



# Newsletter ~ February 2019

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

## Chair's Remarks

Hello everyone, welcome to the February edition of the Newsletter.

I hope everyone had a happy and fulfilling Christmas and New Year. I know I did, although I think I may have eaten a bit too much!

With the New Year for many people comes resolutions and new challenges. I'm hoping for some people that includes improving their driving and that we're kept suitably busy as a result.

We recently ran an open morning promotional event at the Ibis Hotel, where we invited members of the public along to find out more about the Group and go for an assessment drive if they wanted to. We'll be

looking to run similar events in the future so if you know anyone who may be interested please feel free to let us know. Equally, if you have any suggestions for how we as a Group can promote ourselves please don't hesitate to tell us.

A couple of weeks ago the Observers went for a meal together at the Lymewood Farm in Haydock, with drinks courtesy of the generosity of Joyce Ridyard as a thank you from her for all the help we provided. We would like to reciprocate this thanks and say a good time was had by all! We've also recently joined Facebook. Follow us at:

<https://www.facebook.com/StHelensIAM>

where you can keep up to date with what's going on with the Group and get invited to social and promotional events like the ones mentioned above.

I hope the snow hasn't had too much of an impact for anyone!

Here's to your continued safe and systematic driving!

**Tom Field,**  
**Group Chairman**



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](#)

## Ice ice baby! Cold weather driving tips from IAM RoadSmart

If the weather conditions are severe in your area, you should take notice of police advice and simply not travel. However, in exceptional circumstances if you must go out then make sure you drive safely with extra caution on icy roads.

At least triple your stopping distance and approach every junction expecting to stop well before the stop or give way line - it can take up to ten times as long to stop according to Highway Code advice.

Salt will often make the windscreen, headlights, number plate and rear parts of your car very dirty. Cars without headlamp washers, for example, will lose an estimated 40% of luminosity and possibly all their focus in about 20 miles on a damp, gritted motorway. Keep a filled bottle of water in the car boot to give your lights, windows and mirrors a quick wash over.

Always carry a winter driving kit including an ice scraper, de-icer, blanket, torch, shovel, something to eat and a fully charged mobile phone.

While roads may be gritted to give you better traction, some areas may not be completely treated which can leave ice patches exposed. You should therefore drive at a steady pace, ensuring the safety of you and your passengers. On the roads you use regularly, watch out for water running across the carriage-way as this can wash away salt .

It's important that you keep your car clean throughout the winter as the salt in grit can cause corrosion to any exposed parts. Ensure that you

thoroughly wash underneath your car when you can to stop salt from settling. Don't forget to wash/rinse alloy wheels too; the smallest scratch can quickly become a large corroded area

Micro-climates of icy patches will linger in areas such as bridges and exposed sections, where the sun has not yet reached.

Keep the tread on your tyres above 2mm - 3mm is ideal. The more tread you have the more water they can cope with. Letting your tyres get down to the legal limit of 1.6mm is not recommended.



## Associate Coordinator's Corner

Congratulations to Eric Smith and John Moriarty on their recent Test Passes; Eric then retook his Test and obtained the IAM F1rst.

Welcome to those who have returned to or joined the January Course. I wish you every success. As well as attending each Sunday, I urge you to attend the Classroom Sessions. A lot of work goes into the presentations and in addition to learning a great deal, you will get a chance to ask questions to resolve any problems you might have.

Questions about the IAM Test are best left until the *Meet The Examiner Evening*, when an IAM Examiner will explain all about the Test and how it is marked and you will also

have an opportunity to ask questions.

In the early weeks of the Course, it is quite likely that you will have problems in certain areas (everyone does!) so if you are finding any of these really difficult then mention this to whoever does your Demonstration Drive. For example, if you are having a problem with avoiding overlapping brakes and gears then actually seeing how it is done should go a long way to solving the problem.

Now that you are on the Course, it is important to practise the skills every time you drive. Advanced Driving can never be a Sunday-morning-only activity. Remember

that if your Test Drive can be described as safe, systematic, smooth and progressive then you will pass.

The law of the land is paramount.

The most common cause of failure is breaking the speed limit. Every time you go on a new road, ask yourself "Is there a new speed limit?" The Examiner does want to pass you, but he cannot ignore breaking the law. However, we do have a 90% pass rate so enjoy the Course!

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

## Notice Board

### Congratulations



Congratulations to Joyce Ridyard, Peter Masters (middle) and Matthew Stock for passing the Advanced Driving Test. They are seen here at the Winter Course Introduction Night (17th Jan) with Group Chairman Tom Field. Peter and Matthew both achieved an IAM F1RST - a fantastic achievement.

#### Welcome to:

Kathie Johnson and Tony Gallagher who have joined our Winter Advanced Driver Course.

I'm sure you will enjoy the course.

**Tom Field**  
**Group Chairman**

#### Visit to the British Commercial Vehicle Museum

King Street, Leyland, PR25LE  
23rd February, 11am to 2.30pm.

Entry Fee: £6.50 (Adult).

Founded in 1983 they are celebrating over 30 years of cherishing some of the most interesting and historic vehicles from our past.

#### 'Biker down' course

Safety Central, Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service,  
Cliff Lane, Lymm, Warrington, WA13 0TE  
14th April, 10.00am to 1.30pm.

A free three hour session that covers:  
initial scene management and protection,  
casualty care and rider skills.

Whilst the course is obviously heavily reliant on motorcycle aspects, it is also very relevant to car drivers as who knows, you could be first on the scene... would you know what to do?  
(Pre-booking required - contact Kay Heppenstall).