

e-NEWSLETTER



IAM
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ROAD SAFETY 2011-2020

**TAUNTON GROUP OF
ADVANCED MOTORISTS**
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TAUNTON GROUP OF ADVANCED MOTORISTS

e-NEWSLETTER

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DATA PROTECTION ACT

Members' details, i.e. names, addresses and telephone numbers, are kept on computer for convenience. This information will only be used to further the aims and objectives of the IAM and is only available to Committee Members BUT can be inspected at any suitable time provided just cause can be proven.

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Chairman's Corner



By the time you read this, you'll be feeling that summer and the holidays are a distant memory. We've had some fantastic weather here in the West with soaring temperatures; when I look at the temperatures in London – where I used to live and work – I'm so glad I no longer have to suffer the commute to work in London in temperatures approaching 30 °C on trains packed to the seams – and of course with cancellations due to it being the “wrong type of sun” which of course in autumn changes to “the wrong type of leaves (on the line)” and in winter changes yet again to “the wrong type of snow”.

It's strange how many countries manage to deal with seasonal changes far better than the UK when it comes to transport!



**By Andrew Griffiths
Chairman**





It has been hard for Associates and Observers alike to go out for observed drives in the high temperatures – especially if air-conditioning is faulty. So well done to everyone who has managed their drives in such conditions.

That brings me on to air-conditioning in cars. My local garage tended to around 15 problems in a single day that related to aircon. The problems arise due to the aircon system not being exercised on a regular basis. Let's face it, many drivers use aircon in the summer and the heater the rest of the year. This is poor practice as the refrigerant in the system needs to be stirred up regularly else it will settle in the lowest point in the system and gradually become ineffective; this then usually results in the refrigerant having to be replaced or the system recharged by an authorised garage, there is a simple way to look after your aircon and get more out of it; during winter months when it tends not to be used at all, switch it on once a week or so for a few minutes to stir the refrigerant. You'll find that when the temperatures eventually soar, your aircon is far more likely to work for you and costly repairs can be avoided (at least until the refrigerant needs placing at specified service intervals).

Cars these days usually have aircon fitted as standard. If you came to the BBQ and classic

car event at Hatch Beauchamp last month, you would have seen cars from an era where the only form of aircon was to open windows and/or lower the roof. The event was excellent and it was a great pleasure to see members and friends bring along their loved ones (cars and motorcycles that is!) for us to see. *[See pictures at the end of Andrew's article. ED.]* The amount of work, enthusiasm and money that goes into keeping these gems on the road is often, I suspect, under estimated. I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who came along with their cars and motorbikes to make the event a huge success. I would also like to thank everyone involved in organising it over many weeks and running it on the night. There is one person who stands out and I'm sure you would all agree that Janet Loader deserves special thanks for laying on a splendid spread; Janet had spent the whole day cooking and because of her determination to see it through to the end (even down to tasking me to put the rubbish sacks in the boot of my Mercedes 500SL, which was on parade and to dispose of them in an appropriate manner), she was unable to take a look around the cars and motorbikes and enjoy mingling with us. I'll be looking at alternatives for next year so Janet can enjoy what the rest of us enjoy on the evening.



In your travels, you may have noticed new mini-roundabouts sprouting up. These minis have a raised centre (sometimes a walled flowerbed) bounded by a raised red circular area which itself is bounded by the black tarmac roadway (known as the “circulating lane”). See photos below.



This has caused confusion as there’s nothing in the Highway Code (HC) that tells drivers how to deal with them – or is there? The HC Rule 188 states that “all vehicles **MUST** pass round the central markings except large vehicles which are physically incapable of doing so”. This is law and drivers of vehicles that **can** manoeuvre around the central island





are in danger of being prosecuted if they drive over it. So where does this fit in with the new style roundabout? Read on.

There is a great deal of information about these roundabouts in several articles produced by the Department for Transport (DfT). The raised red area is called an “**overrun area**” and is there in order to accommodate occasional larger vehicles. **The overrun area is separate to the circulating lane and forms part of the internal central island.** There is normally a 50mm kerb provided between the circulating lane and the overrun area. With that in mind, drivers must pass **around** the overrun area (as it's part of the central island) in the circulating lane unless the vehicle is physically incapable of doing so – caravans, trailers, articulated HGV etc – in which case they may use the overrun area. Just to labour the point, if the driver of a vehicle which is capable of manoeuvring around the overrun area drives over it, they are in danger of being prosecuted. Please take heed and avoid prosecution.

Refresher Drives: I've mentioned on previous occasions that all full members of TGAM (ie those who have passed their advanced driving test) can request a free refresher drive with one of our qualified Observers. The refresher drive is NOT a pass/fail; you get free help and up-to-date guidance on your driving – and a

chance to address those habits which may have crept in since you passed the Advanced Driving Test. You will receive a report from the Observer and it goes no further than that. So what have you got to lose? Please contact Tony Hucker to book an appointment.

Committee Elections: We have an AGM coming up in October which sounds too far ahead to contemplate doesn't it? But actually it will be upon us in no time. We are fortunate that many of the current Committee members are prepared to stand again and so will be looking for re-election. BUT Serena Lonton will be standing down as Secretary after many years on the Committee. In accordance with IAM's rules, TGAM MUST have a Secretary in order to remain a Group of the IAM. If we don't fill this role **at the AGM**, TGAM's future will be in the balance. So if you want to help assure its future, please think about putting yourself forward for this vital role and contact me (or Serena) for more information. The Committee is a proactive one and everyone helps out so taking on a key role may be easier than you think. As they say, “many hands make light work”.

Newsletter: I'd like to see more articles from members of the Group – at the moment the contributions are largely from the Committee with just a few exceptions. It is not the Committee's newsletter, it's the Group's newsletter and I invite





contributions from you. Here are some suggestions for newsletter articles;

- Share a good/bad driving experience with fellow members and Associates.
- You may have returned from a holiday abroad where you drove a rental car on the right hand side of the road. How did it go? How did you adapt? Did you do cockpit and POWDER checks, frequent mirror and shoulder checks?
- If you are an experienced caravaner, share with us your experiences of towing.
- If you are a keen horse rider, what advice/tips and personal experiences can you offer those of us who may not know how best to respond when encountering a horse with rider?
- If you cycle on busy roads, share your experiences of courteous (and not-so-courteous) drivers.
- Have you bought a new car recently? How did the cockpit drill help you familiarise with the vehicle and prepare for the test drive?
- Is there a particular road you like driving on? Perhaps one you find particularly exhilarating, one with lots of challenges, lots of bends, straight sections for overtaking?
- Is there a picturesque route you would recommend for an enjoyable afternoon drive?

- Do you have a classic or vintage car/motorbike? Tell us about it, and its history. Why do you like it? Include a photo (of you with your car).

Articles need not be lengthy. Aim for between a page or two. If in doubt, give David Walton or me a call.

On a similar theme, I'd like to hear what sort of topics you'd like featured at our Group meetings (also known as Club nights, Members evenings) which take place on the 3rd Wednesday of each month (except January and August). Currently, in the absence of suggestions it is the Committee who decide what happens on Group nights. It would be nice to redress the balance and incorporate some of your suggestions if we can arrange it. The topics need not be vehicle-related; for example, in the recent past, we've had presentations on first aid, history of Somerset, visual impairment (Somerset Sight), the Grand Western Canal – to name a few. Do you have a hobby you can talk about and even better, demonstrate? So if you have suggestions, please contact Ella, your Events Coordinator and talk about your idea(s) and we'll see if we can arrange something. Please note that the topics should appeal to a broad audience.

Best regards

Andrew

Chairman & Chief Observer.









THE COMMITTEE



Committee meetings (for Committee Members ONLY) are held bimonthly at 7:30pm on the 2nd Thursday of the month at Hatch Beauchamp Village Hall. If, as a Group Member, you need to raise any issue at Committee level, then please feel free to contact any Committee Member to put your views to the next Committee Meeting.

Chairman	Andrew Griffiths	chair@tgam.org.uk
Secretary	Serena Lonton	secretary@tgam.org.uk
Treasurer	Geoffrey Stoate	treasurer@tgam.org.uk
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	Janet Loader	cmjl@tgam.org.uk
	Faye Markham	cmfm@tgam.org.uk



GROUP OBSERVERS



TGAM Observers

Chief Observer and Masters Mentor	Andrew Griffiths
Group Training Officer	Alan Thomson
Group Observer	Tony Hucker
Group Observer	Isobel Jennings
Group Observer	Janet Loader
Group Observer	Hugh Todd
Group Observer	David Walton
Group Observer	Allan Wellwood
Group Observer	Russ Williams

Group Observers must be fully paid up Taunton Group Members AND National IAM members at ALL times to carry out your vital Observer roles: There are NO exceptions.

Always check that your Associate has an up to date membership card before departing on any observed drives. Please try to make and maintain contact with your new Associates and listen to any concerns or fears they may have. When Associates pass their Advanced Driving Test, PLEASE inform the Associate Coordinator as soon as possible as we have a duty to keep accurate and up to date records. All new Associate Members are normally teamed up with a conveniently placed Observer. If you have any problems please contact our Associate Coordinator, Tony Hucker.

The following IAM & TGAM members are Driving Standards Agency/Approved Driving Instructors:

Nigel Steady 01278 722944

Nick Tapp 07900 900678

Members and/or enquirers must establish their own facts and details when contacting a Driving Instructor. If any other IAM & TGAM Full Member Driving Instructors wish to be on the above list, contact the Group Secretary or the Newsletter Editor. (NB: You MUST remain *full* IAM & TGAM members at all times.)



PRESIDENT'S PONDERINGS



I am uncharacteristically late with my article this quarter, because absolutely nothing seems to be happening in my head. I cannot think of a single subject to pontificate on. In desperation, I sought help from my bookcases in the back bedroom. There be no dragons there, just dusty books whose pages haven't seen the light of day since they were put there nearly 12 years ago when we first moved in. But to be fair, the book collection has grown in that time, even though the year before last, I very reluctantly took about 30 paperback novels to a charity shop to make space for newer reads. Not that I begrudge the charity shops, but because I never know when I will want to re-read a good book. However, notwithstanding the state of my library, (that sounds deliciously pretentious, doesn't it?), in amongst the Readers Digest Guides to.... I found a rather interesting publication, called "The Motor Manual" and priced at 3/- NET (for those of you born after the British currency decimalisation in 1971, which stands for 3 shillings, or 15 pence in today's parlance). This is a hard back book and inside the front cover is written in pencil, 10p. Therefore I must have bought it either in a second hand book shop or from a bookstall at a long previous WSRA Steam Rally.



By Brian Howe
Group President





The Motor Manual. A Handbook Explaining the Working Principles and Construction of the Modern Motorcar and Giving Advice on Running and Economical Maintenance, Together with Chapters Dealing with War-time Regulations, Methods of Reducing Petrol Consumption and the Use of Coal and Producer Gas as an Alternative to Petrol. **PROFUSELY ILLUSTRATED.** Compiled and illustrated by the Staff of "The Motor." *Thirty-first Edition All Rights Reserved.* Published for TEMPLE PRESS LIMITED, by THE ENGLISH UNIVERSITIES PRESS LTD., Little Paul's House, Warwick Square, London, E.C.4.

I have Googled both companies and checked the Companies House website. In Google, Temple Press Ltd was established in 1988, clearly not the original as my book was printed in 1941. Neither company is registered with Companies House. The Motor and The Motor Manual are no longer in print. Therefore I will attribute all the following work to "The Staff of The Motor" as no specific authors have been listed or mentioned. I have used this material as *EDUCATIONAL MATERIAL* only for the interesting and historic information therein contained.

PREFACE. This is the 31st edition of "The Motor Manual." Produced in the midst of war,

it has been substantially revised and rewritten especially to meet present circumstances. References to unorthodox and little-used components have been deleted in the interests of space, other and valuable chapters have been added dealing with special war-time motoring problems. These include making the best use of fuel rations, various schemes for using alternative fuels, head-lamp masks and other war-time regulations.

The Manual has been written so that it can be easily understood by the non-technical motorist and the contents remain not only a guide to the best use of a motorcar, but also an authoritative exposition of its design and construction. It has been compiled by the Technical Staff of The Motor and illustrated by Motor drawings, this paper being published weekly and covering every phase of motoring, design, operation and sport. January, 1941.

Obtaining the Best Fuel Consumption. The basic rations of fuel are proportioned so as to allow all sizes of cars approximately 200 miles per month. This mileage will not be achieved unless the car is in good condition, but it may be exceeded if a car is maintained and driven with a view to obtaining maximum m.p.g. rather than full power or ease of hill-climbing. The following six points summarize





the ways in which the petrol ration can be extended over the greatest distance.

No. 1. Driving Methods. Different drivers on the same car and the same state of tune may obtain widely different consumption figures. One man may get 30 m.p.g. from a car in which another may only obtain 22 m.p.g. The driver, in fact, makes more difference than any other part of the motorcar. To obtain the best consumption, the following rules should be carefully followed:-

- Do not run the car a moment longer than is necessary with the rich-mixture starting control in operation.
- If possible in the winter, start the engine after having filled the radiator with hot water.
- Avoid high speeds in the indirect gears.
- If the car is brought to rest, allow the engine to tick over at even speed. Similarly, drive with a steady throttle opening, avoiding constant opening and shutting of the throttle, and moving at an economical speed, usually between 30 and 40 m.p.h.
- Do not open the throttle wide and make rapid restarts in traffic, but, with the engine running comparatively slowly, gently let the clutch back until the car moves off.

- If delayed in traffic for any length of time, switch off, for much petrol can be saved by avoiding idling with the car stationary. Watch traffic lights and endeavour to drive so as not to be brought to rest. Stay in top gear as much as possible.
- Keep the engine warm when the car stops. In winter it is best to put a rug over the radiator.
- When going down-hill real economies can be made by putting the gear in neutral and coasting, and, better still, by switching off the engine. (N.B. *Do not try this now, it is not only illegal, but also extremely dangerous. Modern cars need the engine running for power steering, braking and other important safety systems.*) It is possible to restart by putting up the clutch and pulling into top gear on the synchromesh, but it is better to use the starter motor and to accelerate the engine slightly before engaging gear. It is unwise to let the speed drop below 20 m.p.h., or petrol will be consumed in re-establishing cruising speed.

No. 2. Tuning the Engine

The carburettor is the first unit to need attention when cutting down fuel consumption. Do not be over-enthusiastic; this may defeat the main object by creating a





necessity for too much gear changing. Generally speaking, reduce the jet to one size smaller. In the case of the S.U. carburettor, a new needle will be required to achieve a similar result.

The air filter should be cleaned regularly; it is not advised that it be taken off completely. A dirty filter can be the cause of heavy consumption, as it restricts the ingoing air flow. As a rule, the filter is cleaned by swilling through with paraffin and, in certain instances, subsequently dipping in light engine oil to impregnate the filter.

Ignition should be advanced slightly, so long as full throttle driving is not the rule. A micrometer adjustment is provided on the majority of modern engines by which the distributor head can be shifted slightly against the direction or rotation of the rotor.

It is not, as a rule, desirable to break away from the recommended grade of sparking plug. Keep the points scrupulously clean and adjusted to the recommended gap. A new set is advised after some 10,000 miles or so.

When the weather is chilly an increase in temperature may be found beneficial. Fit a sheet of card over the front of the radiator or use a muff, if you have one, in order to keep up the under-bonnet heat.

Unsuspected petrol loss may result from excess pressure on the mechanical pump. The pressure should not be more than 1 lb., which can be checked by a gauge connected to the delivery side of the petrol pump and the fuel in the float chamber used to run the engine while obtaining the reading. Excess pressure is expensive. It can be reduced on mechanical pumps by fitting gaskets between the face of the unit and the cylinder block.

No. 3. Economy Dopes and Accessories

A large number of fuel dopes and special equipment have been developed to improve fuel consumption. In the majority of cases other claims are also made, such as the prevention of pinking or the lengthening of periods needed between decarbonisation. The Motor has tried a number of these and amongst them the following:- Chemlets, Milex, Pynkure, Vol-o-pep and Redex. The last is a special lubricant mixed with the sump oil, also with the gearbox and back axle lubricant for the purpose of reducing friction and the amount of power to drive the car.

All of them have shown advantages on some cars, but effects often vary from car to car. Motorists are advised to experiment with them if they wish to secure maximum economy, as the cost of making a test is small and it is





probable that one of them at least will give a beneficial result. Other devices which we recommend are Vokes and Cox Atomizers. These are diffusing devices placed between the carburettor and the inlet pipe in order to split up the fuel and improve distribution throughout the manifold. There is no doubt at all that these accessories, although relatively more expensive, do improve the fuel consumption on many makes of motorcar.

No. 4. Carburettor Service Schemes

Many motorists forget that wear takes place in the carburettor as well as in other parts of the mechanism, yet wear does occur and results in a marked increase in petrol consumption.

A small car which has covered 25,000 miles or so can quite reasonably be expected to show 4 or 5 m.p.g. improvement in consumption simply in response to the fitting of a new or reconditioned carburettor. Solex, for example, have a special scheme in which they offer a completely reconditioned unit, tuned for your particular engine, in exchange for the present carburettor. The cost is about £2. Zeniths do a similar scheme and market also the Ration model, which embodies restrictors to cut down the quantity of mixture delivered to the engine. Performance drops, of course, but economy is marked. The S.U. Co. has

prepared lists of alternative needle and jet settings for all types of car, designed to give increased economy without great loss of performance.

In tuning the carburettor, try, as already recommended, a size smaller main jet. Check up the butterfly and spindle for wear; replacement would be desirable after a long period of use and at the same time investigation should be made to see whether a ridge has been worn in the inlet pipe where the butterfly valve contacts it. If so, even a complete new butterfly will not effect a satisfactory cure, as there will always be leakage.

The replacement carburettor will save that lingering in the gears which occupies only a few seconds per ratio, but which makes a difference of several m.p.g. per trip.

It is wise to let a carburettor service man in your district overhaul your carburetion system if the engine has been re-bored. After a period of, say, three months' consistent running all the high spots, as it were, in the engine are worn down, the whole unit has settled into its working gait and a slight adjustment in carburetion will be beneficial.

No. 5. Thin Oils

Particularly in winter it is desirable to use thin oils. With maximum speeds limited on top and





in the indirect ratios there is little likelihood of damage in the bearings as a result and gains in fuel consumption can be very substantial, certainly up to 10 per cent. There may be an increase in oil consumption, but this is not likely to be of importance either from the viewpoint of volume or expense. Thus, in place of consuming perhaps 2 gallons in the course of a year of basic-ration motoring, at the worst the consumption will not rise above 3 gallons. The extra cost of, say, 6s., (30p), is a small matter compared with the additional 250 miles of motoring which it may make possible. The oil companies should be consulted, or, alternatively, owners should discuss the matter with service stations or distributors.

No. 6. Checking Ignition

A neglected ignition system can become very costly. Erratic firing produces roughness of running, demands more frequent gear changing, allows a certain part of the mixture to go through unburnt and generally wastes fuel. The following, briefly, is the procedure: - Clean the distributor points with a carborundum stick and then reset to .012 in. with coil distributor; .018 in., with magneto. Wipe round the inside of the distributor head with a rag dipped in petrol. This removes any

trace of carbon dust, which would cause tracking between the points. See that the carbon pin in the distributor head makes good contact with the rotor centre.

Make sure that the connections in the head are tight; if the leads show any signs of cracked, worn or frayed insulation, replace the leads.

Sparking plugs must be kept scrupulously clean. The points need adjusting to .018 in., or, if a high-voltage coil is fitted, .037 in. approximately. Clean the outside of the plugs as well; a film of oil over the insulator may cause short circuiting between the body and the terminal. Clean the outside of the coil as well, removing any film of dust-laden oil. This also cause tracking between the terminals.

This section of The Motor brought back quite a lot of memories of trying to look after my first car, a 1957 Ford Popular E93A with side-valve engine, when I was a mere lad of 17 years. (21 years after the war ended).

My thanks to the Staff of The Motor for compiling this information to help a war-torn Nation conserve its limited stock of petrol.

Brian Howe



MEMBERS' PAGES



By Serena Lonton Group/Membership Secretary

It's approaching fast! Another year has passed and subscriptions will soon be due for the year commencing 1st October 2014, and in order to simplify things, the membership renewal subscription from that date will be £8.50 for everyone. You will however still need to show on the renewal form whether you are renewing as an Associate/Friend or Full Member. This is needed for our records and for Group Insurance purposes.

So, if you joined TGAM *before* 1st November 2013, you will receive a renewal form, but if you joined TGAM *on or after* 1st November 2013 on the Skill for Life programme, you will be pleased to know that your subscription for this coming year is covered by your initial payment when you first enrolled. Please check your Group membership card if you are not sure and contact me if you have any queries.





For those who are due to renew, we look forward to receiving your subscription, therefore the renewal form will be sent by post to you, along with information regarding our AGM on *15th October 2014*. Please complete it and send it to me with your payment as soon as possible.

If for any reason you are not renewing your membership, please let me know as early as possible as this will save time in sending reminders.

We do hope you will all continue to support the Group, and thank you for your continued support.

Finally, we must stress again that if your subscription is not paid you may *not* be covered for Insurance. Those renewing as full members *must also be fully paid-up national IAM members*.

This particularly applies to Observers, who are strictly forbidden to take an Associate out on a drive if this is not complied with.

Observers must also always check that their Associate has an up-to-date membership card before departing for a drive.

Many thanks and happy motoring.

Advanced Driving Test Passes

Congratulations to four members who have recently passed their Advanced Driving Test.

OBSERVED BY

Carol Duggan (NM)	John Gilbert
Barry Keenan F1RST (NM)	Hugh Todd
Jane Langford	Allan Wellwood
Josephine Washington	Russ Williams

NOTE: If you have passed the test recently but your name is not on the above list please make sure that you inform Serena Lonton, the Membership Secretary. We would like to present successful candidates with their pass certificates at one of our Members' Evenings.

The Membership Register

This quarter we have nine new group members, (two in the list above). We hope you enjoy your association with the Taunton Group and we look forward to welcoming you to our meetings, events and activities.

	<u>TOWN</u>	<u>LEVEL</u>
Paul Grenville	Chard	Associate
Neil Hammond	Wellington	Associate
Janet Kayser	Taunton	Associate
Gerry King	Shapwick	Associate
Grant Lewis	Taunton	Associate
Judy Nesfield	Williton	Associate
David Short	Langport	Associate



CALENDAR

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

9th October 2014

11th December 2014

12th February 2015



AUGUST

26	Tu	All Day	IAM track based CAR skills day at Croft
27	W	All Day	IAM track based BIKE skills day at Croft

SEPTEMBER

17	W	7:30 pm	Member's Evening – Winter Driving - An IAM presentation targeting specific areas of driving development; skills, experience and emotions.
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OCTOBER

15	W	7:30 pm	Member's Evening – 'Anti Sat Nav' - A talk by Andy Mayes, a TGAM member and experienced HGV driver.
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NOVEMBER

19	W	7:30 pm	Member's Evening – 'Ashtrays to light rays' - A talk by Tim Shallcross, Technical Guru, on safety features past, present and future.
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DECEMBER

17	W	7:30 pm	Member's Evening – Christmas Quiz
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September Members' Evening

Confident Driving

IAM presentations targeting specific areas of driving development

Winter Driving

The variety of weather conditions in a British winter can increase stress on vehicles and drivers. It is important that vehicles and drivers are correctly prepared for these changeable conditions at the onset of winter.

We will show you how to prepare for and cope with these conditions.

**Wednesday 17th September
7:30pm**

at Hatch Beauchamp Village Hall

October Members' Evening

'Anti Sat Nav'



A talk by Andy Mayes

Andy is a TGAM member and experienced HGV driver. His talks are thought provoking and sometimes controversial but always amusing and entertaining.

**Wednesday 15th 7:30pm
at Hatch Beauchamp Village Hall**



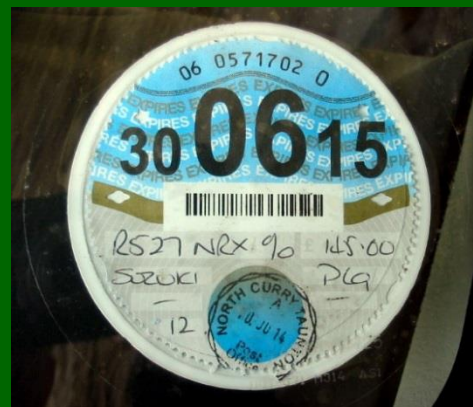
A TAXING SUBJECT!

By Kevin Grose

Taxing one's vehicle has always led to so much confusion over the many past years since its initial introduction from about 1921, but now it appears that from the end of October 2014 you don't even have to display a tax disc any more according to some recent reports in various car magazines and car sections in national and local papers. Tax disc collectors are NOT happy and think the whole idea is ludicrous!

However, you still have to physically tax your vehicle (which is like legalised bank robbery depending on what type of vehicle you may have) but you will no longer have to display this fact to all and sundry who may have cause to peer in the direction of your vehicle's windscreen – ie: Mini Hitlers... sorry, local car park attendants; Traffic Wardens (when was the last time you saw one around here?) and of course, our local boys in blue – the Police, because they can all now instantly check if your vehicle is taxed - and insured - and MOT'd (if required) no matter where you are or what time of day; isn't modern technology wonderful!

I'm not sure how people will really feel about



this new initiative because having a small round piece of coloured paper which may have cost an arm and a leg to purchase, lightly stuck into the corner of your windscreen gives

the owner a sense of security to show everybody – THERE, I've legally taxed my vehicle and I've got the evidence to prove it, but if you really think about this for a moment – that little flimsy roundel piece of coloured paper is quite an expensive piece of paper. I have one that arrived this morning and it had cost me £230! I have another one that cost £475 about six months ago; another one - £145 and lastly, one for £140. That is some serious money that totals £990 during a full year for four lovely little bits of coloured round paper which allows me to legally use these vehicles on our excellent and well cared for, national road system!





I hate to think what the owners of commercial lorries, etc., have to pay on an annual basis – the figures are eye watering! So, it finally looks like we are moving towards being electronically tagged vehicle wise where ever you are in the UK. There are already cameras everywhere digitally logging your every move. These cameras can, through their electronically enabled databases, also check all the details for your vehicle, I am led to believe in an instant. So, if you are a law abiding citizen, handing over handfuls of hard earned cash for not much in return, then you should not have any problems because you will be all legal and correct. There must be millions and millions of us doing this, so why do we still see at the moment, so many vehicles running around with out of date tax discs?

Whilst on a road traffic survey recently, the car which tried to block me in because I had legally parked correctly outside “his” house, was indeed three months out of tax. The owner appeared to live in a reasonably substantial quality house. There were two newish, expensive BMW’s in the driveway, a year old medium sized commercially registered van out in the road and this untaxed vehicle. If it was untaxed, it was likely it was not MOT’d either and worse of all, unlikely to be insured as the lack of one requisite usually invalidates the

others and it appears this scenario had prevailed for over the last three months to date. I do really wonder how many more people/ vehicles are like this in the real world? I believe there are still over 32 million vehicles registered to use our national road network but how many are avoiding the law by not paying for a tax disc or an MOT or for insurance?

But when you have complete idiots like me who have to pay out for FOUR tax discs; FOUR MOT’s and FOUR lots of insurance to stay within the required law – that’s what keeps motoring fun! There is one advantage that may be of interest – allegedly, when a vehicle is now sold on privately in the future, the current tax already paid for and belonging to that said vehicle will NOT be transferable - you will have to claim a refund for the unused period. The new owner then has to pay for a new tax period once the vehicle has been purchased. Keep your eyes open in the press, etc., for more updates (and tax “disc” price increases). Let’s hope this new government scheme can work in the real world because the human and reactionary eyes were invented far before cold, clinical digital technology; I know my eyes react when I see the current new increased tax costs every year!

Kevin Grose... on a very taxing case!





TGAM NEEDS A NEW SECRETARY!

Serena Lonton is resigning her position as TGAM Group Secretary and Committee member at the AGM in October after many years' service.

Our Group is mandated by IAM and the Charities Commission to have all three main Officers posts filled - Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer. Therefore we must vote in a new Secretary at the AGM, otherwise TGAM's future will be uncertain.

TGAM has in excess of 100 members and I'm looking for just one of you to come onto the Committee as Secretary so that the Group's future is more secure. You would be working with proactive Committee members who conduct routine business throughout the year by email and we meet "formally" just 6 times a year at Hatch Beauchamp Village Hall.

Here is a summary of what the Secretary's role entails.

Job Summary

The Secretary is part of the local Group Committee and is a Trustee

To provide the link between the Group, IAM Chiswick and the general public

Key Responsibilities

To respond to queries from potential Members concerning the IAM, its aims and objectives and to encourage enrolment

To respond to queries from IAM Chiswick and to liaise with the Group Committee as appropriate

To record Minutes of Committee Meetings and General Meetings

Key Tasks

Provide support for the regular Committee Meetings and General Meetings such as the preparation of agenda and taking of minutes

Respond to requests for information from the general public concerning group activities

Attend, as appropriate national IAM events and liaise with Group Committee on outcomes

Maintain Group's library of documents

Key Skills

Good interpersonal skills

Knowledge and use of the internet

Email skills

Please contact Serena or Andrew for more details and/or to register interest.

YOUR GROUP NEEDS YOU!





The 2014 Annual Taunton Rotary 50/50 Charity Cycle Ride

by Brian Howe



Dressed to hunt down the finish line in "plus 4's" and deerstalker with Bob-the-Bike as my trusty steed.

It is called the 50/50 cycle ride because 50% of the sponsorship raised by each rider is donated to the *Rotary Club of Taunton Charity Trust Fund* and the other 50% is donated to the charity chosen by each rider. Last year I successfully completed the 11 mile course raising a total of £350.00. I donated £175.00 each to the *Rotary Club* and *Cancer Research UK*. This year I thought I might challenge myself a little bit more, so I opted to tackle the

18 mile course. My 50% this year is going to the *Work-Wise Project, The Lecture Hall, United Reformed Church, Paul Street, Taunton* www.workwise-taunton.weebly.com

Work-Wise offers support with all aspects of seeking employment, and is open Tuesday and Thursday mornings from 9:30am to 12 noon. I had heard about the *Work-Wise* project in church as it is jointly supported by Temple Methodist Church, Upper High Street and the United Reformed Church, Paul Street. I wanted to help Liz Lewis, the Project Coordinator, and I wanted to add a purpose to my daytime wanderings as I am medically unable to return to work. With this in mind I applied to be a volunteer and duly turned up on the first opening day on 1st April, 2014. I am there as a Hospitality Greeter, welcoming people at the door, signing them in to comply with Health and Safety, and familiarising them with their surroundings. As *Work-Wise* has limited funding, I felt the need to do something in a more practical way and decided that the Rotary 50/50 was the best way to achieve my goal. Adding the extra 7 miles to tackle the 18 mile course would be a real challenge as I





hadn't taken Bob-the-Bike out for a long time due to the horrendously wet winter and poor spring.

I started training along the Bridgwater to Taunton canal towpath as it is fairly flat gradually extending my rides beyond Creech St Michael to Lower Maunsell Lock at North Newton, using the tea room as a convenient rest stop. When my legs had grown more accustomed to hauling my 15 stone 10 lb, 6ft frame and bob's weight of in excess of 100 lbs, around the countryside, I got a bit braver. After reaching Lower Maunsell Lock one fine sunny day, I took a water stop of about 10 minutes, crossed the bridge and headed along the road towards the village of North Newton. Passing through the village I noticed a pristine Morris 1100, Police Panda car parked on a driveway. It was a pity I had not thought to carry posters of our then forthcoming classic car evening. I digress. I then turned right towards Maunsell House and North Petherton where I turned left on to the A38 south. At the junction I stopped and replaced my white flat cap for my cycle helmet which was in the rear basket and I also donned my Hi-viz vest. Better safe than sorry as my late mother used to say. It was an interesting, if sometimes hair-raising experience riding a 2' 5" wide cycle on a major

road. It did however have its upside. After struggling to the top of a hill, there is the excited buzz of the downhill that surely follows. I was reliving my teenage cycling years of letting the cycle 'have its head'. The only difficulty was having to hold on to the handlebars like grim death. Having two front wheels and standard bicycle steering without the ability to lean the bike into the corners wasn't proving easy. Overall I really enjoyed the thrill of it and the feeling of being 50 years younger.

However, I digress, again. Following the thrills of the Walford Cross bends, I had a good start for the next hill, and actually managed to stand in the pedals to pump my way to the Monkton Heathfield junction (without changing down) where I wanted to turn right. To do this I had to follow the rather circuitous cycle route which carries you past the junction to cross the main A38 at a slightly safer place. I actually resisted the call of Monkton Heathfield Garden Centre and the need for tea and cake as I now considered that I was reasonably close to home. There was one scary moment in the village, when a passing artic lorry pulled in early to avoid an oncoming car, forcing me to wobble along with my left hand wheels rubbing the grass bank. Pheww!





That was close. I should have taken the longer cycle track into Maidenbrook. Lesson learned, I arrived safe at Maidenbrook/Nerrol's Farm and used the cycle way to circumnavigate the large roundabout to use the cycle track alongside Bossington Road into Selworthy Road. Second exit at the mini roundabout into Eastwick Road and I was nearly home. Just Cheddon Road and Wellsprings Road and the final push up past Wellsprings Chapel. I wonder sometimes why I decided to live on a hill, then, I remembered, my family name of HOWE, I was once told, is an old English or Anglo-Saxon word for a man who lives on a hill.

On 11th June, Alice and I returned from a 10 day break away, visiting our son Graham and his family, who live on the Canary Island of Fuerteventura. It was also a chance to grab some sun for my stiffening joints. Whilst over there, I suffered a blackout when sweeping the roof terrace ready for my future daughter-in-law to repaint it. This blackout was caused by the heat (45o C.) and me not drinking enough water. That was another lesson learnt. Now I only had 11 days left to train. I couldn't manage Tuesdays or Thursdays because I volunteer for Work-Wise on those mornings and I wouldn't have enough time for a long ride out in the afternoon. I am not superstitious,

so I chose to go out on Friday 13th. As I hadn't ridden for nearly two weeks, I did some stretching and warming up exercises to loosen up my leg muscles a bit. Remembering my experience on the roof terrace, I filled two bottles of water for the journey and planned my route using roads that I knew. I also made sure to check that my mobile phone was charged.

I ventured north on Kingston Road and gently cycled to Kingston St Mary village to allow my legs to re-accustom to the constant rhythm of pedalling. From the Swan public house I took a slight left up the hill past the village primary school where I stopped for a breather and some water. It is surprising how quickly you lose stamina when taking virtually no exercise. I was lucky that the next stage was downhill to the T junction at Parsonage Lane. After turning right at the junction I continued through the Cushuish crossroads not looking forward to the long slog up the hill heading towards the top of Bishops Lydeard. This uphill section is quite narrow and has high banks on both sides in places. A couple of times, I had to stop and squeeze right into the bank to allow cars to pass whose drivers were unwilling to reverse and wait for me at a wider section. I didn't have the energy to be annoyed, so I just





politely waved and shouted “Thank you”, perhaps with a little discernible sarcasm. When I eventually arrived at the crossroads (that I know as Huntingdon Cross), I stopped in the junction splay and drained the first bottle of water. I turned left and looked forward to the downhill stretch into Bishops Lydeard. Unfortunately the tea room by St Mary’s Church was closed. Incidentally, St Mary’s is one of only a few C of E churches that share their premises with Roman Catholics.

Cycling through a village that I know so well brought back so many memories that I actually started to forget about my tired, aching legs. Alice and I ran the Corner Stores at Gore Square, for 10 years. Well, mainly Alice, as I spent most of my time swanning around England, Wales, Ireland and France, driving coaches, mini buses, taxis and American stretched limousines. There was the time I sang “Were You There?” A Capella with my two brothers, on a cold and frosty Easter Sunday morning at the top of Lydeard Hill (not quite the ‘Three Tenors’ as I remember). There were many happy times at the URC Chapel which is now sadly, a private residence. My 40th and 50th birthdays were celebrated at the Bell Inn and I also remember the Christening parties for three of my grandchildren. Leaving

the sentimentality behind, but not the memories, I turned left at Gore Square along Taunton Road to join the infamous A358. This is not the best road to be cycling along as it is not quite wide enough in places, to be overtaken by lorries and buses. However, today being the Friday the 13th, my luck was actually in. The traffic was unusually heavy and travelling slow enough most of the time for me to keep pace. Especially in some of the more narrow sections. I arrived safe and unscathed at Cross Keys and took the opportunity to look at some of the superb classic cars for sale in the showroom. This time I had a laminated poster advertising the TGAM Classic Car Show and BBQ evening with me and asked for it to be displayed in the window. Having taken on some more water and being suitably refreshed, I carried on pedalling with a lighter heart, knowing that I was now only a couple miles from home. An extra push by standing in the pedals took me to the Staplegrove traffic lights at the top of the rise, then it was a simple, uneventful ride through Staplegrove village and Corkscrew Lane, across Kingston Road, and the circle was complete.

The BIG DAY finally arrived. I don’t like being late, it frustrates me and causes my stress levels to rise, which, in turn, can make me ill.





At 9:00am on Sunday 22nd June 2014, Bob was out of the shed and I was breakfasted and dressed for the day in plus fours, deerstalker and highly polished Brogues.

With IAM principles in my head I methodically went through my POWDER checks as far as

they relate to a quadracycle. (That is my word for a 4 wheeled pedal cycle).

- Petrol; I don't use that so for fuel I put a banana in the wicker basket as it was going to be too hot for a chocolate bar.
- Oil; There are no levels to check so I oiled the chain and gear mechanisms with light spray oil.
- Water; I filled the water bottle on the down tube (600ml), and put two extra 500ml bottles in the basket as well. These had been in the fridge all night.
- Damage; I checked that all the fittings were secured even though Bob had been serviced just two weeks previously. Loosely related to damage, I made sure that my puncture repair kit, small hand pump and all relevant tools were present and correct, and then I strapped the basket lid closed.
- Electrics; I have two front and two rear lights. These were all checked for static and flashing modes and the mechanical bell was also given a quick "ding-dong" (Like – Avon calling!).
- Rubber; All four tyres were checked and pumped up to 35 psi. The treads were all clean with no stones present. Finally, as Bob has disc brakes front and rear, it is very important to check regularly that the left and right brakes apply evenly. (If they are not balanced correctly, I could be thrown off under heavy braking at speed). There is only one cable for the front set of wheels and one for the rear.





Tally Ho! The Mayor, Cllr David Durdan, was the official starter for the 2014 Rotary Club of Taunton 50/50, charity cycle ride, at 10:00, Sunday 22nd June 2014.

The start was at the Genesis Centre at the rear of Somerset College, so I was already at a 2 mile disadvantage, while other cyclists were arriving with their bikes strapped to the roof of their cars. Although I wasn't alone, so to speak, as Alice, Emma and Caleb (Granddaughter and Great grandson), had come to see me off. The Work-Wise Project Coordinator, Liz Lewis and her husband Grant were also present. I had made a pact with myself not to rush the route, and had allowed myself 3 hours for the full circuit including necessary water stops and rests. I was just about to leave when the photographer from the Somerset County Gazette asked if I would like to join the line-up so that the Mayor of

Taunton, Cllr David Durdan, could start us off. Once I had safely negotiated the narrow gap between the gatepost and the wall, I was gently cycling my way along Heron Drive to turn left onto Silk Mills Road, then first right into Bishops Hull Hill. "Great!" I thought, "Leg muscles not yet warmed up and I'm already struggling passed the primary school". Still, as I've said before, "After every uphill, a downhill awaits". And this year didn't disappoint. There was nothing coming towards me, so I was able to build some speed as I passed the parked cars down Shutewater Hill. We continued beyond the electricity sub-station to turn right over the bridge, out towards the old Allerford Inn. By this time I was already on my own with the other early starters already way ahead of me. But I just kept plodding along at my own pace, with occasional cyclists passing me, intent on travelling much further, and much faster, than I planned to. (The longest course of 57 miles was an amalgamation of the 11, 18 and 28 mile courses). Best of luck to them. I followed the yellow markers for my course and turned left out to the Anchor Inn at Hillfarance and on to the T junction near Bradford-on-Tone. Spurred on by the fantastic Course Marshalls, I turned right up the hill to Oake Manor Golf Club. More up hills than down. I was passing all these watering holes and was unable, and unwilling, to stop and imbibe. But I did have to stop for water and a short rest in the entrance of the golf club.





I continued, mostly uphill, to the Oake crossroads at Hillcommon where the Marshalls guided me safely across this difficult and sometimes busy junction where I was offered a bottle of water. I thought that was quite ironic, having stopped for water less than 5 minutes previously. I kept cycling up the gentle slope, which felt more like cycling up Porlock Hill, when I heard a tractor approaching from behind. Because the lane was quite narrow, I stopped, dismounted and struggled to pull Bob-the-Bike as far into the nettles as I possibly could to allow it to pass. However, as I looked back, the tractor turned into a farm entrance not 10 yards behind me. Typical! Now I had to start pedalling from a standstill ever upwards.

Listening carefully, I rounded the right angle bend and continued along this very narrow lane to the left turn for Ash Priors village. I know this part of the route very well as I used to use it on a daily school run, several years ago, and I knew, that at last, there was a downhill section in the offing. I had to be cautious though, because I knew that there was a narrow stone bridge immediately before a left hand bend, and steering two front wheels with handlebars, is not easy at speed on an uneven road surface, with alternating

cambers. Nevertheless, I bent my elbows, leaned forward, and lowering my head down towards the handlebars, we galloped down the hill. I relied on Bob's 4-wheel disc brakes to slow me down in time for the bridge. I really enjoyed that short section, and legs rested a little, I dug deep for the long slow climb to Ash Priors.

Nearing the top and spying gateways opposite each other to provide a refuge, I stopped for more water when a fellow cyclist called out, "Approaching on your right!" When you are in the zone, in a world all of your own, this sort of call can save an unexpected fright. As it was, two cyclists stopped to admire my noble steed, and one of the gentlemen asked my permission for a photograph, which, in the spirit of the day, was instantly granted. With good luck messages offered all round, we parted company at our differing speeds, with me drifting in their wake. I had a quiet and peaceful ride through Ash Priors so was able to listen carefully before rounding the sharp bend outside the village pub. When riding a bike the size of Bob, (6ft 7ins x 2ft 5ins), you need time and space to manoeuvre. After surmounting yet another UP hill, part way between Ash Priors and Ash Common, I stopped for another breather and was blown





away by the incredible view west across the countryside. My short breather turned into nearly 10 minutes by the time I had fumbled my cycling gloves off and retrieved my almost smart phone. I just had to have a permanent memory of this very special moment. Not a sound could be heard, apart from the rustling of the leaves in the gentle breeze and a solitary bird calling in the distance.



The view west across the Somerset countryside from the Ash Priors to Ash Common road.

Leaving Ash Common behind me I continued to follow the yellow markers of my route as they pointed me towards Bishops Lydeard. I wasn't looking forward to the short sharp climb to the A358, but I needn't have worried.

Two Marshalls, whilst giving encouragement said, "No. Go through the subway, it's much safer". As I passed through the tunnel, I couldn't resist ringing the bell, just once, you understand?

All too familiar territory now as I cycled through Bishops Lydeard village, but I won't bore you with more memories. I've already done that one to death elsewhere in this article. It was now sometime since I had encountered my fellow cyclists and I was beginning to feel alone and very late. Perhaps not too many were covering this particular course, but I was determined not to look at my watch because I wanted to avoid the temptation to start hurrying. Even the village was almost devoid of people. I thought for a moment that I was in Western movie, riding slowly through a deserted ghost town. Silly what the mind comes up with when you're bored. I pulled my thoughts together for the task in hand, and believe me, it was fast becoming a task that I thought I might not be able to complete. I still had the long drag up past Darby Way and the Bishops Lydeard football ground, on my way to the 'Huntingdon' crossroads at the top. I left Bob in a middle gear and stood up in the pedals until I reached that particular milestone. Thankfully, another smile and more words of





encouragement from another Marshall helped me complete the final few yards before turning right into Parsonage Lane. By this time I had already emptied all of my water bottles, so I gratefully accepted another one from this kind Marshall.

After a short break, a puff from the Ventolin inhaler, and a few deep breathing exercises, to get everything back in sync, I now had the gloriously long DOWN hill ride, almost all the way to Cushuish, to look forward to. I was in the shade of the trees, so for safety, (Bob-the-bike is painted black, and I was dressed almost entirely in green), I stopped in a convenient gateway and turned my lights on, front and rear in flashing mode, to attract attention and hopefully make me more visible. I don't know what was going on, but I only met one car coming towards me and none approached from behind. Not that I minded! That never happened when I was driving coaches along the same road. Then, I seemed to meet the World and his wife, going in all directions.

As I said, before digressing yet again, I was in the shade of the trees, it had become a hot and sunny day and I was beginning to feel the heat. Barrelling down the long straight, there was a slight breeze, I sat bolt upright, pressed

my back into the backrest, quickly and nimbly loosened my tie and one shirt button with one hand, and at the top of my voice, (there was no-one in earshot), I let out an ear-splitting "WEEEEEE!" The ten years that I thought I had aged on the long slow climb through Bishops Lydeard, just fell away and I felt young again. I think it must have been a release for the tensions that had built up in me during the ride so far. Now I knew, beyond a shadow of a doubt, that I could finish this thing. I never even changed out of top gear all the way to Fulford, but by then I had to stop for more water, my mouth was as dry as a desert.



I stopped for a minute or two to reflect on the distance covered and that yet to complete.





I couldn't allow myself to dwell on what was to come, of whether I was $\frac{1}{2}$ or $\frac{3}{4}$ of the way round, but I knew without doubt that it was achievable. I knew there were no more steep hills, so with a lighter heart I cycled on towards Kingston Road. I was guided right at the T junction by more Marshalls with more cries of encouragement and I have to say, admiration for Bob-the-Bike. What about me, I was riding him?

Further down the road, I was surprised to see another yellow marker pointing to the right down another narrow lane. The reason I don't like these so much, is that they tend to have a 'crown' in the centre of the road, with cambers off to each side. On a four wheel bike with no engine power, this can be quite disconcerting as the bike is constantly dragged into the camber and the waiting ditches or banks beyond. It makes the hard work even harder. But, that is the route, so it must be followed. After following the yellow markers through the lanes, I had lost what little sense of direction that I had left, so I was somewhat surprised to find myself at the double bends of Corkscrew Lane, Staplegrove. At this junction, I was pleased that I didn't think to go down Kingston Road to Hope Corner Lane and into Corkscrew Lane that way, because there were two more

Marshalls sat at the T junction to make sure it was safe to cross. I would have approached them from the wrong direction, and with a large number 2 pinned to the middle of back I would have been easily identified and possibly disqualified.

I knew where I was then, so when I reached the safety of the Manor Close junction, I stopped, looked at my watch with some surprise, and pulled out my phone to tell Alice that I was nearing the finish. I continued through Staplegrove to the A358 traffic lights, turned right again and cycled on to Silk Mills roundabout to turn left. I thought about using the cycle lane, but this meant that I would have to cross this busy road twice, unnecessarily. Undaunted I made difficult work of the Silk Mills rail bridge and eventually puffed my way atop the rise. It was then an easy coast down to the Park and Ride traffic lights hoping they would remain green. I didn't have to stop and was able to safely join the bus/cycle lane and back to Heron Drive with a welcome cheer from the Marshalls stationed there. I had to slow right down to renegotiate the narrow gap at the Genesis gateway as there was only about 2 inches free space either side of Bob. That was it, I had finished the 18 mile course, I looked carefully at my





Jubilant at the finish line with my medal of achievement around my neck.

watch again to find I had completed the course in 2 hours 20 minutes. That was a huge 50 minutes quicker than the 3 hours I had allowed myself.

I knew it wouldn't be easy. I knew it would be a challenge. That was the whole point of choosing that distance, so that I could raise as much money as possible for Taunton rotary and more so for Work-Wise. But listen, Liz Lewis, do not expect me to do it all again next year. There is no way on this earth, that anyone will ever get me to attempt that challenge again. "What was that? What was the final total?" **£450.00**, that is, **£225.00** each for The Rotary Club of Taunton Charity Trust Fund and **Work-Wise, Taunton.**

Brian Howe





My Skill for Life Experience

By Jane Langford

I turned 60 this year and last year I realised I was becoming less confident about my driving – often due to criticism from my husband and son who are sooo perfect!

I got to the stage where I only wanted to drive locally and not have to face large roundabouts, night driving and chatting passengers! My son suggested the IAM and we both signed up for it and went together for our assessment. My observer was Alan Wellwood who has the patience of a saint and is obviously extremely knowledgeable on all aspects of driving. I can hear him in my head when I'm driving saying “make progress” - I liked cruising slowly around country lanes and was never aware of the queue behind me!

I started to gain more confidence and started to go further afield and was soon driving to

Bristol, Birmingham and Exeter with friends and on my own and surviving the roundabouts.

Alan was always supportive and patient and every lesson I had with him, I went home feeling more confident and feeling that I had learnt something that I had forgotten.

My son passed his test while I was still continuing but I enjoyed the lessons and wasn't in any hurry to take the test as I still felt I was improving every lesson. Finally I took the test on Tuesday and passed and feel really pleased that I have done it – I recommend it to all my friends it's one of the best things I've done in the last few years and I am very grateful to Alan for having so much patience and giving me back the confidence to drive.

Best wishes Jane Langford





Do You Have a “Vehicle of Historic Interest”?

By Kevin Grose

Are you aware of the recent EU agreement on the final form of the “Roadworthiness Testing” legislation that was concluded on the 18 December 2013 and is due to be published very shortly? It is alleged that it may have been officially adopted in April this year and the UK will then have 48 months to incorporate it into our laws. Under EU rules this means that the UK and all other EU states can incorporate its requirements into their laws in a way that best suits their existing legislation, institutions, procedures and processes.

You may be wondering what on earth I am talking about.....I sometimes wonder what on earth I am talking about! I haven't read the above described item and I don't really intend to but the main thing I picked up on was the definition of a “vehicle of historic interest”. It appears now that if your vehicle fulfils all the following conditions, then it is one! Firstly - It was manufactured or registered for the first time at least 30 years ago; Secondly - Its specific type, as defined in national or EU law,

is no longer in production; and thirdly – It is historically preserved and maintained in its original state and has not sustained substantial changes in the technical characteristics of its main components.

The first thing that comes to my mind, “Is how long is a piece of string?” as it is now implying that EU governments will not have to test these vehicles (ie: annual MOT test) BUT the decision will lie with each and every separate EU government. Here in the UK, the Department of Transport (DfT) are allegedly of the opinion that even historic vehicles need some sort of periodic test if such vehicles are to be used on the public highway. Many older “historic vehicles” are maintained, or have been restored to a far better condition than when there were new; many “historic vehicles” owners belong to individual car clubs so that the quality of maintenance is preserved to a very high standard; most “historic vehicles” are treasured and extremely well looked after – sometimes better





than the everyday family/work/school vehicle used. BUT, the main problem is defining why two seemingly identical vehicles are so different according to the above criteria.

Vehicle 1 – has its original engine, gearbox, axle, brakes, interior, and most of its own original bodywork allowing for some rust/



accident damage that has occurred over the years – there are NO modifications, no upgrades and no adaptations apart from the fitment of maybe more currently available modern type tyres as any original type fitments could no longer be available. (Therefore does this fitment of new safer tyres invalidate this vehicles credentials?)





Vehicle 2 – has an engine fitted from a later similar make vehicle, ie: Vauxhall Red Top 2 litre Twin Cam in place of the original 2 litre cast iron single cam lump; 200 plus BHP (Brake horse power) instead of 89 BHP! Modern 5 or 6 speed gearbox instead of original 4 speed; LSD (Limited slip diff) axle; 4 pot calliper and larger diameter disc front brakes and dual pot disc rear brakes; the suspension has been completely “poly bushed” throughout; the interior has been completely refurbished in red leather and black pinstriped edging with the fitment of mini TV screens in the rear of the front seats, etc., the bodywork has been modified to accommodate huge 18 inch, 19 inch maybe 20 inch bling/alloy wheels and ribbon high thin tyres, etc., etc.



Let's say both vehicles are of 1974 origins, carry their original number plates and look almost identical to the average layman from the outside appearance. One is exempt and the other isn't. One is an extremely well looked after original version worth maybe £3,000 to £5,000, the other is a completely different animal all together – it's very fast, handles differently, stops much, much quicker, drives much better (maybe) and has had an absolute fortune spent on all the modifications – thousands and thousands, maybe £30,000 spent as virtually everything has been replaced.





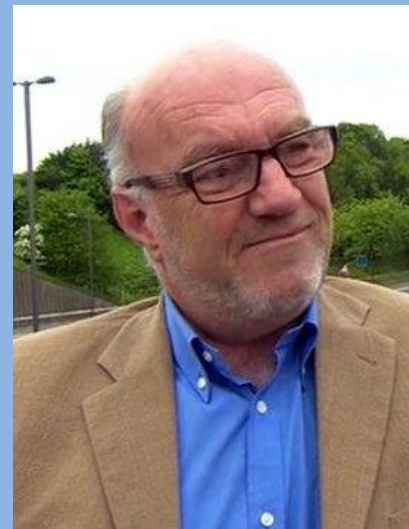
Which is the safer vehicle? Who really knows? Both vehicles will drive differently on the road but where do you really draw the line to make either vehicle exempt from being annually tested? As a mechanic or MOT Tester, there have always been certain criteria to comply with depending on the year of your vehicle but now you are going to have to be a lawyer as well to try and implement the forthcoming new EU rules: IF the UK actually decide to comply with this EU directive – as I said earlier, “How long is a piece of string?” BUT don’t worry, “we” have another four years yet to decide!

Happy historic motoring, enjoy it while you can because it may not last for much longer.

Kevin Grose (1958 Vintage)

November Members' Evening

‘Ashtrays to light rays’



**A talk by Tim Shallcross,
Technical Guru, on safety
features past, present and
future.**

**Wednesday 19th 7:30pm
at Hatch Beauchamp Village Hall**



WSRA Steam Fayre and Vintage Vehicle Rally

By Brian Howe

The West Somerset Railway Association Steam Fayre and Vintage Vehicle Rally was held at the WSRA Fields at Norton Fitzwarren, Saturday 2nd and Sunday 3rd August. Our Group Events Coordinator, Ella Waude, made all the arrangements with the Rally Marshalls. The Group had a poor show last year, mainly due to our location on the field, tucked away in a grey corner on a dismally damp weekend. This year, having had discussions with the relevant Marshalls, it was agreed for us to occupy a plot in what I call, "Charity Alley", within the retail and craft stalls.

Our bright red gazebo, complete with 4 zipped in walls, was erected Friday afternoon by Andrew Griffiths (Chairman, Chief Observer and Masters Mentor), Serena Lonton (Group Secretary and Membership Secretary) and Serena's husband, Peter. And what a great job they did. When I arrived just after 6pm, everything was finished including laying brochures etc out on the tables. I brought my 2 man dome tent, which isn't really big enough for me, let alone anyone else. Andrew helped

me with that and it was pitched and ready in 10 minutes. I didn't trouble to stay on site Friday night as I wasn't sure of the weather, so I arranged for my wife, Alice, to collect me when she finished work, and to drop me off again in the morning on her into work.



Discussing Tactics in front of our gazebo with display boards and brochures laid out and ready to go





Brian's Hotel?

Saturday the stall was staffed by Andrew, Tony Hucker (Associate coordinator) and myself. It turned out to be a fairly quiet day in general, for the whole show. I think this was due to the unsettled weather and the Taunton Flower Show competing for the same people. We did however, hand out several vouchers for Free Assessment Drives, and we spoke to some of the public about Advanced Driving. There was a dampener on the day though, literally, and we were severely dumped upon when the heavens opened around lunchtime. Although this is sometimes the right opportunity to engage with people sheltering from the rain.

Sunday was a much better day for all concerned. The sun was out most of the time and there was only a short shower to contend with. The staff were Andrew, Serena, Ella Waude (Events Coordinator), myself and Andy Mayes, one of our Group members who volunteered for the day. We were a lot busier and we were grateful for the extra help. Again we handed out many Assessment Vouchers and not only engaged with the public, but a few of the public engaged with us, asking questions about Advanced Driving and requesting information. We also exchanged information, leaflets and enquirers with the Somerset Road Safety Partnership.



Before the Downpour





Jessamine (New Build)

I would like to express my thanks and gratitude to all the organisers and helpers aforementioned, especially Andy Mayes, who did a sterling job, nabbing people to take part in our Children's Colouring Competition and the adult's Guess the Names of the Car Competition. And a special thank you to Mrs Christine Ridler (WSRA Craft Marshall) who went out of her way to help and accommodate us.

Brian Howe



Fair Organ



Steam Showman's Engine



Foden Far From Home



Austin 16



1973 Fiat 500



Daimler Dart V8



Austin 7 Chummy



Standard Vanguard with RR Silver Ghost



Ford Popular Pick-up



Morgan V Twin 3 Wheeler



Advanced Driving is a System of Car Control...



The £4 Pasty



Chewing the Fat?



The New Camping Trailer





A Few Traffic Survey Incidents

by Kevin Grose

As you may or may not remember, I carry out road traffic surveys on behalf of the Department of Transport (DfT), so here are a few, some amusing, incidents that have taken place so far this year. Please remember, I only tell it as I see it and nothing is made up – it's all true!

Near Merriot, Crewkerne I am parked legally in a layby opposite an entrance to a farm. The traffic is fairly reasonable and not too busy. There is a lot of activity during the day with various vehicles coming and going. Most funny thing was watching the farmer come flying out of his muddy, gravelled drive way and rocket off down the road on his quad bike... and trailer. Two minutes later, he's back again still going at Mach 1 speed. He then reappears without the trailer this time and travels even faster down the road. Five or ten minutes later, he comes flying back. Twenty or thirty minutes later he whizzes off again – I don't know where he goes or what he does each time but he does grin inanely at me every time and rarely looks where he's actually going. He doesn't wear a crash helmet either...

or a reflective jacket! He did this for most of the day – very strange!

I am in a small cul-de-sac in Bridgwater watching the traffic crossing the end of my road. Legally parked, correctly signed and hi-vised up – a car is parked behind me. The owner appears from across the road and gives me a funny look. He walks pass and starts his car and drives off. During the morning, several cars appear, park up for a few minutes, pop into this same house, come out, give me strange looks and drive off. Then around lunchtime, an almost new black Mercedes 600 S Class pulls up in front of this house and parks on the pavement (illegally) and within a few seconds another large Honda car pulls right in front of me and partially blocks my view. He doesn't park considerately; he just appears to dump his car virtually in the middle of the road facing the wrong way on a blind corner. Windows are left down and he just walks off; into the said same house. A few minutes later, both cars roar off down the road. Several more cars arrive, park and disappear and all of them give me a weird





look, like they were all up to something that may not be strictly legal. They all acted furtively, all the cars had blacked out rear windows, all had lowered suspension and all had massive bling alloy wheels - they all had tattoos, piercings and scruffy appearances – they were ALL edgy! They all went down the side entrance to the house and later on, I also realised that some of the windows were in fact, blacked out with black cardboard or something. It might have all been completely innocent but it certainly looked very dodgy to me observing this over the whole day - God knows what was going on there all day!

Following survey was next to a recently reopened pub which had been shut down last year when the road was last surveyed. This was quite a busy road so it was a 3 man team on this one. “Good”, my colleagues commented, “we can get a decent lunch this time!”. I can’t afford to buy lunch on what we get paid to do this job, so I stuck to my previously homemade sandwiches. When his shift ended, said colleague number one trundles off to the pub – he was soon back as he indicated you would need to take out a mortgage to purchase a reasonable lunch in this place! Second colleague trundles off at the end of his shift but he didn’t come

straight back. He had some soup and a roll... a very expensive bowl of soup and a roll! Whilst here, a motorbike pulled into the car park where we were and it was whisper quiet. I initially thought it was an electric motorbike but soon realised it said Ducati on the tank. The rider was then on his mobile – it appeared the bike had just cut out and he had coasted into the space near us. He tried and tried to start the bike but no way was it going to start. It had just been serviced as well. A long while later, a recovery vehicle arrived and the driver tried to start the bike. “It won’t start” he says. “No” says the owner “that’s why I called you!”

A good hour later and the bike still won’t start so the driver then decides the bike needs to be recovered... dooh! Problem is, he doesn’t have a bike trailer... dooh! Can’t get the bike into the van either because it’s absolutely crammed full with stuff... dooh! “I’ll have to go and get a trailer and come back” he says; this lad is really bright, he must be the director of this company or something, and off he drives. About two hours later, he reappears; loads up the bike onto the trailer; loads the rider into the cab and drives off. That poor rider had been there for most of the day yet he was still smiling when they finally drove off!





Survey in Yeovil side street on a housing estate – I return from my break to find my colleague chatting to a cyclist who has his bike in the middle of the road talking through my colleague's driver side window and I can hardly get past him. I turn around and park behind my mate. This chap is still chattering away but is really causing an obstruction by his actions as the vehicles can hardly get pass. I walk up and realise he's on a rant about something to my mate. I listen... and listen... and listen – ten minutes later and this has got to stop, so I politely interrupt his dialogue and try and advise him of his present actions. To my surprise, he agrees to my comments, apologises and pushes off. My colleague then says, "Thank Christ you came back – he been here for half an hour and nearly caused several accidents, I couldn't get a word in edgeways to get rid of him!" Do you know what he was ranting on about for that last half an hour – people in cars and buses causing obstructions and blocking drivers and riders clear access to the highway – you could not make this up! I wonder if these people ever look in a mirror some times.

Outside a sewage treatment works – yes, I get to see all the scenic views in my job – I hear this buzzing sound getting nearer and nearer and then it flies pass me like a bat out of hell

and you'll never guest what is was? It was my old friend the farmer from near Merriot again on his quad bike doing about Mach 2 this time still with no helmet or hi-vis jacket. He was still grinning inanely and really not looking where he was going. Three minutes later he was back going the other way, flat out again; skids on some gravel; almost hits the bank and just carries on; still grinning like a mad man!

Near a youth hostel in the car park opposite, on a fairly busy B road, I witnessed eleven hours of fairly well behaved traffic all day without incident until about the last hour when one by one, various vehicles started to arrive and commenced unloading many bicycles in the other car park nearer to the hostel. Nothing unusual in that you may think apart from the fact I witnessed the behaviour of most of these drivers who were now becoming cyclists. Their actions were erratic, loud and inconsiderate to say the least whether they had been driving on arriving or now on bicycles. To put this into context, first thing in the morning I had also witnessed a group of about six cyclists and their American back up van leave the very same parking area to continue on their Lands End to John O'Groats sponsored cycle ride. They really did have all the gear – if you are a professional cyclist, you will know what I mean. They were polite,





considerate and whilst chatting with the backup van driver, very informative about their quest and inquisitive to my job requirements and what the surveys all means. I sincerely hope they all completed their mammoth task safely. However, this later bunch of loud, sometimes aggressive lot were a completely different kettle of fish. Their attitude appeared to be very arrogant and inconsiderate to other road users. This was a very busy B road at this time of the day but they decided to wobble about all over the road by riding between the two car parks and it appeared to be showing off – this caused several vehicles to have to take evasive action to eliminate an incident. I thought they were really pushing their luck. “What’s that bloke doing over there” was bellowed across the road. “Oh, nothing... some kind of survey or something”... ”Well, tell him to **** off” was the reply; very nice! Anyway, the dozen or so cyclists finally rode off and I hope their attitudes didn’t cause any further hassle or inconvenience on whatever route they had chosen to follow. There has always been an alleged war between drivers and cyclists but this bunch appeared to have problems with both modes of transport - neither operating in a very safe mode no matter which one they chose.

Last story – quiet country road near Radstock; well, it was supposed to be a quiet country road. When I arrive for my shift, my colleague is somewhat flustered – his pencil had almost worn out and the paperwork is almost alright! I immediately decide to use my counters but it is still very busy. This is not just a quiet country road – it must be a rat run or something. I look on the map to see where it goes but it appears to go nowhere exclusive and there is definitely no direct cut through to anywhere. There is also no major village or a massive housing estate – this is strange? The numbers are really high – excessive for this type of road, so there must be a diversion in place or something? No there isn’t – nothing. It is a very busy morning so at lunchtime, my colleague says he needs a newspaper to read so I embark down the road to see where it goes... and get him a paper. I find the local Post Office cum village shop and lo and behold – the proprietor is also the leader of the local district council. “Where do all these cars go”, I ask him. “I wish I knew. I’ve lived here for so many years and I still don’t know where they all go to - it is a rat run but it is not a nice rat run to drive quickly through. Most of it is single country lane with very few passing places. There is no major industry; no major





housing developments and no direct routes to any major towns or villages. They must come from somewhere and they must be going somewhere!” Now, that’s an understatement if ever I have heard one. On returning with a paper for my colleague, I bump into a local farmer (not literally) and he tells me much the same details. He thought I was from the local planning office because of my hi-vis jacket, etc., but he was a very decent likable chap so I said I didn’t mind what he built on his land as it was nothing to do with me! He laughed and drove off saying “Enjoy your day counting traffic!” Back on site I inform my colleague of the local “intelligence” I have gathered and he says “I do wish you would speak to more intelligent people!” Anyway, the amount of traffic never ceased all day and we are still none the wiser of where it all went of where it all came from but they were all on a mission to go somewhere.

Kevin Grose
(I’ve never fallen asleep yet during a survey)

TAUNTON GROUP of ADVANCED MOTORISTS

CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON

to be held at

**OAKE MANOR GOLF CLUB
Oake, Nr. Taunton, TA4 1BA**

**on Saturday 6th December 2014
12 noon for 12:30pm**

*Menus and booking forms will be sent out
shortly, with the AGM invitations*



Recent Releases from the IAM Press Office

Casualties increase in 20mph zones

The number of serious accidents on 20mph roads has increased by over a quarter (26 per cent) last year, according to analysis of government data by road safety charity, Institute of Advanced Motorists. Slight accidents on 20mph roads increased by 17 per cent.

In the same year, there was a decrease in the number of serious and slight accidents on 30mph roads and 40 mph roads. Serious accidents went down nine per cent on 30mph roads and seven per cent on 40 mph roads. There was a five per cent reduction in slight accidents on 30 mph roads and a three per cent decrease on 40 mph roads.

Casualties in 20mph zones also saw a rise. Serious casualties increased by 29 per cent while slight casualties went up by 19 per cent.

IAM chief executive Simon Best said: "The government and councils need to take stock on

the effectiveness of 20mph signs. Recent advice, guidance and relaxation of regulations has all been about making it easier for councils to put 20mph limits in place.

"More and more roads are being given a 20mph limit but they do not seem to be delivering fewer casualties. The IAM are concerned that this is because simply putting a sign on a road that still looks like a 30mph zone does not change driver behaviour. More evaluation and research is needed into the real world performance of 20mph limits to ensure limited funds are being well spent. In locations with a proven accident problem, authorities need to spend more on changing the character of our roads so that 20mph is obvious, self-enforcing and above all contributes to fewer injuries. In Europe, it is long term investment in high quality segregated or shared surfaces that have led to a much safer environment for cyclists and pedestrians."





Twenty something men the most likely age group to be disqualified from driving

According to new figures obtained by the Institute of Advanced Motorists (IAM), male drivers between the ages of 20 and 30 were the most common group to be disqualified from driving in the 12 months between July 2013 and June 2014.

The figures were supplied by the DVLA following a Freedom of Information request made by the IAM, Britain's leading road safety charity.

The statistics reveal the age groups most commonly carrying out a driving offence that then lead to a subsequent driving ban.

As of 21 June 2014, 92,136 people in total across the UK were disqualified from driving between July 2013 and June 2014. Of those about 62,000 are still disqualified.

The age with the greatest number of disqualified drivers is 25 – 3,748 are serving a

driving ban, made up of 3,294 males and 454 females.

Some 31,668 males – just over one-third of the total number of people disqualified from driving during this period – were between the ages of 20 and 30. public roads.”

Males also outnumber females considerably when it comes to carrying out offences leading to a driving ban. In total 13,481 females were disqualified during this time period – less than 15 per cent of the overall total.

And in the 20-30 age group just 4,333 females were disqualified in the 12 month period, compared to 31,668 males.

While 36,001 people between 20 and 30 were disqualified in the last 12 months, 10,025 people in their fifties and just 3,874 in their sixties were.





The information supplied to the IAM also shows 230 people under 17 and therefore under the legal driving age for the UK were disqualified – including four 12 year olds and four 13 year olds. One 12 year old girl is currently disqualified before her driving career even starts.

Simon Best, chief executive of the Institute of Advanced Motorists, said: “These statistics strongly reflect the research we have already carried out in this area – that young males are very much the at risk group when it comes to driving safety.

“We believe targeting the attitudes of these drivers specifically, through advanced training for example, should be a major part of future road safety campaigning. Reducing offending in this age bracket would dramatically improve safety on our roads for all road users.

“It is also of great concern that youngsters not even eligible to hold a provisional licence are being banned at such young ages. Parents need to be aware their children are putting their own lives and those of others at huge risk by taking the wheel of a car on public roads.”

‘Quick fix’ modifications costing lives, warns IAM

Britain’s leading independent road safety charity is warning that some popular aftermarket vehicle modifications are not only making cars and vans illegal; they could also be risking lives.

The Institute of Advanced Motorists has highlighted three of the most common aftermarket tweaks that render vehicles illegal – and noted that people are rarely prosecuted despite the risks to other road users. The tweaks are:

- diesel particulate filter removal;
- fitting xenon headlights; and
- reprogramming or ‘chipping’ vehicle electronic control units (ECUs)

Diesel particulate filters (DPFs) can sometimes be troublesome, especially for van operators making frequent stops in urban areas. Due to the fact the DPF doesn’t run at the optimal temperature in town centre driving, the item can sometimes clog up and fail – causing an expensive and lengthy repair.





Some garages offer to remove the filters, assuring the operator the modification is acceptable – but the result of these back-alley tweaks is to increase deadly pollutants and CO2 emissions.

IAM head of technical policy Tim Shallcross said: “DPF removal has always been illegal but since 1 January 2014 has also been reason to fail an MOT. Some garages are blatantly still doing it. In short – they are selling a service that’s killing people.”

“Removing a DPF isn’t a task that can be done accidentally, as it involves reprogramming the engine management computer. Before 1 January it wouldn’t count as an MOT fail; but unscrupulous traders still offer to cut the case open from the top of the unit, remove the filter and welt it shut again – in an attempt to pull the wool over the eyes of the tester to achieve an MOT pass.

“This is disgraceful, but people are rarely prosecuted for this openly advertised service.”

The popular trend for xenon headlamp conversions is also a major hazard – not having a self-levelling or washing function means they can dazzle oncoming traffic, potentially causing an accident.

Shallcross said: “Fitting this kind of lighting is illegal. Claiming ignorance of the law is no excuse; these lights which people choose because they look stylish could potentially have tragic consequences.”

Finally the reprogramming of ECUs, or ‘chipping’ is another popular modification that is fraught with hazards for a number of reasons.

Shallcross said: “No aftermarket warranty company will offer to cover a car that has been chipped. If you don’t tell you insurer it is likely to invalidate your policy.

“But if you do tell your insurer, he could refuse to cover your car at all, or could demand a hefty increase to your premium. Is it really worth it in the long run?”





Take a rain check

Road safety charity the IAM is offering weekly motoring tips from Britain's top advanced driver, Peter Rodger. This week, he advises on preparing yourself and your car for the rain ahead of forecasted showers and thunderstorms later this week.

- Before you set off, set your heater controls – rain can make the windows mist up in seconds. You don't want to be fiddling with controls when you should be concentrating on the road.
- See and be seen. Put your lights on – as a rule of thumb, whenever you need to use your wipers you should also turn your dipped headlights on, and before overtaking put your wipers on their fastest setting.
- Keep your eyes on the road ahead and plan your driving so that you can brake, accelerate and steer smoothly – harsh manoeuvres will unbalance the car.
- Slow down. In the rain stopping distance is at least doubled. Giving yourself more space

also helps to avoid spray, especially when following a large vehicle.

- If you have cruise control, avoid using it on wet roads – you need to pay more attention to the road surface conditions and alter your speed gently.
- Strong winds can also unsettle your car and even change your direction of travel. Grip your steering wheel firmly and also be ready for the effects of the wind on other road users, particularly motorcyclists and flat-sided vehicles like lorries.

Rodger said: "A suddenly very wet road surface increases the chances of slipping when braking or steering, which is a problem not just for motorists, but for the cyclists and motorcyclists in among them too."

"When driving in wet conditions remember that stopping distances will increase, and visibility will be reduced. Drop your speed and give yourself more time to slow down.





Motorway breakdown

Road safety charity the IAM is offering weekly motoring tips from Britain's top advanced driver, Peter Rodger. This week, he is advising on what to do if your car breaks down:

- Plan ahead: keep a reflective jacket, warm waterproof clothes and a torch in your car. Put the number of your breakdown company and your membership number in your phone. Some breakdown services offer free mobile phone apps, often even if you are not a member. Use the phone's GPS system to find your precise location.
- Get out of the vehicle by the left-hand door and make sure all your passengers do the same. If you have a high-viz jacket, put it on and make sure everyone is standing well away from moving traffic. If there is a safety barrier, wait behind it.
- Where possible, coast to an emergency

telephone. If you use your mobile phone, you may be asked to give the number on the nearest marker post, located every 100 meters or on a square blue sign every 500 metres.

- Don't attempt a repair on the hard shoulder of a motorway, call your breakdown company.
- If you feel threatened by someone, get in the passenger seat, lock the door and dial 999.
- Be safe and be patient while you wait for help to arrive.

IAM chief examiner Peter Rodger said: "Breaking down is stressful, but be prepared by knowing what to do and when. Thinking about these things in advance will place you in a better position in case it happens and relieve some of the strain."





IAM director of policy and research Neil Greig said: "This is good news although the regulations are complex and medical practitioners will need extra time and patience to explain and reassure drivers that they are unlikely to be affected. The key point is that no one taking prescription drugs in the way that their doctor tells them to should fall foul of the new drug driving laws. We can now look forward to finally seeing drug testing rolled out across the country later this summer."

Drug driving guidance issued to healthcare professionals

Tough new measures to crack down on the menace of drug driving moved a step closer today (Thursday 3 July 2014) after the government issued new guidance to healthcare professionals. The new offence of driving with certain controlled drugs, including some prescription drugs, above specified limits is due to come into force on 2nd March 2015.

The guidance helps doctors and nurses start explaining the new rules in advance of the launch to patients and reassure those who take prescription drugs that they will be able to drive safely without fear of being prosecuted.

The new advice, which has been developed with support from the medical profession, advises general practitioners, doctors, nurses and health advisers on changes to the drug driving offence and what it means for patients.

Police can already prosecute drivers if they are driving whilst impaired by drugs, including medicinal drugs. The new rules will mean it will be an offence to be over the specified limits for each drug whilst driving, as it is with drink driving. The limits for the vast majority of medicinal drugs are above the normal doses. Unlike the existing 'impairment' offence, the new law provides a medical defence for patients who are taking their medicine in accordance with instructions – either from a healthcare professional or printed in the accompanying leaflet – provided they are not impaired.

The guidance also advises patients who take legitimately supplied medicines to keep evidence with them in case they are stopped by police. This will help speed up any investigation where the medical defence is used and reduce the inconvenience to the patient.





The new regulations will come in to force at the same time as new equipment to test drivers for cannabis and cocaine at the roadside is expected to become available to the police. If a driver tests positive they will be taken to a police station where a further evidential test will be taken. If this is positive it will allow police to prosecute a driver for being over the limit.

Roads Minister Robert Goodwill said:

“The new guidance will help doctors, nurses and healthcare professionals explain the new drug driving offence and reassure their patients that provided they take their medication in accordance with advice and are not impaired they can carry on driving just as they have always done.

“The new drug driving law will make it easier for the police to tackle those who drive after taking illegal drugs or abuse medicinal drugs whether they are on prescription or available over the counter.

“This new offence will be introduced alongside major changes to drink-drive laws. Taken together, these will give police the tools

they need to prosecute those who risk the lives of others through dangerous behaviour and make our roads safer.”

The limits for each individual drug are set out [here](#). The drugs most associated with medical use have been set at a level where a road safety risk arises, following advice from a panel of medical and scientific experts.

The changes to drink drive are being introduced as part of the Deregulation Bill and will remove the right for drivers who fail a roadside breath test to demand a blood or urine sample at the police station. This test can take place several hours later, which means some drivers who were over the limit when tested at the roadside could have time to sober up. Removing the option for this test will save police forces an estimated £13 million over 10 years and allow breath tests to be used as evidence. New mobile breath testing equipment is also expected to be approved early in 2015, allowing police to take evidential breath tests at the roadside, helping to streamline enforcement and support police officers in making sure our roads are kept safe and free from drink and drug drivers.





New assessment to help older drivers

The Institute of Advanced Motorists (IAM) is launching its Mature Driver's Assessment – a way for older drivers to gain a trusted second opinion on their driving and is available for motorists aged over 70. It consists of a 60 minute driving assessment that includes advice on what action to take.

The assessment is not a formal test, it is a 60 minute drive with an IAM-approved assessor. Candidates drive in their own vehicle taking routes that they are familiar with. At the end of the assessment, they are given immediate feedback and a confidential written report. A certificate is given to those judged 'Excellent' or 'Competent' or there is advice that their driving needs to improve and what needs to be done about it.

IAM chief executive Simon Best said: "This assessment helps keep older people driving for as long as it is safe to do so. It's worth remembering that many older people actually give up too early, simply because they lack confidence. It also gives elderly drivers and their families the information they need so that they can choose the right time to give up driving."

In March this year, IAM research showed that 42 forty-two per cent of the population is worried about an elderly relative driving, yet they are unlikely to do anything about it.

To find out more about the assessment, visit [here](#).





IAM director of policy and research Neil Greig said: "It is incredibly shocking that so many new drivers are accumulating points especially before officially passing their test. The one positive aspect is that bad driving is being spotted and prosecuted."

"Attitudes to driving are set from a very young age so parents have a key role to play in preventing their child becoming an accident statistic."

Mirror, signal... motoring offence!

Nearly 54,000 learner drivers currently have penalty points on their provisional licence

- More than a fifth of motoring offenders (22%) received penalty points before they had officially passed their test
- FOI data obtained from the DVLA reveals nearly 54,000 provisional licence holders currently have valid penalty points on their licence
- Of those learner drivers to receive penalty points for a motoring offence, the majority were caught speeding (60%)
- Nearly 3 in 10 motorists (29%) were unaware that they could get penalty points before officially passing their test

There are currently nearly 54,000 motorists in the UK who have penalty points on their provisional licence, according to new research from Confused.com.

The findings obtained from the DVLA reveal that learner drivers are racking up penalty points for motoring offences before officially passing their driving test. According to official figures, there are currently 53,988 provisional licence holders with valid penalty points on their licence, meaning they have committed a motoring offence whilst still learning to drive.

Further research from the leading price comparison site reveals that more than a third of UK drivers (36%) have received penalty points at some point for a motoring offence. Of these offenders, more than a fifth (22%) accumulated these points before they had officially passed their driving test.

Of those learner drivers to receive penalty points for a motoring offence, the majority were caught speeding (60%), followed by





jumping a red light (43%). Nearly a third of learner drivers who have received penalty points (33%) were caught driving without insurance, while one in six (15%) were charged with driving carelessly.

Despite many motorists being charged with driving offences whilst still on a provisional licence, nearly 3 in 10 (29%) were unaware that they could even get penalty points before officially passing their driving test. A further 40% of drivers were oblivious to the fact that if they reached six or more penalty points in the first two years of passing their test, their licence would be revoked.

Worryingly, more than a quarter of motorists (28%) admit that they didn't feel confident at all when learning to drive, which poses the question as to whether learner drivers should be held fully responsible for any offences occurred whilst learning to drive, or if a certain amount of onus sits with the person overseeing their tuition.

The research reveals that a third of people (33%) believe that the co-driver or driving instructor should be held responsible for any motoring offences committed by a learner driver, more than one in 10 (12%) arguing that they should also take the points for the learner.

However, it is illegal for anyone other than the

driver to take the penalty points or conviction on their behalf. The law is clear that if a motoring offence is committed then the driver is liable for any penalty, such as points on their licence or attending an awareness course, even if they are a learner.

According to the findings, one in six (17%) people think learner drivers should face more difficult theory tests before being allowed on the roads, to make them safer and more aware of the rules of the road.

Gemma Stanbury, head of car insurance at Confused.com comments: *"We're aware that people might make mistakes along the way as they learn to drive, however practising road safety is an important part of the process, and picking up bad habits such as speeding or jumping lights before officially passing your driving test is never a good way to start."*

"It's concerning that a considerable number of motorists were unaware that they could get penalty points on their licence before officially passing their test. Not only could these points contribute to their licence being revoked if they accumulate six points in any way within the first two years of driving, but they could also lead to increased insurance premiums when they are able to get back behind the wheel."





Young driver deaths – it's not all about the driver

The number of drivers aged 17-24 killed in an accident has decreased by 10 per cent since 2010, according to the latest analysis by road safety charity Institute of Advanced Motorists (IAM).

In the same time frame, the number of 17 – 24 year old passengers killed in a car with a young driver (aged 17-24) has decreased by 24 per cent. The difference in figure could be due to the general improvement in safety on our roads, fewer young people passing the test, ongoing campaigns and enforcement and the recession.

Younger drivers are more likely to travel with passengers of a similar age but the risk goes up with every extra passenger. A study from the USA showed that a young driver's chances of being killed went up 44 per cent with one passenger, 90 per cent with two and 300 per cent with three or more.

In 2012, 133 drivers aged 17-24 were killed alongside 71 young passengers. The previous year (2011), there 148 drivers aged 17-24 killed as well as 93 young passengers.

These figures are still completely unacceptable with new drivers far more likely to cause their passengers' death than any other age group. New drivers and their passengers also have far more life changing catastrophic crashes with lifelong injuries than any other age group.

IAM chief executive Simon Best said: "Road safety has been improving for everyone in the UK in recent years and that is reflected in the improved situation for new drivers. But, it's worrying that our younger people are still at such high risk of causing death and injury to themselves. These figures show an urgent need to improve awareness of the risks for younger drivers and their passengers."

"We know that inexperience and overconfidence are significant factors in crashes among the younger age group and addressing this issue must be a top priority. By delaying its Green paper the government has missed a great opportunity to provide better training, more support and learning from a younger age. In the meantime parents





and young people should follow the IAM's tips for young passengers to maximise the chances of survival."

The IAM's top tips for young passengers:

- More passengers equals more risk so don't overload the car as it will handle differently and the driver may not know how to deal with that
- Don't distract the driver by trying to show him or her stuff on your phone
- Don't give in to peer pressure – if others are being stupid don't get involved
- Never get in a car with a young driver who has been drinking
- Agree with parents you can call them up or they will pay for a taxi if you have worries about your lift
- Risk is highest at night and on country roads - make sure your mate knows where they are going and has put in the hours learning how to cope with a wide variety of roads

Closing date for the Winter Edition of the TGAM e-Newsletter is 20th October. All contributions would be very welcome. All items should be sent to "The Editor" at ed@tgam.org.uk or by mail to David Walton at Little Paddocks, White Street, North Curry, Taunton TA3 6HL