



Oxford Local IAM Group Newsletter October 2018

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

Annual General Meeting 2018

*The group's AGM this year will be on **Wednesday 7th November 2018, at 7.30pm with refreshments from 7.00pm. +++ Venue: Exeter Hall, Oxford Rd, Kidlington OX5 1AB.***

The Oxford group is a registered charity and is bound by charity and company law. The main purpose of the AGM is to enable the trustees of the group to present their Annual Report and Accounts for the year ended 31st March 2018 for approval by full members of the group and to conduct an election. It is also an opportunity for members to ask questions and discuss the activities of the group during the previous year. Questions from Members will be invited following each report on the agenda.

All Group Full Members, Associates and Friends are invited to attend but **only Group Full Members may vote.**

A Member entitled to vote at the AGM may appoint a proxy to vote in their stead.

Note: a proxy need not be a Group Full Member! Postal votes are not permitted.

AGENDA

- 1) Apologies for absence
- 2) Minutes from the previous year
- 3) Matters arising from the Minutes
- 4) Amendments or adjustments to this Agenda
- 5) Chair's Report
- 6) Secretary's Report
- 7) Treasurer's Report
- 8) Election of Group Officers and Committee
- 9) Address by New Chair
- 10) Any Other Business

You will have received full details of the AGM via an email circulated on 16th September. This included the following attachments:

*Notification of AGM on 7th November 2018
2017 AGM Minutes*

*Final Accounts 2017-18
Proxy Vote Form AGM 7th November 2018*

Shedding Light on IPSGA

*Car Observer **Nik Bergson** recently took part in an IAM training day for observers. Here he reports on the experience and shares with us what he learnt.*



This was a really useful and enjoyable event - the first of three such training days, all geared towards supporting both qualified and wannabe local observers. It was organised by a former IAM area group with the wonderfully opaque title The CEWW Forum (Central England, West and Wales).

The day started with a relatively brief theory session, and included an interesting discussion of the four learning styles, which were inevitably summarised by another acronym: VARK, which stands for visual, auditory, reading & writing and *kinaesthetic.

The remaining time was divided into two extended practical sessions where we were arranged in groups of three, comprising two local observers (or trainees), who took turns to drive the same pre-planned route, while supervised by a National Observer. This was then followed by a debriefing session.

Each Local Observer played the role of either associate or observer, with the roles swapped for the second drive, the main focus always being the observer. To spice things up, the 'associate' was briefed to include one or two sub-optimal features in the drive, which the 'observer' would hopefully spot. It seems almost superfluous to add that this was never done at the expense of safety! The National Observer in my group was extremely knowledgeable and was able to shed light on a number of points that had been bothering me for some time. For example, when applying the IPSGA system to bends, I have always thought that there is much potential confusion in the use of the word 'accelerate'.

**kinaesthetic learning: learning through feeling - such as a sense of body position, muscle movement and weight as felt through nerve endings*

continued...

However, this is very easily resolved, simply by extending the usual meaning of the word 'accelerate' to include 'negative acceleration' (slowing) and more importantly 'zero acceleration'. The latter is equivalent to 'first stage acceleration', where increased throttle is used solely to balance the vehicle by counteracting the larger opposing forces caused by turning, *without any increase in road speed*. This contrasts with 'second stage acceleration', occurring after the breakout point of the bend, when the road speed does increase.

Similarly I was informed that - strictly speaking - my own preferred steering technique should not be described as 'push-pull', but rather as 'rotational steering'!

We also considered whether there might be any circumstances where it is appropriate *not* to give a signal prior to moving to the right to overtake a bus waiting at a stop. After the discussion, the National Observer remarked that he too had learned something new today. He was impressed by a comment - made to me by Geoff Ayres at one of our summer drive outs - that the bus driver would always benefit from a signal, because he or she will be looking in the mirror before pulling away.

For me, the day provided another useful and probably unplanned lesson - as an observer having to give the directions to follow an unknown route in an unfamiliar area, I didn't quite appreciate how demanding it can be to rely solely upon written instructions, whilst at the same time, trying to focus on the most important role - observing! I guess this underlines the fact that there is no substitute for careful planning and a really good knowledge of the route in your head.



IPSGA: The Acceleration Phase

On the subject of acceleration, here is the official advice from IAM RoadSmart...

- **This phase actually starts as you enter the bend.**
- **The limit point will by now be starting to move in front of you.**
- **Apply some power, not to accelerate, but to corner under power.**
- **Follow the limit point smoothly around the bend, matching its speed.**
- **As the road straightens, and the limit point moves rapidly away, accelerate.**
- **Block change back up, e.g. third to fifth.**

September Test Passes

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

James Grant is a very experienced driver who nevertheless found new things to learn from the Advanced Driver Course. He recently completed the course by gaining a F1rst.



I've always been enthusiastic about cars – something I blame entirely on my father - and this has led me to both a career in the automotive sector and a love of driving. Since passing my test in 2011 I've been fortunate enough to drive in various countries around Europe in a huge range of conditions, from snowstorms to baking sun, and a large range of cars, from my father's 1990 MKII Golf GTI to Long Wheelbase 5 litre V8 Range Rovers! My current pride and joy is a 2014 BMW M135i, which I bought earlier this year and in which I expect to cover roughly 20,000 miles a year.

I graduated from Loughborough University in 2017 with a Masters in Automotive Engineering and now, at the age of 24, I've just started the second year of the graduate engineering scheme at Jaguar Land Rover. I work in the Vehicle Engineering department on the Range Rover, Range Rover Sport and Discovery models. So, if any members are in the fortunate position to drive any of those vehicles, I'm proud to say I had a (very) small hand in developing them!



20,000 miles a year – James's BMW M135i

As part of my job, I've been fortunate enough to receive a substantial amount of driver training, encompassing off-road work, proving ground training and on road advanced driving as well. It was after this latter piece of training that I decided to apply for the Advanced Driver Course, as the content and requirements to pass are near-enough identical.

I'd like to take time at this point to give thanks to my observer Colin Godfrey, who picked up on a couple of areas I could continue to work on during our two observed drives together and provided a useful sounding board for questions and ideas I had in the run up to the test.

Obviously, I was pleased to pass with a F1rst but my test also reinforced the fact that there is no such thing as a perfect drive as there were still areas with room for improvement. Advanced driving is something I hope to continue working on as I progress in my career and may in the future move on to tackle the IAM Masters course.

Jane Rackley has passed the Advanced Rider Test.



Jane says: I'm really chuffed with my achievement as I think that I've said that I'm not a 'natural' when it comes to anything bike related - it's taken a lot of years for me to get to what I consider a reasonable standard of riding. It's also fine with me that I didn't get a F1rst and I'll probably never go for my Masters as there are a few things about the IAM way of riding that I don't entirely agree with. That's my contrary side coming out...

I'm hoping to be a bit more involved with the Oxford group and am wondering if there's anything that I can do to help out.

Jane has since joined an informal working group to look at what rides and events we will put on in 2019. If you would like to take a more active part in the Oxford Local Group, contact our Group Secretary, Harry Schoetz at secretary@iamoxford.org.

Phil Sirett has passed his Advanced Driver Test. Phil introduces himself and outlines his riding and driving history:

In the course of my career, I fixed aircraft in the Royal Navy, fixed computers at IBM and fixed networks for the NHS. I'm retired now but still work as an IT consultant.

I started my initial activity on the roads almost sixty four years ago on a 350cc side valve Royal Enfield which had spent its former life in the Army. It cost £35.00 - all my savings at the time.

I spent the next four years riding bikes. My Royal Navy training income meant a car purchase was way into the future until, in 1959, I bought a Vauxhall Victor. I've been on four wheels ever since then, even when spending a couple of years in Singapore and another one in the USA.

I've owned and driven a variety of cars over this time, my pride and joy being a Austin Healey 3000 which with hindsight I should have kept and watched it appreciate in value.

I have recently been driving a manual Ford Fiesta which I found to be perfect for the IAM course, but replaced it after the test with a DSG Polo - to help compensate for the bits that are creaking a little!

I had been considering for a long time how my driving compared to current drivers after hearing the odd comment from my children and grandchildren that older drivers should be compulsorily tested. So decided to take a taster drive to assess my capabilities.

This was positive, so I joined the IAM and the rest is history,

I find that my driving has definitely improved and I'm now particularly observant when watching other drivers. I still find the IAM definition of 'progress' interesting, though...

Thanks to my observer Chris Morris who provided me with excellent tutoring to enable me to pass the test - and to other observers on drive outs who helped to smooth out the corners.



Riding in Normandy

mile after mile of sweeping, traffic-free roads with glorious countryside views



*Early on the wind-swept Thursday morning of 20th September, nine riders left Oxford for Portsmouth, their sense of adventure mixed with a hint of trepidation at what the channel crossing might throw up in gale force conditions. **Ted Tattersall** reports.*

In the end it was not the weather that disrupted proceedings but a far more powerful force – the French unions. With the 08.30 Portsmouth sailing cancelled due to our continental cousins in the port of Caen going on strike, it was a quick dash to Poole for the alternative route to Cherbourg. It turns out the Poole ferry is a smaller and less sophisticated craft than the Portsmouth ships and our travellers endured a “lively” crossing!



That fate did not await two further members of our group who had decided to take the later crossing – evidently the port workers had resolved their dispute by lunchtime as the 14.30 from Portsmouth went ahead as planned - and a very comfortable crossing it was too, thanks!

Our destination was La Motte ‘biker friendly’ B&B about an hour and a half south of the Normandy coast in a pretty region near the Parc Naturel Regional Normandie-Maine and close to delightful Brittany. The accommodation was a converted farmhouse run by Carol and Bill, an English couple who decided 15 years ago to up sticks, follow their dreams and open a guest house in France.

The pair have been successfully hosting biker guests – as well as normal people - ever since, although Bill suffered a stroke two years ago which has rendered him incapable of assisting with the running of the B&B and barely able to speak.

We wish them good fortune in whatever they choose to do in the future and remind ourselves that we should follow our dreams today as we never know what’s around the corner.

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St Malo - Walled Port City

The trip was to last three nights so we had two full days to explore the area and ride the fabulous roads. On the first day after breakfast we set out to visit Brittany. I was the ride leader and had planned a route taking in Mont St Michel, the walled port city of St Malo and the mediaeval town of Dinan. There we were treated to the sounds of a hand-cranked musical instrument played by a man who looked at least a hundred. To get an idea of the noise, think bagpipes but more repetitive, less tuneful and more irritating.

There were CDs for sale. We did not buy any.

We had also planned to stop at the city of Rennes but time was pressing so we skipped that. As it happened we found a fabulous alternative. We diverted off the main route home to find petrol and discovered mile after mile of sweeping, traffic-free roads with glorious countryside views, passing occasionally through picturesque villages. It was all very wonderful in the late afternoon sunshine. We finished up in the town of Saint-Hilaire-Du-Harcouet for a welcome drink and meal, before the final short hop back to the B&B for a few beers and bed.



For the second full day we had planned to head up to the Normandy coast and do a flying visit to the beach landing locations and other D-Day attractions. However, the more we talked it over the more we felt the travel distance would leave us too little time to pay proper respect to these important sites. So we pulled out the maps and guide books, fired up the laptops, satnavs and phone apps and plotted a route east into Suisse-Normande, a region of Normandy named for its similarity in appearance to a Swiss mountain landscape.

Once again we were treated to beautiful views and mainly traffic-free roads.

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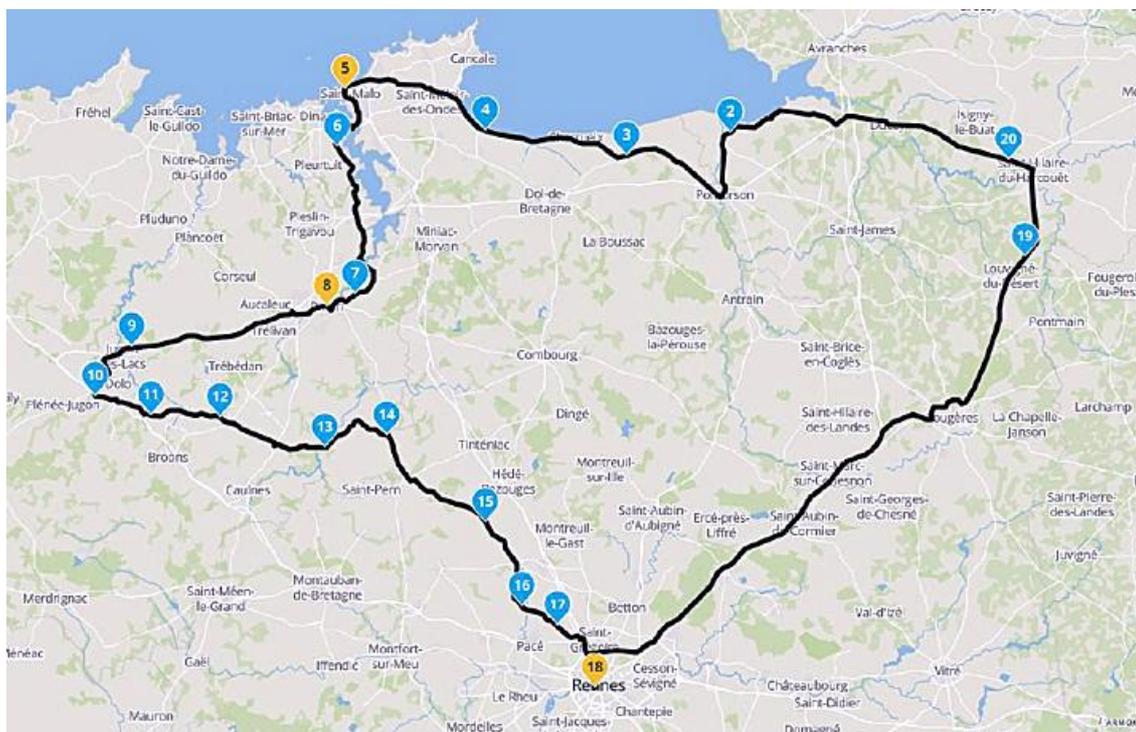
A notable highlight was stopping off for a comfort break in a narrow farm track only to be faced with a huge tractor and trailer bearing down on us, forcing us to ride into the fields to get out of the way!

The rain that had been threatening finally caught up with us in the afternoon so we donned our waterproofs, slowed the pace a touch and continued, finishing back in Saint Hilaire dripping wet but well satisfied with the day's riding.

Over another excellent meal we reviewed the events of the past two days and recounted our favourite moments, all agreeing that it had been a fun and memorable trip.

Bring on the next one!

Our route on Day One: Mont St Michel, St Malo and Dinan



Keswick 2018



Someone's excited about going to Keswick ...



A pre ride ride over Honister Pass and Newlands Valley Pass, to warm the tyres up before the main event.



Evening meal at the Woodstone Pizza & Flamegrill Restaurant in Keswick



Ready to set off after a good lunch at Lanercost Priory Tea Room

Flying Along in Dynamic Mode

Geoff Ayres samples an IAM RoadSmart Skills Day



An IAM Skills Day at Thruxton circuit. Just the thing to improve my car handling skills.

This would be my first time and I wasn't sure what to expect so, just in case, I signed up for the morning session rather than commit myself to a whole day.

As a well trained advanced driver, I started by giving my recently acquired Audi SQ5 a good check over: water, tyres oil... Hang on. Where's the dipstick? Well, the wonders of modern science never cease to amaze me. It turns out that my Audi's on-board computer measures the oil level and there's a handy read out on the dashboard.

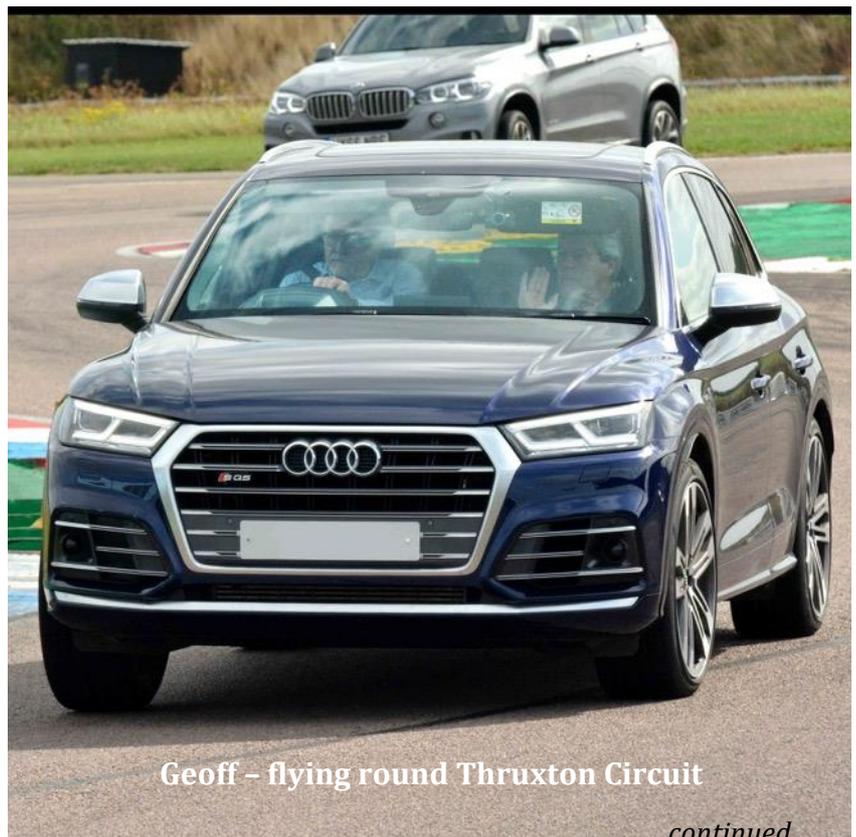
So that was the oil sorted. Now, what about the tyres? The tread on the fronts was getting near replacement depth, so a trip to [Charlett Tyres](#) was in order. Their advice was to go on the track day first and then replace the tyres but the IAM people pointed out that if I scrubbed out the tyres on the day it would be illegal to drive the car home. Oh well. With four new tyres and a much lighter wallet, I was all set to go.

Monday the 10th September saw me arriving at Thruxton just as the gates opened. Tea and coffee were laid on plus a breakfast bar. Excellent value for money.

First off was a briefing of the do's and don'ts on the circuit with a speed limit of 90mph. That's not very fast, I thought. Silly me!!

The cars ranged from Minis to a McLaren and the format was that groups of up to six cars would go out on the circuit at any one time. Each of us had our personal instructor and over the course of the morning we had four 15 to 20 minute sessions on the track, always driving within limits that we were comfortable with.

So, selecting sports mode, off I went for my first session. The first lap was reasonably sedate while all the chicanes and bends were pointed out, cones placed to indicate the driving line and expert advice received from my instructor on steering, braking and where and when to accelerate.



Geoff - flying round Thruxton Circuit

continued...

By the end of the first session I was positively flying round the track – only to discover that I was flying along at about 54mph. In fact, during the course of the morning I managed to look at the speedo approximately three times!! After coming into the pit area after my second drive I was surprised to see people lifting up their car bonnets and checking their tyres. It dawned on me that engines were cooling off and tyres were being checked for damage!

By my last session I had discovered my Audi has a dynamic mode setting. Yes, don't tell me, you're supposed to know your car. Nonetheless it worked a treat. By that stage I really had the measure of the circuit and actually managed 90mph. Lewis Hamilton move over!!

All in all it was a great experience and the benefit of having a skilled mentor guiding and instructing me throughout the morning was a positive plus towards my observing capabilities.

And my tyres survived!!

Circuit based skills days

2019 Skills Days will be announced on 17th November

Members and non-members are welcome, come and develop your advanced driving and riding skills in a superb closed-circuit environment, with expert IAM RoadSmart tuition throughout. Priority given to 'first-timers' - please tell us when booking if this will be your first 'closed road' activity.



Stop press!

Mallory Park is back for 2019

First dates released at Motorcycle Live 2018

17 - 25th November, NEC, **Stand 2C36**

**MOTOR
CYCLE
LIVE 2018**
NEC BIRMINGHAM

Motorcycle Days, £149 per rider (full day)

2019 motorcycle dates being finalised at the moment.

"I have just completed the IAM rider skills day at Thruxton, what a fabulous day !!!!! Even though half the day was wet the training was done with no pressure and you could practice at your own pace, you were never encouraged to travel outside your comfort zone but being on a track the training allowed you to push your bike and yourself further than you normally do and thoroughly enjoy doing it."

Car Days, £135 per driver with own car (half day)

2019 car dates being finalised.

"I can't tell you just how much of an experience today has been. The level of support and encouragement has been truly outstanding, not forgetting, of course, the quality of training. I have a great deal to learn, however, events like this, given by such committed volunteers, is really helping me up the learning curve."

2018-19 Events Checklist

Wed 7 November 2018

7.30pm - OAGAM Annual General Meeting
Exeter Hall, Kidlington

Wed 5 December 2018

7.30pm - Christmas Social (tbc)
Exeter Hall, Kidlington

Wed 6 February 2019

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

Wed 6 March 2019

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

Wed 3 April 2019

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

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

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 September and October.

Test Statistics (over the last 12 months)				
	OAGAM Group	OAGAM Car	OAGAM Bike	Region Avg.
	12 months	12 months	12 months	12 months
First	11	7	4	3.6
Pass	32	14	18	10.6
Fail	8	5	3	2
% Pass	84	81	88	88

Status: 04/09/2018

Test Statistics (over the last 12 months)				
	OAGAM Group	OAGAM Car	OAGAM Bike	Region Avg.
	12 months	12 months	12 months	12 months
First	10	7	3	3.7
Pass	35	17	18	10.7
Fail	7	5	2	2
% Pass	87	83	91	88

Status: 03/10/2018