

ARE WE THERE YET?



Mid Yorkshire Advanced Motorists Newsletter

September 2019

iam
RoadSmart

Group Number 4178
Registered Charity Number 1053843





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Cover Photo – Mini Moke

One of the many variants of the Mini produced since its introduction in 1959. Probably one of the most iconic British cars over five million were built between 1959 and 2000. There cannot be many people who have either owned or learnt to drive in a Mini.

FORTHCOMING GATHERINGS AND EVENTS

Date	Meetings	Location
Sunday 25th August 10 am – 4pm	Heath Common Classic Car Rally	Heath Common Kirkthorpe Lane Wakefield WF1 5SE
Sunday 1st September 10 am – 4pm	West Yorkshire Classic and American Car Show	Featherstone Rovers Football Club Post Office Road Featherstone Pontefract WF7 5EN
Monday 2nd September 7:30pm	MYAM Social Evening Paddy Hopkirk and David Gallagher	Carlton Social Club Main Street Carlton WF3 3RW See page 7
Sunday 8th September 9:30am – 12am	Sunday Driving Sessions Assessment runs for all Associates & Members	Sigma Ltd Alpine Court, Castleford, WF10 4TL
Sunday 15th September 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 6th October 9:30am – 12am	Sunday Driving Sessions Assessment runs for all Associates & Members	Sigma Ltd Alpine Court, Castleford, WF10 4TL
Monday 7th October 8pm	MYAM Social Evening Norah McWilliam Queensbury Tunnel Society	Carlton Social Club

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.

FROM THE EDITOR

Last month I mentioned I was going to spend some time helping my brother with his MGB restoration. I'd already spent some time sorting out the wiring under the bonnet and the wiring to the rear lights so it was just the dashboard wiring that needed sorting out. Unfortunately some of the switches had suffered from 30 years of neglect and needed replacing. However we did manage to get most of the electrics sorted and, with the help of a couple of members of the MG Owners club, get the engine started. I reckon it will be sometime next year before it will be completely finished.

We have a treat for you at our September meeting when Paddy Hopkirk the IAM RoadSmart Mature Drivers Ambassador and David Gallagher, the IAM RoadSmart Young Drivers Ambassador will be our speakers. Please note that the meeting will be starting at 7:30pm but be warned the meeting may go on for some time as Paddy has kissed the Barney Stone and gained the gift of the gab!

Also last month I included an article on the Queensbury Tunnel and for our October meeting our speaker will be Norah McWilliam leader of the Queensbury Tunnel Society who are campaigning to stop the tunnel being filled in and abandoned. They want the tunnel refurbished and used as part of a cycle network that can bring economic benefits to the area. For more information see their website.

<http://www.queensburytunnel.org.uk/index.shtml>

If you wish to object to the plans to close the tunnel please visit the following website

www.tiny.cc/TunnelPlans

Because of the Mini articles there is no Technology in Your Car this month but it will be back next month.

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.

GROUP MEMBERSHIP NEWS

Welcome to the Group

New Associates

**Raza Altamimi, Alex Laws, Peter Letts,
William Swordy, Kristian Thompson**

Congratulations

On passing the Advanced Test

**Ben Cordiner - Observer Lesley Pollard
Paul Franks - Observer Mick Coley**

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Pathfinder Yorkshire 28th October – 1st November 2019

October half term is on the horizon and if you have, or know, teenagers 17 and under who are keen to learn to drive then please have a look at under17driver.co.uk.

The Under 17 Car Club, which is accredited by IAM RoadSmart, have developed the Pathfinder Course which runs for five days every Easter and October half term. The nearest venue to MYAM is run at Driffield, East Yorkshire.

The youngsters are taught in a safe environment and by the end of the week are displaying advanced standards in their driving, more details are on the website.

The cost is £370 and there are 50% bursaries available to apply; for folk from our area. If you'd like any more info contact Ian Goring, Course Leader, on 01904 700489.

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

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 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)

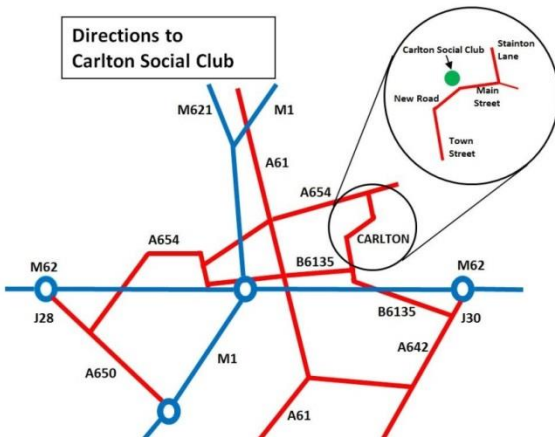
Mid Yorkshire Advanced Motorists (MYAM) is committed to looking after the information that it holds on behalf of its members in a way that complies with the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR).

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.

August Meeting - Highways England

I'm sure we have all experienced the M62 Smart motorway where the speed limits are changed to suit the traffic conditions but what is the reasoning behind the changes. For our August meeting Martin Free from Highways England gave us an insight into the history and operation of Smart Motorways.

Following bad weather in January 2003, when much of the motorway network was brought to a halt, the Highways Agency was formed to look after the motorway network and major trunk roads. It changed to Highways England in 2015 and now looks after the motorways and major trunk roads in England amounting to around 4300 miles. For more information on the roads managed by Highways England see the following website.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/roads-managed-by-highways-england>

These roads represent around 2% of all roads in England but they carry a third of all traffic by mileage and two thirds of all heavy goods traffic.

Because of the volume of traffic it is important to keep the roads moving and to this end Smart motorways were introduced. By altering the speed limit and opening up the hard shoulder as a running lane this can be achieved, increasing the capacity of the motorway and reducing the level of "stop start" motoring which I'm sure we've all experienced. However this only works up to a point, once the maximum capacity of the motorway is reached the motorway can still grind to a halt.

One of the first motorways to be converted to the "Smart" system was part of the M42 in the Midlands, a road I am familiar with. Following the trials the scheme was extended to other motorways including the M62 and M1. I'm sure we've all experienced the roadworks associated with these conversions.

Some motorways have been widened to four lanes but this is expensive if additional land adjacent to the motorway has to be purchased. Converting to a Smart motorway is cheaper although in many cases the former hard shoulder has to be dug up and rebuilt with better foundations to allow it to be used as a running lane. The central barriers are also being changed to concrete which can reduce the number of crossover incidents.

Sensors in the road detect the speed of the traffic and if a slow down is detected the speed limits are altered automatically to keep the traffic moving. There are also overhead signs which can warn motorists of obstructions ahead. Martin said that motorists will call them to report objects in the road these will cause the overhead signs to display "reported debris in road" but the reports have to be confirmed by one of their officers. Once confirmed the signs will change to "debris in road" and a Highways England vehicle will be dispatched to halt the traffic while the debris is removed as quickly as possible to minimise the time the traffic is stationary.

The Story of The Mini

Perhaps one of the most iconic British cars, the Mini was introduced to the public on 26th August 1959 although the story had started three years earlier when BMC (British Motor Corporation) set out to design a small economical car in response to the flood of bubble cars that had come into the country following the petrol rationing as a result of the Suez crisis. The man chosen to head the design team was Alec Issigonis who had designed the Morris Minor and had recently returned to BMC after a spell at Alvis. The instruction was to design a miniature Morris Minor.

Issigonis had decided to use front wheel drive with a transverse engine, and a gearbox mounted under the engine using the same oil as the engine. The principle of using the same oil as the engine had been successfully tested early in the design phase. The initial prototypes had the engine mounted the opposite way round to the final version but because this would expose the carburettor to cold air with the risk of icing up, the engine was turned round. This meant an additional gear was needed to prevent it having one forward and four reverse gears.

In early 1959 the first production Mini was built at the Longbridge factory single handed by Albert Green taking seven hours to complete. It was eventually registered with the registration 621 AOK.

At the launch there were two versions, the Austin Seven and the Morris Mini Minor for the two franchises that formed BMC. The only difference between the two was the grille and wheel trims. The price was £496 a price that Ford wondered how they made any profit on the car.

The original car had an 848cc engine but in 1967, when the MkII Mini was introduced, a 998cc engine was an option. Other changes for the MkII were larger rear lights and a different gear lever.

In 1969 the MkIII was introduced with concealed door hinges replacing the external hinges and wind up windows replacing the sliding windows. The Clubman range with a different bonnet was also introduced at the same time.

John Cooper, who had been the World Champion Racing Car Constructor in 1959 and 1960 and knew Alec Issigonis very well, was looking for a small car



Two generations of Mini owners. The top picture, taken in 1972, is my brother with his first Mini and the bottom picture, taken in 1998, is his son with his Mini. Both pictures were taken outside our parent's house.

suitable for conversion to a GT car. Once he got his hands on a Mini he found it eminently suitable and proceeded to uprate the 848cc engine to 997cc with twin carburettors and disc brakes. The resulting car was very successful in competitions. The next development was to uprate the engine ultimately to 1275cc to produce the Cooper S.

The Mini was very successful in competition including winning the Monte Carlo Rally in 1964, 1965 and 1967. It did come first in 1966 but was disqualified for a technical infringement of the headlights. One of the drivers for the team was Paddy Hopkirk.

Following the introduction of the Clubman range, which included the 1275GT, the Mini Cooper was discontinued but the Cooper S continued until 1971.

In addition to the saloon versions there were the Countryman estate, the Minivan, the Pickup and two upmarket versions, the Riley Elf and the Wolsey Hornet with an extended boot and the Mini Moke. The Moke had been developed as a military vehicle but because of its low ground clearance it was not suitable for its intended purpose. However it was popular as a taxi in hotter holiday resorts where the lack of a roof was not a problem.

Over the life of the Mini virtually every part has been changed from the original and 5,387,862 were made with the last one leaving the factory in 2000.



A selection of Minis at Thornes Park

You're Only Supposed to Blow the Bloody Doors Off

Perhaps one of the most quoted lines from the 1969 film *The Italian Job* which celebrates its 50th anniversary this year. The film stars Michael Caine as the small time crook Charlie Croker who takes on a "job" in Italy to steal £4 million of gold from under the eyes of the authorities and the Mafia in Turin. The film also stars Noel Coward and Benny Hill but the real stars are the three Minis used to escape with the gold from the chaos caused when the computer program controlling the traffic lights in Turin is changed.

About thirty Minis were used for the film and it is believed that none survive, many being damaged during the stunts. Turin was the home of Fiat and they offered as many cars as the production required but as it was a British film the offer was politely declined. However BMC had no interest in the film and only offered three cars at trade price, the rest had to be bought at the normal price. The three registration numbers used are not genuine but were fitted to make them look as if they were current 1969 cars.

In the scene through the sewer, which was actually filmed in an unopened sewer in Coventry, they had wanted to do a full 360 degree rotation but couldn't because of the water and various obstructions on the roof of the sewer. Filming was done from the back of a Mini Moke fitted with a Cooper S engine.

For the jump scenes the cars had to be modified to increase the strength of the body to allow them to withstand the landing. The stunts were actually performed by Remy Julienne and his stunt team and were very carefully planned beforehand.

The scene where the title quote was set was apparently filmed without telling anyone. The film crew just turned up and blew up the van then left quickly having shattered windows in the vicinity.

If you know your Minis you should know that the cars that were rolled off the coach at the end were not the Cooper S models used for the escape as the Cooper S has twin fuel tanks but the cars that were destroyed in that scene had only a single filler cap.

The film has, literally, a cliffhanger ending. There were four endings written but the producer, Michael Deeley, wasn't satisfied with any of them and conceived an ending on a plane journey to the States which left an opportunity for a sequel. In 2008 the Royal Society of Chemistry held a competition for a solution which had a basis in science, didn't involve a helicopter and took no more than 30 minutes.



On The Roof Of The Fiat Factory



Hang On A Minute Lads I've Got A Great Idea

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Please Note

When I send out the newsletters I receive a list of email addresses from David Rushfirth. This normally goes smoothly but last month David, who has recently taken over the job of membership secretary, had been reviewing the address list and comparing it with the IAM Roadsmart database. This threw up a number of anomalies causing a higher than usual number of failed deliveries. We managed to get it sorted out within a few days but it did highlight differences between the two databases. We would therefore ask you to inform both MYAM and IAM Roadsmart if you change any of your details such as postal address or email address.

Since the start of the year we have been changing to Direct Debits for membership subscriptions. This is going well with many members signing up for a Direct Debit through Gocardless but we are still receiving subscriptions from members who have Standing Orders set up for the old subscription amount which is losing us around £300. We would like to remind you that the MYAM subscription is now £10 for all members. You will receive details about setting up a Direct Debit about a month before your subscription is due. Please also remember to cancel any standing order once your direct debit is set up.

For those members who wish to set up a Direct Debit but do not have access to online facilities you can contact David Rushfirth who can set up the Direct Debit for you.

We would also ask you to set up Gift Aid for your subscriptions. This allows us to claim back tax on your subscriptions for up to four years.

Driving abroad - the dos, the don'ts and the things to remember

A friend and I booked a short break to my family home in Murcia, Spain – and with the airport being 30 minutes' drive and the beach being a 10-minute drive from the house, we opted to hire a car.

The last time I visited the family home was six years ago and I was too young to even hire a vehicle. So arranging a hire car was exciting but a little scary as neither of us had driven a left-handed manual car.

The only time I had driven abroad was to France four years ago. So, I was a little nervous to attempt to drive on the 'wrong' side again, but even more so to operate a left-hand-drive manual car.

We arrived in Spain at 10pm and searched for our hire car company - hoping that the queue with over 30 people wasn't where we had booked it from. Thank goodness it wasn't, however with three people ahead of us, it still took 45 minutes to actually get the car.

Before getting in the car we gave it a look over to ensure there wasn't any damage that they could potentially charge us for. There was a slight scratch and after informing the company we began our journey.

Driving from the airport in the dark, on the right-hand-side of the road was difficult - especially with a nervous passenger who also didn't know where we were going. After 30 minutes of "you're too close to the white line" and "is this the turning, I can't see the sign," we were finally there.

Luckily in Spain most of the locals have dinner later in the evening and with a restaurant within walking distance, we were able to ditch the car at the house and stretch our legs.

The rest of the holiday consisted of beach days, with a straight road to the beach which was fairly easy to get to.

Here are a few of my thoughts after reflecting on booking a hire car:

- Ensure you have a credit card – many companies will hold around £1,000 deposit in case of any accidents/damage.

- Learn a little of the language, or enough for you to get by - especially when the time comes to refuel. I had already learnt that a petrol station in Spanish is la gasolinera or estación de petroleo. However, they don't write these on signs so you may need to ask your car hire which the best fuel station will be to fill up.
- Find out Sunday trading hours if you're due to fly home that day. Driving around for 45 minutes looking for an open petrol station was more stressful than I'd like to admit!
- Know your route. Maps on my iPhone didn't detect a new road, so instead took us down a chalk track of what can only be described as a death trap. The old road was situated right next to the new motorway. We then had to manoeuvre a dodgy U-turn and head back.
- Refuel before dropping your car back.
- When returning the car, make sure that the company checks the car whilst you are there. The last thing you want is to return home with charges taken from your card - which was exactly what happened to us. When we handed the car back, it was full of fuel and we'd been perfectly safe driving it with no incidents. We asked a member of staff to check over the car before we left, he came back to ensure that car was in perfect condition and we signed off on it.

Arriving home

Four days later there were three separate charges to the credit card mounting up to £300. When contacting the company, they told us we had to pay 50 euro admin charges and the rest they were unsure of and refunded us. So be sure to question any extra charges.

In conclusion, driving on the opposite side of the road in a left-hand-drive car wasn't as difficult as I expected.

The first few days were tricky and it did take a while to get the hang of, but to make things easier I recommend getting an early flight, so you can drive during the day. It was a lot more stressful at night.

A handy tip is to follow the car ahead of you it will ensure that you stick to the correct side of the road!

By Jaimi McIlravey, IAM RoadSmart's digital content executive

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One of my experiences of driving on "the wrong side of the road" was on a business trip to Denver where it took three of us to "drive" the car. One to drive, one to navigate and the third to make sure the other two didn't fall asleep after the flights from the UK.

Ed

And Finally.....

A little silver-haired lady calls her neighbour and says, "Please come over here and help me. I have a killer jigsaw puzzle, and I can't figure out how to get started."

Her neighbour asks, "What is it supposed to be when it's finished?"

The little silver haired lady says, "According to the picture on the box, it's a rooster."

Her neighbour decides to go over and help with the puzzle.

She lets him in and shows him where she has the puzzle spread all over the table.

He studies the pieces for a moment, then looks at the box, then turns to her and says,

"First of all, no matter what we do, we're not going to be able to assemble these pieces into anything resembling a rooster."

He takes her hand and says, "Secondly, I want you to relax. Let's have a nice cup of tea, and then," he said with a deep sigh

"Let's put all the Corn Flakes back in the box."

This Month's Teaser

The Mini Cooper was one of the first cars to be fitted with which feature that is now standard of virtually all new cars?

Last Month's Teaser

Last month I asked. "Which petrol company had "I've got a tiger in my tank" as its advertising slogan. It was of course ESSO. How many of us can remember the tiger tail you could get to fit onto the petrol filler cap?"

Your Committee

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Secretary	Paul Macro		myam.secretary(at)outlook.com
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Membership Secretary	David Rushfirth	01924 211510 07966 134045 Contact after 5pm	myam.membership(at)outlook.com
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.