

e-NEWSLETTER



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



Number 137

Winter 2015



TAUNTON GROUP OF ADVANCED MOTORISTS

e-NEWSLETTER

Published Quarterly

Editor: David Walton

IAM Group No. 1005

Registered Charity No. 1062207

www.tgam.org.uk

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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 group officers BUT can be inspected at any suitable time provided just cause can be proven.

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Chairman's Corner



Chairman's Report – presented at AGM

By Andrew Griffiths

Good evening ladies and gentlemen and welcome to the Taunton Group of Advanced Motorists Annual General Meeting. We were to be joined this evening by our Regional Operations Manager Tom Docherty but unfortunately he isn't coming.

I'll try to keep my report to 3 hours and I'll wake you up when I've finished... but I'll be testing you on what I've said. We've had quite a busy 12 months spread across the board and I'd just like to mention some of the highlights.

As you are all aware, our raison d'être (you should be impressed as I failed French O level 4 times and was asked by my teacher not to go for a 5th attempt) is to





promote road safety in Somerset. We do this in two ways; first and foremost through delivering the IAM's Skill for Life programme and secondly through providing free assessment drives.

We've seen a steady influx of Associates and an increase in requests for free assessment drives. This has put increasing demands on our Observers throughout the past 12 months and they have risen to the challenge admirably. The quality of observing is superb and this continues to be reflected in the results being achieved by Associates coming through our doors. This year we have seen a number of Associates achieving F1RSTs; this accolade was introduced by IAM around 5 years ago in order to acknowledge Associates who scored extremely highly on their advanced driving test. We've had some near misses too (I'm not referring to collisions here but to those of you who just missed the F1RST). All that said, to every Associate who has passed the advanced driving test I'd say "be proud of your achievement, you earned it"... and of course you are now full members of the IAM and of TGAM. Well done to you all.

All IAM Groups now receive a monthly scorecard which contains lots of statistics and one statistic clearly shows the percentage of Skill for Life passes. The average percentage for Groups in the Southern Region (what is called "the Regional Average") is around 84%. You may like to know that the pass rate for TGAM is 96%. This is simply down to the hard work put in by our Observers in training Associates through to test standard. So I'd like us to give a round of applause to our Observers who give so readily of their time to deliver their expertise. I'm proud of you all!

I'm pleased that as of today we have a newly qualified Observer join the team. Barry Keenan has been working hard, training to be a Local Observer – a qualification which is accredited by the Institute of the Motor Industry. My congratulations to Barry and welcome aboard. And on this theme, one of our Observers – Isobel Jennings – has also been training for this qualification and I'm pleased to say that she too has been successful and she has the honour of becoming the Group's very first Local Observer, beating Barry to the post by a very narrow margin. In due course, all of our





Observers will be taking this qualification in line with IAM's strategy for professionalization.

This year, TGAM and Somerset Road Safety joined forces to provide young, newly qualified drivers with motorway experience. This is a new venture and it's free. The process is simple; young drivers firstly register for a 1hr classroom briefing on motorway driving and this is delivered by Rina and Steve at Somerset Road Safety in Taunton. Within 2 weeks of the classroom briefing, each driver is taken out on a 90 minute one-to-one observed motorway drive by a TGAM Observer. This is a great opportunity to reach out to young drivers and give them coaching which they may otherwise never get and which may lead to them avoiding putting themselves and others at risk because of inexperience. I hope we see more young drivers registering for this and if you know of someone in this high risk category who will benefit, contact SRS.

Moving on, we've had a number of events and members social evenings and while I'm not going to speak about them all, I'd like to

mention a few just briefly.

- One of our social evenings was spent on vehicle familiarisation; Andy Mayes organised this very entertaining and educational practical evening where we carried out POWDERY checks and cockpit drills in our own cars in the carpark area just outside the hall as well as carrying out some staged manoeuvres. It is something I think is worth repeating at a future social evening as we all had a great time... even the person – who shall remain nameless – who didn't know how to open the bonnet of her car!
- Our Classic Car and BBQ in July was a resounding success and we are seeing a bigger turn-out of classic cars year on year. This year we brought in an outside caterer which meant that ALL of us could enjoy the evening and not be confined to the kitchen for hours preparing food. We hope to continue this theme next year and Brian and I have already lined up catering for next year's event.





- Our presence at the annual steam rally at Norton Fitzwarren in August was a notable success, drawing in a number of new Associates over the two day event; the first signed up just a few minutes after the rally opened. The weather was perfect and the sun shone. This is a big event with a typical footfall of around 3,000. Our pitch looked very professional and was staffed over the two days by members and Associates alike; one of our Associates passed the advanced driving test with a F1RST on the Saturday morning of the event and then came to help on the Sunday only to suffer sunstroke! It would be indiscreet of me to mention names so I won't.
- The last memory is of our first aid evening from St John's Ambulance. Yes, first aid can be fun! All who attended I'm sure enjoyed a very informative evening and got lots of opportunity to work with dummies. Firstly we were treated to a live demonstration involving Faye putting Karen in the recovery position; Faye commented that Karen's Jeans were too tight which prevented her from emptying Karen's pockets. Then out came the dummies including a baby. As a newly qualified granddad, I was

keen to learn about dealing with a choking baby. I thought I was doing well until the instructor mentioned my rough handling when I plonked the baby on its front; she asked me for my daughter's phone number so she could warn her not to let me loose on my granddaughter.

So hopefully from this brief glimpse you will see that we've been a busy Group throughout the year. The Committee have had to respond to the departure of 4 of its members and so a demanding workload has been falling to a shrinking committee; this has been very impacting indeed. I personally have been covering a number of jobs/tasks in addition to my roles of Chairman and Chief Observer and I've found it very heavy going. TGAM and IAM work has taken up the majority of my time for many, many months and it is not sustainable. Regrettably I've had to put on-hold many of my key responsibilities IAM bestows on Chairpersons and Chief Observers (examples are Observer training, Quality Assurance checks, growth, development) so I and others on the Committee have been working hard just to stay still and unable to develop TGAM as we'd like.





Many of you will have heard me plead at social evenings and through the Newsletter for others to step forward to share some of the work but sad to say it has been to no avail. Therefore I've had to make the decision that unless the vacant committee posts are filled tonight, I will not be standing for re-election as your Chairman so that I can focus on the other tasks. We're all busy people I know, but the more committee members there are, the less the workload on any single individual.

And so at this point I'd like to thank all of those who have served on the TGAM Committee this year and to say to those remaining that I hope it will get easier after this evening.

And finally, I now have pleasure in presenting the Chairman's Award for 2015. This award is given to a Committee Member who in the Chairman's view has made an outstanding contribution to the Group. In 2014 I awarded it to our Treasurer Geoffrey Stoate for his sterling work in managing the Group's finances. This year, the award goes to our Secretary David Walton.

David isn't here tonight as he's taking a well earned holiday in the north. I wanted to tell you about our multi-talented Secretary.

- He is the official point of contact for TGAM;
- He is also our newsletter editor and what a fantastic job he does;
- He is our Group membership secretary;
- He manages our website and along with the Committee he will be exploring a dramatic change in 2016 which would result in an IAM-brand website for TGAM;
- He is our Committee minutes secretary;
- He sacrifices valuable Saturdays occasionally to attend formal IAM meetings such as Regional Liaison Forum and the forthcoming IAM Annual Conference;
- He's there at external events such as the Steam Rally, representing TGAM and IAM;
- When we come to social evenings, the hall is always unlocked, the lights are on, the chairs are almost always already set up along with





- any IT and media required. I guess not many of you know that it's David who does all of this;
- He does all of the above with no expectation of recognition or reward. Oh, and in his copious free time(!) he is a TGAM Group Observer.

So this is my opportunity to “publically” acknowledge him and show him much deserved appreciation on behalf of all of our members, for the significant time and effort he devotes to TGAM. I’ll be seeing David at the IAM Annual Conference on Saturday and so I’ll make the presentation there. Yes he is attending the conference on his way back from his holiday! WHAT DEVOTION!

Thank you all for listening. My 3 hours is up so unless there are any burning questions from the floor, this is where I stop and hand over to Brian Howe, our President.

November Members’ Evening

HAYNES INTERNATIONAL MOTOR MUSEUM



A talk by Mike Wotton

a TGAM committee member and observer

**Wednesday 18th November 7:30pm
Hatch Beauchamp Village Hall**

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/Membership Sec.	David Walton	secretary@tgam.org.uk
Treasurer	Geoffrey Stoate	treasurer@tgam.org.uk
Associate Coordinator	John Gilbert	coordinator@tgam.org.uk
Support Officer	Michael Wotton	cmmw@tgam.org.uk
SRS Liaison Officer	Grant Lewis	cmgl@tgam.org.uk
Events Coordinator	Hazel Snell	events@tgam.org.uk
Chief Observer/Masters Mentor	Andrew Griffiths	chair@tgam.org.uk
Newsletter Editor	David Walton	ed@tgam.org.uk
Webmaster	Paul Willitt	cmpw@tgam.org.uk
Committee Members	Brian Howe (President)	president@tgam.org.uk
	Janet Loader	cmjl@tgam.org.uk
	Barry Keenan	cmbk@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	Guy Denton
Group Observer	Brian Dodd
Group Observer	Tony Hucker (paused)
Local Observer	Barry Keenan
Local Observer	Isobel Jennings
Group Observer	Alan Thomson
Group Observer	Hugh Todd
Group Observer	David Walton
Group Observer	Timothy Wheeler
Group Observer	Michael Wotton
Trainee Observer	Grant Lewis

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 Chief Observer, Andrew Griffiths.

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.)



CALENDAR



			NOVEMBER
18	W	7:30 pm	Members' Evening – Haynes International Motor Museum, a talk by Mike Wotton, one of our observers
			DECEMBER
5	Sa	12 for 12:30	Christmas Luncheon – Oake Manor Golf Club
16	W	7:30 pm	Members' Evening – Christmas Quiz
			JANUARY
			No Members' Evening in January
			FEBRUARY
17	W	7:30pm	Members' Evening – Speaker TBA



MEMBERS' PAGE



TGAM finished its year with 136 fully paid up members, of whom 15 are active associates and 14 qualified observers. 52 members have not yet renewed their membership! In the last 12 months the group's members have achieved 20 test passes, seven of them at First level, and one failure. This means that we have 95% pass rate compared to 84% nationally, so well done associates and their observers who helped them achieve such fantastic results.

Advanced Driving Test Passes

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

OBSERVED BY	
Les Gibbs	Alan Thompson
Gavin Strathie (F1rst)	Godfrey Davey
Julia Beer (F1rst)	Andrew Griffiths
Steven Lewis	Isobel Jennings
Marie Kynaston (F1rst)	Hugh Todd
Fiona Attwood (F1rst)	Barry Keenan

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 six new group members. 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>
Edward Parks	Minehead	Associate
Owen Snowball	Yeovil	Associate
Rhys Llewellyn-Eaton	Taunton	Associate
Peter Allfrey	Taunton	Associate
Alan Webber	Yeovil	Full
Richard Board	Street	Associate

David Walton, Membership Secretary



PRESIDENT'S PONDERINGS

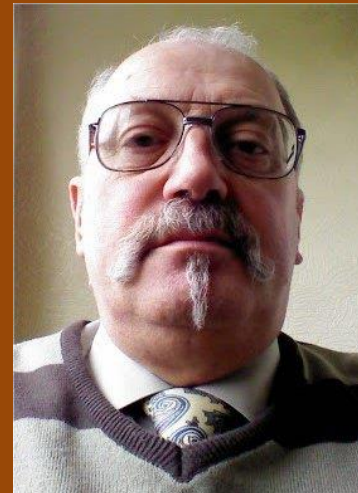


President's Report – presented at AGM by Brian Howe

PETs

Recent events at home have brought me to a conclusion that, at the back of my mind, I have known for years.

A 2ft high support wall in my garden has been in an increasingly poor and unsafe condition for several years, gradually leaning more and more. In January my landlords agreed that it needed replacing. A local gardener/handyman approached to give a price. He looked at the job a couple of weeks later and eventually gave his estimate in April. He was given the go ahead. Spring past by in a blur, closely followed by summer, but despite frequent reminders he still hadn't turned up by early



September. The landlords gave up on him and commissioned a builder to do the work. The job was surveyed and priced within 2 weeks and authority given 2 weeks later. Julian of Legacy Property Services turned up last Wednesday (14th October), and the job was expertly completed in 4 days by expert builders.

You have to have the right PEOPLE for the job in hand.





Monday, (19th October), I decided to grind the rust from my driveway gates that have been leant against the shed for at least 13 years. (They weren't in situ when we moved in). Tuesday morning, whilst volunteering at Work-Wise Taunton, I was driven to Musgrove A&E experiencing an extremely uncomfortable eye complaint. After nearly 20 minutes with an eye doctor, 3 particles of swarf or dust were extracted from my left eye. I am now applying cream 4 times a day for 5 days to prevent an infection. I am now the proud owner of a brand new pair of anti-fog wrap around safety goggles.

You have to have the right EQUIPMENT for the job in hand.

Last week I also had the sad task of burying my next door neighbour's cat, which passed away peacefully in its own garden at the grand old age of 24 years. The soil under the small tree in their front garden was so hard I couldn't

dig properly with my spade. In my shed I have a 4ft steel spike/pry-bar. This was used to great effect to break up the soil to remove it from the hole. Job done, and a small stone laid on top to prevent unwanted predator attention.

You have to have the right TOOLS for the job in hand.

Our job in hand here at TGAM, is to improve road safety in our area. We now have the right people, in our new Group Committee, we have the right Equipment, in that all observers are provided with everything they need, and we have the right tools in the training given to our Group, Local and National Observers, so that they can train Associates. This is all borne out by our very high success rate in Advanced Driving Test passes, 95%, and our rising number of F1st passes and several of those with a perfect score of all 1's.

Brian L. Howe.

IAM PC/CV. TGAM Hon. President.





TAUNTON GROUP of ADVANCED MOTORISTS CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON

to be held at

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

**on Saturday 5th December 2015
12 noon for 12:30pm**

Menus and booking forms are still available from Brian president@tgam.org.uk





Social Evening 16th September 2015

By Brian Howe



Karen (All 1's) Hummel receiving her F1rst certificate from Brian Howe and Andrew Griffiths

Our evening started off with the presentation of 3 ADT pass certificates. Karen Hummel received a F1rst certificate having achieved a perfect score of all 1's on her test. Karen's Observer was Andrew Griffiths.

Next in line for his certificate was Karen's dad, Les Gibbs. Les' Observer was Alan Thompson.



Karen's dad, Les Gibbs, receiving his pass certificate from Brian Howe and Alan Thomson





The third recipient was Tony Ellerton, who brought that lovely Aston Martin DB7 to our July Classic Car BBQ. Tony's Observer was Mike Wotton.

Congratulations to you all and a big vote of thanks to your Observers.



Tony Ellerton receiving his Pass certificate from Brian Howe and Andrew Griffiths, who is showing his support for Welsh rugby



A Brief Introduction

St John Ambulance is a volunteer led, charitable non-government organisation dedicated to the teaching and practice of first aid.

The St John Ambulance Association was set up in 1877 by the Venerable Order of St John to teach industrial workers first aid, so that they could provide on-the-spot treatment in emergencies. The Association set up training sessions across the country, and in 1887 trained volunteers were organised into a uniformed Brigade to provide first aid and ambulance service at public events. The St John Ambulance Brigade and St John Ambulance Association merged in 1968 to form St John Ambulance, a single organisation providing both training and first aid cover.





During 2013, St John Ambulance trained approximately 278,000 adults through its workplace and community first aid programmes, and directly trained 91,000 school children. St John Ambulance personnel attended 45,000 public events, treating approximately 102,000 individuals. It also distributed 100,000 free first aid guides nationwide and its free smartphone app was downloaded by 148,000 people.

The talk was entitled “**Save a Life September**” which was to raise awareness of life saving techniques.



Above: The gentle touch for baby from Janet

Left: Faye tending her casualty, Karen





If Your Casualty is Unconscious. We were shown how to open the airway by tilting the head and lifting the chin. To check for breathing, look along the chest for a rise and fall, and listen and feel for breaths. If the casualty is breathing, roll them into the recovery position. At this point Karen volunteered as casualty and Faye as first aider. Karen made great play of her role until she was reminded that she was supposed to be unconscious. Cue a ripple of laughter. Faye was then told how to roll her casualty into the recovery position, first checking pockets for sharp

objects, keys etc. so as not cause further discomfort. This proved quite difficult for Faye because Karen's jeans were so tight. Of course, us men hadn't noticed that, but the ensuing pat-down would have earned Faye a place among the Customs Officers at Heathrow airport. Cue raucous applause and laughter. There followed instructions on what to do when the casualty is not breathing and how to perform CPR. We were given the chance to practise what we had been taught on dummies, and several took their chance to practice this new found skill.



Hands on demonstrations of CPR





Left: Tony, are you having a little trouble getting up?



Right: Liz shows how it is done

As we approached the tea/coffee break, a question was asked about how to treat a choking baby. So our intrepid instructor followed up with a demonstration on how to perform the 'Abdominal Thrust' as it is known in St John Ambulance. Apparently the other term is patented or registered. The demonstration was carried out on a special dummy equipped with a ball on a string, which pops out of its mouth when the Abdominal Thrust is performed correctly. Andrew had the baby dummy on his knees face up. The instructor asked him to transfer

the baby onto its back which he did unceremoniously throwing it down with a thud by its legs. At this, the instructor asked Andrew for his daughter's telephone number so that she could warn her about the uncaring grandparent. This caused much hilarity in the room, which was an excellent way to finish up the evening and have a chat about it all over a cup of tea and biscuits. A vote of thanks was given to our excellent instructor for the way she engaged us all and got everyone involved. We all enjoyed a thoroughly entertaining and informative evening.





Four Candidates say Thank-you

Extracts from letters received from grateful new full members

...Just wanted to say such a huge thank-you for your hard work and dedication in helping me pass; it's thanks to you, the wonderful volunteers, who make the IAM such a successful institute and why it is able to maintain such a high standard. Doing the advanced driving course has been one of the best things I have done... I wouldn't have said I was a bad driver before but I definitely feel much safer and much more confident now. Thanks to learning a new driving style it has also helped prevent accidents which now I can usually see unfolding in front of me and I can act before they happen... what a great skill to have, if only more people did their advanced driving. I've recommended it to all my friends and family in the hope they'll do it too. *Hazel S.*

I would like to send a big thank you to Andrew Griffiths for the training he gave me towards taking my Advanced Driving Test.

He gave me excellent support, and had the confidence in me, to help me exceed my expectations. I entered into the training just to pass the test and get a tick in the box as it was something I had wanted to do for some time.

However, he saw more in me and pushed me on to aim for perfection, (well practically), whilst making the drives he took me out on an enjoyable experience.

As a result of both my practicing and Andrew's cajoling, I passed with a First.

I am very proud of this accomplishment, and will be using the skills he has taught me, to good effect, on a daily basis in my job as a driving instructor. *Julia Beer*





...I was very happy with my test result and very much enjoyed my experience with IAM. I may be going on to the Master Driver course as a result. My success in passing was in no small measure down to the patience and good natured assistance of my observer, Mr Godfrey Davies and I offer him my thanks in helping to prepare me for the test... *Gavin Strathie*

Recently passed my advanced driving test and would just like to say what a great experience it has been. I have learned so much about the correct way to drive and behave on our busy road system. I would however like to add that none of this would have been possible without the skill and patience of my first class observer, Isobel Jennings. Many thanks for all your help and your determination to get me to the required standard. I will fully recommend skills for life to anyone willing to listen... *Steven Lewis*

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 16th December 7:30 pm
at Hatch Beauchamp Village Hall**



Have you got what it takes?

Perhaps a TGAM event for 2016 at the Devon Driving Academy near Exeter

By Andrew Griffiths

If you've never driven on a skid pan you don't know what you're missing out on. Well, help may be at hand in the shape of TGAM experience day at Devon Driving Academy!

The Academy is a specialist wing of Devon County Council's Road Safety Unit and is based at Westpoint just outside Exeter. I visited the Academy on Saturday 19th September to meet with Roger Jewell who was supervising the office that day.

Roger – some of you may remember him visiting TGAM in June and giving a very entertaining talk – is the Chairman of Plymouth & District Advanced Motorists and Chairman of the Regional Liaison Forum (RLF) South West. He is an instructor at the Academy.

What can the Academy offer us?

While anyone can make arrangements for training at the academy by contacting them direct, I thought it would be good to arrange a fun day out sometime in 2016 for members of

TGAM who would like to try their hand at the driving activities available (see below). The idea would be to form teams of 6 and these teams would move between the various activities available during the day. We may have to put a limit on numbers but that has yet to be explored with the Academy.

There will be a cost per person and the Academy will put together a discounted package for us to consider.

So what are the activities?

- 1) It has a Skid Pan; this is a “dry pan” using a cradle system (as distinct from a wet pan that has oil and water on the surface... very messy, very dirty). The skid pan gives drivers first hand experience of what a skid feels like and with tuition, drivers learn to prevent and control different types of skid – all in the confines of a controlled environment and all perfectly safe.





The cradle has been fitted to a Ford Mondeo front wheel drive car as seen in the photo.

The cradle simply raises and lowers the front or back) of the car (or both simultaneously) by controlled amounts thereby determining how much tyre is in contact with the road surface. An on-board control panel adjusts the height but incorporates a “kill” switch which drops the cradle down immediately thereby putting all 4 wheels back in full contact with the road (should the need arise!).

With the front of the car elevated, understeer skids can be created whereby for a given steering input, the car fails to respond (to varying degrees) and continues (at worst) in a straight line towards the outside of the bend.

With the rear of the car elevated, oversteer skids are created whereby for a given steering input, the rear of the car swings out towards the outside of the bend.

Roger demonstrated the cradle to me – he drove and I sat in the passenger





seat (not least because Devon Advanced Motorcyclists had parked their fantastic

machines on the side of the skidpan which they were about to use for slow speed manoeuvring and the risk of me bulldozing into them like skittles would have concerned Roger slightly).

The experience was educational and great fun. The demo covered how the skid is caused and what the response is for recovery. Armed with this knowledge and experience, this should be the only time a driver will feel what it is like to be in a serious skid.

- 2) The academy also has an enclosed practice road circuit complete with junctions, traffic lights, pedestrian crossings, roundabout and cul-de-sacs. Drivers use their own cars. For 16yr olds aspiring to become confident and safe drivers of the future, a driving instructor can offer a dual-controlled car (by arrangement and at extra cost!). If you wanted to let your 16yr old lose in your car, you can do so but the Academy MUST see proof that he/she is insured on your car. For the purposes of insurance, the





use of Academy facilities is a “private event” rather than a track day (because it isn’t a track day... which would cost a lot to arrange insurance.)

- 3) There are areas where you can drive blindfolded. This isn’t as drastic as it seems. You would be driving your own car very slowly and taking instructions from your passenger about when and by how much to turn the steering to make turns, park in a bay etc.
- 4) You can try your hand at driving (forward and reverse!) through chicanes defined by cones.
- 5) You can experience what a drunk driver might see; wearing special glasses emulate this by distorting your vision in a specific way. You would be driving your own car in a safe and controlled environment.
- 6) Try driving in a smooth and balanced way. You have a bowl of water on the bonnet of your car and the challenge is to have the same amount of water in the bowl after completing a route (again all safe and in a controlled environment). Not as easy as it

sounds though but professional chauffeurs can probably do this better than most as they wouldn’t want client spilling their gin and tonic in the back seat due to harsh braking, accelerating and steering!

- 7) Trailer manoeuvring is something of a skill and if you’ve never had the opportunity, here’s your chance. You use the Academy’s vehicles, manoeuvring through chicanes forward (and in reverse for the more ambitious driver); a qualified instructor must be present and consequently this adds to the cost.
- 8) Similarly, have a go at driving a minibus and manoeuvring it through chicanes, parking it, reversing it. Again for this you’d use academy minibus and it would be supervised hence an additional cost.

I am hoping that Events Coordinator – Hazel Snell – will explore this further with our committee. It would be educational and fun, bringing members together for a great day out in 2016. And there may be a prize!

Andrew Griffiths
Chairman, Chief Observer





OBLIVIOUS OR LACK OF HINDSIGHT?

By Kevin Gould Grose

Here I sit once again, carrying out another DfT Traffic Flow Survey – they’re called “traffic flow” because that’s what normally happens – the traffic flows, but today it’s an annual benchmark survey counting traffic flow for a smaller cul-de-sac, so there’s not actually much traffic flow going on!

Anyway, with nothing much going on here, it gives me more time to observe everything else around me today as I am actually parked on the busier road looking into the cul-de-sac. There are many very nice detached and semi-detached homes here and all with good driveways and a garage or two for each house. It’s a reasonably busy inner town link road to the suburbs with a major secondary school and a nursery / junior school along the road from where I am parked and littered with speed humps, bumps and traffic calming measures. So here are a few of my observations during the day.

Initially, I note that virtually every house with a vehicle reverses OUT into the traffic when there is no reason why they shouldn’t have reversed into their driveways in the first place. I also note that driveways with 3 or 4 vehicles on them had all driven in, assuming the night before, then as I am here at 06:45 hours onwards the early morning rush to work now involves all 3 or 4 vehicles reversing OUT into the slightly busier work hour traffic. Many make some very concerning manoeuvres indeed – some make very dangerous manoeuvres without any consideration for others and some shouldn’t really be allowed to drive at all... at any time!

The owner of the house where I have been instructed to park outside, perfectly legally as dictated by law, the Highway Code and DfT asks me, to move my vehicle as I am “blocking the road” according to him, so, (1) Do I inform said house / 3 car owner person that I am





perfectly allowed to park here as I am 100% legally entitled to; (2) It's a public highway; (3) You don't own this part or any other part of the public highway; (4) Can I just point out that "you", by reversing OUT onto a public highway are putting yourself and others in unnecessary danger... three times within the hour I witnessed or (5) Do I tell him the very common normal two word answer with the second word beginning with "OFF"! No, of course not, I politely inform him that I shall be moving away anyway, as it's my break time and my equally able colleague will now take over – he's alright because he's parked outside the next door neighbours home and no "complaints" there!

The annoying part is that this person and his family think they are doing no wrong and you just can't get through to them when you explain any rational reasons – I have done this survey for several years now and I only park there ONE day out of 365 days of the year and every time we get the same response from this gentleman and his family. I know it's not the end of the earth scenario but their antics backing OUT onto the road do cause concern for many others using the public highway correctly and they most likely do this 365 days of the year!

Worse than them, down the road a bit there is a staggered crossroads and from a house on the right, a black VW Passat estate backs OUT completely blind onto the road – a taxi stops abruptly and lets the driver continue his inconsiderate manoeuvre – either that or there's an incident! Not only does he reverse OUT of his driveway completely oblivious to the traffic already on the main road, he then continues right across the road onto the wrong side of the junction opposite his house. Taxi driver shakes his head, puts his hands up in the air and appears to mouth, "WFT?" (as youngsters now say) and drives off. Passat man then does a forward 180 degree turn and proceeds off down same road.... on the wrong side of the road facing oncoming traffic! Not any indication of thanks was ever given.

It gets better – "Wifey" now gets into a small grey van, backs straight OUT in front of a bus – bus HAS to stop. "Wifey" stops in middle of road and the passenger door flies open and many moments pass before finally, a senior school aged lad ambles out from the driveway and slowly gets into the van. "Wifey" then puts down her mobile phone and van moves and proceeds pass me. "Wifey" now has a big red





cup of coffee (I assume) in her hand – a proper big ceramic kitchen cup... oh, and NO seatbelt on – neither has the youngster who is now struggling to find it and hopefully put it on. Best thing was, that “Wifey” never once acknowledged the kindness and courtesy of the held up bus driver – NOT ONCE – she was completely oblivious to her current surroundings.

Then, a white BMW 1 series literally shoots, again backwards, out of the same driveway onto the road and several vehicles HAVE to take prompt action to avoid a crash. The young “hoody” driver with a mobile stuck to his ear and of course no seatbelt on, accelerates very quickly away and by the time he passes me, I would estimate he was well over twice the 30 mph speed limit present in this area. He didn’t even attempt to slow down as he was travelling towards the secondary school a little way up the road. Well, at least they have all gone now; but then Passat man returns and reappears on the wrong side of the junction again, then drives right across the road causing a white van man to express and gesticulate his concerns to him, and then pulls up outside his home and parks facing the

wrong way about a metre or two from the blind junction corner which forms the staggered part of this road lay out. He has also parked in such a place as it renders the lane this side virtually unusable due to the solid white line and hatchings narrowing road markings obviously in place for this well used staggered junction. All vehicles now have to straddle said markings and drive slightly into the other carriageway to pass his car. He arrogantly gets out, presses his blipper and the car locks itself and he strolls off up his driveway.

Well, what a lovely family of drivers with a complete and utter disregard for any motoring / driving / highway law whatsoever – absolutely marvellous, but what really worries me is that ALL this has just taken place with them all leaving the house in the morning so what on earth are they like during the rest of the day?

Please keep your eyes open and be fully aware that this family may live near you and worse still, drive on the same roads that you do!

Kevin Gould Grose (Sad old git who sits on sides of roads counting traffic – well, someone has to do it!)





MARTIN MASTERS THE DISTINCTION!

By Martin Wyn Griffith with introduction by Andrew Griffiths

A Master's Story

I've mentioned in previous newsletters the IAM Masters and so I'm sure you know that it is the highest civilian driving qualification in the UK.

The IAM Master programme is open to all accomplished advanced drivers. It takes the high skills level the driver will already have – through Skill for Life for example – and augments them to much higher plateaus particularly in;

- Applying cornering principles
- Assessing, planning and executing safe overtaking manoeuvres
- Recognising opportunities to make safe progress (within the speed limits)
- Improving observation, anticipation and awareness consistent with vehicle speed
- Applying sound judgement of speed and distance
- Delivering a fluent, relevant and continuous commentary

A regular visitor to my good neighbours, Martin expressed an interest in the programme during a chat about advanced motoring. And so followed a Masters taster session, with him driving and me coaching. By the time we arrived back at my neighbour's he was hooked!

Martin had no previous advanced driving qualification but his standard of driving was good as was his mental attitude towards driving. He had acquired a few "habits" during his motoring career but all could be rectified with effort. And so he committed himself to the Masters programme and the weeks of hard work ahead were about to begin for him, more so because he also needed to cover Skill-for-Life in conjunction with the Masters programme which would take Martin from basic driving to the highest civilian standard in the UK in one journey.





I'd already determined that Martin was not one to settle for anything less than excellence. His car – of which he was immensely proud – was always gleaming and he was fully familiar with its performance characteristics. He worked hard throughout his training and he'd spend many hours in-between training sessions putting into practice what he'd learned. He would say "aim for perfection and achieve excellence"

and he lived up to it.

His accomplishment was truly outstanding as he'd not done any advanced driving.

Here follows an article Martin has submitted for our newsletter to share his experience with you. Enjoy!

Andrew
Chief Observer
Masters Mentor

Martin writes...

And so the moment had finally come. The Masters Test. Three months of arduous preparation learning theory and putting it into practice with my mentor, Andrew Griffiths, had brought me to this moment of truth. I stood alongside my 2013 Porsche Cayman S in a pub car park in Keynsham. It was a blisteringly hot summer's day in June. Over the phone, my examiner had told me to park as near to the tree as possible. But, there was more than one tree! Which tree? I chose the one at the back of the car park where the car would be in the shade and other drivers would not park right next to me. I wanted room to walk my examiner around the car. Fifteen minutes to

rest and compose myself before Andy Poulton, IAM Staff examiner, strode breezily into the car park with his IAM bag over his shoulder, pointing up at the tree in the middle of the car park and, with a big smile, shouting across at me, "Tree!, Tree!"

"Tree! Tree!" I shouted back, pointing at my tree with an even bigger smile. He laughed. I laughed. I started to relax. He was my kind of guy. I had been told all about him. Andy was a former police driver with forty years' experience at the highest level, a trainer of other police drivers and with his Class 1 Police Certificate still in place.





But the car was the star, for now. What is there not to like about a two year old, latest version of the fabulous Porsche Cayman S? He was taking in its superb form and slowly tuning into its function as I walked him around. I had rehearsed this carefully – 3.4 litre, 6 cylinder, 325 bhp, mid-engine, rear wheel drive – beautifully balanced – big fat, low profile 19” tyres – upside, lots of grip – downside, you don’t half feel a bumpy road surface. Tyre pressures and tread depths. Now the seven speed PDK gearbox with paddles tucked behind the steering wheel, the sport mode and auto engine on/off functions. He asked to see the engine. I smiled again and showed him the two boots in the front and back and talked him through the various fluid filler caps but, no, you can’t see the engine!

I guided him into his seat and talked him through the seven way electric seat adjustment to make sure he was comfortable, then made sure he knew about all the emergency kit on board – first aid kit, fire extinguisher, glass hammer, hi-viz jacket. Did he want some water for the journey? I took my seat. I ran quickly through my cockpit drill and POWDER checklist. Still slightly anxious, I added the Y to

the checklist and said I was pretty sure that, once I got going, I’d settle down. You see, I wanted this so much, not just the Masters pass. I wanted a Distinction – the highest level of civilian driving award achievable. I’m the sort of guy that, once I decide to do something, there are no half measures. It is all or nothing.

We drove out of town through various speed limits, calling and observing each one. It was not long before a short stretch of dual carriageway was upon us – straight into a banana overtake manoeuvre and topped out at 60 momentarily forgetting that I was actually on a dual carriageway! But the overtake was perfect and I glided into the single carriageway, tucking in behind the car in front without touching the brakes – sweet. Now we were into open country roads so this was an excellent opportunity to talk through limit point analysis and call “catch, match and despatch” as we cornered.

We exited a village and into a steep three lane uphill section. I really wanted to show Andy that I was eager to make progress and always ready to overtake. I saw the gap and went for it, using the hill to slow me down and pop back into a safe gap in the traffic. Excellent!



More open, country roads but the car in front was rolling along happily at 55mph and I didn't have the headroom to overtake within the speed limit so called it off and relaxed into a safe following position. I was very happy with my commentary – fluent, forward looking, bringing in as many Roadcraft references as I could muster.

I was really enjoying the drive now – calm, confident, relaxed. I felt it was going well. Time to really turn it on! We turned onto a derestricted B-road with long, open sweeping bends which I straightened out since “nobody was about”. Then, eyes on main beam to look way ahead into the distance, I saw some acute bends coming. I spent time along this road analysing what should be my speed of approach. The first turned out to be a double apex bend with tightening radius at the exits. I was on full concentration and, using LPA, entered at 29 mph having tapered the brakes off, went in under power and accelerated out. Excellent. I smiled. Andy later fed back that it had been critically analysed at 30mph and this was one of the best executions he had seen.

Then, we turned onto a very undulating road with high frequency and low frequency bumps.

I reminded Andy about what I had said at the start about my big, fat tyres. In my commentary, I made clear that whilst I would love to make full progress at 60, I had decided to drop right down to 30/40 to make sure that passenger comfort and vehicle stability were prioritised over making rapid progress. Again, later, Andy fed back that this was a first on that section of road and on a Masters test. I was so proud, so happy that all the preparation I had done had brought me to the point where I could make these calls on my own, following my instincts and trusting them.

We stopped for a comfort break but then there was no lowering of the pressure to perform. A page long list of Roadcraft questions, some easy to recall, some tricky. Back to Keynsham, the commentary was now flowing even more smoothly, thanks to all the hard work that had gone into my preparation for the Test.

My mentor, Andrew Griffiths, had drawn me into the philosophy of the IAM, the standard expected at Masters level and had successfully transformed my ingrained driving habits of forty years in under three months. We had started with an introductory drive to see if Advanced Driving was something I would





value and get into. No pressure, he left me to choose whether I wanted to commit. After a second drive, I told him I wanted to go for the Masters but had as my objective to achieve a Distinction and that nothing less would suffice. From then on, there was no going back. With each drive, he piled on the pressure, forcing me to hone the system of car control, not just in theory but at every moment on the road. Mirror, position, mirror, speed, gear, mirror, accelerate; stealth on approach to roundabouts – ready to stop, looking to go. Woe betide me if I crept over a speed limit. Worse, woe betide me if I fell back to 34 in a 40 whilst practising commentary driving, a common fault apparently. He was at all times supportive, talking me through learning points on the road, stretching me to acquire more and more knowledge of the road and control of the car, developing my cockpit and shut down drills, re-thinking the way I used my electric parking brake, positioned my car in the road, prepared for and executed overtakes, analysed limit points and modified my speed of approach into corners. As we neared the point where he thought I was almost test ready, Andrew Griffiths arranged a “dummy test” with another former Police driver, yet another Andy, ironically.

Andy Ware took me out for ninety minutes near Yeovil and felt that, with some polish, I was test ready. One fabulous tip he gave me was to press the accelerator with the toes not the ball of the foot, squeeze the throttle with increasing pressure to smooth out the acceleration force, which is there for the taking in the Porsche. Transformation.

Back at the test venue, I completed a full verbal shut down drill in order and then went inside for a much needed cup of tea. I attacked the Highway Code question paper whilst Andy got the tea in and then he sat down, reached out to shake my hand and told me that, well done, I had passed. A pause. Surely not! I was gutted. Passed? I had failed! He didn't know that I had set my heart on a Distinction!

Andy went through all the test elements with their scores, feeding back on each. This was excellent, that was excellent. I looked at his notes sheet upside down and could see nothing but Exs and a few Gds. Inwardly, I started to beam but held myself back. I wanted to hear the words. On he went, this was excellent; this could have been better and this is why. Excellent. Good. And eventually, “So, I'm pleased to tell you that you have passed –





with a Distinction.” I beamed the biggest smile, so proud. And I was even prouder when I read his test report later that night which ended with:

“This was an excellent test. Well done. I was very impressed with the high level of the drive for a previous non-member and appreciated the hard work that went into this very interesting drive. I always appreciate Man and Machine as one, or a car complimented by the driver or vice versa!”

My heartfelt thanks go to Andrew Griffiths for literally transforming my driving pleasure and safety on the road. I also want to thank Andy Ware for giving me his time and the benefit of his knowledge and experience. And I want to thank Andy Poulton for his time examining me and the brilliant feedback he gave me on how to improve even further.

Porsche Cayman S and Martin Wyn Griffith as one! I can wear my Masters Distinction badge with pride!



Photo: Martin Wyn Griffith and mentor Andrew Griffiths
– two Masters with Distinction!





DO YOU HAVE WHAT IT TAKES TO BE A VOLUNTEER DRIVER?

A transport service for vulnerable children and adults described by its users as a 'lifesaver' and a 'godsend' is appealing for more volunteer drivers.

Somerset County Council currently provides transport for eligible non-emergency NHS patients and social care users, ranging from the elderly to young children. This includes trips to hospital for medical appointments, or transport to day centres.

A dedicated army of nearly 200 fantastic drivers across the county currently act as volunteers, but the ageing population in Somerset means demand for transport is growing and more volunteers are needed.

Cllr David Fothergill, Somerset County Council's Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport, said: "You only have to look at feedback from the annual survey of passengers to see how highly regarded our volunteer drivers are.

"These often unsung heroes really make a difference to people's lives, so I'd like to take this opportunity to publicly thank them all for their efforts.

"With demand for this service increasing, we need to attract new drivers – from all parts of Somerset. It's a great opportunity to help others, meet new people, improve your CV and provide a vital lifeline in your community.

"Volunteer drivers come from all walks of life – male, female, old, young, working, retired – we even have a few couples who travel together. If you have a few hours to spare and enjoy driving and helping people, please get in touch."

Anyone can be a volunteer – the only criteria are that drivers must be over 18, have use of their own four-door vehicle, and hold a full UK driving licence with no more than six points. Mileage expenses will be reimbursed at up to 50p per mile.





Below are some of the comments from service users taken from the 2014 annual survey:

"I am 85 years old and nearly blind, but I count my blessings for the service you give me. To all that are part of this service, my very sincere thank you!"

"I think this is a marvellous service. There is no doubt I could not get to my many appointments without it. Therefore I can even say it is a life-saver! Thank you so much."

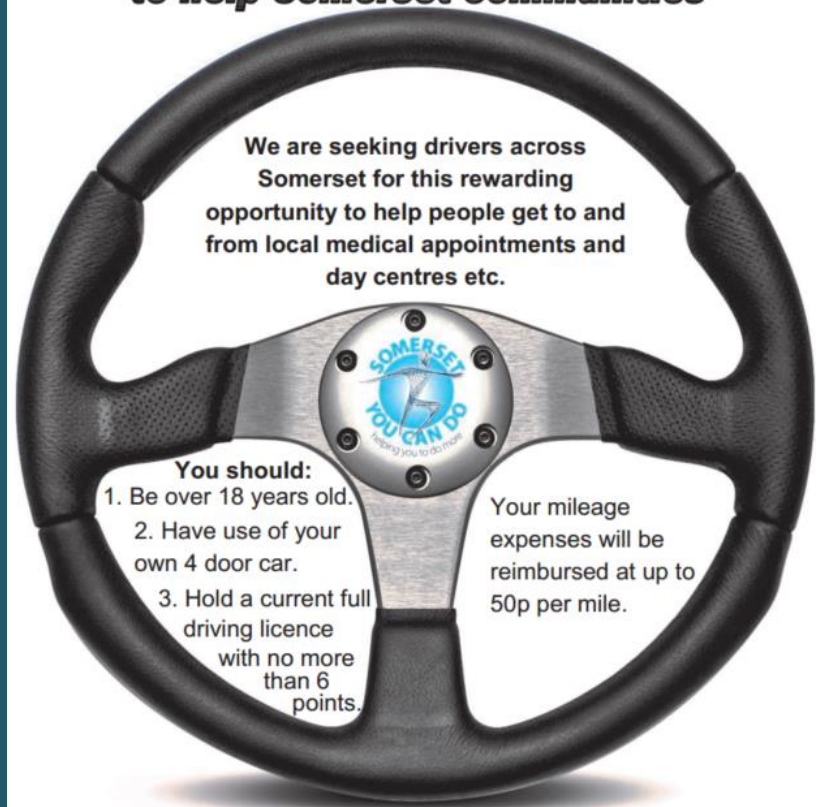
"This wonderful service has been a godsend to me, I'd like to thank the Transporting Somerset team very much for this."

"Your drivers have all been wonderful – friendly, helpful and considerate. I really could not manage without the service you provide. My thanks to you all."

For more information about volunteer driving, please contact Somerset You Can Do by phoning 01278 664180. More information about volunteering opportunities with Somerset County Council can be found at

www.somerset.gov.uk/volunteering

Volunteer Drivers Required to help Somerset communities



For more details please call Somerset You can Do Services on

01278 664 180

SYcD Services is part of Careers South West Ltd, Registered in England No. 3029947

Registered Office: Tamar Business Park, Pennygillam Industrial Estate Launceston PL15 7ED



CLASSIC INSURANCE ISSUES

By Kevin Gould Grose

How many TGAM members run classic cars? Quite a few I believe and I would imagine they are insured with a variety of different insurers which offer the best cover for price according to each individual's needs. I have run my 1984 Opel Manta since 1998 on various insurance policies with various insurance companies. At the same time, I have had either my own other cars insured individually or I have had a company car plus my Opel.

So what you may ask? Well, having passed my driving test in Aug 1975, I have been driving on our roads for 40 years now and apart from one or two incidents, which were not my fault, I have accrued a substantial NCB (No Claims Bonus) tally over those 40 years. Some insurance companies consider all the years you have been driving; some consider 21 years or more; or some consider maybe 9 years plus, etc., and award you a NCB percentage which used to be a maximum of 60% years ago; then 65% was the maximum and finally, I believe 75% is the latest maximum



amount you can ever achieve. As soon as possible, I have always had the maximum amount and have also protected that amount whenever available – it does or can cost a little bit extra but it is always certainly worth it in the long run, especially with spiralling annual insurance costs.

I have been with my last insurance company for over 9 years because they have always offered





me the best classic car insurance for my individual needs and for my type of car, albeit they do ask that I remain a member of the Opel Manta Owners Club to get this deal. So, no problems for 9 years apart from a very minimal increase every year – we are talking about £5.00 a year maybe!

On renewal this year, my premium was almost doubled and because I now do not have any other personal insurances on other vehicles – I am a named driver on other policies, they also inform me they cannot insure me just on my classic car. My first reaction was one of complete and utter disbelief and no amount of facts and details I relayed to them, they would not agree to insure me and after a bit of a heated argument, they were not too happy about insuring me even at the vastly increased price!

I then thought, I am not having this, this is disgraceful. I then went onto the various TV advertised insurance comparison sites to get some quotes and low and behold, 51 quotes appear and about 40 of those quotes were

LESS than the amount I was now being asked to pay and about 9 quotes were even less than I originally paid 9 years ago! I then rang IAM Surety because I had seen the magazine advert indicating they now cover classic cars, so I gave them a go. I explained to the first gentleman I spoke to, the issues that had now arisen. He then passed me over to someone else, a gentleman called Jason. I explained my situation and we went through the quotation process. We had a figure but at the last hurdle, they could not insure me only on my classic car as I did not have any other cars personally insured. I was also informed that as I did not have and I had not had another car insurance policy in place for over two years, I had also lost all my NCB entitlement... (as the youngsters now say, “WTF..!”). I again explained that I had had two previous vehicles insured with IAM Surety but I had sold the last one on 5th Aug 2013 – I am writing this 20th Aug 2015... yes, sir that’s over two years ago; Sorry! Well, that’s it then, I thought; a classic car I can’t insure on a classic car policy!





However, literally five minutes later, the phone goes and it's Jason from IAM Surety, "Mr Grose, I've just checked our records and in fact, even though you sold the vehicle in Aug 2013, your actual policy didn't lapse until Oct 2013 and therefore your full NCB is still valid" ...utterly brilliant... "and why don't you insure your Opel on a normal car policy instead of a classic car policy?" I didn't think of that, but why? "Well, firstly – your full NCB is transferred to that policy and continues as normal; you don't have a limited mileage clause; we can add the business use facility for your traffic survey job and you are allowed to drive other vehicles (Third Party Only) not owned by you." He then quoted an entirely acceptable all in price which was still some £50.00 less than my renewal quote from my present classic car policy provider... RESULT or what! He had actually taken the time to check and then provide a far better cover

policy with added bonuses for a much lesser price and I think that is an absolutely brilliant effort showing concern and consideration for an old man reeling back from the shock of losing everything in the snap of a finger. Jason, you certainly saved the day and you made my day – you saved my full NCB entitlement; you allowed me to continue to use my old Opel; you added extras to my policy and you gave me an exceptional price that beats all others – FANTASTIC!

So, two things – firstly, if you have classic car insurance, make sure you do not lose your NCB (after two years have lapsed on your, or another policy) and secondly, next time your insurance renewal is due, give IAM Surety a call – HIGHLY RECOMMENDED - as you'll never know what you might miss!

Kevin Gould Grose (now a very, very happy fully insured classic Opel driving man!)





TRAFFIC CALMING MEASURES – DO THEY REALLY WORK?

By Kevin Gould Grose

Amongst my many miles travelled for my traffic survey work, I have to negotiate many old and many new traffic calming measures on our county's roads. I also witness their use sometimes at very close hand by having to park safely somewhere near them on some surveys. What I do notice is the absolute look of sheer terror and panic on the faces of those who are not fully aware the road layout has changed since they last progressed along this way – the ABS usually gets a good workout!

I also notice the different routes that different vehicles take to avoid running over the various humps, bumps and road intruding kerbs at some locations. The motorbike rarely slows down and conducts the perceived slalom course at speed – sometimes it's poetry in motion to watch even though they are speeding but they all usually slow right down for the "sleeping policeman" type humps, especially the more pronounced ones – the ones that mangle front spoilers and exhaust

pipes or even worse, could rip your exhaust right off!

Buses will sometimes straddle the triple bumps across the road by using the two gaps between the three humps and most cars also try this – some are ok but others misjudge it and catch a wheel or two! Those trying to comply with the rules of the road go right to the edge of the road and just straddle the inner nearside hump which is fine provided there isn't a cyclist using this part of the system at the same time.

The most enjoyable antics are those performed with their super "lowrider" vehicles – those with cut down springs, massive wheels and very, very low profile tyres where the car is virtually scrapping the ground. Their suspension is usually compromised and now very limited in giving any amount of travel – there is just no give at all and this leads to all sorts of scrapes, grinds and noises that sound very expensive to repair! With today's roads full of pot holes, speed bumps, speed humps, kerbing designs,





dips, pits, crests, different type surfaces, etc., the only real vehicles that can cope with all this fairly well, day in and day out, are either 4x4's or a commercial vehicle – van, lorry, tractor, etc., due to their heavier suspension set up and more heavy duty tyres.

Another entertaining scenario is when you have a cyclist and bus going one way and a car and motorbike coming the other way – the biggest vehicle usually wins but the main thing I do notice is that speed calming measures appear to curb the speed of a few right down to a level that causes other drivers to have to react to avoid a slow end collision which can further cause a concertina effect down the line. However, they don't appear to curb the speed of the majority, in fact, it seems to increase their speed to maybe above the previous sensible limit – if they bothered to comply in the first place!

There are also a few morons who treat all the speed calming control methods as some kind of challenge. The fact they have had to slow

down for someone who cares about their vehicle means they have lost valuable time... many, many seconds... and they must get this back, no matter what, so they invariably speed up and then carry out some very crazy overtaking manoeuvres just to get in front of this law abiding and very considerate driver. Once past this “slow driving idiot”, the moron floors it and then tries to score more points by negotiating “The Highways Slalom Speed Trial Challenge” in the shortest time and no matter how or what you do... as long as you WIN!

However, it is NOT a game; it is NOT part of a rally course; it is NOT a speed trial and it is NOT a game you can win – there are only losers who damage, misuse, scrape, break, etc., their vehicles just because they have been held up for a few seconds or at worse, a few minutes!

SLOW DOWN and save your car, your tyres, your suspension, your sanity – you may even save a life!

Kevin Gould Grose





Recent Releases from the IAM Press Office

18,000 pedestrians injured in road accidents in one year – IAM calls for urgent action

The Institute of Advanced Motorists (IAM) has revealed that nearly 18,000 pedestrians were injured in an accident involving a vehicle in the last full year with analysis available.

The charity is calling for an even greater focus on pedestrian protection to make cars safer and raise awareness of the risks.

The figures come from a Freedom of Information (FOI) request made by the IAM, Britain's biggest independent road safety charity, asking for details of the most common pairs of contributory factors reported together by the police attending the scene of an accident in 2013.

Police can record up to six contributory factors from a list of 77 for each incident to explain why they think a crash took place but the top two give the most obvious reasons for the incident. The statistics come from an analysis of the most recent full year data covering the whole of 2013.

Last month the IAM reported that 'failure to look properly' and 'failure to judge other person's path or speed' was the biggest pairing of factors when it came to vehicles in accidents. And now the pairings of factors listed by police for all pedestrian casualties in accidents can be revealed.





'Pedestrian failed to look properly' with 'pedestrian careless, reckless or in a hurry' were named as factors in 4,100 casualty accidents, or 23% of the overall total putting them clearly at Number 1.

The remainder of the factor combinations listed are as follows:

2. 'Pedestrian crossing road masked by stationary or parked vehicle' with 'pedestrian failed to look properly' - 1,961 casualties (11%)
3. 'Pedestrian failed to judge vehicle's path or speed' with 'pedestrian careless, reckless or in a hurry' - 1,204 casualties (7%)
4. 'Pedestrian crossing road masked by stationary or parked vehicle' with 'pedestrian careless, reckless or in a hurry' - 1,013 casualties (6%)

The IAM Manifesto makes a number of suggestions on how to protect pedestrians, including making road safety education part of the national curriculum, making pedestrian safety a bigger factor in vehicle design and a long-term engineering programme to deliver safer roads in the UK.

Sarah Sillars, IAM chief executive officer, said: "Pedestrian fatalities are rising faster than any other group right now so it is vital that drivers are more sympathetic and aware of pedestrians when they make their journeys. There is no need to blame any party when it comes to how to reduce the numbers of people killed and injured on our roads – all road users need to look out for each other and ensure we minimise the impact of our own and others unpredictable behaviour."





Get in the driving spirit, but don't let the spirit get into you

Tips from the IAM's head of driving standards, Peter Rodger are all about avoiding the temptations of drink-driving. Here are Peter's top tips to ensure your safety is never compromised.

- If you've already had a couple of drinks, don't try to calculate whether or not you're over the limit, as any amount of alcohol is hazardous if you're driving. If you have no other choice but to drive, simply avoid drinking completely.
- If you know you're going to have some alcohol, ask someone else to drive you to your destination, or arrange for a taxi. The same applies for when you are leaving – not having your car there will mean you're not tempted to drive back. Make sure you refuse a lift from anyone that has been drinking too.
- If you drank the night before, you may still be over the legal limit the following day. If you're involved in a collision that's not your fault but are the driver, you may still get caught by the police when you are breathalysed. Bear this in mind and don't risk it – arrange for alternative travel plans the next morning.
- Don't feel pressured to drink especially if you don't really want one. Don't be influenced by

others around you, you will only end up putting your licence and liberty at stake.

- Some crashes involve pedestrians who have been drinking and drivers who haven't. Look out for pedestrians walking late at night and be prepared for them to step out without looking your way.
- Remember that the legal limit in England and Wales is 80mg of alcohol per 100ml of blood, while the limit in Scotland is 50mg of alcohol per 100ml of blood. Bear in mind these limits are only a guide as everyone's body reacts differently – depending on your weight, height and metabolism you may still be over the legal limit even if you have consumed less than the stated amount.
- Driving under the influence can lead to three months' imprisonment, up to £2,500 fine and a compulsory driving ban across the UK.

Peter said: "There has been enough education about drink-driving for no-one to claim 'I didn't know'. Quite simply you are in no condition to handle a motor vehicle or bike with any amount of alcohol on your system – and you could wreck someone else's life. It's very simple: drinking and driving don't belong together."





Don't let your night on the town become a big drama

This week's tips, from the IAM's head of driving standards Peter Rodger are for drivers planning to go into town for a night out. Whether you're off to the theatre, a restaurant or a party, here's what you can do to stay safe.

- Always plan where you are going beforehand. Think about whether there will be traffic on the way, if there will be sufficient parking, and where it is safe to park your vehicle – preferably in a well-lit and open area.
- If you know you're going to be out till the early hours of the morning, top-up with fuel beforehand.
- If you have passengers, only carry as many as there are seatbelts for. Never have too many people seated in the car.
- Make sure passengers do not distract you from driving. You need to fully concentrate – don't look at your passengers and keep conversation to a minimum.
- Avoid getting distracted by using your smartphone or tablet whilst driving. Texting, phoning and checking social media can all

wait – to avoid any temptations either put them out of reach or get someone to hold them for you.

- Once you arrive at your destination try to reverse your car into a parking bay. This will help you drive out with ease without having to manoeuvre later.
- Whether you're heading to a restaurant or a party and you are the sole driver, avoid any amount of alcohol. If you do end up having a drink, don't risk driving back – book yourself a taxi or arrange a family member or friend to collect you.
- Always keep an emergency kit in your car and the number of your breakdown service provider in an emergency phone. You may not necessarily need these, but it's best to be prepared.

Peter said: "You may be more focussed on the destination than the journey if you are going somewhere special, but it's just when distractions are high that a problem can occur.

"Don't rush, be prepared, and you will have a great evening".





IAM's Lesley scoops top automotive lifetime industry award

The Institute of Advanced Motorists' (IAM) recently appointed Commercial Director, Lesley Upham, has won a top automotive award at a well-respected motor industry ceremony at the weekend.

The 19th Annual Bodyshop Event and Awards 2015 (BE2015) took place at the Celtic Manor Hotel in Newport; and featured a day of exhibits, seminars and networking concluded by the glittering black-tie awards dinner.

The Institute of Advanced Motorists' (IAM) recently appointed Commercial Director, Lesley Upham, has won a top automotive award at a well-respected motor industry ceremony at the weekend.

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"They have been a major driving force in directing, influencing and shaping the increasing professionalism of the industry for a number of years and have played a key role in raising standards throughout. A new challenge now lies ahead for this individual but in our sector, this person's effect has been profound."

Lesley joined the IAM, the UK's biggest independent road safety charity in July. She previously held

roles with Thatcham Research.

Lesley is responsible for the IAM's commercial subsidiaries; IAM Drive & Survive, Professional Driver Services (PDS) and IAM Driver Retraining Academy (DRA).

Sarah Sillars, IAM Chief Executive Officer, added: "We'd like to congratulate Lesley on the award, which is thoroughly deserved and marks many years of dedicated service to the industry."





Speeding still top road offence – and people flouting law in bigger numbers

Figures obtained by the Institute of Advanced Motorists (IAM) have found that, over the last decade, speeding is still the biggest motoring-related offence where the defendant is found guilty in court.

And the numbers of those found guilty have risen sharply in the past 12 months – from 115,935 to 148,426, an increase of 28% which is the highest number since 2005. The 2014 figures were 2% greater than 2004.

The next highest offence where defendants were found guilty was vehicle insurance-related crimes, although the percentage has

fallen dramatically since 2004.

Some 118,254 people were found guilty in court of this, which is 7% up on 2013 but 84% down on a decade ago, when 218,142 were found guilty.

The figures, obtained by the IAM from the Ministry of Justice, also show that vehicle registration and excise duty offences and driving with alcohol in the blood above the legal limit are both offences that have fallen in huge numbers in the past ten years.

The top five list of offences where offenders are found guilty in court is as follows:

Offence	2004	2013	2014	% chng 1 yr	% chng 10 yrs
1.Speed limit offences	146,161	115,935	148,426	28%	2%
2.Vehicle insurance offences	218,142	110,843	118,254	7%	-84%
3.Failing to supply information as to identity of driver when required	n/a	50,687	54,372	7%	n/a
4.Vehicle registration and excise licence offences	192,959	55,182	46,636	-15%	-314%
5.Driving with alcohol in the blood above the prescribed limit	74,055	40,683	37,853	-7%	-96%





Other offences with a large number of guilty verdicts other than speeding are neglecting road regulations at 16,951 in 2014 (up 2% from 2013), using or causing others to use a mobile phone whilst driving at 16,025 (down 8% from 2013) and driving licence-related offences at 15,982 (down 10% from 2013).

New offences such as causing serious injury by dangerous driving are also showing signs of more widespread use which reflects the life changing nature of these crimes.

Sarah Sillars, IAM Chief Executive Officer, said: "We can see from these figures that as the UK comes out of recession traffic levels have risen, speeding appears to be becoming more prevalent and regrettably casualties are rising again. The government and police forces cannot afford to take their eye off the ball and more visible policing is, in our view, the key

way to ensure that people don't think they can get away with speeding.

"In addition local campaigns must remain high-profile to make sure drivers don't get complacent, or forget that speed can kill."

According to the government's THINK! campaign, speed is "one of the main factors in fatal road accidents". In 2013, 3,064 people were killed or seriously injured in crashes where speed was a factor.

They added that the risk of death is approximately four times higher when a pedestrian is hit at 40mph than at 30mph (reference 2).

Sarah added: "On a positive note, the joining up of databases across agencies and the increased use of number plate recognition cameras means some motoring crimes have fallen in big numbers."





Technology and social media bigger perceived threats than drink-driving

Motorists are now more worried about the dangers of distraction posed by technology and social media than drink-driving, according to the Institute of Advanced Motorists' (IAM) first major survey into safety culture.

The Safety Culture Index report was launched today by the IAM, and is a study of more than 2,000 UK motorists' attitudes to driving safety and behaviour on our roads.

This report will form a definitive baseline to track changes over time, providing the opportunity to examine how attitudes change over the years.

The report has found that while technology will form a fundamental part of improving road safety, it also poses some risks, in particular driver distraction – 77% of people say it is now a bigger problem than three years ago. This compares to just 23% of people feeling drink driving is a bigger threat than three years ago.

Those surveyed said text messaging and social media are the two biggest factors threatening their personal safety, with 93% and 92% respectively claiming these to be a 'very or somewhat serious' threat.

The next two factors they say are threats to their personal safety are drink and drug driving, at 90% and 89% respectively.

And while most people feel talking on a hand-held mobile phone is unacceptable in their own locality (just 15% said they found it acceptable), some 64% say talking on a hands-free mobile phone is acceptable.

Motorists are also much more worried about speeding in residential streets than they are about speeding on motorways - 86% believing this to be a very or somewhat serious threat; 24% higher than motorways.

This is borne out by the fact 61% feel it's acceptable to drive 10mph over the speed limit





on the motorway, just 27% feel it's acceptable to drive 5mph over the limit on a residential street.

The IAM believes the report highlights the key areas of road safety and police enforcement priority that will command the highest levels of public support.

IAM President and 1992 Formula 1 World Champion Nigel Mansell CBE said: "The good news is that the vast majority of drivers do value safety and they want to feel even safer on the road in the future.

"They take speeding and drink-driving very seriously and are happy to support even stronger legislation even if it may stop them doing things they admit to doing themselves.



We do feel we can offer real world solutions to those drivers who through over, or under, confidence feel stressed on our busy roads."

Sarah Sillars, IAM chief executive officer, said: "This report is a crucial barometer of what drivers are really thinking. It is all about seeing what issues and factors the public see as important in their lives, and using that information to influence their behaviour.

"Understanding the issues drivers see as important when it comes to road safety is essential for establishing how best to communicate with them and so in turn to achieve behaviour change, on both a local and national level.

"It is up to all of us now, armed with this information, to do something about it."





Support for speed cameras remains high – but London and the north-east still need some convincing

A national survey by the Institute of Advanced Motorists (IAM) has shown that although most drivers support speed cameras there are big variations across the country – and Londoners and people in the north-east appear to show higher levels of resistance than most.

The survey polled 1,000 drivers of all age groups across Britain and asked “It is now common for the authorities to use speed cameras at the side of the road to identify vehicles involved in speeding offences. How acceptable do you think this is?” The national average is 79% but only 69% of Londoners said it was acceptable, down from 85% in 2011.

The north-east also has seen a decrease in acceptance in the past year, down from 84% to 70%. The north-west, Yorkshire and Humber and Scotland have also all seen acceptability decrease over the four year period.

When asked if they agree with the statement “Speed cameras are only sited at places where

accidents are happening” again there was a sharp decrease in people in the north-east and London agreeing with it. Only 37% of those polled in the north-east agreed with this, down from 69% between 2013 and 2014.

In London the numbers agreeing fell from 46% to 28%. The north-east has seen the biggest fall in drivers agreeing with the statement (from a peak of 69 per cent in 2013 to 37% in 2014).

We asked if they agree with the statement: “Raising money from fines is not the motive for speed cameras” there is a sharp fall in those in the north-east and London agreeing compared to 12 months ago, and a gradual fall over the past four years. In 2011 48% of people agreed with this statement in London, which has dropped to 29% last year. In the north-east those agreeing with the statement dropped from 58% in 2013 to 30% last year.

The West Midlands and London are the only regions where the overall trend since 2011 indicates that more drivers believe raising





money from speed cameras is the motive (from 37% in 2011 to 56% in 2014 for London, and from 51 per cent in 2011 to 58 per cent in 2014 for the West Midlands).

With deaths on UK roads having fallen from around 3,600 in the mid-nineties (when speed camera use became widespread) to 1,713 in 2014, respondents were asked: “To what extent do you believe speed cameras have helped in this decline?”

While there is a very high agreement across the country for this statement, the north-west is the only region to see a consistent year-on-year decrease in those who believe speed cameras have contributed to the decline in road fatalities.

And there was a sharp fall in those in the north-east in the past year who agree with the statement that speed cameras have helped in this respect, from 91% to 57%.

In its manifesto, the IAM supports the use of safety camera systems at collision hot spots, on roads with a bad crash record and at areas of proven risk, such as motorway road works.

However, the IAM states that it is vital for their credibility and road safety policy that their use is concentrated on these areas, directly linked to speed related crashes and casualties. It also suggests that cameras should be seen as a temporary solution until long term engineering improvements can be implemented to solve the problem permanently.

Sarah Sillars, IAM chief executive officer, said: “It is clear that most drivers accept that speed cameras are effective in reducing the numbers of people who are killed and seriously injured, but for many there is still an unfortunate link to revenue raising and a perception they are not always in the right places.

“Public support is very important when it comes to effective speed camera operation. They will respect them if they can see their effectiveness and worthiness, and these regional variations highlight where extra work is needed to convince drivers of the benefits and to counter media perceptions and urban myths around cameras.”

For the full survey findings as commissioned by the IAM click here: <http://bit.ly/1k7b3p9>





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
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