



# Newsletter ~ June 2017

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

## Chair's Remarks

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

The Group's AGM is on the 8th June so it is timely to give a brief summary of our achievements over the last 12 months.

The Group has had a steady stream of new Associates from across the age range, helped by donations to the Group that have funded discounts for young drivers and there have been discounts for older road users that the Group has mainly funded. Some of our courses have had up to 10 Associates. It is particularly pleasing that over one third of our Associates are not only passing the Advanced Driving Test but passing it very well by achieving an IAM F1RST. This shows a high level of competency of our Observers in the delivery of our Courses.

The national re-branding to IAM RoadSmart and other changes have had a number of consequences for the Group. All of our Observers have had to become Institute of Motor Industry (IMI) qualified and as I reported in

April we have achieved this well before the end of year deadline. In addition, our Observer team has had to become familiar with the new Associate booklet which is provided by IAM RoadSmart HQ. Since this booklet is now provided to each Associate, this has removed the time involved and cost of the Group producing Associate booklets.

Our new IAM RoadSmart branded website is comprehensive having information of value to both Group members and the general public. The Group's bi-monthly newsletter has been streamlined (reducing production costs) but at the same time providing access to a greater amount of on line information via links. Paper copies are still sent to those who don't have internet access. The new website has enabled most of the Group's paper based forms to be replaced with on-line alternatives, thereby reducing Group administration and costs. To obtain more information about our year, please join us at the AGM

**Mark Farnworth**  
**Group Chairman**



St. Helens Group website

[www.shgam.org.uk](http://www.shgam.org.uk)

### Contacts:

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### **More Information** (click links)

[Spring and Autumn Course Dates](#)

[Up and coming events](#)

[SHGAM News](#)

[IAM News Releases](#)

[SHGAM Driving Tips](#)

[IAM RoadSmart Advice](#)

## The Butterfly effect: IAM RoadSmart blog

In most situations, more years behind you equates to better experience. If this is the case, why are we so quick to demonise older drivers?

There have been a number of highly publicised incidents involving older drivers in the last few weeks. As tragic as the cases may be, it would be harmful for us as a society to take these incidents, out of proportion. Reacting by imposing stricter measures on older drivers (who are already [statistically one of the safest groups on our roads](#)) would only place unnecessary strain on public services that are already struggling to cope. Imposing more regulations on

older drivers means placing additional undue pressure on the group that will inevitably put many off driving into old age. This means people may start giving up driving earlier than they need to out of fear, leaving them solely reliant on others or public transport.

If these alternative options are not easily available to them then chances are individuals will become more housebound and less able to carry out the normal everyday activities that we take for granted (including medical and social visits). Even worse it could lead to isolation (and consequently depression) as the extra effort required to go out, or the fear of burdening others might become too overwhelming.

To put it plainly, there is a lot more to driving than just driving. Driving, particularly in areas where access to public transport is limited, is about the connection to the outside world - family, friends...ultimately simple human interaction! Even the brief conversation with the person serving at a checkout, can make all the difference to someone's day.

A recent [Age UK report](#) found that loneliness had a 'higher health risk than lifelong smoking,' isolation was a key contributor towards depression and that lack of social interaction could be linked to the onset of degenerative diseases such as Alzheimer's.

## Associate Coordinator's Corner

Congratulations to Pamela Boffey on her recent Test Pass.

Welcome to Paul Heaton, Andrew Heaton, Kate Riley, Michelle Williams, Christopher Parle, Caitlin Hampson and Geoff Basket, who have recently joined the Group.

As this is the first Newsletter following the end of the IAM year, April 2016 to March 31<sup>st</sup> 2017, it is an appropriate time to give you the statistics for that year.

During the year, we generated 18 Tests with 16 Passes and 2 Fails. Eight of those who passed also

achieved the IAM First. This is the most First Passes we have generated in any one year. Since the Group began in 1985 up until May 2017, we have generated 625 Test Passes and 56 Fails, which is a Pass rate of around 92%. This is a testimony of the hard work put in by our Observers both past and present over a very long time and I would like to thank them for the support they have given me throughout the 23 years I have been the Associate Co-ordinator. As regards recruitment, 21 Associates joined the Group in the last IAM year. As Associate Co-ordinator, I would like to wish our Associates on the present

Course every success. It is important that you practise your skills every time you drive.

*Advanced Driving is never a Sunday's only activity.* It is also important to attend the Classroom sessions. A lot of hard work does go into the Presentations. The 'Meet the Examiner Evening' is your opportunity to find out everything about the Test itself. I hope you all enjoy the Course but if you do have any problems, then please let me know.

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

### Notice Board

#### Welcome to new Associates

Paul Heaton, Andrew Heaton, Kate Riley, Michelle Williams, Christopher Parle, Caitlin Hampson and Geoff Basket.

#### AGM

Thursday 8th June  
ibis Styles Hotel, Haydock  
8pm prompt start

**Bring a friend!**

### In the News

#### Road safety charity IAM RoadSmart's manifesto leads the call to work together and save lives on our roads

IAM RoadSmart, the UK's biggest independent road safety charity, has today launched its own manifesto calling on all road safety professionals with one simple message: "Work together to reduce the numbers of people killed and seriously injured on the UK's roads."

In its manifesto, IAM RoadSmart urges legislators, car makers, social media and smartphone companies to work with road users on practical solutions to address driver distraction, especially smartphone usage and interactive dashboard information availability.

The charity also highlights road safety at work; as a critical health and safety issue that requires higher priority and one which should be at the core of good corporate governance for every employer. Making informed procurement choices is vital, with the manifesto urging Defra to implement cross-government procurement rules which accelerates the uptake of safe new vehicles with features such as autonomous braking.

New drivers are also included as IAM RoadSmart called for further changes to post-driving test driving rules and supports a 12 month minimum learning period for new drivers.

#### IAM RoadSmart Course Spring 2017



Associates on the Spring 2017 Course.

Back Row: Paul Heaton, Andrew Heaton, Christopher Parle and Paul Burgess

Front Row: Kate Riley, Caitlin Hampson, Catherine Dutton, Sue Austin and Michelle Williams

#### Jodrell Bank, 27th May 2017



Members and family gather in front of the Lovell Telescope during a visit to the Jodrell Bank Discovery Centre.

#### Congratulations

Pamela Boffey  
for passing the  
Advanced Driving Test

#### Annual Dinner

Friday 30th June  
7.15pm for 7.30pm

Quattro's Italian Restaurant  
(north end of the Rainford  
bypass)

All welcome



**You are cordially invited to the  
St Helens Group of Advanced Motorists  
Annual General Meeting**

**to be held on Thursday 8th June 2017  
8pm at the ibis Styles Hotel, Haydock, St. Helens**

**Guest Speaker:  
Mr. Paul Mountford,  
Casualty Reduction Officer, Merseyside Police**

**Prompt start! Bring a friend!**

### Group Annual General Meeting

ibis Styles Hotel, 4 Galway Crescent Piele Road Haydock, St. Helens WA11 0GR

