equipment that their vehicle has ... wouldn't that cause a stir?

David Gallagher, IAM RoadSmart younger driver ambassador



Associate Coordinator's Corner

Congratulations to Caitlin Hampson, Paul Burgess and Sue Austin on their recent Test Passes.

Although our other Associates had not taken the Test at the time of writing this report, I would like to thank them for the way they have applied themselves during the Course. I hope this has been or will be reflected in the results. The Classroom Sessions were well attended and thanks must go to those who did the presentations.

Special thanks go to Lee, who took the *Meet an Examiner Evening*. This was also well attended and Lee was able to put everyone at ease, as well as making it clear as to what is expected on an IAM Test and how it is marked. Those who have not yet

taken the Test do know that if their Test Drive can be described as safe, systematic, smooth and progressive, they will pass.

Our Associates may be wondering if Observers ever undergo any training regarding our own driving. Well, on October 18th, two of our Examiners, Lee Westhead and Jeff Mather, took six of us in hire cars to Wales, where we were put through our paces on the Evo Triangle and the mountain roads near Bala. This was demanding to say the least and, yes, it did remind us how our Associates must feel when they begin one of our Courses. Thanks to Lee and Jeff for giving up their time and for making the days so enjoyable.

Associates who pass the Test may wonder what to do next. If any of you are interested in Observing, then speak to Ken Nevitt. If you are interested in being involved with the Group in some other way, then see Mark Farnworth. Some will inevitably say their goodbyes. However, as long as you are a Member you will receive the Newsletter and you will always be welcome at any of our social functions.

As this is the last Newsletter of 2017, I will end by wishing you all a very Happy Christmas and New Year.

Alan Prescott
Associate Co-ordinator

Notice Board

Congratulations to:

Caitlin Hampson
Paul Burgess
Sue Austin

for passing the
Advanced Driving Test.

Meal at the Cottage Tandoori, Rainford

Friday 26th January
7.30pm for a 8pm sit down

A new year's get together at the Cottage Tandoori, Rainford (parking at the back of the restaurant).

Contact Kay Heppenstall

Free Merseyside Senior Road Users Event

Thursday 7th December
10 to 2pm
Rainford Village Hall

A popular, free to attend Merseyside Senior Road Safety event is to take place in Rainford. Committee member and Observer Jim Cunliffe will be giving a presentation in behalf of IAM RoadSmart and SHGAM.

Mersey Tunnel Walk

Saturday 9th December 2017

- 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
- Witness an engineering master piece first hand
- The tour takes approximately 2-3 hours. The admission fee is £6.00.

Those who did the walk in March with SHGAM missed out on some elements of the tour due to operational issues. We have an opportunity to go back and do the full tour at no additional cost. Open to all who did the tour in March. If spaces are available then others may come as well.

Contact Kay Heppenstall

Winter Advanced Driver Course

The next Advanced Driver Course starts on Thursday 4th January with a 'course introduction' meeting. Register now and get the benefit of a 10% IAM RoadSmart Christmas discount (£134 instead of £149). Additional SHGAM discounts available to those aged 35 and under or 60 and over.



Road Safety Event at the St. Helens College

9th November 2017

A Fire crew makes preparations to remove the roofs of two cars as a demonstration of a real life situation following a vehicle collision.