



Newsletter ~ December 2019

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

Chair's Remarks

Hello everyone and welcome to the December edition of the newsletter.

Winter has now well and truly arrived, with Christmas now less than a month away and the temperatures dropping noticeably. It's those dropping temperatures that can cause issues though, with ice and freezing fog. Be aware of the risks and plan accordingly. Simple things, like allowing yourself an extra ten minutes at the start to defrost your car can make a big difference.

Our Autumn/Winter Course is now finished and we start to look towards our Winter/Spring Course. Our first Sunday will be the 12th January 2020, so if you know anyone who would be interested or are

looking for a Christmas gift then please bear this date in mind.

On the topic of new courses, we are still offering our wonderful discounts for drivers aged 17-35 and drivers aged 60+. If you know anyone who would be interested in taking part in our next course please put them in touch with us and we will be happy to provide more information.

We are also currently looking for Group members to join our committee. This would be a 12 month commitment and we meet for an hour and a half on the first Monday of each month. There is much to do and we would welcome additional support in the areas of general admin,

recruitment, publicity and social media engagement.

If you would like to have more involvement in the running of the Group, please get in touch. Before committing you would be more than welcome to attend one of our committee meetings to get a feel for how we run the meetings.

That's all from me, I hope you and your families have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Here's to your continued safe, systematic driving.

Tom Field,
Group Chairman



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More Information (click links)

[Winter Course Dates](#)

[Up and coming events](#)

[SHGAM News](#)

[IAM News Releases](#)

[SHGAM Driving Tips](#)

[IAM RoadSmart Advice](#)

Winter draws on and we all need to see the light

Driving home in the gathering gloom in the days immediately before the clocks went back, I was shocked by the number of cars I saw driving apparently without lights.

But when I came upon a Fiat 500 driving at speed into the dusk on a busy dual carriageway, without any rear lights on, I started to think about the appalling consequences that not being seen could lead to. As I passed the car, I realised that the front beams were visible, so it wasn't necessarily a case of the lights not

working or not being turned on. More a fact that the daytime running lights had made the driver far less aware of the conditions than perhaps they should be.

A quick trip to the gov.uk website gave me some useful facts. Daytime running lights are proven to reduce multiple vehicle daytime collisions and fatalities – which has to be a good thing for road safety. They became law for all cars and light goods vehicles in 2011 and all large vehicles and buses from 2012.

The important point for me is that they are automatic. As drivers, we get so used to the fact they're activated when the engine starts that we forget to think about it. So, in low or declining light conditions the risk is that as drivers we all think we're more visible than we really are.

I asked our head of driving and riding standards, Richard Gladman, for some advice. Here's what he said:

Often on a modern vehicle the instrument

panel is illuminated as we turn the ignition on and bright daytime running lights give the impression of headlights being on. Make it part of your routine to check what systems you require; auto lights and wipers are great but you or another user may have changed the setting and they may be switched off. Be prepared to act early and beat the system to switch them on, remember they are there as an aid, not to take over.

Kate Tonge, IAM
RoadSmart director of
marketing and
communications



Associate Coordinator's Corner

Welcome to Anthony Jones who has recently joined the Group and congratulations to Julian Raffay on his recent Test Pass.

Although our other Associates had not, at the time of writing this report, taken the IAM Test, I would like to thank them for the way in which they have applied themselves during the Course. The Classroom Sessions were well attended and thanks must go to those who did the Presentations.

I must also thank Oliver Fullerton who took the *Meet The Examiner* Evening. Oliver gave a very full explanation of what happens on the Test and how it is marked. If you have not taken the Test yet,

you should know that if your Test Drive is safe, systematic, smooth and progressive, then you will pass. However, included in the safety aspect are speed limits, which must be kept at all times or you will fail. Many times we have stressed that every time you go on a new road, particularly in an area you don't know, look to see if there is a new speed limit.

We have mentioned signs right on a junction or just before or after a roundabout. I am now going to add speed limit changes just after a set of traffic lights. As we have had four Associates fail on such a change in the last twelve months, I must draw your attention to it. Another piece of advice is to check

your speed when going down a steep hill, as one of our fails was on precisely that. Make sure that does not happen to you and then you should pass.

Those who do pass might be wondering what to do next. If you want to know about Observing then speak to Ken Nevitt. If you wish to be involved in some other way, then speak to Tom Field or Mark Farnworth.

As this is the last Newsletter of 2019, I will close by wishing you all a very Happy Christmas and New Year.

Alan Prescott
Associate Co-ordinator

Notice Board

Welcome to:

Anthony Jones

who has joined the Group as an Associate

Congratulations to:

Julian Raffay

on his recent Test pass.

Motorists unhappy with smart motorways, RAC survey finds

The majority of British motorists (68 per cent) say that removing the hard shoulder on 'smart motorways' compromises the safety of drivers.

To increase capacity on the country's busiest roads, over one hundred miles of hard shoulder have been converted by Highways England into running lanes for traffic including parts of the M1, M4, M5, M6, M42 and M62. Many hard shoulders have been removed permanently on 'all lane running' smart motorways and on these stretches. A survey in the RAC Report on Motoring 2019 found that 72 per cent of smart motorway users are worried about not being able to reach these areas if they break down.

Jack Loughran
Engineering and Technology
Published 29th November 2019

Built-in car breathalysers and speed limiters will save countless lives says IAM RoadSmart

IAM News Release 13th November 2019

The decision to adopt EU road safety rules after Brexit and make it mandatory for new cars to be fitted with breathalysers and voluntary speed limiters by 2022 in the UK has been given the thumbs-up by IAM RoadSmart.

A proposal for this idea and a host of other safety features for cars and lorries was made in March and was rubber-stamped by the EU last week.

IAM RoadSmart, the UK's biggest independent road safety charity, supported the idea when it was originally proposed eight months ago, saying it would save countless lives.

On hearing the EU and Department for Transport's decision, Neil Greig, IAM RoadSmart director of policy and research, said: "We welcomed these proposals earlier this year so it is great to see they will actually happen.

"Speed limiters will still be voluntary so you don't have to use them, but they could save your licence if you do.

"Although all new cars from 2022 cars will be enabled to have an alcolock it will be up to the UK government to decide how they are used. We see them as a useful tool for repeat drink-drive offenders to get them back to safe driving after a ban. It is very unlikely that the vast majority of the law-abiding public will ever have to blow in a tube to start their car."

Other EU proposals to improve road safety to be implemented by 2022 include AEB (autonomous emergency braking) which can detect and react to pedestrians and cyclists in front of the vehicle, lane keeping assistance systems and new technology to detect distraction and drowsiness.

New lorries will also be expected to have better levels of direct vision to give drivers a better chance of seeing vulnerable road users such as pedestrians and cyclists.