



Newsletter ~ February 2020

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



Chair's Remarks

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

A happy new year to you all, I hope you all had a wonderful Christmas and New Year (I know I certainly did!). New year is a time for resolutions. Perhaps one good resolution would be to have an honest appraisal of your driving, to see if there are areas for improvement. We are always happy to take any member (or non-member) for a general "check drive", so feel free to get in touch if you'd like to have your driving checked.

Our Winter/Spring course got underway a few weeks ago. A big welcome to everyone new and those returning. I hope you find the course helpful and informative and that you

ultimately get what you're looking to get from it.

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 advantage of these offers and taking part in our next course (starting in April) please put them in touch with us and we will be happy to provide more information.

We are also still on the look out for new members on our committee. This is a 12 month commitment and we meet once a month on the first Monday. If you would like to have more involvement with the running of the Group, please get in touch.

IAM RoadSmart has produced a large number of videos that are available to view on YouTube. It's well worth taking a look at these since some are particularly good. Links to these videos as well as additional Group selected videos on YouTube can be seen on the [Associate documents and videos](#) page of our website. Also on this page is a link to number of driving tips that the Group has put together. I'd particularly like to encourage our Associates to read these [driving tips](#).

That's all from me, I hope you are all having a wonderful start to 2020. 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](#)

Vive la difference - road safety policy after Brexit?

I have recently returned from Brussels where I attend three meetings per year of the FIA Region 1 Transport and Mobility Working Party. The FIA maintains a large office in Brussels to lobby the European Parliament and EU Commission on their numerous proposals.

How relevant this will all be after 31 January is of course up for debate, but I was struck once again by the commonality of issues facing motoring clubs across Europe. Top concerns include low emission zones with

different levels of car ban, electric charging points, air quality, distraction in new cars, the transition to autonomy and protection of personal data. It seems that no matter where you drive or ride in Europe the basic issues are the same - lack of progress in reducing deaths and injuries, over taxation and poor infrastructure.

Perhaps more fundamentally a mistrust of governments that they will adopt policies that will make that much difference. The longest (in every way) session at my recent meeting was

a discussion on the 'internalisation of external costs' - great if you were an economist but a little dry for the rest of us! This could lead to governments using the 'costs' of congestion, air pollution and accidents on our roads to increase charges and taxes.

The FIA is organising a strong response based around the fact that congestion is a cost borne mainly by those delayed and many accident costs are already covered by insurance. Worryingly many of the

figures in the EU proposals appear to be very inaccurate and out of date. We in the UK will be able to watch from the sidelines as this debate progresses, but if we are to remain aligned with the EU in order to get a trade deal it may come back to bite us.

The good news is that I am being told that the UK government is making 'internationalisation' a big theme in the coming months.

By Neil Greig, IAM RoadSmart director of policy and research



Associate Coordinator's Corner

Congratulations to Lucy Hickey and Steven Walker on their recent Test Passes.

Welcome to Elizabeth McIntyre, Kath Bates and Philip Ireland who have joined the Group. I would also welcome back those who have returned from the previous Course.

I urge you to try to come each Sunday and also attend the Classroom Session. All but one of the sessions take place on Sunday mornings and you should aim not to miss any of those. The only evening session is the *Meet The Examiner*, which takes place towards the end of the Course.

Whilst you may certainly ask questions about the Course in the Class-

room Sessions and on Sunday mornings, questions about the Test itself are best left until the *Meet The Examiner* Evening. On that evening, an IAM Examiner, who may or may not be your Examiner, will explain all about the Test and how it is marked. You will also be able to ask him any questions you may have.

If, during the first weeks of the Course, you have any problems which seem very difficult, then mention them to whoever does your Demonstration Drive. One particular problem that occurs a lot in the early weeks is usually completing all the braking before selecting the hazard gear. When you actually see this done, then it will go a long way to solving the prob-

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

As you will have been told many times, the most common cause of Test failure is breaking the speed limit. Every time you go on a new road ask yourself "Is there a new speed limit?"

I would like to end on a pleasant note by telling you that over the years our Pass rate is over 90%.

I wish you every success.

Alan Prescott
Associate Co-ordinator

Notice Board

Congratulations to:

Lucy Hickey and Steven Walker
on their recent Test pass.

Letter in the St. Helens Star Newspaper 16th January 2020 p14

Safer driving

FOR several months in the Star, I've read of various fatalities due to dangerous driving. I witnessed my best friend get hit and killed by a car at six years old, which created a strong anxiety around driving.

To overcome my fear of driving, I enrolled on an Institute of Advanced Motorists (UK's leading road safety charity) Advanced Driver Course, and the volunteer observers at the St Helens branch, have all been exceptional, in making my driving better and safer, and giving me the confidence to now drive regularly.

Not only am I a safer driver now, but I'm better trained to spot the dangerous drivers before they become a problem for me.

Michael Egan, St Helens

Certificate Presentations

Lead Observer Mark Farnworth presented the following certificates.



Christine Billinge
(certificate of driving improvement)



Lucy Hickey
(IAM Advanced Driving certificate)

AGM

Thursday 4th June 2020
Ibis hotel, Haydock
8pm prompt start

Ten Pin Bowling

Friday 28th February
AMF Bowl, Wigan
7.30pm arrival

Music Experience

Cunard Building
Liverpool

Saturday 28th March
11am start

Social Event Bookings

Contact our events organizer
Kay Heppenstall to register an
interest for / book onto one of
our social events

events@shgam.org.uk

Tel: 07849 674939 (after 6pm)