

Oxford Local IAM Group Newsletter January 2019

for all car and bike members of the Oxford Area Group of Advanced Motorists

Give Jack Frost the Cold Shoulder



As we went to press this month, the first cold snap of the winter hit the Oxford area with a sharp frost and sudden snowfall causing chaos on the roads. IAM RoadSmart has put together some advice on how to deal with driving and riding on ice.

- Only drive if it is really necessary. In very bad weather it is better to stay in or take public transport rather than risk an accident. Always check the weather and road conditions on your route before setting off; if police advise not to travel, then do not risk it
- Make sure you know how the demister settings on your car work and how to adjust them properly. If you are riding, a clean scratch-free visor with a properly fitted insert will help you stay mist free.
- Never pour boiling water on the screen as the sudden temperature change may cause cracks. Prevention is better than a cure so if possible cover the glass overnight with cardboard or an old sheet to prevent freezing or invest in a windscreen cover.
- If you haven't done so already, get an anti-freeze check at your local garage or fast-fit centre. Keep your washer bottle topped up with an even stronger concentration of de-icer.
- It might sound like old news, but you may need up to ten times the distance to stop in icy conditions - increase your following distance to account for this. If a car has to stop suddenly or, worse still, a crash occurs, you will need that extra time to react and stop.

Preparation and planning are the key to worry-free driving in cold weather. Plan your route carefully as major routes are likely to be treated with salt and less likely to be icy, although this might still form in dips and around bridges and in shaded areas. Leave more time for your journey, respect the conditions and don't rush. Factor in delays and give yourself plenty of time to clear the ice properly from all the windows of your car before you set off.

adapted from a blog post by Richard Gladman, IAM RoadSmart's head of driving and riding standards

Too Old to Drive?



When is it time for older drivers to think about handing in their car keys and giving up driving?

This question has been very much in the news recently, following 97 year old Prince Philip's spectacular accident, overturning his Land Rover near the Sandringham Estate. The driver and passenger in the other car involved were treated in hospital but the Prince, while shaken and shocked, was otherwise unhurt.

He was photographed a couple of days later, driving a replacement vehicle.

You may be concerned about the wisdom of continuing to drive when late middle age has inexorably turned into old age. You may be thinking of yourself or are, perhaps, worried about an elderly member of your family. If so, are you aware that IAM RoadSmart offers a driving assessment for older drivers? The Mature Driver Review is described as follows:

Mature drivers are among the safest on the road, but there is no denying that as you get older reactions can be less swift, perhaps the eyesight might not be so sharp and memories of the Highway Code less clear. Our Mature Driver Review is the perfect way to gain reassurance that even though you may be a senior road user, you still have plenty of miles left in the tank.

One of our qualified experts will go out with you, in your own car on familiar roads that are local to you, to assess your driving style and to watch out for any areas where your skills could do with

continued...

Driving licences expire at 70 years of age, so when you reach 70, you need to renew your driving licence if you wish to continue driving.

You then need to renew it every three years afterwards.

some sharpening. It might be that you are aware that your driving is not what it used to be, that you have worries about particular situations you have encountered in the cut-and-thrust of today's traffic, or simply that you – or your family – would benefit from the reassurance of knowing that you're still OK to be behind the wheel of a car.

The review is informal – you can even bring a friend to ride along if you like – and is aimed purely and simply at helping you to be a better driver. Ninety per cent of older drivers reviewed by IAM RoadSmart need only some minor guidance to set them back on the right road.

After the review, drivers not only get a verbal report on their skills but also a written account of the session, which includes pointers to improvement. It's a completely personal report, shared with no one else. Those who have completed one of our Mature Driver Reviews tell us that having an expert to judge their driving skills gives them renewed confidence at the wheel and a real sense of achievement.

The Mature Driver Review costs: £49

[Full details can be found here.](#)

The following figures show the numbers by age group of car drivers who died or were seriously injured in road traffic accidents in 2017.

The data suggest that the over 60s are actually not as great a danger on the roads as younger drivers. Years of experience may make older drivers more risk aware – or they may simply be less adventurous and, of course, there are fewer of them.

Age Group	No of Casualties
12-15	10
16-19	3,956
20-29	17,957
30-39	14,498
40-49	11,902
50-59	9,603
60-69	4,888
70-79	3,171
80 and over	1,890
All	68,290

from the Department for Transport road casualty statistics 2017, RAS30024



Upcoming Events

February Monthly Meeting Tickets Please! A lifetime on the buses

Wednesday 6th February
7.30pm, Exeter Hall, Kidlington



Before he retired and joined the Oxford Local IAM Group, Chief Car Observer, **Geoff Ayres**, worked for the Oxford Bus Company, as a driver and manager.

Geoff will give a bus driver's view of the road - and other road users! He'll recount his many adventures on the buses and describe the changes he has seen, as well as giving a glimpse of the future of public transport, both locally and more widely.

Upcoming Motorcycle Events

See p14 and our events calendar at <https://www.iamroadsmart.com/groups/oagam/events>



Cancellations due to bad weather –

For the next month or two, we can expect some icy conditions, and rides may be cancelled, so this is a reminder that should we decide to cancel a ride, we will update the calendar on the website and our Ride-out WhatsApp Group. So please do check that the ride is still going ahead.

- On **27th February**, we are planning to hold a **Bike Members Meeting**, at **7.30pm** at Jurys Inn Oxford, Godstow Road, OX2 8AL. All motorcycle members, associates and observers are welcome. To help us book a suitably sized room, please notify Paul Thompson if are attending - by 10th February latest.
- On **6th March**, we will be attending **An Evening with Austin Vince**, at Stratford upon Avon.
- We still have a couple of places left on our **annual bike trip up to Keswick**, for the **Rod Wickham Challenge**, on **9th > 11th August**. B&B at Portland House, is £47 per night.
- For more info on any of these events please email Paul Thompson: bikechiefobserver@iamoxford.org.

Winter Drive-Out

***Sunday March 10th 10.30am for prompt 11.00am departure
Meet in the café at Yarnton Nurseries Garden and Shopping Village***

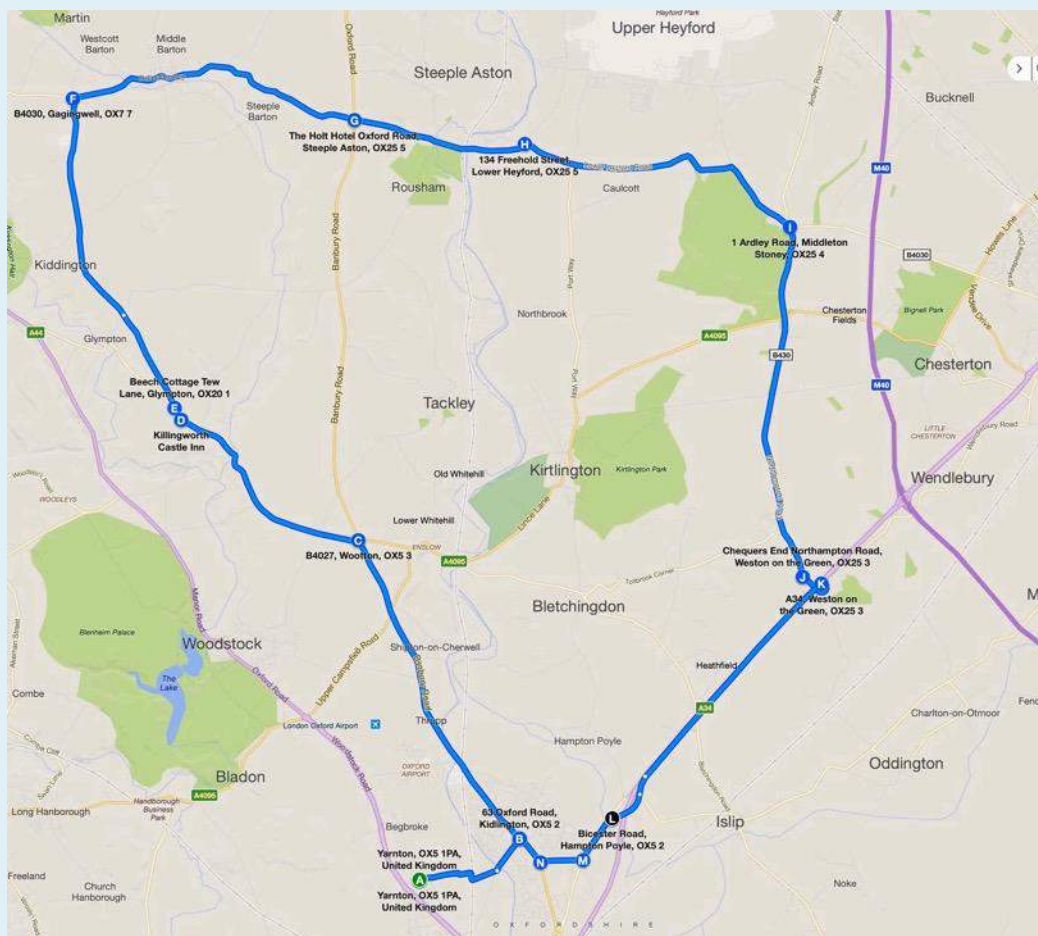
This weekend drive-out will take the same format as the summer evening drive-outs. If successful and enough people express interest a subsequent winter drive-out to a specific destination - perhaps a motor museum - is planned.

There is ample parking space at the meeting place (<https://www.yarntonhomegarden.co.uk/>). Drive round to the main entrance and into the garden centre to find the café where we will meet at 10:30 on the morning of Sunday 10th March.

As usual attendees will be paired and the intention is for each person to take a turn driving and observing, returning to Yarnton to swap cars about halfway through the session. There is a suggested route which can be modified or replaced as preferred.

See <https://binged.it/2shoedx> or the map below.

Peter Edgley, Organiser



Advanced Rider Test Passes

A Record Year

Paul Thompson, Chief Bike Observer, reports a significant milestone:

Well done and a big thank you to our hard working team of motorcycle observers for a great effort over the past year. We had a very good year, and a flurry of test passes in the last week of December took us to 27 test passes for 2018.

This improved on our group's previous record of 25 motorcycle passes, back in 2014.

To get us off to a great start in 2019, we had our first test pass on 22nd January, when Nick Allcock (Observer Tim Routen) passed with examiner Paul Farrar. *(More details in the next newsletter.)*

The Roll of Honour

<u>Associate</u>	<u>Observer</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Examiner</u>
1. Frank Richardson	Steve Savage	4th Jan	John Lang
2. Matthew Birks	Ted Tattersall	18th Feb	Chris Williams
3. Lloyd Taylor	Chris Finnigan	23rd March	John Lang
4. James Frank	David Lisk	17th May	Martyn Hillier
5. Neal Browning	Paul Thompson	21st May	John Lang
6. Andrew Russell	Paul Thompson	3rd June	John Lang
7. Cliff Orchard	Ted Tattersall	6th June	Duncan Parker
8. Ray Smith	Jason Hopgood (HS)	10th June	John Lang
9. David Pilbeam	Rob Archer	15th June	John Lang
10. Neil Roberts	James Henton	28th June	John Lang
11. Stephen Fellows	Paul Flint	29th June	John Lang
12. David Smith	Paul Durrands	18th July	John Lang
13. Martin Williams	Chris Finnigan	19th July	John Lang
14. Nik Moore	Steve Savage	3rd August	John Lang
15. Paul Woods	Steve Savage	7th August	John Lang
16. Dave Tanner	Paul Flint	11th August	John Lang
17. Jane Rackley	Rob Archer	1st Sep	John Lang
18. Dominic Marlow	David Lisk	5th Oct	John Lang
19. Kevin Junior Colin Page	David Lisk	5th Oct	John Lang
20. Mark Winks	James Henton	10th October	John Lang
21. Robin Edwards	Paul Flint	11th October	John Lang
22. Mike Elliott	Chris Finnigan	12th November	John Lang
23. Rick Madden	David Lisk	26th November	John Lang
24. Duncan Carmichael	Paul Durrands	10th December	John Lang
25. Dave Houghton	Ted Tattersall	28th December	Paul Farrar
26. Derek West	Paul Durrands	28th December	Martyn Hillier
27. Kevin Page Snr	David Lisk	30th December	John Lang

Beware of False Friends

An Old dog Learns Some New Tricks



*After 52 years of motorcycling, **Derek West** took the Advanced Rider Course and passed – all the way from ‘unconscious incompetence’ to ‘unconscious competence’.*

It may come as a shock to you but the expression “You can’t teach an old dog new tricks” is not true... It’s not even true about dogs! Apparently older dogs learn faster and better than younger ones.

As a motorcyclist for 52 years, it was with this startling revelation that I rode out for my first meeting with my IAM RoadSmart observer. After brief explanations and with me muttering something about the poor guy having to deal with 52 years of bad habits, we were off without any over-analysis of potential inadequacies and ‘old-dogness’. Riding my Triumph Sprint 1050ST, I was given the lead, remembering as much as I could about the route and looking in my mirrors for my observer, Paul Durrand’s, signals. (*Thinks... ‘Now, Derek, concentrate on what you’re doing and make a good account of yourself’*).

What makes an old dog choose to learn a new trick? The prospect of justifying my lifetime of motorcycling had been an appealing idea for some time so when my motorcycling buddies began, one by one, to achieve an IAM RoadSmart pass, my mind was made up. Also I began to notice an improvement in their riding style – not that they were bad riders at all, but there was clear evidence of increased skill. Having ridden together in the UK and through France, we’d spent many hours together and occasionally discussed the merits of some of these skills: counter-steering, positioning on the road, braking and so on.

Now I’m prepared to acknowledge that although I’ve gathered a lot of experience over the years, most of it has been gained through doing something daft!

Mercifully the accidents in which I’ve been involved weren’t fatal (obviously or I wouldn’t be writing this!) and not too traumatic, but they were significant enough to teach me not to make the same mistakes again. Wouldn’t it be good if there were someone to actually tell me about other errors before I made them. (I’m very aware that I don’t bounce like I used to).

Leaving the story for just a moment I want to write about visiting France. I confess I’m a bit of a Francophile. Thanks to the heavy right-hand slap round the back of the head from my French teacher, Taffy Hughes, I retained a good knowledge of the language and was delighted to discover that I could converse reasonably well when visiting the country. One would assume that more use of the language would enable the aspiring polyglot to become more proficient. After a few trips however, I was aware that my spoken French wasn’t improving at all – in fact it was getting worse! I mentioned this to a friend, a languages teacher, who explained a principle applied to learning. ‘It’s not that you’ve become

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A young motorcycling aspirant posing with his Triumph Tiger Cub T20SH in 1966.

worse at speaking French,' she said, 'You've actually improved. Now you're realizing your mistakes more because you have more experience'. Well of course, this came as wonderful news and led me to another discovery.

In 1969, a management trainer by the name of Martin M. Broadwell introduced a model that he described as 'The Four Levels of Teaching'. The four stages describe firstly, an individual's lack of awareness of how little they know. It's referred to as 'unconscious incompetence'. As they learn, they begin to identify their incompetence and they move into a stage of 'conscious incompetence'. Further teaching leads to the acquisition of a skill that is used consciously - the third stage, 'conscious competence' - and the final stage is entered when, through practice, the skill becomes instinctive: 'unconscious competence'.

Got all that? It makes sense to me. Returning from the first ride with Paul I felt OK... fairly confident it had been a good ride. I even identified a couple of moments that I thought could have been better but no... I was in the 'unconscious incompetence' part of my four-stage journey. Over a cup of coffee Paul outlined the areas in which I could improve and we arranged another ride to address them. These simple corrections to my riding style were incredibly helpful. Correct positioning and choice of gear - two elements of the IPSGA system - brought a whole new perspective, providing confidence and better handling.

Of course, there were several other refinements to make but with impressive encouragement from Paul we tackled these through the next four sessions before a crosscheck ride with another observer, the equally encouraging Harry Schoetz. 'Striking while the iron was hot', a test was arranged soon after. The excellent preparation from the observers, and the pre-test notes from the examiner, enabled this old dog to rejoice in a new trick.

Earlier I mentioned my journeys into the French language and now, in conclusion I'd like to introduce you to 'les faux amis' - false friends. They are words that sound the same as English but have a completely different meaning in French. The following tale is about how things can go horribly wrong.



Fifty-two years down the road an older, questionably wiser, Derek returns to the marque and his first love with his Triumph Sprint 1050ST in 2019.

I've always enjoyed a nice chunk of baguette and to my mind it just doesn't sit as heavily as processed bread made with preservatives. Once while I was seated at a tableful of diners in France I widely commended them on their marvelous baking. Now it was obvious to me that the word 'preservatives' in French was the same as in English so I loudly announced...

'J'aime le pain francais parce qu'il n'y a pas de préservatif'. (I like French bread because it doesn't contain 'preservatives').

I was greeted by a stunned and quizzical silence until a linguist friend suggested I might have meant to use the word 'conservateurs'. The revelation was instant and embarrassing. My audience broke into hilarious laughter. I'd just announced that I loved French bread because it didn't contain any condoms!

It just goes to show that, however good you think you are, there's always room for improvement.

Other November & December Test Passes

We offer our warmest congratulations to members who passed the advanced driving or riding test recently.

Rick Madden (right) has gained F1RST in his Advanced Rider Test.

My biking days began at age sixteen with a Kawasaki AR50 restricted to 30 mph - at first! - and with no training nor experience whatsoever on the roads. This was followed by a Honda CG125 and again with no training - just luck and the invincibility of youth.

Roll on twenty years or so and following a career in the RAF I had some training money available and thought I would use it to pass [CBT](#) and [DAS](#) training and achieve a full licence, which I did some three years ago. I believe it is training that keeps us safe on the road and was encouraged to see things had changed and the training to pass CBT / DAS was now quite comprehensive.

However, I wanted more. A [BikeSafe](#) training workshop was next, carried out with the Dorset Police and it was quite an eye-opener as to how much more there was to learn and how with training and defensive riding you could certainly put yourself into the safest category possible. IAM was involved in BikeSafe and was suggested as the next step.



I then registered with IAM as an associate member, not really knowing what to expect. I went on my first observed ride with some trepidation, but I found I had nothing to fear and spent the next five months or so under the expert observation of David Lisk until he thought that I was ready to fly solo - although I still had my doubts. A check ride and some excellent additional advice from Paul Thompson led to my test and a pass with a F1RST with which I was equally delighted and surprised.

I've learnt throughout my training that riding is dynamic and hazardous, yes, but the risks can be fully controlled and the only way to do this is through training and practice. The IAM course has given me a real appetite for continued learning and, indeed, teaching others.

I still have much to learn and am looking for the next step which will hopefully be training as an observer with IAM as well as beginning training as a motorbike instructor. My son now rides on an A2 licence and is probably sick of the stream of advice I give him but I want to pass on what I have learned to him and others to make them safe and skilled riders.

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Duncan Carmichael (below) has passed the Advanced Rider test with a F1RST.

I am 58 years old and currently unemployed – well, retired, actually! - so getting out on the GS (or my offroad AJP PR3) is a luxury that I take advantage of quite regularly.

I am relatively new to riding, only having passed my test in 2006, but since then have used motorbikes as my main mode of transport for commuting to work – from Brize Norton to St Pauls in London every workday for over a year, then over five years commuting to Swindon. I also ride for pleasure - you may just be able to make out the green 'vignette' for Switzerland on the bike screen from a trip to the Alps. And I ride in support of good causes – including Ride of Respect, Ring of Red and Ride the County.



Duncan on the Ride of Respect last year. He says, 'I know my face is covered, but this is how I look most days anyway as I love to be out riding.'

The reason that I signed up for the IAM RoadSmart course was to enable me to volunteer to ride for the [SERV OBN](#) Blood Bikes, now that I am no longer gainfully employed. Now that I have passed, I am waiting with fingers crossed for the service to respond to my application. I must admit that I thoroughly enjoyed the taster ride, observed rides, the cross check and even the test itself because I was out riding and learning something new each and every time. I would recommend it to anyone who rides a motorcycle.

I attended the last Local Group AGM and have been out on weekend rides with members as both an associate and full member, so intend to take an interest in helping the group in any way that I can in the future - not least of all to try and get more people into advanced motorcycle training as I truly believe that you never stop learning.

Kevin Page (right) has passed the Advanced Rider Test.

Kevin tells us: I'm 48 Years young and have been riding from the age of 29. I have worked as a truck driver for TNT Express in Didcot for 12 years now, recently passing my class 2 Licence and will start training for LGV class 1 in March.

At the 2017 NEC bike show I made the IAM RoadSmart stand my first stop to enrol on the Advanced Rider Course simply to improve my riding and also achieve a better awareness whilst riding on my bike. I certainly gained some valuable information from the observers I've been out with. I'm really looking forward to joining a few ride outs in 2019.



Dave Houghton (right) has passed the Advanced Rider Test.

Dave signed up to IAM in order to qualify for volunteering as a Blood Biker. 'I've since got a whole lot more value out of the process than 'just passing'. I owe massive thanks to Ted Tatersall and I'm looking forward to joining the group for rides and other events.'

Congratulations are also due to **Michael Elliott** for passing his Advanced Rider Test.



Chris Woodward (left) has gained a F1RST in his Advanced Driving Test.

Chris writes: First some details about myself: I'm 26 and work for Jaguar Land Rover as a product development engineer. I grew up on a farm and even from a young age I was always driving quad bikes or tractors or Land Rovers and jumped at any opportunity to drive something completely new.

As an adult I still take these opportunities and I always nominate myself to do the driving for friends and family.

I have always tried to do things to the best of my ability, and driving is no exception. This naturally led me to further driving training with IAM. When I was 24 I did a [DAS](#) motorcycle course and bought my first motorcycle. Riding a motorcycle opened my eyes to a whole host of new hazards which I hadn't considered to the same extent when driving my car - such as road positioning, throttle balance through corners, road surface condition and, most importantly, your vulnerability and how dependent you are on other drivers paying attention and being predictable. With 98% of my journeys being in a car I sought out the IAM for car

training to learn how to transfer and develop these skills in my car to ensure I was driving at my best and safest for other road users.

The IAM training was a really enjoyable experience with a very steep initial learning curve. Geoff was a fantastic observer who was able to find answers to all of my questions. I've been able to take the skills learned and apply them in all aspects of driving and feel that I've become a much safer and smoother driver whilst making significantly better progress because of it.

In the future I hope to take the advanced motorcycle test and potentially progress to being an observer myself to help others recognise the benefits.

Harry Coventry (below) has passed the Advanced Driving Test with a F1RST.



Harry introduces himself: I'm aged 29 and I live and work in Summertown, North Oxford, as a PA for a private family. As you can imagine, a large portion of my job involves chauffeuring family members around.

My grandfather was car enthusiast and even though I only briefly met him, I believe he had a lasting impression on my young self. And now I'm attracted to anything with four wheels and a half decent engine.

For me I view driving in two forms: (1) professionally, where being as smooth and safe as possible is the aim; and (2) personally, where those two aims still apply but I also try to have fun driving.

I went down the IAM route mainly to improve my driving for work, but also to meet and be a part of a group of like-minded people. I feel IAM has benefited me in both those areas.



Have you tried IAM LiveSmart yet?

Go to www.iamlivesmart.co.uk for a choice of members offers and discounts.



Simon Denton is the latest recruit to our car observer team. Congratulations to Simon on successfully completing his Local Observer training. Here Simon reflects on his journey from associate member to qualified observer.

When the suggestion to train as an observer was first made, I had mixed opinions. On the one hand, I am a nervous passenger and had some concerns that this may be a problem. Also, like most people, spare time is at a premium for me. On the other hand, I had been very grateful to my observers who had given their time to help me improve my driving whilst I was an associate.

Although the techniques and tips that we acquire through undertaking the course soon become second nature, I also had to remind myself that they are only obvious once someone points them out to you. I decided that if I could assist someone to make just a small number of improvements to their driving, I should take the opportunity to pass that knowledge and experience on to them.

Undertaking the observer training was a learning experience in itself. Using different questioning techniques rather than just 'instructing' is a skill I should definitely work on more. Giving feedback on improvement points isn't always easy but is an essential part of the observer role. Sometimes I feel I am nagging when repeating advice or learning action points.

Personally, I find it tricky concentrating on a carefully chosen route that exposes the associate to an interesting and varied selection of road. While I'm doing that it is easy to forget about the driver. A couple of times I have had the embarrassment of missing a turn off, having to make a lengthy detour as a result. I guess after a while I will have compiled a tried and tested set of routes that I know really well.

I have to say that my experience to date has been positive. Luckily, perhaps, both the associates that I have worked with have started from the position of being pretty good drivers at the commencement of their course.

Future goals for me: I have just arranged my first 'proper' associate to undertake their check run. I am hoping that there aren't any major concerns that I have overlooked but if there are I'm sure I will learn from that. I would like to have the challenge of working with a driver who really lacks confidence and needs a lot of input and support...



2019 Events Checklist

Wed 6 February 2019

7.30pm – Monthly Meeting, *On The Buses*, (see page 4)
Exeter Hall, Kidlington

Sun 10 February 2019

9.30am - Thomo's Sunday Morning Ride Out
Starbucks, A34 North, OX25 3QQ

Sun 24 February 2019

10.30am - Ride Out

Wed 27 February 2019

7.30pm – Meeting for Bike Members
Jury's Inn Oxford, OX2 8AL

Wed 6 March 2019

7.30pm – Monthly Meeting (tbc)
Exeter Hall, Kidlington

6.30pm – Bikers Meeting: An Evening with Austin Vince
Stratford on Avon

Sun 10 March 2019

9.30pm - Thomo's Sunday Morning Ride Out
Starbucks, A34 North, OX25 3QQ

10.30am – Winter Drive Out
Yarnton Garden Centre, OX5 1PA

Wed 3 April 2019

7.30pm – Monthly Meeting (tbc)
Exeter Hall, Kidlington
7.30pm – Bikers Curry Night

Sat 6 April 2019

9.00am - Ride Out to Kempton Motorcycle Jumble
Starbucks, A34 North, OX25 3QQ

Sun 14 April 2019

9.30am - Thomo's Sunday Morning Ride Out
Starbucks, A34 North, OX25 3QQ

Sun 28 April 2019

9.00am – Ride Out to Bicester Heritage Sunday Scramble

Wed 1 May 2019

7.00pm for 7.30pm - OAGAM Drive-out & Ride-out Meeting
Meet Exeter Hall, Kidlington

Wed 5 June 2019

7.00pm for 7.30pm - OAGAM Drive-out & Ride-out Meeting
Meet Exeter Hall, Kidlington

Wed 3 July 2019

7.00pm for 7.30pm - OAGAM Drive-out & Ride-out Meeting
Meet Exeter Hall, Kidlington

Wed 7 August 2019

7.00pm for 7.30pm - OAGAM Drive-out & Ride-out Meeting
Meet Exeter Hall, Kidlington

9 11 August 2019

Bikers Trip to Keswick

Wed 4 September 2019

7.00pm for 7.30pm - OAGAM Drive-out & Ride-out Meeting
Meet Exeter Hall, Kidlington

Check for updates of this list by visiting <http://www.iamroadsmart.com/groups/oagam>



and finally...

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Group Scorecard

The group scorecard is published each month and shows the test statistics for the previous twelve months. Here are the scores for December and January.

Test Statistics				
(over the last 12 months)				
	OAGAM Group	OAGAM Car	OAGAM Bike	Region Avg.
	12 months	12 months	12 months	12 months
First	12	8	4	4.1
Pass	35	16	19	11.4
Fail	8	5	3	2.2
% Pass	85	83	88	88

Test Statistics				
(over the last 12 months)				
	OAGAM Group	OAGAM Car	OAGAM Bike	Region Avg.
	12 months	12 months	12 months	12 months
First	13	8	5	3.9
Pass	38	16	22	11.6
Fail	7	4	3	2.2
% Pass	88	86	90	88