

ARE WE THERE YET?



Mid Yorkshire Advanced Motorists Newsletter

August 2018

iam
RoadSmart

Group Number 4178
Registered Charity Number 1053843





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Cover Photo – Narrowboat on the Stratford-upon-Avon Canal

The cover picture was taken on a recent short break when we travelled from Alvechurch, just south of Birmingham, to Stratford-upon-Avon in 3 days. By road the journey would take around 40 minutes.

See page 12 for our experience of life in the slow lane.

FORTHCOMING GATHERINGS

Date	Meeting	Location
Sunday 5th August 9:30 am	Sunday Driving Sessions Assessment runs for all Associates & Members	B&Q Car Park Aspen way, Glasshoughton, Castleford, WF10 4TA
Monday 6th August 8 pm	MYAM Social Evening Director of Safety British Horse Society	Carlton Social Club Main Street Carlton, WF3 3RW See page 7
Sunday 12th August	Harrogate MG Show	Brewerley Park, Pateley Bridge, Harrogate, HG3 5BD
Sunday 19th August 10 am	Sunday Driving Sessions Assessment runs for all Associates & Members	McDonalds Car Park On the roundabout with Oakwood Lane and Easterly Road LS8 2RB
Sunday 2nd September 9:30 am	Sunday Driving Sessions Assessment runs for all Associates & Members	B&Q Car Park Aspen way, Glasshoughton, Castleford, WF10 4TA
Monday 3rd September 8 pm	MYAM Social Evening First Aid with Damian Conway	Carlton Social Club See page 7

Everyone is welcome at these events, this includes partners, other family members and friends, and they are an ideal opportunity to meet new people socially, find out about what is going on within the Group and listen to an interesting talk on a variety of topics, sharing our skills with other serious drivers and keeping up-to-date on club and driving matters.

Will any Member wishing to have an item, article or picture included in the newsletter please submit it to the editor no later than the 15th of the month, these may be edited to save space. Thank you.

FROM THE EDITOR

Summer is now well and truly with us. We've just had a week of high temperatures and can look forward to another week or more of high temperatures. It's a little reminiscent of the heatwave of 1976. There's talk of a hosepipe ban and firefighters have been struggling to control fires around Manchester. Perhaps a hosepipe ban is the catalyst for the rain to start. There's only so much sun we can take! Our garden would certainly welcome the rain as watering the plants is slowly depleting the limited supply in our water butts.

There's another consequence of summer which I see as I travel around and that's road signs being obscured by the undergrowth. I don't mean a few leaves covering the top of a sign but in many cases virtually the whole sign is covered. Speed limit signs, direction signs, arrows indicating sharp bends, the list is endless. I haven't been able to find any information as to who is actually responsible for ensuring road signs are visible to road users. And what is the legal position should an accident be attributed to an obscured road sign?

Summer is also the time for car and other shows. We will be attending many of these and the Forthcoming Gatherings on page 3 of this, and previous, newsletters have details of the events where the MYAM caravan is in attendance. If you see the caravan at any of the events please come over and say hello and bring all your friends and relatives along.

One event we attended recently was the Fleur-de-Lys car show at Thornes Park in Wakefield. This was well attended as I found out when trying to find somewhere to park.

I spotted my next door neighbour at the show with his classic car. Watch out for next month's newsletter when I'll be featuring another little known classic car on the front cover.



Keith

Welcome to the Group

New Associates

**Emma Gibson, Denis Hodge, Paul Moore,
Keith Shorter, Matthew Webster**

Congratulations

On passing the Advanced Test

**Shirley Mallett - Observer Bill Jackson
Jo Robinson - Observer Bill Jackson
Peter Scott - Observer Paul Orange
Helen Whyche- Observer Alan Jones**

Data Protection – Privacy Notice (GDPR)

Mid Yorkshire Advanced Motorists (MYAM) is committed to looking after the information that it holds on behalf of its members in a way that complies with the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR).

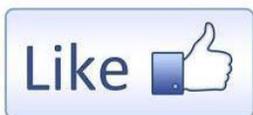
MYAM has a legitimate interest in keeping sufficient personal information to communicate with its members and other local people with an interest in road safety, and to permit the renewal of subscriptions. A member can ask to see a copy of their personal information, correct any errors and ask for all or part of it to be deleted.

MYAM is affiliated to the Institute of Advanced Motorists (IAM) and will use a member's information to support them if and when they are assessed by IAM. MYAM will also ensure that any data shared with IAM is accurate. We will not share your details with anybody else.

MYAM Online

MYAM COMMITTEE MINUTES NOW AVAILABLE TO MEMBERS

The Committee has now agreed that in the interests of transparency the minutes from the MYAM Committee meetings will now be available to Members on the Group website once they have been accepted as a true record by the Committee. So please feel free to check them out. They can be found on the Committee Members page under Our Team. The minutes are located at the bottom of the page.



FACEBOOK provides details of events and local news. Go and visit www.facebook.com/midyorkshireiam and like our page. How about inviting a few of your Facebook friends to like our page too. It helps getting our name out there.

WEB SITE As part of the changes at IAM to introduce the new IAM RoadSmart branding, we now have an all new look website and a new website address. If you use the old address you will be redirected to the Local Groups page on the new IAM RoadSmart website. To go to our new page enter:-

www.iamroadsmart.com/groups/midyorkshire

or use the QR code.



On the website you'll find details of our events, courses, the latest news from the group and copies of previous newsletters.

The Group Telephone number is 0113 314 9969

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RAC Membership Discount

For those of you who are members of the RAC, did you know you can get a discount on your annual membership? You have to ask for it but next time you get your renewal notification, ring them and tell them you are a member of the IAM and they should recalculate your subscription. My experience has been that you need to do this every year as the discount is not automatically applied.

Ed

July Meeting - Highway Code Quiz

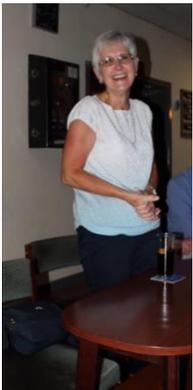
Back in September 2016 our Chief Observer David Rushfirth tested our knowledge of the Highway Code. Just to keep us on our toes for the July meeting he retested our knowledge with the sequel.



This time there were fewer, but still challenging, questions interspersed with a little light relief as shown in the picture where the invention of Cats eyes by Percy Shaw of Halifax followed a question on the different colours of cats eyes on the roads.

After a nerve racking question session, the answers followed accompanied by the usual groans as the teams realised their first thoughts on the answers were correct, not the answer actually written down.

After the answers the results, Lesley Pollards team of two managed to win proving it's the quality of the team, not the quantity that counts. This was quite fortunate as David did not have enough prizes had the 5 member team won.



David's final slide proved a great relief to all and time to relax before returning home.



Also congratulations to Ruth Watson (left) who recently passed her Masters test. Ruth joined the group in late 2016 passing her test in February 2017 with a F1rst and recently qualified as an observer. Is there anything Ruth cannot do?

A Message from the Membership Secretary

Huge thanks to all of you who have paid their subscriptions recently. There have been a few delays in sending reminders from time to time, so apologies for that. Unfortunately, day jobs get in the way.

The changes to the MYAM membership database outlined in a previous newsletter are just about sorted out. This helps us to ensure that we comply with General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) but did require a move from an obsolete database program to a simpler 'data list' program. Lots of data had to be cross checked against the old database and against IAM records. Hopefully, the change will make things easier to manage in future.

I would like to remind you all that the current MYAM group annual subscription rates are:

Members, Associates and Friends - £8.00, reduced to £6.00 if you are aged 70 or more
Committee members and Observers - £1.00

A number of you pay more than is strictly required, often because standing order payments have been set up using the sum paid to our constituent groups. This happens too often to raise it directly with an individual and the amounts involved are small, but please check the value shown on your standing order for future payments.

Any overpayment is treated as a donation, but if a member would like a refund I will be happy to sort one out for you. Just let me know.

Enjoy your driving - *David*

Subscriptions

As many of you will know, the subscriptions for this MYAM Group have remained the same at £8 p.a. since the Group was founded by merger in 2014, in spite of the Members' giving the Committee permission to make an increase at each AGM.

Rising costs are now making it necessary to introduce an increase, and the Committee have agreed a new amount of £10 p.a. - the amount most of us were paying prior to the Group merger.

This new amount will take effect as from 1st January, 2019, and, in order to make this, and any future change, easier for us all, we are looking to change the payment method from standing order to direct debit.

Over the next few issues of the newsletter, we will keep you informed of the steps we will take to move toward direct debit payments, and I do hope you will support us in our efforts to keep MYAM running in the best way for you, our Members.

Janice N. Haigh - Chairman

Fire Alarms

Those of you who were at the July social meeting will have heard Janice relate her experience of being in Morrison's when the fire alarm went off. Here are a few of my fire alarm experiences.

Back in the early 90s I started work at Gent, the fire alarm manufacturer, in Leicester. On my first day the fire alarm went off and someone wandered over to me and said "I suppose you'd better come outside with us all". It's a little embarrassing if a fire alarm company building burns down! In the factory we had several test systems which we used for developing various sensors, detectors and other devices. Whenever we were sent outside after the main alarm system had been triggered, as soon as the fire brigade had given us the all clear the engineers rushed into the building to see if any of the test systems had recorded the incident. These test systems were supposed to have all the sounders disabled to prevent any "accidents" being confused with a real fire but they weren't always disabled as you could be working on a test then suddenly over the other side of the factory a sounder would go off.



The alarm system was tested every Monday morning at 9am. I once made the mistake of being in the toilet when the test occurred. All I can say is if you had constipation at 8:59 by 9:01 you didn't.

At university in the hall I was living in, one resident dreamt his room was on fire and at 3am rushed out of his room and hit the fire alarm. I woke up and realised the alarm was sounding but ignored it, then thought "it's probably a fire" and prepared to leave my room when the alarm stopped. My logic was that if it was a real fire the alarm wouldn't have stopped so I went back to bed. One person had apparently heard the alarm, jumped out of bed, run down to the reception area and was telling the porter what to do. I think the porter told him what to do in no uncertain terms. At about 7am the alarm went off again, as they were trying to reset it. This time everybody ignored it.

At the last company I worked for the building was fitted with a Gent system. When we moved in I was looking around the building noting the familiar sensors on the ceiling when I noticed something very familiar, an interface I'd designed. This was linked to the lift system, its purpose being to inhibit the operation of the lift during a fire. There was also another of these interfaces in the plant room to turn off the air conditioning in the event of a fire. I used to tell people if the fire alarm went off I'd be the first person in the car park.

Keith Wevill

IAM News Releases and Tips



Sunglasses: A Shady Business

The sky's blue, sun is shining and the snow, fog and rain are a distant memory. It's time to get the top down, the shades on and celebrate the great British summer with some open-air motoring. But hold on a minute - those shades might make you look cooler than an ice box, but are they OK for driving? Are sunglasses a boon or burden for the safe driver?

Did you know about the EU standards for sunglasses?

As a matter of fact, there is an EU standard for sunglasses, ensuring the frames are reasonably strong and sweat resistant and the lenses are shatterproof, scratch resistant and give good protection against harmful ultra-violet light.

Any which show the CE mark (and any sold in the EU should have it) should come up to the standards, but they are also graded into five categories - 0 to 4 - to show how dark the tint is, or more specifically, how much visible light they let through.

What categories of sunglasses are there?

Category 0 specs allow 80% to 100% of visible light through and are fine for driving at any time. Categories 1, 2 and 3 are progressively darker tints, shielding against brighter levels of sunshine, and while they are all fine for daylight driving, none of them should be worn if you're driving at night. The darkest is category 4, which lets just 3% to 8% of the light through. These are very dark, like ski goggles. They are so dark that they should not be used for driving at any time, and category 4 sunglasses must be labelled as unsuitable for driving.

Category	Description	Use	Driving	Symbol	
0	Light Tint	Indoors or Cloudy Day	Any time		
1	Light tint	Moderate Sun	Day only, not for night driving		
2	General Purpose Sunglasses	Medium Sun	Day only, not for night driving		
3	General Purpose Sunglasses	Bright Sun	Day only, not for night driving		
4	Very dark	Very Bright Sun/High Glare	Not for driving at any time		

Where can I find this information?

Seems simple enough. Sunglasses on sale in shops such as chemists or opticians do have the label and are marked with the category - normally on the arm. However, online shoppers beware; a look through several shopping websites revealed that very few sellers display the tint category or any symbol, so you have no way of telling whether the glasses are suitable for driving until they arrive. A few are advertised as category 4 and suggested as being good for cyclists, although the official standard states they are “not suitable for driving and road use”, and common sense would say that if they’re too dark for driving, they’re too dark for cycling.

Photochromic glasses aren’t marked but they should be fine for most cars because they respond to ultraviolet light to darken. Car windows block UV light, so the glasses will stay more or less clear. Watch out if you drive a convertible though, because once the roof’s down the glasses will darken, but at their darkest they still allow about 20% of light through, putting them around category 2 or 3. Just be aware that they will stay dark for quite a while if you drive into a tunnel or underpass or a long stretch of shadows.

So, while the sun stays shining, check the tint number before you drive and make sure your shades keep you safe as well as cool.

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Life in the Slow Lane

The journey from Alvechurch, just south of Birmingham, to Stratford-upon-Avon takes about 40 minutes by road but there is another more leisurely way to make the same journey. Caroline and I, along with my brother and his wife, recently took the slow route along the canal system. The map on the next page shows our route in red. The yellow section is the part we decided not to do.

After watching the instructional video we loaded our luggage and food onto the narrow boat and went through the official handover where we were shown how to grease the prop shaft bearing and clear the weeds from around the propeller. Suitably instructed we set off around 4pm aiming to moor at Earlswood. The route took us along the Worcester and Birmingham canal through the 1½ mile West Hill tunnel, close to where we used to live in Kings Norton. This tunnel is wide enough for two boats to pass as we found out when we met another boat close to the exit.



Our transport for the week

At the Kings Norton Junction we had to turn right onto the Stratford-upon-Avon canal. The direction sign said Stratford 25½ miles and 55 locks. Another, shorter, tunnel followed then we passed very close to our parent’s first house.

We didn’t make it to Earlswood that night but moored up a couple of miles away after about 5 hours travel and settled down to our evening meal.

Next morning after breakfast and checking for weeds, we set off to face our first lock. I don’t know how familiar you are with the operation of locks but the basics are to ensure the water in the lock is level with the canal as you approach. Then lower the water to the level on your exit which involves operating paddles on the entry and exits and opening the gates once the water levels are equalised. With a team of three operating the locks, by the end of the trip we were getting through locks in about 10 minutes.



The water tank had to be filled with water everyday which meant finding one of the water points, then spending about 15 minutes filling the tank which was used for washing, flushing the loo and, via two filters, for drinking.

We passed through Kingswood Junction where the canal meets the Grand Union canal then through more locks stopping that evening at Lowsonford, where we had a barbecue at the side of the canal. My brother loves barbecues!

There were still had a lot of locks to get through before we reached Stratford but we had received news from other boats that there was a River Festival in Stratford that weekend and that mooring would be difficult so we changed our plans. There is a flight of 11 locks just outside Stratford. Just before the flight is the railway station at Wilmcote so we decided to stop there and take the train into Stratford. We reached Wilmcote and moored mid-afternoon



Our Route

leaving us to have a leisurely evening meal, another barbecue, a walk into Wilmcote where Mary Arden's house is located and a pleasant drink in the local pub.

Next morning we caught the train into Stratford spending the day walking round looking at the sights and observing all the Japanese tourists taking selfies outside Shakespeare's birthplace. We met one of the boats in the marina that had been travelling with us. They had managed to get a mooring in the marina and were planning to continue along the Avon.

The boat had to be back at Alvechurch by 9am on the following Monday so we had three days to get back. Our plan was to spend Friday and Saturday going through the locks and have a leisurely Sunday without worrying about locks, moor up outside Alvechurch on Sunday evening and make an early start on Monday to get the boat back on time.

Although there were no locks on the final section there were three swing bridges. Two of these are hand operated but one, on a public road, is electrically operated requiring no more effort than pressing buttons to open or close it. It's amazing, though, that you wait for the traffic to clear but as soon as you operate the bridge cars just turn up to wait for you to finish!



Everyone we met along the canal was very friendly and always said hello. Several of the boats were almost travelling in convoy so we got to know some of them quite well.

One thing that struck me after we'd moored was how quiet it was and all we could hear was the sound of the birds in the morning and as we travelled there was just the sound of the boats engine in the background.

The speed limit on the canal is 4mph and as a check I took along a GPS unit which showed our speed. Our typical speed was between 2 and 2½ mph although we did get up to 3.4mph at one point.

Steering the boat was interesting as there is a delay between turning the rudder and the boat turning, also the rudder has virtually no effect in reverse which makes manoeuvring very interesting at times.

One thing we did find useful, especially when going through the locks, was a set of walkie-talkies so someone could go ahead to the next lock and check whether it was in our favour or needed to be set up. This did speed up getting through the locks.

Keith Wevill

And Finally.....

Read this in a Brummie accent

Aynuk is walking home one afternoon when he comes across his old pal Ayli.

“Hey up Ayli” says he. “were yow bin?”

“Fishin!” says Ayli

“Oh ar! Yow cetch anythin?”

“Oh ar!” says Ayli, “I caught a whale”

“Cobblers!” says Aynuk “Yow woz anny dahn the cut, yow dow get whales in the cut!”

“I bloody did!.....” Says Ayli

“.....Day ‘ave no spokes in it though!”

.....

This Month’s Teaser



What is wrong with this picture? It’s a little difficult because of the strobing interaction between the sign and the dashcam but look carefully and you’ll see something not quite right.

Last Month’s Teaser

Last month I asked “Why were British cars disqualified from the 1966 Monte Carlo Rally” in spite of finishing in the top four places?.” The cars in question were all fitted with non-dipping single filament quartz iodine bulbs in place of the double filament dipping bulbs fitted to the production versions of the cars. This elevated a Citroen to first place. Teams threatened to boycott the event.

Your Committee

Chairman	Janice Haigh		Contact via the secretary
Secretary	Andrew Simpson-Laing	01132 299522 07743 306654	myam.secretary(at)outlook.com
Treasurer	Rosie Bricis	0113 2534528	rbricis(at)live.co.uk
Membership Secretary	David Rockliff		Membership.myamcar(at)jamGroups.org.uk
Youth Contact	Position Vacant		
Speaker Secretary	Position Vacant		
Events Manager	Alan Jones	07714 444595	alan.j909(at)btinternet.com
Website	David Rushfirth	01924 211510 07966 134045	myam.webmaster(at)outlook.com
Newsletter	Keith Wevill	01274 815281	myam.newsletter(at) outlook.com
Chief Observer	David Rushfirth	01924 211510 07966 134045	myam.webmaster(at)outlook.com
Ex officio	Bill Jackson Paul Macro Paul Orange Julie Watson		

Due to computer hacking and high levels of spamming we have had to remove the hyperlinks to our e-mail addresses and have replaced the @ symbol with (at) so you will need to retype the address in the correct e-mail format, i.e. replace (at) with @, with no spaces.

URGENT REQUEST

We now have a Group Secretary however we also need a Speaker Secretary to organise the social meetings. To find out more contact the Secretary.