

# ARE WE THERE YET?

Mid Yorkshire Advanced Motorists Newsletter

December 2019

**iam**  
RoadSmart

Group Number 4178  
Registered Charity Number 1053843





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### **Cover Photo – Cable Car Funchal Madeira**

With winter fast approaching it's time to remember our summer holidays and plan next years holiday. Our main holiday this year was to Madeira where we took the cable car up to the gardens at the top of the hill. If you do go to Madeira and want to use the cable car, get there early to avoid the queues and get a gondola to yourself.

## FORTHCOMING GATHERINGS AND EVENTS

<b>Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> November</b>	<b>Ossett Christmas Lights Switch On</b>	Town Hall Market Place Ossett WF5 8BE
<b>Sunday 1st December 9:30am – 12am</b>	<b>Sunday Driving Sessions</b> Assessment runs for all Associates & Members	Sigma Ltd Alpine Court, Castleford, WF10 4TL
<b>Monday 2nd December 8pm</b>	<b>MYAM Social Evening</b> Christmas Quiz and Buffet	Carlton Social Club Main Street Carlton WF3 3RW See page 7
<b>Sunday 19th January 10 am</b>	<b>Sunday Driving Sessions</b> Assessment runs for all Associates & Members	McDonalds car park On the roundabout with Oakwood Lane and Easterly Road LS8 2RB

Everyone is welcome at these events 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.

### Social Meeting Dates for 2020

February 3rd	March 2nd	April 6th	May 4th	June 1st
July 6th	August 3rd	September 7th	October 5th	November 2nd
		December 7th		

There is no meeting in January.

### Ideas for Speakers Required

We are planning the programme of speakers for 2020 and would like to “ask the audience” for ideas for speakers so if you have any suggestions for speakers, either motoring related or non-motoring related, please let the committee know. You don’t have to organise the speaker (unless you want too!) we can do that.

## FROM THE EDITOR

Over the half term week we've taken advantage of being relieved from our childminding duties and have been out and about. Several of these outings meant driving on the M62 between the M1 and the M606 junctions, which we managed to hit around rush hour which seems to start around mid afternoon. Because of the level of the traffic, the hard shoulder was being used as a running lane but there is an anomaly with this as traffic has to move off the "hard shoulder" as the motorway approaches a junction, unless you actually want to leave at the junction. This forces traffic back into the normal running lanes around junctions. Was this considered when the decision to use the hard shoulder as a running lane was made? Perhaps a redesign of the junction layout is needed?

We've also been down the sections of the M1 where the hard shoulder has effectively been converted into a permanent running lane. I would question the wisdom of doing this as often the level of traffic would be adequately served by just three lanes. It has been said that the technology monitoring the motorway can pick up an incident on the former hard shoulder but we all know that technology is not 100% reliable so there is always the possibility of a simple shunt escalating into a major incident very quickly. There may be refuges at regular intervals but breakdowns do not always occur at convenient points and it's not always easy to get to the next refuge.

Surely at times of lower traffic levels would it not be better to have three lanes with a hard shoulder resorting to using the hard shoulder as a running lane as traffic volumes increase as on the M62. The technology already exists to put a red X above the hard shoulder to stop it being used as a running lane.

### Keith

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.

I occasionally receive more contributions than I can use in the current newsletter so if you have sent me an item and it hasn't been published rest assured it will be published in a future edition.

GROUP MEMBERSHIP NEWS

# Welcome to the Group

New Associates

Ummera Ashruff, Matthew Davies, Jeremy Pearce,

# Congratulations

On passing the Advanced Test

Andy Fox - Observer David Rushfirth

Lauren Gough - Observer Les Horsman

Andy passed with a F1rst  
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We wish all our members



A Merry Christmas  
and  
A Happy New Year



# MYAM Online



**WEB SITE** Our website is packed full of information and is the go to place for everything you need to know about our events, courses, meetings and news about us as a Group. How about copies of the newsletter going back a few years.

Need to know who the Committee are or see our Observer team? We are all on there.

See us at [www.iamroadsmart.com/groups/midyorkshire](http://www.iamroadsmart.com/groups/midyorkshire)

We are adding to the content all the time so keep dropping in to see what we are doing.



**FACEBOOK** provides details of events and local news. Go and visit [www.facebook.com/midyorkshireiam](http://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.

**The Group Telephone number is 0113 314 9969**

## **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).

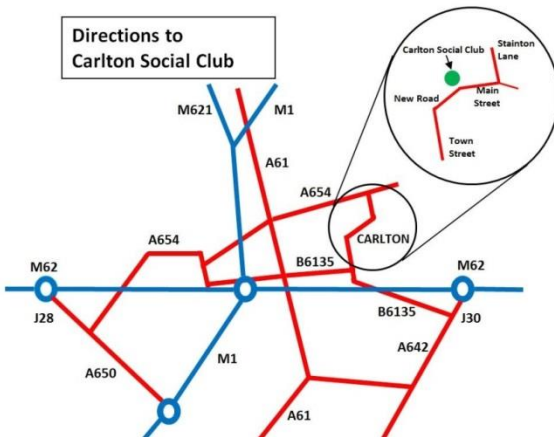
MYAM has a legitimate interest in keeping sufficient personal information to communicate with its members and other local people with an interest in road safety, and to permit the renewal of subscriptions. A member can ask to see a copy of their personal information, correct any errors and ask for all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



# Directions to the Carlton Social Club

Main Street, Carlton, Wakefield WF3 3RW



From the M62 West leave at Junction 28 and take the A650 towards Wakefield. At the next set of traffic lights turn left onto the A654 toward Rothwell. Follow the A654, turning left in Thorpe on the Hill. Cross the A61 and continue into Carlton. Turn right into Stainton Lane then turn right into Main Street. The Social Club is on the right immediately after the Unicorn pub.

From the M62 East leave at junction 30 and take the A642 towards Wakefield.

Take the next right, B6135, towards Lofthouse. Follow the B6135 under the M62 onto Ouzlewell Green towards Carlton and Rothwell. Follow the road past Carlton Primary School and the Social Club is on the left just before the Unicorn pub.

There is a car park with overspill parking available on the grass area opposite the club.



# November Meeting - Winter Driving

Winter is approaching and with this in mind David Stringer gave us a few timely reminders about driving when the temperature drops. Some of the potential hazards such as snow, ice and frost are obvious but there are many other hazards which can catch us out if we are not prepared.

Driving east in the morning or west in the afternoon the sun will be directly in front of you causing poor visibility, hiding potential hazards and causing eye strain. Keeping the windscreen clean, both inside and out, will help and using dipped headlights can help others to see you.

Rain brings the risks of poor visibility from spray and surface water risks aquaplaning on faster roads, stopping distances can also be increased. Note that ABS will not reduce the stopping distance but it will allow you to retain control under braking.

Beware of flooded roads, especially with recent events in south Yorkshire. If you have to drive through a flood try to check the depth or watch other motorists going through the water, let them find the depth. Remember if you drive through there could be hidden potholes. If you do decide it is safe, drive through slowly, try to keep the engine revs up and the speed low and do not create a bow wave and do not cross when other vehicles are crossing. Once you are through check your brakes.

Micro climates, where the climate differs from surrounding areas, can occur near trees, large bodies of water, hedges or bridges. There could be standing water, frost or ice in these regions.

Mist and fog are common with reduced visibility. Problems here are drivers not using lights, I'm sure we've all seen cars with no lights at all in these situations. It is a legal requirement to use rear fog lights when the visibility drops to less than 100m. These should be used with at least dipped headlights to ensure you are more visible to oncoming traffic. It is not advisable to drive with sidelights and front foglights. Do not use main beam as too much light will be reflected by the fog. (try it, briefly, and you'll see what I mean)

In snow and ice clear the snow from your car, clearing all the windows AND the roof, making sure you have a clear windscreen. How many times have you seen a car with a small hole in the snow covering the windscreen? Keep moving, accelerating and braking smoothly and remember stopping distances may be up to 10 times longer and allow more time for your journey. On hills let the car ahead get all the way up before setting off, keeping your speed high enough to get up but not too fast to be dangerous.

Your car needs preparing for winter. Check the lights are all working, check you have sufficient screen wash and the concentration is suitable for winter temperatures and check your tyres making sure they have sufficient tread depth and, if necessary, fit winter tyres but don't forget



to change back in the spring. As an alternative you can get all season tyres which can be used all year round.

And finally don't forget to prepare yourself. Wear suitable footwear, wellington boots are not really suitable for driving but keep some in the car. Outdoor cold weather clothing may restrict movement making it difficult to access the controls but can be kept in the car along with food, warm drinks, a torch, an ice scraper, hi viz jacket, blankets etc. Keep these easily accessible inside the car, not in the boot. You can also carry things such as jump leads, extra blankets and a spade in the boot.

Make sure your mobile phone is charged and you have a full fuel tank before you set off but should you be unfortunate to get stuck in snow keep the engine running to keep the interior warm while you wait for assistance. Car interiors cool down rapidly once the engine is turned off.

Hopefully we won't have another bad winter but just in case it's as well to be prepared.

# Thank You Halfords

Once again we have to thank Halfords for their support by providing prizes for our Christmas meeting.

As a thank you from us to Halfords all they ask is that you call in and tell them where you heard about them. This is a relationship we can build on with your help. So please visit and let them know where you heard about them even if you don't buy anything. The manager needs to know that our members have visited his shop, which let's face it is only fair.



## **Halfords Wakefield**

78, Ings Road  
Wakefield  
WF1 1TY

**Telephone**  
01924 387474

See their website at <http://www.halfords.com/> for their full range of products, services and store locations.

## The Technology in Your Car – 9 Security

Back in the 1960s and early 1970s it was relatively easy to steal a car without a key. The locks weren't that secure and it wasn't difficult to "hot wire" the ignition. Then in the 1970s the ignition switch was moved to the steering column and linked to a lock which locked the steering wheel when the key was removed. Saab were different linking the key to the gearbox. These measures heralded a series of improvements to vehicle security.

Central locking was introduced meaning all doors could be locked or unlocked by locking or unlocking the driver or passenger door. In 1992 deadlocking was introduced. This prevented the doors from being unlocked from the inside once the car had been locked from the outside. Remote control soon followed allowing the car to be locked or unlocked as you walked to or from the car.

When electronic engine management systems arrived security was further enhanced by fitting a small transponder in the key which is interrogated by the management system when the key is turned. If the key responds with an incorrect code the engine will not start. The key also usually includes the locking and unlocking buttons.

Prior to this a number of aftermarket options were available which included an immobiliser which was fitted in the ignition and starter motor circuits preventing both operating unless a "key" was inserted which reconnected both circuits. There were also aftermarket alarms which were usually activated by a door being opened often working by sensing the small drop in battery voltage when the interior light came on. There was also the ultrasonic alarm in which the interior of the car was flooded with an ultrasonic sound. This was picked up by a microphone which detected any disturbance in the sound created by a door being opened or a window being broken and set the alarm off.

These days alarm systems are incorporated as standard as are transponder immobiliser systems. This means the keys are quite complex and if lost replacements must be coded to the car. This is why they can be very expensive to replace. There are also many additional functions available such as setting the door mirrors, electric seat settings, radio stations to each individual key and on many cars you can close or open all the windows when you lock or unlock the car remotely.

You may have heard of Thatcham Research, established in 1969 it helps to reduce the costs of insurance claims and tests, and rates, security of cars. Following the introduction of the New Vehicle Security Assessment in 1992 the measures introduced reduced the number of car thefts by 80% up to 2016. A good Thatcham rating can help to reduce the insurance group rating. One of their latest ratings concern cars with keyless entry. These cars do not have a conventional key and allow entry to the car and starting the engine provided you have the "key" on your person. These can be more vulnerable to theft and to gain a Superior award they must pass a specific test. If you're thinking of buying a new car with a keyless entry system visit their

website, <https://www.thatcham.org/what-we-do/security/consumer-rating/>, to see which cars have passed this test.

## Pathfinder October 2019

Over the last few issues I've been publicising the Pathfinder driving course for under 17s, the latest being run over the half term week at Driffield. I was curious to see what was involved, so on Thursday 31<sup>st</sup> October I drove over to Driffield and met Lesley Pollard who has been involved since Pathfinders came to Yorkshire. It was the fourth day of the course so the participants had already been taught the basics and were now covering more advanced techniques.

Each day a different course is laid out in cones, the Thursday course included roundabouts, junctions and several sections where higher speeds could be achieved. Speed limits were also set around the course. There was also a test area where they had to brake and simultaneously avoid several hazards.

There was also a fire engine in attendance in which the participants were encouraged to take a ride to see how it copes with the course. I had a ride and saw how difficult it was to get round the various obstacles but the driver negotiated the course without hitting any of the cones.

The week is split between theory and practical driving sessions and after lunch the course leader, Ian Goring, spoke on how to deal with "misbehaviour" from passengers in the car. There was also advice on what to do, and what not to do, when an ambulance, fire engine or police car is approaching with the "blues and twos" going.



**Lesley in the driving seat**



**Ian at the theory session**

Following the theory session it was practical driving and I sat in with one student. For the driving session the student is accompanied by an observer and their parent. The observer first drove round the course demonstrating both the car, in this case it was an automatic BMW, and how to approach and negotiate the various hazards. Then it was the students turn. To say I was impressed as to how he coped with both the car and driving round the course is an understatement. Considering he hadn't driven before the start of the week, the standard of his driving was excellent, and aided by the

observer, he negotiated the course successfully in spite of it being the first time he'd driven an automatic. I spoke to his mother who considered that the course was well worth the money and would hopefully reduce the number of driving lessons required and would result in a first time pass and would set him up for a lifetime of safer driving.

One other thing that impressed me was that on the first day the students were taught reverse parking so all the cars were "correctly" parked in the car park.

The statistics show that the accident rate is significantly lower for Pathfinder students. It would be nice if the insurance companies, who seem to rely on statistics, could offer reduced premiums for those who have undertaken the course. Let's hope they take notice.

Ian was a little disappointed that there were only 21 students on the course but was hopeful that the next courses would be fully booked so if you know of any aspiring young drivers who would benefit from the course pass on the details. Next year there will be three courses, over the Easter and the autumn half term breaks with an extra course being run in July. For full details of the dates and locations see <https://under17driver.co.uk/>.

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## October and November Presentations



I forgot to include the certificate presentation photo last month so in the photo above we see Tom Duncan being presented with his certificate. His observer was Alan Jones, also in the photo. Right is Janice presenting Paul Douglas Semple with his certificate. His observer was David Rockliff.



## The future is green – even our number plates

Amidst the ups and downs of Brexit, the Department of Transport managed to hit the streets recently with an announcement on green number plates. Excellent, I thought. No more chunks of white and yellow plastic being dumped in our canals and landfill sites – now they will all biodegrade away to nothing. Unfortunately, that's not quite what they meant. Instead they are part of the governments push to lower the carbon economy and to encourage us to take up electric cars. So, will they have any impact?

According to the RAC, who have polled their members on it, the answer is – not really. The drivers they questioned don't seem too impressed. Only a fifth think it's a good idea and the majority said “the number plates wouldn't have the effect of making them any more likely to switch to an electric vehicle”.

I don't really share the concerns raised by some that green number plates could become a 'look at me I'm greener than you' item that could spark resentment. But you never know – green road rage could replace the red mist!

With today's joined up database of CCTV and ANPR (Automatic Number Plate Recognition) we can instantly find out most of a car details at the touch of a button. Insurance and tax status are all recorded centrally and adding emissions into that system should not present too much of an issue. This means that you don't need different plates to identify the cleanest vehicles.

In terms of using the plates to link the vehicle into new incentives, then that could be a useful idea. Incentives such as bus lane access and free parking for electric vehicles have been mentioned. These have worked very well in countries such as Norway, which now have the largest market for electric vehicles in the world. This was part of a wider project to reduce costs for electric vehicles and provide a comprehensive network of chargers.

I have been told by my NAF friends (NAF is the Norwegian equivalent of the AA) that what has happened in Norway is that so many people chose electric, that the bus lanes are now full of cars and the incentive may have to be removed. This illustrates the importance of 'timing' when it comes to incentives. It's great to introduce them but when their job is done it is not so easy to remove them. The UK government has already, in my view, got this wrong by reducing the subsidy on new electric cars and hybrids too soon. At a stroke they reduced the market for hybrids, and increased demand for full electrics that the car manufacturers simply cannot yet meet.

So, in essence I have no real problem with green number plates, but it will not increase the uptake of electric vehicles by itself. There are far bigger barriers to a low emission future such as purchase cost, range anxiety and charging networks that need to be addressed urgently. Driving electric vehicles does require new skills, and incentives for training should be part of any new measures that are being brought forward. As ever, this need is not being given any high-profile support by the government. Which is a pity as getting the maximum confidence, fun and enjoyment out of your new electric car is much more likely to turn you into a convert, than the colour of your number plate!

*By Neil Greig IAM RoadSmart's director of policy and research*

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## Electric Car Heaters

One aspect of electric cars has always puzzled me, how does the heater work? A former work colleague had an electric car which had a small petrol tank purely for the heater. That car was an early one with a range of around 30miles, just enough to get him to and from work although it was touch and go if he made it home as it was uphill from work.

In a petrol or diesel car heat is a by-product of the operation of the engine and effectively costs nothing to run and helps to keep the engine cool but having googled electric car heaters, it appears that they use the cars battery to provide the heating as the heat generated by the electric motors is insufficient to heat the cars interior. Thus using the heater, air conditioning and heated seats will affect the range of the car.

One other aspect is the performance of the battery at extreme temperatures. Batteries are usually optimised for charge and discharge in an ambient temperature of around 20 to 25°C, operating them at higher temperatures the range is reduced but operating them at lower temperatures the range is reduced even more..

One test report, <https://apnews.com/04029bd1e0a94cd59ff9540a398c12d1>, tested several electric cars at 75°F (24°C) and at 20°F (-7°C) and 95°F (35°C). At -7°C the range fell by 12% without cabin heating but fell by 41% when the heating was turned on. At 35°C the range fell by 4% without air conditioning falling by 17% with the air conditioning turned on.

This leads to an interesting situation. If you get stuck in snow in an electric car and turn the heater on to keep warm, as mentioned in our November social meeting on winter driving, will you have enough left in the battery to drive the car away once help has arrived.

Perhaps one question to ask if you are planning to get an electric car is “what is the range in winter compared to summer?”

Does anyone have any experience of driving an electric car in winter?



# And Finally.....

## Tales from Academia

Written above a toilet roll holder in one of the university toilets  
“ Philosophy degrees. Please take one”.

In a Philosophy degree final exam the question was “Is this a question?” to which one candidate wrote “If this is an answer!” Probably got a first for that.

When I was at university, the head of the Engineering department was once described as a random word generator with a slight bias towards the English language. The head of the Oceanography department could do the same but in Welsh!

Our lectures began at 10 past the hour to allow time for students to travel from one building to another. One of our lecturers had the habit of locking the lecture room door after he had entered the room. On one occasion after he'd locked it there was a rattling of the door as one of my colleagues was slightly late for the lecture. A couple of minutes later he appeared through the back door, walked down to one of the front rows, gave the lecturer a dirty look and sat down. We thought nothing of it until a few weeks later at 10 past the hour the lecturer hadn't arrived so my colleague went over and locked the door. A couple of minutes later there was a rattling of the door handle followed by the door being unlocked. The lecturer came in, gave my colleague a really dirty look then started the lecture!

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## This Month's Teaser

Which is Britain's longest motorway and which is Britain's shortest motorway?

## Last Month's Teaser

Last month I asked. “Which car has the longest production run in the UK?” It is the Morgan 4/4 which was launched in 1936 and has remained in production since then with a styling update in 1955.

# Your Committee

Chairman	Janice Haigh		myam.chairman(at)outlook.com
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Youth Liaison	David Speight		
Speaker Secretary	Position vacant		
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Website	David Rushfirth	See above	myam.webmaster(at)outlook.com
Newsletter Editor	Keith Wevill	01274 815281	myam.newsletter(at)outlook.com
Chief Observer	David Rushfirth	See above	myam.webmaster(at)outlook.com
GDPR Manager	David Rockliff		

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 are still in need of a Speaker Secretary to organise the speakers for our monthly meetings. Please contact any member of the committee if you are interested this position.**