



# Newsletter ~ February 2018

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

## Chair's Remarks

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

Here we are, already into the second month of the New Year. How time flies!

As mentioned previously, the Group has been involved in a national trial of 'Group sign-off' - a method whereby an Associate having achieved a set of verified driving competencies can become a full member of IAM RoadSmart. We were one of only two Groups in the North West (Area 6) to have participated in the trial. Mark Grove was selected as our Associate and I'm pleased to tell you that Mark achieved all the necessary competencies for 'sign-off' in December. Mark then decided to go a stage further and did an IAM RoadSmart member driving assessment and achieved a **FIRST**.

'Group sign-off' led to the development of a new [procedure](#) for Associate Training. All Observers have received training in the new approach which will be used for all future Associates.

The Group has had a good start to the New Year with nine new Associates joining us. The 'Course Introduction' and 'System' evenings at the ibis hotel, Haydock were well attended.

The group continues its involvement with the Senior Road Users Thematic Group of the Merseyside Road Safety Partnership. We have been involved with this Group for several years now and I feel we are really having a tangible impact in this important area.

At the other end of the age range are the 'young drivers' and we have significant plans developing for these drivers, the most vulnerable of road users, for 2018 and beyond. I'll give you more information about the plans in the next newsletter.

Well, that's it from me.

Safe driving and good observing.

**Mark Farnworth, Group Chairman**

Click [here](#) for full report.



St. Helens Group website

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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](#)

## Parking, Security and Safety: IAM RoadSmart tip

As the dark days delay the morning sunrise and the evening twilight creeps upon us more quickly than before, our cars are at more risk of being a victim of theft. IAM RoadSmart's head of driving and riding standards, Richard Gladman, suggests a few top tips to reduce this risk.

As we exit the supermarket with a trolley full of shopping, we're eager to unlock the car as soon as possible to avoid the hassle of finding our keys when we get to the car. But unlocking your car before you reach it gives thieves a longer period of time to access valuables and make a run for it, especially if your boot opens automatically.

Don't leave your keys lying around. This can apply to any situation, whether you're out for dinner and leave your keys on the table or if you're at a friend's house, as you may not know everyone around you. Be security conscious about code-grabbing from your keyless entry, are you being watched?

Hide any valuables. Before you leave your car, make sure you secure any valuables and keep them out of sight. Putting them in your glove compartment or in the boot of your car will avoid them being seen.

Don't fall into the habit of hanging up your keys next to doors or windows. Thieves use a 'fishing' meth-

od where they insert a hook through a letter box or window and search for keys. This can even be done when you're at home and you may not even notice until you look for your keys and find that you've "lost" them. Make sure you put your keys somewhere safe and secure, and far away from windows and doors.

Choose your parking neighbours wisely. In a busy car park, we normally go for the first space we can find. But have you thought about your neighbours beside you? For example, parking next to a flatbed truck filled with rubbish may not be as good a choice as parking next to a pristine, well-kept vehicle.



## Associate Coordinator's Corner

Congratulations to William Bushell, Thomas McGuire, Keith Piggot, Nicola Woods, David Hickman, June Soo and Mark Grove on their recent Test Passes.

Welcome to Val Cunningham, Phil Evans, Joyce Ridyard, Jon Taylor, Andy Peet, Jonathan Despoti, Steve Fergus, Ricky Cheung and James Whittaker, who have recently joined the Group.

I would also like to thank all the Observers who have done Assessment Drives following the Rainford Senior Road Users Event. Thanks to an excellent promotion from Jim Cunliffe, we had thirteen who asked for Assessment Drives. That certainly kept us busy for the last few weeks before and after Christmas!

By now, our Associates should be well settled into the new Course. As well as coming on Sundays, it is

important every time you drive to practise on those areas that Observers have identified as being in need of development.

Advanced Driving can never be a Sunday-Morning-only activity. If you do have any questions, then make a note of them and we will deal with them the next time you come to the Group. It is also important that you attend the Classroom Sessions, as you will be introduced to new material.

At the Meet The Examiner Meeting you will meet an Examiner who may or may not be the Examiner that you have on Test. He will explain what the Test is all about and how it is marked. You will have an opportunity to ask questions. The Examiner will try to put you at ease about your Test. It may be of some comfort to you to learn that over 90% of those we put in for Test do

pass first time. If your Test Drive can be described as safe, systematic, smooth and progressive then you will pass. Some may also achieve the IAM First.

Occasionally, the Test proves unsuccessful for the Candidate. If that happens, the Examiner will explain why and you will then know what to work on before you take a re-Test. The majority of Test Fails are usually because of breaches in law, particularly breaking speed limits. However, this does not happen on every Course, so let's make sure it does not happen on this one.

As you work through the Course, let me know if there are any problems or if you need a Midweek Run.

**Alan Prescott**  
**Associate Co-ordinator**

## Notice Board

### Congratulations to:

William Bushell, Thomas McGuire  
Keith Piggot, Nicola Woods  
David Hickman, June Soo and  
Mark Grove  
on passing the  
Advanced Driving Test.

Both William and Mark achieved a F1RST, a fantastic achievement.

### Certificate presentations—4th January 2018



Members receive their Advanced Test certificates at the Winter Course Introduction Evening. From left to right: Mark Farnworth (Group Chair), William Bushell, Paul Burgess, Thomas McGuire, Nicola Woods, David Hickman, June Soo, Sue Austin, Mark Grove and Steve Ellis (IAM RoadSmart Area 6 Service Delivery Manager).

### Welcome to:

Philip Evans, Joyce Ridyard,  
Valerie Cunningham,  
Jonathan Taylor, Stephen Fergus,  
Andrew Peet, Ricky Cheung,  
James Whittaker and  
Jonathan Despoti  
Who have recently joined the  
Group

### Senior Road Users Event Rainford 7th December 2017



A FREE road safety event was held to help older residents become more confident and competent behind the wheel. It was the latest in a series of events hosted by St Helens Council. Dozens of older Rainford Residents attended the course in the village hall. Jim Cunliffe, SHGAM National Observer and Committee member gave a talk to those present.

### Ten Pin Bowling

AMF Bowling, Wigan

Friday 23rd February

Meet at 7.40pm for a 8pm start.

Contact [Kay Heppenstall](#) by Friday 15th February if you are planning to attend.

### Double success for Mark Grove



Mark Grove passed the Advanced Test and achieved a F1RST following a successful trial of 'Group sign off' that SHGAM has been running in consultation with IAM RoadSmart Area 6 Service Delivery Manager Steve Ellis (Right). Mark acted as SHGAM's Associate for this national trial.