

e-NEWSLETTER



IAM
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ROAD SAFETY 2011-2020

**TAUNTON GROUP OF
ADVANCED MOTORISTS**
www.tgam.org.uk



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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 Report



At our recent AGM Andrew Griffiths, our Chairman, gave the following report.

Good evening ladies and gentlemen and welcome to the Taunton Group of Advanced Motorists annual general meeting 2014.

Let me start by thanking all of you who have travelled here tonight. I know I am in direct competition with Coronation Street and it must have been a tough choice to have to make. I hope you feel the sacrifice is worthwhile and that you can wait until you get home to watch it on your DVD recorders. I'm pleased that Ken is back... the Street just wasn't the same without his gregarious and humorous character was it?

I'm not going through everything our Group has been busy with over the last 12 months but I'd like to pick on some of the highlights.

Firstly, the bread and butter of the Group is all about promoting road safety in our area of Somerset which geographically is quite large. We do this through the IAM's Skill for Life programme. We've seen a steady influx of Associates throughout the year and with the quality of coaching provided by of our valued Observers, we've achieved a 100% pass rate which is something we should be proud of. A bit more of that later.





A good time was had by all at our BBQ and classic car evening back in July. The range of vehicles was impressive and included a fleet of Morgans, Sunbeams, Austins, a couple of motorbikes and a Mercedes 500SL which had been washed and polished for the evening at great personal effort. The enthusiasm of their owners shone through and members and friends had the opportunity of getting close up and personal to all of these gems. The food was plentiful and delicious thanks to Janet and the whole event was a resounding success. I'm looking forward to next year's already.

A few weeks later, we attended the WSR Steam Fayre at Norton Fitzwarren. This was a 2-day event and we had some enthusiastic volunteers help Brian and me staff our IAM/TGAM pitch over the 2 days. Our stalwart of a President slept the night there in his new tent claiming that it was one of his last stands as a young man! I had the pleasure of spending some cherished moments with "John" who had brought along his gypsy caravan minus horses (he brought it on a trailer). He lived in it occasionally (he said he'd swapped his wife for it); the smell of the log burner was luring as was the smell of his sausages cooking over a fire pit. John was a happy old chappy and had many a tale to tell

me in his strong West Country accent. Try as I might, I just could not get him to grasp the system of vehicle control as I sat with him on the front of his wagon. Win some lose some! We had a lot of interest from people attending the Fayre and we've given some free assessment drives as a result - hopefully these will turn into skill for Life.

We've had many social evenings with some quirky themes. For those of you who missed woodturning demo, you missed a treat; a spot light came crashing on to the woodturning lathe and that was shortly followed by a cube of oak slipping out of the grip of the jaws and disappearing over my head backstage. I hope to be invited to give a repeat performance next year – there'll be an entrance fee to cover the personal liability insurance!

Andy Ware, a local Examiner and honorary member of our Group, provided a very entertaining and anecdotal evening which involved letting us loose with a Stinger. Great fun! But he wouldn't let anyone borrow it.

Alan Wellwood made his début as a presenter last month when he took his audience through one of the new IAM modules – winter driving. There'll be one or two modules next year. IAM charge for these but you get them for free.





Our Newsletter continues to provide a very good read with some interesting articles. A plea though; please write an article for our newsletter, don't leave it to the same contributors. I gave some suggested themes in the last newsletter.

Our website has been on the back-burner for a while but we've set up a small working group to give the revamp a kick-start so you should start seeing changes to the content in due course although the structure will be largely unchanged. If you have any thoughts as to what you'd like to see on our website, please contact one of the committee. Don't forget, the website is our "shop window" for the public so we want it to appeal and draw visitors in. It is a repository for Group information such as newsletters, Observer material and much more.

I and other members of the committee have been working closely with IAM and with Camelot in the lead-up to the closure of the Camelot Group last week, to ensure that road safety continues here in the West. Consequently, some of its members have now joined TGAM and it is a pleasure to welcome them here tonight.

It is at this stage I must acknowledge the work of individuals who keep the clockwork oiled. Firstly our Observers; without Observers, we

could not prepare Associates for the ADT which of course is a primary role for an IAM Group – otherwise we would be a car club. It is through the hard work and dedication of our Observers that we have been achieving 100% pass rates for some months. Through the Observers, our Group helps promote road safety in our area. Sadly, one of our Observers, John Gilbert, has decided to stand down. John has achieved impressive results, coached many Associates up to test standard and he'll be missed. We're not rid of him entirely though as he remains a member of the IAM and of TGAM. So on behalf of TGAM I'd like to thank John for his hard work.

Indeed all of our Observers work with the prime objective of getting Associates up the ADT standard. They give up personal time to do this. We are always looking for suitable advanced motorists to train to become Observers and I'm pleased to announce that Barry Keenan who recently achieved a F1RST in SfL is starting his training. I mentioned that members of Camelot had joined TGAM – we are very fortunate that a few of these are Observers and they are already coaching Associates. The total number of Observers now stands at 12 and includes two National Observers - myself and David Perkins. So I'd like to thank our new and enlarged team of Observers for all they do.





Now to our committee who make my life an absolute misery. Seriously though, I come back from committee meetings feeling I've been out with mates. While we get the business done, the atmosphere is jovial; the chemistry between committee members is healthy. Sadly though, one of my mates is standing down. Serena has served on the Committee in one capacity or another for a long while and has worked hard, taking everything in her stride. She stands down tonight as TGAM's Secretary, a role I feel she has embraced. Not every one of our members knows everyone on the Committee but the exception has to be Serena because she is the person who has been in contact with each and every member – keeping you informed. So I'd like to thank Serena for all she's done for us and I'd like to call on our President to mark the occasion.

I'd like to thank everyone else on the committee. Each does a sterling job, even Faye☺. So my thanks in no particular order, to Ella, Janet, Geoffrey, David, Tony, Paul and of course Faye. Of course, Faye and Janet ensure we have coffee, tea and biscuits at each social evening so let's thank them otherwise we may find ourselves without refreshments!

Now would be an appropriate time to present the Chairman's award. This year, I want to pay tribute to a member of the committee who

seems to have more stamina than most of us put together. This person makes the job look simple and on the surface carries it out seemingly effortlessly but I always think of the swan and what is going on under the surface and that's the bit many of us don't always appreciate. This person's finger is always on the pulse and I know is well-respected by every Committee member. I would like you all to join me in acknowledging and showing appreciation for the work this person does for our Group and I hope you'll agree it is a befitting award I now present to Geoffrey Stoate, our Treasurer.

Now, Geoffrey is the first person in our Group to take up the offer of a free refresher drive (typical of a Treasurer to want something for free!) and it was a pleasure to take him out. I must tell you that the quality of his driving was superb – no habits of a lifetime and if I can drive like Geoffrey if I get to his age I will be very happy! It was an added pleasure to be driven by his wife, Joy, too. I took them out separately – I didn't want to risk them heading for divorce after many years of married life. Both great drivers! So what's stopping you taking a refresher?

I'd like to close by thanking you and all our members who can't be here tonight, for your continued support of the Taunton Group of Advanced Motorists and to road safety in Somerset. Thank you for listening.



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	David Walton	secretary@tgam.org.uk
Treasurer	Geoffrey Stoate	treasurer@tgam.org.uk
Training Officer	Alan Thomson	cmat@tgam.org.uk
Associate Coordinator	Tony Hucker	coordinator@tgam.org.uk
Newsletter Editor	David Walton	ed@tgam.org.uk
Webmaster	Paul Willitt	cmpw@tgam.org.uk
Events Coordinator	Ella Waude	events@tgam.org.uk
Committee Members	Rachel Bettiss	cmrb@tgam.org.uk
	Brian Howe (President)	president@tgam.org.uk
	Janet Loader	cmjl@tgam.org.uk
	Faye Markham	cmfm@tgam.org.uk



GROUP OBSERVERS



Chief Observer and Masters Mentor	Andrew Griffiths
National Observer	David Perkins
Senior Observer	Michael Turner
Group Observer	Godfrey Davey
Group Observer	Brian Dodd
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
Trainee Observer	Barry Keenan
Trainee Observer	Josephine Washington
Trainee Observer	Timothy Wheeler
Trainee Observer	Michael Wotton

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 and 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 and 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 and TGAM members at all times.)

PRESIDENT'S PONDERINGS



Are you considering winter tyres?

As the winter months approach, now is perhaps the time to start thinking about whether you fit them or not. Winter tyres are specially designed to be used during cold, icy and snowy conditions. They have a different tread pattern and a higher natural rubber compound than standard tyres, which help to improve braking distances on icy roads when the temperature drops below 7° Celsius.

Although winter tyres may be useful to some drivers, they are not a necessity or a legal requirement in the UK, so you have to figure the cost into your calculations. Bear in mind that if you choose to buy winter tyres, you will need to change all four tyres on the car and possibly the spare tyre as well.

If you decide to go ahead with the purchase, you can store your standard tyres in bags, and you will need to store them horizontally on the ground, so that the tread pattern is not in contact with the ground.

When the weather gets warmer and the average temperature rises above 7°C in the morning, you will have to arrange to change back to your standard tyres, not forgetting the spare.

For more information on winter tyres, speak to your local tyre fitting company.



**By Brian Howe
Group President**





Do you still have a tax disc?

From 1st October the DVLA stopped issuing paper tax discs, as the police, parking inspectors and the DVLA can now rely on an electronic vehicle register to check if a vehicle is taxed. You can check if your car is taxed at www.gov.uk/check-vehicle-tax Click on 'Check now' and enter the registration number and make of your car. The online record will only be updated about a week before your current tax is due to expire.

If like me, you have disabled class tax and you are worried about parking in a disabled bay without visual proof of disabled class tax, the DVLA's online tax checker system automatically includes the taxation class of the vehicle so that wardens can check this electronically. Some councils have said they will use the new system, while others said they will rely on visual inspection of a Blue Badge instead. If you have a Blue Badge, please remember to check it is valid and display it clearly. The badge has to be the right way up, in date and the blue clock has to be displayed with the time that you entered the parking bay. This sounds pedantic, but you will receive a parking penalty if you don't comply.

The DVLA has advised that all motorists should

now remove the tax disc from their windcreens and dispose of it. This applies even if the disc does not expire for several months. This change affects all motorists across the UK. Please rest assured that all the important tax details will be recorded online.

For more information, call the DVLA on 0300 790 6802. *[Believe it or not, old tax discs, particularly those issued in September 2014, are selling on e-bay for more than £1,000! Ed]*

Do you know the Highway Code for mobility scooters and powered wheelchairs?

I have a new class 3 mobility scooter. Class 3 mobility scooters and powered wheelchairs are restricted to 8mph on the road and 4mph on pavements. They must have a method of switching between these two limits. They must also have front and rear lights, flashing indicators and a horn. (If you consider an electronic squeak to be a horn). If they are to be used on the road, they should also be registered with DVLA and insurance is strongly recommended. Mine has all of the above and although it is not legally required to carry a number plate, I have fitted a small, yellow rear number plate with my scooter's genuine registration number. I feel that this helps other road users to know that I am entitled to be there.





If you have a class 2 scooter/powered wheelchair it should only be used on the pavement. As I have already mentioned above, the class 3's can be used on pavements or roads. If you do use a class 3 product on the road, make sure you are following the rules of the road and if you are travelling at night you must use your lights.

When it comes to using your lights, horn and indicators you need to apply common sense and follow the Highway Code. It is also prudent to take extra care and wear some reflective clothing, or fit one of the new reflective scooter/wheelchair bags to the back

of your seat. This will make you easier to see on the road.

Some road junctions can be difficult to cross when using mobility equipment. If it is too hazardous it might be worth taking an alternative route (for example, if the junction or roundabout has more than two lanes). When crossing a junction, take extra care making sure there are no vehicles crossing in front of you and none overtaking you to turn left. If you are turning right it may be safer to take a pedestrian route, and don't forget to limit your speed to a maximum of 4 mph on the pavement.





When parking, believe it or not, normal restrictions should be observed. You should not leave your scooter/wheelchair unattended if it causes an obstruction to pedestrians. You should always lock and secure your scooter to a lamppost or railing, and if it is raining, cover it with a waterproof cover. (Water and electricity, no matter how low the voltage, don't mix).

Class 2 and class 3 mobility scooters and powered wheelchairs must not be used on motorways or unrestricted dual carriageways, where the speed limit exceeds 50mph. By following these simple rules you will stay safe and enjoy your time out better.

For more information on the Highway Code for mobility vehicles, click on the link to the powered wheelchair and mobility scooter section on www.gov.uk/browse/highway-code

Have you booked your place at the TGAM Christmas Lunch?

As advertised elsewhere in this edition (hopefully), of your super duper e-Newsletter, it is not too late to apply to me for a wonderful 3 course Christmas lunch. Depending when our Editor releases this edition of course. It is at the Oake Manor Golf Club, Oake, Taunton, TA4 1BA. 12:00 12:30pm on Saturday 6th December. For more information please telephone Brian Howe on 01823 274410 (if I am out, you can leave

a message) or email: president@tgam.org.uk

CAMELOT

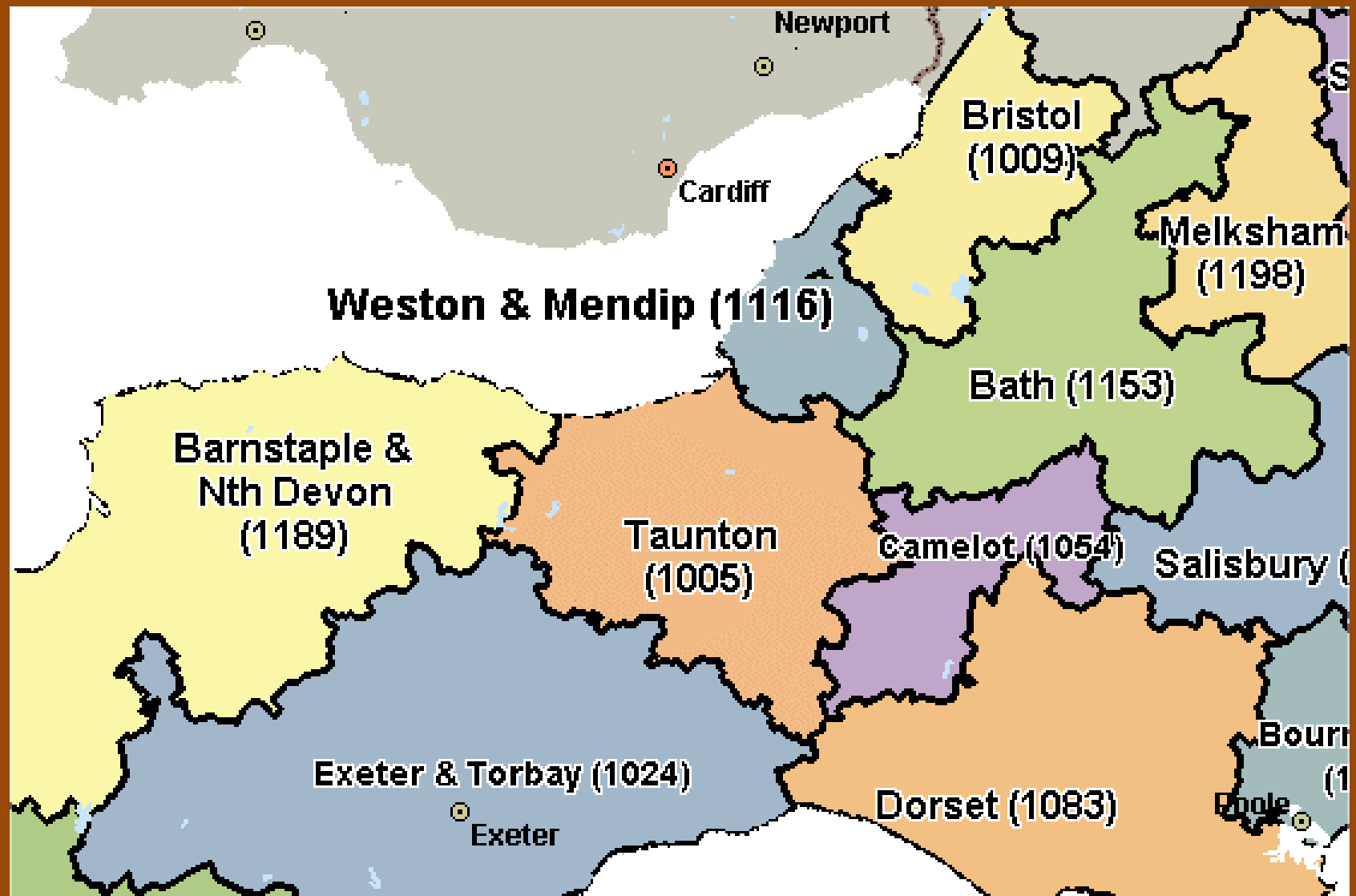
The Camelot AGM was an almost emotional meeting tempered with humorous memories from long serving committee members and from Andy Ware, IAM Test Examiner and Camelot Group member. Their President, Ted Allen, did a sterling job in keeping the meeting flowing and sensitively wound up IAM Camelot (Yeovil) Group of Advanced Motorists, (Group No. 1054). Several certificates of appreciation were awarded for long service and outstanding dedication. All former and present committee members, officers and observers were thanked for the efforts over the years in keeping the group running.

Let us welcome former Camelot members with open arms and embrace the challenges ahead. We will all need to work hard to improve the IAM/TGAM presence across to the Dorset and Wiltshire county borders. [See *following maps. Ed*]

I would like to wish TGAM and its new committee (from our recent AGM) well in its endeavours to increase Advanced Motoring throughout Somerset.

Brian L. Howe
TGAM Hon. President.







CALENDAR

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

11th December 2014

12th February 2015

9th April 2015



			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.
			DECEMBER
6	S	12 noon	TGAM Christmas Luncheon at Oake Manor Golf Club
17	W	7:30 pm	Member's Evening – Christmas Quiz
			JANUARY
			No Member's Evening in January
			FEBRUARY
18	W	7:30 pm	Member's Evening – Motorway Driving - Another IAM presentation targeting specific areas of driving development; skills, experience and emotions.





**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 were sent out with the AGM invitations but if you have mislaid yours, contact Brian Howe at president@tgam.org.uk



MEMBERS' PAGES



Well here we are again, thinking ahead to Christmas and dodgy weather conditions. However I hope you all enjoyed the summer and are now busily preparing for the winter and whatever comes with it.

We have had a good number of renewals since 1st October, including 13 people, some of whom are Observers, who have joined us from Camelot Group following its closure. A warm welcome to you all from everyone at TGAM.

It is always sad to see a group close, but we hope more former Camelot members and new Associates will swell the ranks and make TGAM a stronger, bigger group, and keep our Observers busy.

We now have 105 fully paid up members with 28 TGAM members who have not yet renewed from last year. If for any reason you will not be renewing your membership this year please let us know so as to save time and trouble sending reminders. Many thanks.

The "Skill for Life" programme is always a worthwhile experience, with the benefits of being able to drive safely and economically, so tell everyone you know about it! Hopefully that will lead to our numbers increasing and more people enjoying our excellent Newsletter.

By Serena Lonton





Also, don't forget to book your place at our Christmas Lunch on Saturday 6th December at Oake Manor Golf Club. It's a must!

As some of you will know I retired from the TGAM Committee at the AGM in October, therefore may I thank you all for your continued support. It has been a most enjoyable 19 years and I have made many great friends over that time. I will still be at members' evenings when I can, so you will still see me around!

Happy and safe motoring!

Advanced Driving Test Passes

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

OBSERVED BY

David Crowhurst	Hugh Todd
Christopher Hay	Andrew Griffiths
Janet Kayser	Brian Dodd
David Short	Timothy Wheeler

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 23 new group members, (20 from Camelot, marked C). 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>	
Eileen Beckey	S Petherton	Full	C
Rachel Bettiss	Yeovil	Full	C
Peter Brocksom	Dunster	Full	
Esther Cracknell	Langport	Full	C
Godfrey Davey	Yeovil	Full	C
Brian Dodd	Yeovil	Full	C
Colin Fraser-Mackenzie	Pilton	Full	C
David Freeman	Yeovil	Full	C
Peter Furneaux	Charlton Musgrove	Full	C
Roger Gibson	Sherborne	Full	C
Terry Holly	Yeovil	Full	C
Penny Lock	Hinton St George	Full	C
Rod Page	S Petherton	Full	C
David Perkins	Yeovil	Full	C
Roger Redman	Yeovil	Full	C
Jack Sheaf	Gillingham	Associate	
Dale Stote	Spaxton	Associate	
Michael Turner	Gillingham	Full	C
Isabel Westcott-Pitt	Crewkerne	Full	C
Timothy Wheeler	Yeovil	Full	C
Philip White	S Petherton	Full	C
Michael Wotton	Yeovil	Full	C
Jan Zabkiewicz	Yeovil	Full	C



A note from our retiring Group Secretary

Hi Folks,

I just want to say a big thank you for the gift you gave me at the AGM. I was quite overwhelmed by your generosity, so it is much appreciated.

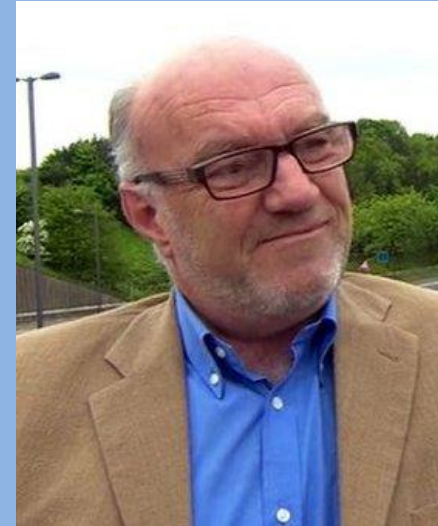
I put it towards an ipod – oh yes, a technophobe like me, but it is intended to use for music, so I hope I can figure it out!

Anyway, it has been a privilege to work with such a great bunch of friends, and the association will long continue I hope.

Best regards,

Serena

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
Hatch Beauchamp Village Hall





TGAM AGM EVENTS

By Kevin Grose (Past TGAM Chairman)

Last night, as indicated earlier to my TGAM friends, I did actually make it this time and attended the 2014 TGAM AGM. This is an ideal opportunity to catch up on all things TGAM, plus meet up again with past colleagues, friends and new TGAM members and you get free tea and biscuits so that can't be bad, can it? It certainly was an enjoyable evening with good company, a free (anti!) SATNAV based talk along with the official normal AGM stuff.

TGAM Member Andy Hayes gave the SATNAV talk along with some discussion on the UK's major "A" roads (some 19 in total) which mostly span out from London and a few other places and we had to suggest (or guess) the correct answers as to where they start and where they finish – it was very surprising where some people thought they started etc., and where they finished, etc., but I think I could safely say that very few of us got them all right but it did make people talk – some argued I know.... but all in a light hearted way and thoroughly enjoyed by all. It did make us all think which is what Andy wanted us to do, so job well done (I've kept the question papers as I'm going to check them all and see if he was right – I'm sad I know!)

Earlier in the week, I had also received an email informing me of the proposed very sad closure of the Camelot Group being one of our nearest and sometimes overlapping IAM Groups. We have jointly at times over the many past years attended so many different IAM regional events along with other shows and venues like those held at the wonderful Haynes Motor Museum, etc. The cessation of any IAM Group is a major loss to all those within that covered area but maybe and fortunately for us in the Taunton Group, this may be a really major asset for all those involved as those members who choose to join us (TGAM) from the Camelot Group, not only bring their experience and past skills to us to share but also bring the strong connection of being linked to the Haynes Motor Museum which is a real major asset for this area and the whole of the south west. It is now not only a national venue but also an international venue for all those with an interest in motoring in general. If you haven't been there yet, please put it on your "to do" list.

I am sure you would like to join me and extend a very warm welcome to all the ex Camelot Group Observers, Members and Associates who will





hopefully frequent any of our future TGAM events. We must make sure that the sad demise of one Group, should open new doors and opportunities to other surrounding Groups and any past and new ventures are entered into enthusiastically to continue to forge the general IAM cause forward. All Groups need all the help they can get in this current struggling climate and I sincerely hope this recent event gives some serious opportunities for the future of all those now currently involved – onwards and upwards someone famously said... but don't ask me who because I don't know who it was!

One last thing I would like to comment on – at the AGM talk, it was inferred that all the roads are much busier now, the M25 (all 117 miles of it!) was referred to as the biggest car park in the world, everywhere you go is grid locked, etc., and I would have to much agree with all that at times but as you may or may not be aware, I spend a lot of time sat on the side of the many roads in Somerset doing road traffic surveys and I can honestly say that in my opinion, this is just not true. It appears that for years now, the volume of traffic is getting less... “LESS?” I hear you say, you must be mad!

Well, I might be mad (not everyone enjoys sitting on the side of the road for hours on end) but certain surveys are carried out in identical places

over the years and it appears that the data collected annually would indicate a very slight decrease in the whole volume of traffic flowing on that particular day than it did the previous year. As an example, I avoid going into Taunton at any time of the day because it is always gridlocked. It takes me hours to cover a few miles. I don't shop in Taunton; I don't travel through Taunton; I don't visit people in Taunton... as I have already said, I avoid it at all costs. This year due to the earlier road works that did in fact gridlock the whole of Taunton for many months, I was involved in carrying out the earlier required surveys later this year and I must admit, I was pleasantly surprised. However, bear in mind I was in Taunton before 06:45 hours and left after 19:30 hours but on the six surveys I was on, carried out at various main roads around the centre of Taunton, I only witnessed a few minor traffic jams during those surveys - the biggest one was going past the Station into town centre but then that was only for about half an hour. As Mr Meldrew used to say, “I don't believe it!” but I have to believe it because I was there and that's exactly what happened on the day(s). It appeared that “inner” Taunton flowed quite well – it was just you couldn't actually access “inner” Taunton because “outer” Taunton was again gridlocked!

Kevin Grose (leads a sad life sat on the side of a road at times.....)





February Members' Evening

Confident Driving
IAM presentations targeting
specific areas of driving
development

Motorway Driving

This module talks about motorway signs,
rules & regulations, dealing with
roadworks, breakdown or incident
procedures and vehicle checks

Wednesday 18th February 7:30pm
at Hatch Beauchamp Village Hall

The Perfect SatNav?

You know about the sat-nav, it sits there in you car,
A satnav is the driver's friend, it tells you where you are.

Mine gives me full instructions, especially how to drive, "It's thirty
miles an hour" it says, "you're doing thirty five".

It tells me when to stop and start, and when to use the brake, and
tells me that it's never ever safe to overtake.

It tells me when the light is red, and when it goes to green. It
seems to know instinctively just when to intervene.

It lists the vehicle up in front and all those to the rear,
and taking all this into account, it specifies my gear.

I'm sure no other driver has so helpful a device,
for when I finally leave the car, it still gives me its advice.

It fills me up with counselling, each journey's pretty fraught. So
why don't I exchange it and get a quieter sort.

Ah, well, you see, it cleans the house, makes sure I'm properly fed.
It washes all shirts and things and keeps me warm in bed.

Despite all these advantages, and my tendency to scoff,
I do wish that once in a while I could turn the damned thing off.

I have this little satnav, I've had it most my life.
It's better than the normal ones, My satnav is... my wife.





YOUR GROUP NEEDS YOU!

TGAM attend events every year to promote the group and the IAM by talking to the public about who we are and what we do. We are looking for members of the group who would be interested in helping at these events in the future. There is no need to be a committee member and there is no need to commit yet; at the moment we are just looking for interested individuals. The small number of committee members work hard to cover a lot of ground, but our group has over a hundred members who could help make a difference. If you are able to help support our group at events, please email events@tgam.org.uk Ella Waude



'Shades of Bonny and Clyde'

An old timer giving pleasure to the next generation of members?
Taken at the Classic Car Show

Refresher Drives

By Geoffrey Stoaate

As a driver who has never taken a test, because at the age of 17 it was wartime, I felt at the age of 80 I ought to do something about it. The Taunton Group of Advanced Motorists provided the answer.

It was all very simple. A telephone call set things in motion. I was allocated an Observer and after something like eight or ten sessions and an observed drive with another Observer, I was deemed fit to take the test, which thankfully I passed.

However, I thought that, in the long run, one drive was not sufficient, because at that age things can deteriorate rapidly. So after three or four years I had another (free) observed drive, with which my Observer was quite satisfied.

And now, in my ninetieth year it was time for another drive, which I have taken with our Chief Observer, Andrew Griffiths. We went on a circular route, taking in country roads, motorway and town streets, and to my relief Andrew said that I could be his chauffeur!

I really do think that elderly drivers would be well advised to follow this practice, for their own peace of mind and the protection of others.



What is NHS Continuing Healthcare Funding and who is eligible for funding?

by Barry Keenan

I know this is completely unrelated to cars and motoring, but equally well I thought that as some of us may have relatives who are in need of constant nursing care and attention, an article on NHS Continuing Healthcare Funding may prove useful.

However, let me make it abundantly clear that this is not an academic thesis nor am I an expert in the field. I simply have both a professional and personal interest in the subject and have had quite a few frustrating dealings with various funding bodies of my own.

It's well documented that we live in an aging population and it's equally well known that the costs of residential and nursing care often require people to sell their homes and surrender assets in order to pay for the costs of that care.

NHS Continuing Healthcare Funding (Continuing Care) is an overall package of care

that is arranged and funded solely by the NHS. It is designed to assist those people who are not in hospital (or are about to be discharged) and who have ongoing, complex medical problems resulting from disability, accident or illness. They must have mostly health-care, as opposed to mostly social-care, needs requiring the help of a nurse, rather than the help of a carer.

What that means is that if you need a lot of nursing support, The NHS can arrange and fund that care for you. If you qualify, (and it's a big if) you could be funded for care in say,

- your own home for services such as a community nurse or specialist therapist or personal care. (Bathing, dressing, laundry etc.)
- in a care home or hospice. (As well as paying for your healthcare and personal care, the NHS will pay for your care home fees, including board and accommodation).





Who is eligible?

To be eligible you must be over 18 with a complex medical condition and substantial and ongoing care needs. This means that your primary need for care must be related to your health.

The NHS Choices website (1) rough guide defines 'eligible' as those health needs which may include, but are not limited to:

- Complex medical conditions that need additional care and support
- Long-term medical conditions
- Physical or mental disabilities
- Terminal illnesses
- Rapidly deteriorating health
- Mobility problems
- Behavioural or cognitive disorders

How do I Claim?

Making the claim is easy enough, all you have to do is to ask your GP or social worker to arrange an assessment. But even at this early stage you should be aware that most people, even those with complex long term care needs won't qualify. The process is complicated and has many grey areas, this is compounded by

different CCG's having different budgets, eligibility criteria and even different interpretations of the rules.

By now you will have realized that just because you have a chronic disability, been diagnosed with a specific health condition or have a chronic debilitating illness, doesn't necessarily mean that you'll be eligible. Clearly the provision of Continuing Care funding is a real issue. Indeed the All Party Parliamentary Group on Parkinson's report "Failing to Care : NHS continuing care in England" (2) was highly critical of the NHS's approach to funding, noting that "The process is intimidating, humiliating, unfriendly, exhausting, degrading, aggressive, frustrating and also it is adversarial". Even the Health Service Ombudsman noted that "Only a minority of people are successful in claiming NHS funding for their continuing care needs... it is clear that most people's care needs are not being met by NHS continuing care funding."

You could be forgiven for thinking that the whole policy has been designed so that your claim will fail. After all, the process is clearly difficult and for the claimant is riddled with confusion and uncertainty. However, a successful outcome could be worth





thousands of pounds each year, so it really is worth persevering. Of course, you'll need to have deep reserves of strength and stamina together with the patience of a saint as you take the refusals and setbacks in your stride. But eventually it could pay dividends. Literally.

So, even though it's a complicated process not generally considered to be fit for purpose it's all we have and to help make sense of it you may find it useful to read the WHICH? booklet 'Challenging local authority and NHS Assessments' (3).

NHS guidance encourages you to believe that you can either go through the process on your own or you can seek help from the local CCG, but with the words of the All Party Parliamentary Group still fresh in mind, I'd suggest engaging a solicitor versed in the complexities of the Continuing Care system who will be able to guide you through the red-tape and confusion hopefully to a successful outcome. Yes, it might cost a bit up front, but in the long run it could save you an absolute fortune and years of frustration. Also, in the event that you're not successful, your solicitor may be able to advise you on how you can protect your assets for the future.

If your health (or that of your loved one) is deteriorating rapidly, you are entitled to ask for a fast track assessment to bypass the initial screening. If you pass this assessment (by an appropriate clinician) the CCG will arrange for care to be provided as quickly as possible.

The Assessment.

Step 1 – The initial screening: is used to assess whether a full assessment is necessary. It is usually carried out either in hospital or at home. The assessor, either a healthcare professional or social worker, will assess your general health and care needs using a simple checklist covering a range of factors.

The Checklist does not indicate whether the individual is eligible for NHS Continuing Care, only whether they require full assessment of eligibility.

Step 2 – The assessment: if the initial screening shows that you may be eligible for NHS Continuing Care, you'll need to have a more thorough assessment. This will be carried by two or more health and social-care professionals who will use the same checklist headings as before but will go into a lot more detail, marking your care needs from low to severe.





At this point the assessing team makes a recommendation to the CCG as to whether you are eligible for Continuing care funding or not.

And if you don't agree with the findings?

Ask the CCG for a review. If their decision was based on an initial screening only, ask for a full assessment. You should be given an opportunity to contribute to the review and to see all the evidence that was taken into account. Your solicitor is really well placed to review the evidence, especially if you have to go to appeal. You may also be able to appeal if you've already been paying for care-home fees and think you should have received NHS funding. To do this, speak to your social worker or health practitioner, and ask for a retrospective assessment.

What if you don't qualify?

Circumstances change, so make sure you have your situation regularly reviewed. (Ask your GP). Remember that engaging a specialist solicitor can really help your case and your sanity. And at the end of the day, even if you don't qualify for NHS support, you may still be eligible for local authority funding to meet some of your care needs.

References:

1. NHS Choices website. What is NHS Continuing Care? Available at <http://www.nhs.uk/chq/Pages/2392.aspx?CategoryID=68>

(Accessed on 03 November 2014)

2. The All Party Parliamentary Group on Parkinson's report Failing to Care : NHS Continuing Care in England (2013). Available at http://www.parkinsons.org.uk/sites/default/files/failingtocare_appgfullreport.pdf

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3. WHICH? (2014) Elderly Care. Challenging local authority and NHS Assessments. Available at <http://www.which.co.uk/elderly-care/your-relatives-needs/challenging-local-authority-and-nhs-assessments>

(Accessed 03 November 2014)

Barry Keenan

TGAM

05.11.2014





Thank You

I would like to openly thank my two observers, Mr Guy Denton and Mr Hugh Todd for all the time and knowledge so generously given to enable me to pass my test. Thank You Sirs, and indeed all those who give their time so generously to better others. I really am very grateful for the experience my 'skill for life' has given me; it has made me a safer, efficient and dare I say smarter driver. Not only have I improved my driving, I enjoy it more too, which when you drive for a living is a definite bonus! Even at the end of my test, the feedback from the examiner provided good useful information to take away and be better yet. So I'm off onto the highways and byways... to continue my journey! My thanks again to Guy and Hugh.

Safe Happy Driving to All,

Yours,

David Crowhurst

December Members' Evening

A CHRISTMAS QUIZ

This will be a light hearted individual quiz with a mixture of general knowledge, Christmas and motoring related questions.

Come and have an entertaining evening and support your Group.

Wednesday, 17th December

at 7:30 pm

at Hatch Beauchamp Village Hall



Thornfalcon Annual Classic Car Meet

By John Gilbert



A view of the site, with the Morgan Sports Car Club section in the foreground and the attractive rolling Somerset countryside beyond.





The Thornfalcon Classic Car Meet was held at Parklands in Henlade on 31st August in beautiful, warm and sunny weather. The Meet is organized by Thornfalcon Classics which specialises in selling classic vehicles. The annual Meet regularly attracts over 1,000 classic vehicles.

I had never been so, as the Wessex Morgan Car Club had a reserved section in the car club display area, I decided to drive my Plus 4 to the event. In many ways this is the perfect Classic Car event. There is no entry fee either for exhibitors or for the general public. Exhibiting vehicles can arrive when they like and leave when they like. It was easy to both get into the show field and to leave aided by the very efficient Thornfalcon marshals who skilfully guided vehicles on arrival either to the individual show car area, the car club show area or to the general public parking area.

The show field itself is situated in rolling fields with attractive views over the Somerset countryside. The field was dotted with trees which provided welcome shade from the sun. Also on site were a number of vendors selling various types of food and some very clean and spacious toilets.

On my way to the show, travelling from Bridgwater to Taunton, surprisingly I saw only one other classic vehicle heading for the show, a Lancia Fulvia which easily overtook me (of course, I was driving at 70 mph) on the M5. However dropping down to the A358 roundabout there were two American cars, a Pontiac Firebird and a Chevrolet Corvette obviously heading for the show.

While on the subject of American cars I was very pleased to see a 1969 Ford Mustang on the show field. It reminded me of my own '69 Mustang which I drove in Montreal although mine was not as hot as the one on display.



1969 Ford Mustang





When I attend classic car shows I'm always on the lookout for my favourite vehicles, namely the Bugatti T.35, the D-Type Jag, the 1963 Corvette Stingray hardtop and the AC Cobra. Of the above only AC Cobras were in attendance, and plenty of them too, but I am sure that many of them were replicas. My fascination for these cars is not just for their aesthetics and engines but also because, as a child, they were my local car manufacturers, their plant being at Thames Ditton, just three miles from where I grew up.



A line up of Cobras

I was disappointed not to see any Bugattis or D-Type Jaguars but there was a C-Type Jaguar on display although I am sure it was a replica.



Jaguar C Type

Another very pretty car that is numbered among my favourites is the BMW 328. The BMW 328 was manufactured in Germany between 1936 and 1940 but was also imported and assembled by AFN Limited (Archibald Frazer Nash) in Britain. It was powered by a 1971cc straight six engine. A BMW 328 won the truncated Mille Miglia in 1940 at a speed of 103.5 mph. The car on display was a 1936 Frazer Nash-BMW 328 which is very active appearing at various car shows, rallies and hill climbs in the area.





1936 Frazer Nash-BMW 328

In one area of the show field Thornfalcon had a number of cars up for sale. One of the most interesting was a Hotchkiss Anjou 1350. This car was manufactured in 1951 and sold to an army officer who left the car in a barn. It was rediscovered in 1981 by a dealer/enthusiast and over the next few years it was restored to its former glory. The engine was rebuilt and the bodywork repainted during this time and the seats reupholstered in the correct material. The rest of the interior was original and in excellent condition. This example was fitted with the manual four speed gearbox, not the Cotal electric box, and was equipped with right hand drive. The asking price was £17,750.

The most expensive car, at an asking price of £52,500, was a 1931 Alvis 12/60 Beetle Back. This was the Alvis Car Bodies 'Demonstrator' in 1931. It competed in the Land's End Trial of 1932. The engine has been completely rebuilt with remote filter and high capacity oil pump, new main bearings, rebored, a new radiator, and rolling road tuned. It has had bronze body SUs and coil ignition fitted, double duck weather equipment and folding windscreen. It is finished in black coach paint with red wings which were the colours when it left the coachworks in 1931. Extras include a 100 mph speedometer, a French fuel gauge and knock-on Rudge Whitworth wire wheels.



1951 Hotchkiss Anjou 1530 with a 1954 Citroen Traction 11BL to its left.





1931 Alvis 12/60 Beetle Back

And now for the prize picture quiz. I was interested to see that a number of the show cars were displaying IAM badges. But what types of classic cars do IAM members drive? On the right are shown four photos. Try to identify them and jot your answers down (make plus model) on a piece of paper and bring it to the next (November) Members' Meeting and hand it to me. There will be a prize for the winner, but only if all four answers are correct. In the event of a tie, as a tie breaker, the correct model year will result in bonus points.



1



2



3



4

Prize Quiz





UK Still a Nation of Lane Hoggers

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DRIVERS in the UK are still hogging the middle lane and the M25 is the worst road for this poor driving habit. One in six British drivers admits to hogging the middle lane on the motorway and drivers over the age of 65 are the most likely to do so.

Five of the top ten stretches of road for middle lane hoggers were on the M25 that orbits London, making it the worst road in the UK for this driving behaviour. The other five roads in the top ten are also to be found in the south-east of England on sections of the M1 and M4. The worst piece of road overall for middle lane hoggers is the stretch between junctions 5 and 6 westbound on the M4 near Slough, where the middle lane is hogged for 27% of the time.

Data from the Highways Agency shows this problem has not gone away despite new legislation that allows the police to fine

drivers for not keeping to the left unless overtaking. Research by Direct Line shows 78% of drivers know they should not hog the middle lane and keep to the left when the road ahead is clear. However, more than half (52%) were unaware this is now a driving offence. Drivers aged 65 and above are the most likely to hog the middle lane, with 59% admitting to it compared to 41% of 18 - 40 year olds.

Rob Miles, director of Motor at Direct Line commented: 'Lane hogging causes congestion, reduces the capacity of the roads and most crucially, can be dangerous. It is also illegal which means drivers could face a £100 on-the-spot fine and three points on their license if caught. Motorists are risking their own safety and the safety of other road users through their actions. If the inside lane has space you should move into it.'





I do survey some interesting road safety incidents at times!

by Kevin Grose

Tree Lorry

The traffic grinds to a halt and the Bristol based rigid 2 axle lorry leaves an unusually large gap from the car in front of it, which is why I start to look a bit closer at this particular lorry. As I casually observe the lorry, I notice there is a huge piece of tree on the roof. Where the tree has been snapped or broken off, the trunk is about a foot in diameter and the whole branch is about the length of a very large car. The lorry is about to go under the Taunton Station main railway bridge. I point out what I have seen to my work colleague. "Oh my god" she says "YOU must do something as that could hurt someone if it fell off" (notice the "YOU must do something" bit) "OK, don't panic" and I move towards the lorry. The traffic is fully stationary and nothing is moving at all. I am highly "vised" up in my company supplied Motorway Class 3 hi-vis jacket. Normally we are advised not to get involved in any incidents, occurrences or events that take place during any surveys – we are to remain neutral but this really is a matter of great urgency.

I approach the lorry slowly but before I get my foot onto the cab side step, the passenger window is already sliding down. I grab the mirror support bracket and haul myself up to converse with the driver – a very happy and nice guy, who informs me "Yeah, I already know – I've got a little bit of tree on the roof" I said "It's more than just a little bit of tree – if it fell off, it could do some serious damage" "It's alright" he says "I'm gonna knock it off under this bridge..." "You're going to make quite a mess" I said. "It's ok, the bloke in the van behind me knows all about it" he says. So I jump down happily aware that at least he knows and the bloke in the van behind him knows all about it!

As my colleague and I are standing very near to the bridge, I advise her to move away until our friend in the lorry has tried to remove "his" tree. He gingerly approaches the bridge and immediately clobbers the "LOW BRIDGE HEIGHT" signs; at least proving that they do actually work! The tree stays put and the signs spring back into place. The driver then





approaches the girder steel section of the bridge but the tree still stays put – driver stops, jumps out of his cab and looks behind the lorry; he shrugs his shoulders, laughs, gets into his cab and just drives off with this huge branch of a tree firmly wedged onto or into the roof of his lorry. The bloke in the van behind him (who knows all about it) beeps his horn at me, puts his thumbs up, laughs, shouts something inaudible at me and drives off behind the lorry.

Well, I did do my best for the general public at large and I did monitor the local radio to see if there were any reports of a mysterious big branch of a tree that magically and suddenly appeared in the centre of Taunton or worse still, it had fallen off onto a car, cyclist or a pedestrian. I just hope the driver didn't spend the rest of the day looking for low bridges just to knock off his tree! You couldn't make this stuff up and it was genuinely witnessed by me and my work colleague. Last words – I suppose you could say this Bristol based company were certainly branching out in our area before anyone twigged what was going on... I think I'll leave it there...

Kevin Grose (it's all alright because the bloke in the van behind me knows all about it)

Idiot Cyclist

It's very early in the morning. It's cloudy, grey and chillingly cold. I'm just down from the centre of Taunton on a vital link road carrying out yet another DfT traffic survey. About 10 metres away, there's a youngish looking chap talking to himself. He appears to be holding a full blown conversation with someone - there appears to be two voices I can hear but there is no one else around so he really is talking to himself. He's also got a bottle of beer in his hand and it's only seven o'clock in the morning. The voices combined tempo now rise and start swearing at one another in between the small swigs of beer casually being undertaken. Again, no one else is around. Maybe he's on the phone – a discreet mobile held to his ear so it appears he is on his own. No, he is on his own and there is NO mobile. The beer is still being drunk slowly and soon the bottle is empty.

The swearing becomes more intrusive and more abusive. Suddenly, he's produces a smallish bicycle from somewhere, gets on it and pedals towards yours truly and my colleagues. He's shouting and swearing like





mad – this looks like trouble coming, but no – he swerves past us and disappears down the pavement, still swearing and cussing like a lunatic. All's quiet now apart from the slowly moving traffic. We all feel a bit sad for this character who obviously appears to have some mental health problems which are again, obviously not being helped by the ingress of bottles of beer at this early time of the morning. A few minutes later, he's back again but talking quietly this time and he has another bottle of beer in his hand. He then lets/throws his small bike into the corporation flower garden and crashes out on the park type bench there present – the same park type bench WE were going to sit out on to carry out this survey – I can't think why we didn't! Minutes later, he's up again; takes a few swigs of beer; starts swearing and shouting again with his imaginary friend; retrieves his bike from the flower bed; jumps on it and heads straight towards us. Again, he swerves at the last minute and disappears down the pavement narrowly missing a few early birds on their way to work. This sequence of events continues to happen time and time again

throughout most of the day. So what has this got anything to do with road safety, you may ask?

Easy – every time he disappeared off down the pavement and without any thought what so ever for any one else, he just rode straight off the pavement and out into the oncoming traffic – how he didn't cause an accident or incident I'll never know but it would appear he definitely had a death wish. He was only "saved" by the observations and quick reactions of all the various drivers travelling along that road during the whole day. Also present, were a set of pedestrian controlled traffic lights at an official crossing which our friend seemed to think you could cross at any time, which he did many times during the day regardless of whether the lights were on red or not. I was very surprised that more drivers didn't blast their horns or shout abuse at this idiot – maybe the locals around here knew of him and made allowances but what if there's a stranger in town and not aware of him – it's a tragic and maybe fatal incident that is just waiting to happen. You may think this





scenario was only taking place in this one particular place but it wasn't – on two further surveys near and around the town centre, our friend appeared on both days carrying out the same antics and actions.

He obviously has a great many personal issues which have and will continue to cause hassle and stress to many other completely innocent individuals over a massive amount of time, but is there really a simple answer to solve all this? Maybe you could take his bike away. I'm sure he'll "acquire" another one quite quickly; could you stop him drinking bottles of beer all day – it's a free world here in the UK and who's going to tell him? Could he get professional help – I know you shouldn't go by appearances alone but I personally believe he appeared to be beyond help – he appeared to be a complete lost cause to society. Maybe his way out was to dart in and out of the traffic all day, because one day it certainly will be his last trip, ever, to anywhere; except in an ambulance or maybe to the morgue. The main reason I raise this issue is because this one person, for whatever his own

personal reasons, is daily putting hundreds of daily motorists at a huge unnecessary risk for no real apparent reason – is that fair, I ask you?

Something to think about and savour for a while and in the meantime, please be very vigilant for this wayward and completely unpredictable "cyclist" who appears to frequent certain parts of Taunton town – there will be a tragic end to this story and I hope it doesn't involve a responsible motorist.

Blind Drivers

Do we really have some blind drivers amongst us all out there? I'm stood at the entrance to a local railway station carrying out yet another DfT 12 hour road traffic survey. This station has a one way system in place. All drivers enter from the main road but **MUST** exit by going past the station entrance and use an exit route which takes them around the back of a car park to another arterial road: That's **ALL** drivers except buses and taxis which can work in a slightly different way.





The bus drivers never enter this complex by the normal one way system as they only enter from the road from around the back of the car park (the normal exit route). This works fine as they drop off and collect all passengers correctly on the right side of the road right outside the station itself – safe, efficient and effective.

The taxis drivers can enter by both routes – the normal entry road and the normal exit route. They deposit their clients right outside or just to the side of the station. They either drive a short distance to turn around or just turn in the road right outside the station and exit by their “own” exit road – which the buses can use as well. It all sort of works even with some taxis taking a slight risk by “dumping” their passengers right in the entrance road very close to the main road – but on the day, no one was actually subjected to any hassle or further stress in completing their duties whilst at the station.

The normal non-commercial drivers deposit their cargo much in the same manner.

Sometimes there’s a bit of confusion but once the road system is observed and worked out, they all exit by the normal correct exit route.

Then there’s the blind drivers. They just arrive, stop suddenly and block the entrance road. Their passengers open all the doors and the boot / rear door and leave them all open. This restricts all others movements considerably. The actual driver never leaves his driver’s seat. The passengers continue to dump all their belongings all over the place – sometimes in the road, then there are kisses and cuddles and very long goodbyes all undertaken without any due consideration for any others whatsoever – they are all completely oblivious to all the mayhem they are causing to all others in and around this fairly busy railway station. Finally, all the doors do get shut by someone and then the blind driver mode takes over as he has to make an agonising decision – should he drive about 150 metres and leave by the correct exit route, or... no way, when you can execute a 7 point turn in the main entrance road, ignoring everything around you and leave by taking an unauthorised and illegal exit route which is very highly sign posted and road





painted to guide you – or is that to deter you! This is where they all go blind – the signs inform you that it is ONE WAY ONLY, BUSES and TAXIS ONLY, NO ENTRY and this is the best bit NO RIGHT TURN.

Everything is very highly visible to all who can see and I do mean everybody. Of course, all this legally required guidance is nothing to do with them at all - it's only for other people – you know them, those that obey the law whatever that may mean – genuine law abiding citizens! The best bits though are the drivers who actually stop, look at and read all the signs and road markings and then just ignore them all and carry on as normal. They even look at us dressed in our highly visible jackets, look at all the signage again, look back at us and then just drive off ignoring all instruction whatsoever.

Are they totally blind? Can they not see the signs? Can they not see the road markings? However, it was not only the drivers who ignored the signs, etc., many cyclists on the day completely disregarded all instruction, signs, markings and common sense by riding recklessly all over the place – on the pavements,

the entrance road, the main road and at some considerable speed at times – even on the wrong sides of the road many times. This sort of behaviour extends the bad reputation sometimes given to all cyclists which is completely and utterly unfair – a few make it so bad for all others.

A railway station in any town is normally a fairly busy place – there are many cars, taxis, buses and people everywhere – and needs to be treated with respect especially by the blind drivers! I just wonder if they saw a NO ENTRY sign, they would ignore it and just drive off down the road the wrong way? It is worrying to witness dozens of seemingly intelligent drivers continue to ignore what is there to help them to remain safe and then they go and do something completely and utterly stupid by putting themselves and many others in unnecessary danger. We even had one driver exit by the entrance road on the wrong side of the road despite our efforts to indicate his mistake – unbelievable.

So be careful out there – never take anything for granted and always expect the unexpected, because it will happen to you one day. Safe driving.

Kevin Grose (who never drives blind...)





Recent Releases from the IAM Press Office

Give Sneezy Street the Cold Shoulder

The IAM is asking riders and drivers to think about the challenges faced on the road particularly if they're unwell. With more than 200 common cold viruses and three types of flu viruses, most of us will have a cold this winter. Yet many motorists will try and ignore the symptoms and get behind the wheel when it is unsafe to do so.

Decision time

If you start feeling unwell you need to decide whether you should carry on or stay indoors and rest until the symptoms subside. If you do decide to carry on with a heavy cold or flu, be aware that your riding and driving can be severely affected. Not only will your concentration drop by more than 50 per cent, but your reaction time slows down – forcing you to brake more frequently and suddenly.

Don't dose off

Symptoms, such as sneezing, runny eyes, fever

and tiredness, individually or combined, are likely to affect your ability to ride and drive safely. While over-the-counter medicines may control a runny nose and sneezing they tend to contain codeine, which can blur your vision and make you feel extremely tired and drowsy. If the label or the leaflet reads, 'may cause drowsiness' you should assume it will and therefore avoid travelling. Check with your GP about prescription drugs for more information about the side-effects.

It's contagious

Germes are easily spread from not keeping good hygiene practices. If you're carrying passengers on your motorcycle or in your car while you're ill, the likelihood is you're going to pass on the cold or flu to them. Making matters worse, some of these passengers may also be motorists who will ride and drive when they're unwell. The more unwell motorists there are on the road, the more dangerous riding and driving will become.





The consequences

Riding or driving when you're too tired to stay awake or when your ability is impaired will have serious implications. For example, as drivers can travel up to 50ft with their eyes closed during a sneeze, they can either temporarily lose control of their car or be involved in a serious accident; where you not only risk your own life but the lives of other road users. This is why it's important to think about whether you need to ride or drive at all when suffering from a cold or flu. If you are stopped by the police after taking a cold remedy or driving when unfit to do so you could find yourself charged, disqualified or serving a lengthy prison sentence.

Route to recovery

Winter driving is stressful enough so you should not add to the stress and compromise yours and others' safety when you are ill. Assess carefully if you are fit to ride or drive, but if you are not then take plenty of rest away from the road – the ideal route to recovery.

Advanced Test Review

The IAM has started a review of the advanced driving and riding tests as part of the permanently ongoing process of keeping up-to-date and relevant to a changing world.

Mark Lewis said: "We have a great product in the advanced test, it is well respected and highly regarded in the UK and across other parts of the world. We want to ensure it remains a standard others are judged by.

"We invited a group of our members and examiners to attend a series of workshops to review the content of the car and motorcycle tests, and have gathered a large amount of information that we are now working through."

He added: "We had a very productive workshop with an enthusiastic group of volunteers who made some very interesting and valid suggestions about how the advanced test could be improved. We are very grateful to everyone who took the time out from their day jobs to attend for three days. We are looking forward to consulting about it more widely as we progress work on it all."

Peter Rodger, Chief Examiner

Mark Lewis, Director of Standards





English and Welsh want Scottish drink-drive laws

A recent survey by the Institute of Advanced Motorists has found more than two-thirds (68 per cent) of those who completed the survey would like the Scottish drink-drive limit introduced across England and Wales.

A total of 2,632 people took part in the survey throughout October 2014.

Under the new proposal, the Scottish government will lower the legal drink-drive limit to 50mg of alcohol in 100ml of blood before Christmas – to reduce the number of drink-related accidents and deaths on Scotland's roads.

Over 83 per cent of IAM's survey respondents confirmed that they drink alcohol and over 47 per cent have agreed lowering the limit from

80mg to 50mg of alcohol in 100ml of blood will reduce the number of accidents taking place across UK roads.

IAM's director of policy and research, Neil Greig said: "England and Wales are now totally out of step with drink-drive limits across the rest of Europe. Existing research has shown that between 63 and 116 lives can be saved every year by a lower limit. Different limits are also a recipe for confusion and the IAM would urge the Westminster government to review its approach as a matter of urgency."

The poll further revealed that over 53 per cent would prefer more thorough police checks to target drink-drivers, while only five per cent would support an increase in alcohol prices to tackle the problem.





23,295 overseas drivers escape speeding offences

Leading road safety charity, the Institute of Advanced Motorists (IAM) has revealed that overseas drivers have escaped 23,295 speeding offences since January 2013 – the equivalent of £2.3 million worth of speeding tickets. The figures were revealed following a freedom of information request to police authorities, which asked how many overseas motorists had been caught by speed cameras across England and Wales. As foreign vehicles are not registered with the DVLA these speeding offences are not pursued.

The highest number of overseas speeding offences were:

- Thames Valley, with a reported 3,580 offences and the highest speed recording of 102mph in a 70mph zone
- Merseyside, with a reported 2,477 offences and the highest speed recording of 87mph in a 70mph zone
- Warwickshire, with a reported 2,152 offences – no highest speed recorded
- Gwent, with a reported 2,090 offences and the highest speed recording of 99mph in a 70mph zone
- Kent, with a reported 1,954 offences and the highest speed recording of 111mph in a 70mph zone

The Metropolitan Police that covers 32 London boroughs followed in at sixth position with a recorded number of 1,586 offences taking place across the Greater London area, with a high speed recording of 98mph on the A406 North Circular Road, southbound – a 50mph zone.

The top recorded speeds came in from:

- Kent on the M25 with the highest speed of 111mph in a 70mph zone
- Surrey on the A3 Hook Road with the highest speed of 109mph in a 50mph zone
- Thames Valley, leading to Aston Clinton with the highest speed of 102mph in a 70mph zone
- Hampshire with the highest speed of 100mph on the A31 in a 70mph zone
- Gwent with the highest speed of 99mph also in a 70mph zone

IAM's director of policy and research, Neil Greig said: "The high numbers of overseas speeders on our roads show how important it is that the UK joins up with the rest of Europe to harmonise motoring offences and give the police extra powers to pursue dangerous drivers. Progress on this issue has been very slow and in the meantime thousands of drivers are avoiding fines and bans simply because their cars cannot be easily traced."





IAM Response to Reported Road Casualties Great Britain 2013 Annual Report

The Reported Road Casualties Great Britain 2013 (RRCGB) Annual Report released today showing a decrease in road deaths by 2 per cent compared with 2012. This is the lowest figure since national records began in 1926.

- In 2013, 1,713 people were killed in road accidents.
- In 2013, the number of people seriously injured decreased by 6 per cent to 21,657 compared to 2012
- The total number of casualties in road accidents reported to the police in 2013 was 183,670, down 6 per cent from 2012 total
- Pedal cyclists' deaths decreased by 8 per cent to 109 in 2013, compared to 118 in 2012

IAM director of policy of research Neil Greig said: "We welcome the overall decrease in road deaths although the long term trends show improvements are slowing down."

However, there have been increases in the following areas:

- Fatalities on motorways increased by 14 per cent from 88 to 100
- Vans and LGVs fatalities increased by 12 per cent from 33 to 37

- Motorcycle fatalities on motorways increased by 250% from 4 to 14
- Child pedestrian fatalities increased by 30 per cent from 20 to 26
- Killed and serious injuries for all road users in deprived areas increased by 5%

Neil continued: "It's worrying that motorways have seen an increase in deaths, which is only partly explained by the increase in traffic on them – it is vital the government keeps a close eye on these figures as the Highway Agency rolls out its programme of wide-spread hard-shoulder running as opposed to proper motorway widening.

"The problem of death and serious injury among motorcycle riders remains and we want to see more use of training opportunities and partnerships to improve both skills and attitudes.

"Driver error was once again the top cause of crashes and the IAM believe that its courses can help reduce this figure but we need the partnership of the insurance industry and the government to help us deliver better drivers and riders."





89-year-old Former Racer's Porsche Pass

Former Yorkshire motocross champion, Philip Green has been praised for his outstanding driving performance after completing one of our IAM driving assessments in his Porsche 911.

Despite having over 50 years' experience in both driving and riding, the spirited 89-year-old undertook the IAM assessment to gain more confidence behind the wheel, in which an IAM approved assessor evaluated his driving performance. While the assessment is designed to give older drivers a trusted second opinion, Philip urged other drivers to take an IAM driving assessment to gain a sense of self-satisfaction.

Assessed across a variety of roads and dual-carriageways IAM examiner, Ross Williams said: "Philip's hazard perception skills are highly commendable. He handled the vehicle

very well and demonstrated the ability to make all adjustments in speed smoothly and steadily".

Having owned more than 10 performance cars over the last 30 years, Philip added: "There's a real misconception that not everyone can drive a Porsche, but they're not at all fiery or fast – unless you want them to be. I drive my Porsche every day and it is a safe vehicle".

IAM director of policy and research Neil Greig said: "We understand the need for mobility and independence at all ages – and how much people want or need to drive. Philip Green is a fine example of what older drivers can do if they don't give up too early. That's why we've developed a number of driving assessments, including a Mature Driver's Assessment – so that the likes of Philip can happily continue driving his Porsche for many more years".





Don't have a 'taxing' time over vehicle tax changes, says the IAM

With the abolition of the vehicle tax disc taking effect from 1 October and a flurry of confused people asking about the situation through social media, leading road safety charity the Institute of Advanced Motorists has taken the opportunity to clarify the rules.

Basically you will still need to buy vehicle tax to keep any vehicle on the road. You will still receive a reminder from the DVLA, and you can continue paying using the previous methods. However now you will be able to pay by continuous direct debit – meaning there will never be a risk of forgetting to pay, and driving an untaxed car.

The direct debit will continue as long as there is a valid MOT for the vehicle.

You can apply online to tax your vehicle using the 16 digit reference code from your vehicle tax renewal reminder (V11) or 11 digit reference number from your log book (V5C).

One major change the new road tax rules has created is that vehicle tax can no longer be transferred with the vehicle if you sell it – often an added incentive when purchasing a vehicle. If after 1 October you sell a vehicle and have notified the DVLA, you will automatically receive a refund for any full months remaining on that vehicle tax.

You will now always have to buy new vehicle tax when you purchase a new or used vehicle.

As of 1 October, you will no longer be obliged to display a paper tax disc on your car – so you are free to remove and destroy it. However you might want to keep it as a souvenir, if you are feeling sentimental over the disappearance of an iconic part of UK motoring life!

Simon Best, IAM chief executive, said: “As with all new systems, it will take a little time to get used to. But the move to allow people to set up a direct debit will mean greater peace of mind for many, so your vehicle will never be untaxed.

“However, moving more of these processes online will make things very difficult for those without regular internet access – as ever, the poor and elderly could lose out.

“And it will be interesting to see if some people think that without a visible tax disc it will be easier simply not to buy one. We’ll see in time how effective this has been in catching those who avoid paying.”

For more information visit the website

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/vehicle-tax-changes>





Slippery wet weather

Whether you're on the school-run or commuting late back from work, there's every reason to be cautious behind the wheel this autumn.

Brake smart

The stopping distance in bad weather is at least double that required for driving on dry roads, but how many of us follow through with this is questionable. Braking harshly on slippery roads will inevitably cause a higher number of accidents. To prevent this, make sure you decelerate and brake smoothly in a straight line so your vehicle does not swerve out of control.

Motorcyclists must take care when driving on slippery wet surfaces too. With 70 per cent of the stopping power situated to the front of motorbikes riders depend on using their front brakes to stay in control. However, using a combination of both your front and back brakes will help you brake smoothly within a short distance.

The essentials

Don't rely on a sun visor to keep the sun rays out of your eyes. Sun rays act as a major distraction so keeping a pair of sunglasses in the glove-compartment would be useful. A pair of driver sunglasses decreases the risk of accidents that occur because of low sun.

Don't forget to keep a window scraper and de-icer in your car, because relying on your car heater is very time-consuming and damaging to your internal heating system. You can also save both time and energy by protecting your vehicle with a winter windscreen.

Car composition checks

Make sure you don't forget to remove excess leaves from your windscreen. Check the wiper blades regularly to see if they are in good working condition, but if they squeal then it's time to get a new pair.

Did you know if your car battery is more than three years old you may need a new one? You should check your battery's performance regularly and if it is above the three year age bracket you will need a new one. Don't forget to keep your battery clean and clear of spillages because this can lead to the battery overheating.

Take the time to check your headlight bulbs are working. You can do this by switching on your headlights to examine their brightness and strength. If you have dim power in one headlight make sure you get this replaced. You can keep spare bulbs in your car so you can replace them when necessary.





Speeding driver detected at 139mph on 60mph Scottish road

New figures obtained by leading road safety charity the Institute of Advanced Motorists (IAM) through a Freedom of Information request to Police Scotland have revealed the top 20 recorded speeding offences in Scotland for the past 15 months.

They show that of the top 20 recorded top speeds between 1 April 2013 and 30 June 2014 just one took place on a motorway – the rest were on A roads. The speeds were captured on either fixed or mobile speeding cameras and ranged between 114mph and 139mph.

The highest figure was a driver recorded at 139mph on a 60mph stretch of the A96 Keith to Huntly Road, one mile east of the B9115 Junction in Aberdeenshire on a mobile speed camera.

The remainder of the top three were recorded on 70mph limit roads; 129mph on the A90 Dundee to Aberdeen Road at Waterston Road, Angus caught on a fixed speed camera, and 127mph on the A9 Perth to Inverness Road at Moulinearn, Perth and Kinross on a mobile speed camera.

IAM chief executive Simon Best said: “These speeds show there are still drivers out there

displaying a contempt for the law and for the safety of their fellow road users.

“This is made doubly worse by the fact the vast majority of the incidents took place on A roads, therefore putting oncoming motorists, motorcyclists, cyclists and pedestrians at greater risk.”

The top 20 recorded top speeds are as follows:

Offence speed/speed limit/road

1. 139mph/60mph/A96 Keith to Huntly Road approximately one mile east of B9115 junction Aberdeenshire
2. 129mph/70mph/A90 Dundee to Aberdeen Road at Waterston Road Angus
3. 127mph/70mph/A9 Perth to Inverness Road at Moulinearn Perth and Kinross
4. 125mph/70mph/A92 Crossgates to Cowdenbeath
5. 122mph/70mph/A90 Dundee to Aberdeen Road near Mill of Forest Stonehaven Aberdeenshire
- 6= 121mph/70mph/A74(M) Glasgow - Carlisle Road southbound carriageway near to Greenhillstairs overbridge Beattock





- 6= 121mph/70mph/A74(M) Glasgow - Carlisle Road southbound carriageway near to Torwood overbridge junction 17 Lockerbie
- 6= 121mph/70mph/A90 Aberdeen to Dundee Road at Haughs of Finavon Farm Angus
- 9. 120mph/70mph/A9 Perth to Inverness Road at Moulinearn Perth and Kinross
- 10=119mph/70mph/M80 near to Barnego Road overbridge Dunipace
- 10=119mph/70mph/A74(M) Glasgow-Carlisle Road southbound carriageway near to Holms overbridge Beattock/ 12=. 118mph/70 mph/A1 Road Adniston East Lothian
- 12=118mph/70mph/A9 Perth to Inverness Road at Pitlochry A924 Perth and Kinross
- 12=118mph/70mph/A9 Perth to Stirling Road at Windyedge Farm Perth and Kinross
- 14. 117mph/70mph/A74(M) Glasgow-Carlisle Road southbound carriageway near to north overbridge junction 19 Ecclefechan
- 15. 116mph/70mph/A74(M) Glasgow - Carlisle Road southbound carriageway near to Torwood overbridge junction 17 Lockerbie
- 16=115mph/70mph/A74(M) Glasgow - Carlisle Road southbound carriageway near to

Whicketthorn overbridge Kirkpatrick Fleming

- 16=115mph/70mph/A1 Road Adniston East Lothian
- 16=115mph/60mph/A82(T) public road near White Corries Rannoch Moor Highland
- 19=114mph/70mph/A74(M) Glasgow-Carlisle Road southbound carriageway near to north overbridge junction 19 Ecclefechan
- 19=114mph/70mph/A1 Road Adniston East Lothian

By comparison the highest speed recorded on a road in England and Wales was 149mph, by a motorist on the M25 at Swanley between April 2013 and May 2014. This figure was revealed following Freedom of Information requests to 39 police authorities by the IAM and announced by the charity in May.

From that survey there were seven separate recorded instances of top speeds over 130mph recorded by a speed camera that exceeded the limit. They were:

Offence speed/speed limit/road/recorded by police force area

- 1. 149mph/70mph/M25 Swanley/recorded by Kent Police





2. 146mph/70mph/M25 Swanley/recorded by Kent Police
3. 135mph/no limit supplied/M62 (Westbound)/recorded by Merseyside Police
4. 133mph/no limit supplied/M62 (Westbound)/recorded by Merseyside Police
5. 133mph/70mph/A1 Barrowby Thorns/recorded by Lincolnshire Police
6. 130mph/70mph/A4146 Leighton Buzzard to Bletchley Road/recorded by Thames Valley Police
7. 130mph/70mph/A46 Sedgeberrow by-pass/recorded by West Mercia Police

In addition, there were a further 23 separate instances of speeds between 120 and 129mph captured on speed cameras by the following police areas: Avon and Somerset Police, Cheshire Constabulary, Dorset Police, Gloucestershire Constabulary (three times), Hampshire Constabulary, Kent Police (three times), Lincolnshire Constabulary, Norfolk Constabulary (twice), Northamptonshire Police, North Wales Police (twice), South Wales Police (twice), Suffolk Constabulary, Sussex Police, Thames Valley Police (three times).

Closing date for the Spring Edition of the TGAM e-Newsletter is 20th January. 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

