

iAM
RoadSmart

Official Provider

Warrington Group of Advanced Motorists

Newsletter
April / May 2018

CHAIRMAN'S CORNER

Spring has finally arrived and the clocks have moved forward so we have lighter evenings, and hopefully our unwelcome visitor from the East has finally left us alone! Hopefully, you've all come through the inclement weather unscathed and the bikers amongst us can look forward to some chippy runs and social ride outs without freezing!

Ian Ross, Steve Bielizna and myself (together with Gary Whittaker from Bolton Group) recently had a training day out in Wales for our Masters Mentoring Hub (Cars) that was both very enjoyable and useful in getting to grips with the standards we are looking for from our potential mentees (when you guys decide to sign up with us!!).

Gordon Blackshaw and myself will be looking at getting a similar day out for the bike side of the Masters Mentoring Hub and I'm pleased to say we've already signed up our 1st mentee, who has already started his training with Jonathan Hough.

I'm also going to looking at getting a training day organised for both the car and bike observer (separately I might add) in the near future, so hopefully more on this in future Newsletters.

Finally, here's a couple of short brain teasers for you to conjure with:-

1/. There is a certain crime; that if it is attempted, is punishable, but if it is committed, is not punishable. What is the crime?

2/. On my way to St. Ives I saw a man with 7 wives. Each wife had 7 sacks. Each sack had 7 cats. Each cat had 7 kittens. In total, how many were going to St. Ives?

3/. Two girls were born to the same mother, on the same day, at the same time, in the same month and year and yet they're not twins. How can this be ?

As usual, you can find the answers later in the newsletter.

Keep safe

Andrew Bloomer

FUNNIES

(Tim Vine One Liners)

"I was getting into my car, and this bloke says to me 'Can you give me a lift?' I said 'Sure, you look great, the world's your oyster, go for it.'"

"I've decided to sell my Hoover - it was just collecting dust."

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS AND CONGRATULATIONS

Hello there

Welcome to new members Philip Armstrong and Antonio Spagnuolo who have joined the Car section. Should you have any questions or queries please ask and we will endeavour to resolve them.

WELCOME

Congratulations to Anne Marie Ross on passing the car test with a F1rst. Well done indeed.



When you pass the Test and receive your membership information from head quarters could you please let me know so that the membership records can be updated with your IAM membership number and expiry date?

A special note for our email members, please keep your mailbox cleansed as they sometimes bounce back also if you are thinking of changing your email address then please remember to let me know at distribution@warram.org.uk

With thanks
Vince

ATTENTION BIKER'S - DID YOU KNOW...

Current IAM group members can take advantage of the "Skill for Life" Advanced Driver Training Programme and as you are already a member you would only be required to pay head office the test fee (currently £69). Also, as you undertake the observed runs in your own vehicle there is no fuel allowance to pay to the observers...

I personally chose this route after gaining confidence, having passed my IAM motorcycle test, and attended several car sessions with skilled observers from our very own Warrington Car group. As a keen biker I also travel more miles on 4 wheels than I do on 2 ... So it just made sense to me to further my understanding and gain the advanced driving skills that are available.

I found that many of the biking attributes learned previously, also applied to the car training and found the experience less daunting than expected, but still very rewarding and maybe you could also if you give it a go?

For further details you can contact Vince Scriven on 01928 573355 or visit our website at <http://www.warram.org.uk/cars-contact.php>

The car group usually meet at around 10am, every Sunday morning at The Old School (Fairfield and Howley Neighbourhood Hub), Fairfield Street, Warrington, WA1 3AJ. Parking is available at the premises, as are toilets and even a complimentary coffee!

Good Luck !!

Simon Jones (Warrington Advanced Motorists Group) Motorcycle Liaison.

MASTERS MENTORING HUB

Warrington Group of Advanced Motorists are pleased to announce that we have now set up an in-house Masters Mentoring Team for both the bike and car sections. This is an exciting development within our Group that will benefit not only those who are interested in taking their Masters Qualification, but also our many associates training for their advanced test as they will benefit from the additional expertise this will afford our existing observers.

Open to all current IAM members, the Masters programme "will help you to attain the highest standard of civilian driving or riding ability in the country" and the training can now be provided in-house at an attractive price. The Master Driver or Rider course with mentoring currently costs £249, and the "test only" option costs £129.

If you opt to do your training in-house, the cost of the training for bikes will be £72 and for cars will be £40, and you will be brought up to the required standard to then apply for the test only option. This represents a saving of £48 for riders and £80 for car drivers. This represents great value for money and it also gives you the benefit of having your training with someone you'll likely already know.

If you are interested in finding out more about the in-house Masters programme, please contact:-

Cars: Andrew Bloomer on 07768 051570 or Andrew.bloomer@warram.org.uk

Bikes: Gordon Blackshaw on 07767 833106 or gordonblackshaw@hotmail.com

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

On Saturday 19th May at 7:30pm we are holding another of our very entertaining Skittles evening. All members, family and friends are welcome to this fun packed evening of games and food. Obviously there are the Skittles but also a side game of Boules and there will be Pie & Peas (with a vegetarian option available). Event will be held at:-

St Johns Church Hall
Wilderspool Causeway
WARRINGTON
WA4 6QE.

Names in advance to Carol Griffiths or call 01925 791961 to reserve your Pie!

FORMER PRESIDENT ALAN DOMVILLE CONTINUES HIS REMINISCENCES AS A MOTORING WRITER & LIFELONG GROUP FRIEND.....

Car launches have to be organised by manufacturers with great care and efficiency and usually are. The logistics are complex: the timing must not clash with rivals' introductions otherwise valuable space in the press is lost if fewer journalists attend; invites have to be sent out and air and rail transportation to the venue arranged; hotels have to be booked and dietary requirements specified; the test fleet has to be in perfect condition and worthwhile test routes planned, the local police having been alerted; presentations must include the attendance of experts to field all the awkward questions and press releases made available.

The list is endless and not surprisingly things can go wrong - and sometimes they go horribly wrong. I, as one of a party of correspondents, was once flown to the Cote d'Azur for the introduction of a new Lada. Unfortunately there were no cars to drive because of a French dock strike.

Airline schedules can often become meaningless, especially in winter, and on more than one occasion I have arrived at the venue long after the cars have been put to bed, missing the driving exercise altogether.

Snow scuppered another planned trip to France to drive a new Renault. I had flown down to London and stayed overnight at a Heathrow hotel ready for an early start next morning but as I boarded the minibus to the airport snow began to fall. My abiding memory of that launch was sitting in the airport watching a Concorde being towed amid a snowdrift after which I travelled home by train.

Fiat conceived a brilliant launch in Florida to which I greatly looked forward. It would include grandstand seats for the launch of a space rocket at Cape Canaveral and on arrival powerful binoculars were issued to all and sundry so we could fully enjoy the blast-off. Unfortunately the weather was so appalling the launch was postponed but at least the cars had arrived.

On another trip our plane suddenly aborted a landing in Bergen for a reason never revealed and it was diverted to Stavanger - which meant we had to be ferried by coach back to Bergen and we arrived at our hotel in the Norwegian hinterland at 3.00am. However, the second planeload of writers never made it at all as their aircraft had to turn back over the North Sea because of a technical problem.

Nowadays press officers also have a mass of health and safety legislation with which to comply, in particular breathalysing every journalist before he or she drives and also checking their licence for any penalty points.

Journalists can also provide some headaches too: on another trip to the United States a couple of German writers set from our hotel and ran into the back of a car at the first set of traffic lights.

And I once shared a car with a writer from a lifestyle magazine and at the halfway stage on the route I suggested he take over at the wheel.

"Oh no," he said, "I can't drive."

FUNDING ROADS FOR THE FUTURE

Motorists should be charged for using the UK's road network based on personal circumstances, a new report says. Drivers currently pay fuel and vehicle taxes, but road pricing is limited to certain toll roads and schemes such as London's congestion charge. However, a group of infrastructure engineers has said that approach is "failing", because revenue from those existing taxes is "drying up". The government said it was investing £15bn in the road network.

The Association for Consultancy and Engineering (ACE), which represents companies involved in designing the UK's infrastructure, admitted some people were suspicious of road pricing. However, in its report "Funding Roads for the Future" it said charges for road usage should be introduced which took into account:

- whether a driver's journey was on motorways or country lanes
- the time of day
- how much congestion was on the network
- drivers' financial circumstances - for example, whether they were students, pensioners or unemployed

ACE said relying on money raised through fuel duty, Vehicle Excise Duty and the HGV levy was outdated. "The growing uptake of zero-emission vehicles means revenue from Vehicle Excise Duty and Fuel Duty will continue to decline as a percentage of the UK's GDP in the future," it said. Changing social trends, including ride sharing and increased urbanisation, meant there was less need for personal transport, it added. As a result car ownership was falling and that was putting pressure on revenues, creating "problems for the funding of roads".

However, a Treasury spokesperson said: "We are committed to ensuring that our roads are fit for purpose, and that's why we are investing £15bn in our Road Investment Strategy.

"We are also supporting hardworking people across the country by freezing fuel duty for the eighth year in a row, saving drivers £160 a year on average."

ACE said there had been four decades of underinvestment in roads.

"Our report argues that in the years ahead only a reformed funding regime based on dynamic road user pricing will manage traffic flows and deliver the significant investment needed to keep the country moving," said the association's chief executive, Nelson Ogunshakin.

He said it was "vital" that the government starts these conversations now, as there are fears "people will be priced off the road".

"This doesn't have to be the case and there is a great opportunity to develop a fairer-for-all road funding system which delivers the first-class road network that this country needs long into the future," said Mr Ogunshakin.

[Ack: BBC News]

FUNNIES

An elderly Florida lady did her shopping and, upon returning to her car, found four males in the act of leaving with her vehicle. She dropped her shopping bags and drew her handgun, proceeding to scream at the top of her lungs, "I have a gun, and I know how to use it! Get out of the car!". The four men didn't wait for a second threat. They got out and ran like mad.

The lady, somewhat shaken, then proceeded to load her shopping bags into the back of the car and got into the driver's seat. She was so shaken that she could not get her key into the ignition. She tried and tried, and then she realized why. It was for the same reason she had wondered why there was a football, a Frisbee and two 12-packs of beer in the front seat. A few minutes later, she found her own car parked four or five spaces farther down. She loaded her bags into the car and drove to the police station to report her mistake. The sergeant to whom she told the story couldn't stop laughing. He pointed to the other end of the counter, where four pale men were reporting a car jacking by a mad, elderly woman described as white, less than five feet tall, glasses, curly white hair, and carrying a large handgun. No charges were filed. The moral of the story? If you're going to have a senior moment... make it memorable ❤️

DRIVING LAW 2018: WHAT TO EXPECT THIS YEAR

New motoring laws are just months away. Here are a few changes that you need to look out for.

April - digital driving licences

Last year a prototype digital driving licence was tested that will sit on your phone or in the Apple Wallet. The new digital licence will be used to support the photocard rather than replace it. Digitising the driving licence seems like a logical step, as more sensitive information is being stored on phones more often.

April - New tax on diesel cars

In April this year motorists with a diesel car will face a higher rate of tax. This applies to the first year of tax for diesel cars that fail the Real Driving Emissions 2 (RDE2) test. Tax is based on your car's emissions. The higher the emissions, the higher the tax and this is part of the government scheme to improve air quality in the UK. The change mainly impacts diesel car drivers as their emissions are higher than petrol cars.

May - MOTs scrapped for classic cars

It was announced that vehicles over 40 years old would be exempt from an MOT test. This law will be put into place in May this year. It's thought that people who own these cars tend to be enthusiasts, and maintain their vehicles well. Therefore the need for an MOT isn't as vital as standard car owners. Statistically these cars also have a lower accident and MOT failure rate than newer vehicles too. This doesn't apply to commercially-used large goods vehicles (maximum weight of 3.5 tonnes) and buses (vehicles with eight or more seats).

This new law is controversial, as some think it's potentially putting other drivers at risk. But drivers of classic cars will still be legally obligated to keep their vehicles safe and roadworthy.

Spring - Motorway law changes

New laws are being put in place in spring 2018 to stop motorists driving on lanes that are closed. Smart motorways run on four lanes. In peak periods, automated signs open and close the hard-shoulder to ease traffic at peak times. Driving in a closed lane is already illegal, but the new law will bring in a new fixed penalty for drivers flouting this rule. This will be monitored by cameras which will catch drivers breaking the speed limit or driving in a closed lane.

May - New MOT test categories

May continues to be a big month for MOT changes. MOT test results will now be sorted into three new categories. The three categories for the MOT will now be dangerous, major and minor. This could make the test harder to pass. If your car receives a dangerous or major fault it'll instantly fail the test. If your car has a minor defect, it'll still be able to pass, but it'll be noted down on the MOT certificate. For example if a car is leaking oil it would be a minor fault. But if it's dripping, the fault would be major and the car would fail the test. On 20 May, diesel particulate filters will also form part of the MOT test. You'll fail the test if your particulate filter has been removed or tampered with.

June - Learner drivers to be allowed on motorways

On the 4th of June, Learner drivers will be able to have lessons on the motorway. In order to do this, they must be accompanied by an approved instructor with dual controls. This will give learners a chance to build their confidence on motorways, so it doesn't seem so daunting when they pass the test.

Also in 2018:

Trading in your diesel model could mean a massive saving.

In 2017, some companies introduced a scrappage scheme for models that were registered before 2010. Now, more schemes have been announced in 2018. Trading in your car for something more fuel efficient could mean up to £2,000 off for cars, and £7,000 off for vans. These schemes are designed to encourage drivers to choose a more eco-friendly model, and reduce pollution caused by diesel cars. To qualify for this scheme your car must comply with Euro 1-4 emissions standards. Usually this means the car was registered before 2010. At the minute, there's no official government backed scheme, but many companies are offering this sort of deal.

New drivers could be banned from driving at night

This year new drivers may facing extra restrictions when they pass. One of these is driving at night. These could be imposed for up to two years until the driver gains more experience. New drivers have a high amount of accidents on the road - the restrictions aim to reduce this. The law was previously dismissed, as some new drivers relied on driving at night for their work. [ack: Confused.com]

MONTH END RUN REPORT (BY TOM MCCANN)



Sunday 25th March and first of the monthly ride outs which take place on the last Sunday of the month from Lymm services for Warrington Advanced motorcyclists. The prospect of a sunny warmish day were left looking a little dubious as I left the house and walked onto the drive to be shocked by a car covered in frost! Not a good portent for a fair weather biker like myself! Wrapped up well and appropriate gloves chosen and off I went. The route chosen by Simon Jones and downloaded to his fabulous sat nav was to take in Cheshire and the A49 down to Whitchurch, Westwards on the A525 for a short leg before turning onto the A595 to Ellesmere. Definite signs of spring and a warming caress from the ever strengthening sun and light traffic made it such a pleasurable ride! South from Ellesmere on the A528 took us down towards Shrewsbury. Using the 2nd Rider Drop Off System to help out at junctions, roundabouts and changes of direction. Being new to group riding this sounded daunting but was easily picked up by myself and worked almost faultlessly all day except for a small glitch in Shrewsbury around the railway station. Brief stop and a quick phone call had us all reunited and off to the first comfort stop of the day at McDonalds Meole Brace. Thanks to Simon Jones for the brew and off down the A49 through Church Stretton to turn west on the A489 to meet up with the A488 and Bishops Castle. Pinching ourselves as the sun was still shining through a glorious, clear blue sky, was matched by incredulity as patches of snow were now starting to appear in field edges and on the leeward side of walls. The picturesque village of Clun with its castle and scenic river view (mental note to return with walking boots when more time allows) saw us select the B4368, this took us along some winter ravaged roads with potholes that Ewan McGregor and Charlie Boorman may have struggled with!!! Twisty sections and lots of gravel had a few of us picking a very careful line and adjusting our riding accordingly. Rejoining the A489 with signs beckoning us on to Newtown and to what I can only describe as some unbelievable stretches of the A483 down to Crossgates. Sweeping left and right bends with tarmac fresher than the young lambs in the fields made for a pleasurable experience. Lunch break at the cafe at Crossgates roundabout and laughter filled the air whilst waiting for the food, basic biker cafe food and fuel for the bikes saw us heading off on the next leg towards Ludlow via Clun and the heading off towards Ironbridge. A much needed leg stretch and quick hydration top up and tempted by Eley's pie shop and the final ride back home via the A49 seemed to pass in the blink of an eye.

Many thanks to Simon Jones (ride organiser), Martin Stuart (back Marker) and all who may be listed below for making it such a brilliant ride out (sorry if I have missed you off), looking forward to getting along to the next one on 29th April.
Mental note, when the back marker passes you it must be a direct route to the next stop lol

Tom McCann	Kawasaki Z1000SX	Peter Hendress	BMW GS1200
Simon Jones	BMW GS1200	Steve Bellamy	Triumph Trophy
Stuart Jones	BMW F800 GSA	Mark G	Yamaha FJR1300
Martin Stuart	BMW S1000R	John	Kawasaki ZZR1400

TIREDNESS CAN KILL

The motorway signs proclaiming that "Tiredness can kill" are based on the commonsense assumption that drivers could fall asleep at the wheel. Scientists have now discovered that the actual problem with sleep deprivation is that your brain cells switch off while you are still awake, leading to anything from forgetting your keys to car crashes.

Research suggests that brain cells fail to communicate with each other properly when a person is tired, affecting memory and visual perception.

Scientists scanned the brains of 12 sleep-deprived people and found how tiredness interfered with the ability of neurons to encode information and translate what was seen into conscious thought.

"We discovered that starving the body of sleep also robs neurons of the ability to function properly," said the report's senior author, Itzhak Fried, professor of neurosurgery at the David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA and Tel Aviv University.

"This paves the way for cognitive lapses in how we perceive and react to the world around us. The very act of seeing the pedestrian slows down in the driver's overtired brain. It takes longer for his brain to register what he perceives.

"Inadequate sleep exerts a similar influence on our brain as drinking too much. Yet no legal or medical standards exist for identifying overtired drivers on the road the same way we target drunk drivers."

The researchers asked patients to categorise images as fast as possible and discovered that the task became increasingly more difficult as the subjects became sleepier and their brain cells slowed down. "We were fascinated to observe how sleep deprivation dampened brain cell activity," said the lead author, Yuval Nir of Tel Aviv University. "Unlike the usual rapid reaction, the neurons responded slowly, fired more weakly and their transmissions dragged on longer than usual."

As well as cells slowing down, brainwaves also appeared to become less frequent, which suggested that the area of the brain was trying to sleep, the scientists said.

"This phenomenon suggests that select regions of the patients' brains were dozing, causing mental lapses, while the rest of the brain was awake and running as usual," Dr Fried said.

Sleep deprivation has been the subject of a number of studies and has already been linked to a higher risk of diabetes, obesity, depression and heart attacks. The Sleep Council estimates that the average Briton sleeps for only six and a half hours a night rather than the recommended eight.

Studies have found that not only do tired people eat more sugar, making them more vulnerable to diabetes; a lack of sleep can lead to insulin resistance where the body finds it more difficult to break down sugar.

Research last year also found that problems in getting to sleep, struggling to stay asleep and waking up tired increased the risk of a heart attack or stroke by 27 per cent, 11 per cent, and 18 per cent respectively.

The NHS also says that people who are well rested have better immunity, are slimmer, mentally healthier, more fertile and have a higher sex drive. [can't imagine this last bit would interest anybody though!, Ed]

[Ack: The Times]

CHAIRMAN'S CORNER: SOLUTION

- 1/. (Answer: Suicide.)
- 2/. (Answer: One - just you)
- 3/. (Answer: They are two of a set of triplets.)



FIVE TIPS FOR A SMOOTH DRIVE INTO SPRING

The clocks have gone forward and days are longer than nights for the next six months; it's time to get your car hale, hearty and 'beach body ready' in preparation for the spring. This week's tips give advice on getting your car ready for the warmer weather, from IAM RoadSmart's head of driving and riding standards, Richard Gladman.

Note: If you have friends and family who drive, please share these tips with them to help them stay safe on the road.

Lose weight; clear out those coats, boots, scarves and bags that took up permanent residence during the winter months. They add weight as well as taking up space and surplus weight means wasted fuel.

Cut down on the salt; modern cars are much less prone to rust than their forbearers, but corrosion-causing salt from gritted roads can build up under the wheel arches and the suspension. Use a hose pipe to flush the wheel arches clean; if you have a pressure washer, even better. If not, try washing the arches after driving on wet roads - the mud and grit will have softened. The neighbours might think you're peculiar but you'll reduce the risk of expensive repairs.

Test your vision; the demister puts a film of grime from traffic fumes on the inside of the windscreen which can spread bright sunshine into a blinding glare. Get the screen squeaky clean with water and detergent, dry with a microfibre cloth and crystal clear vision will be restored. Don't forget the other windows; clean screens rarely mist up so you'll need the heated rear window far less - another fuel saver.

Keep hay fever at bay; most cars have pollen filters, but they need changing periodically to remain efficient. Look in your handbook to find out how to get to the filter and if it looks bad, change it now. Some very good after-market filters are available online, often with a charcoal layer to filter out pollutants as well as pollen.

Don't get hot and bothered; air conditioning is a boon as the temperature rises, but it contains a special gas which can slowly leak away. If it gets too low, the air-con will blow warm instead of cold. Test it by turning the heater control to minimum, the heater fan to maximum and make sure the air-con is turned on (i.e., not in "eco" mode). If you don't feel an icy blast after a couple of minutes, the system may need "re-gassing"; a simple job which most garages have the equipment to do.

Richard said: "Treat your car to a spring clean. The efforts to wash and polish it will last a bit longer now the winter salt has gone. Now is a good time to spend a therapeutic Sunday morning tinkering."

JUNE / JULY NEWSLETTER

The only method available to receive our group's newsletter is to send your email address to distribution@warram.org.uk and ensure your mail browser does not reject messages from this address.



Contributions to the June /July newsletter are more than welcome. Please send them to: newsletter@warram.org.uk or pass them to any committee member. The deadline for next newsletter is Sunday 13th May 2018.



QR CODE

The group has set up a QR code - simply scan the image with a smartphone and it will take you to our website.



FACEBOOK

You can find us on Facebook - just look up Warrington Advanced Motorists. There is also a national IAM Facebook group: IAMRoadSmart.



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

[Cars] Sundays at 10:15: Every Sunday except Christmas and New Year and Easter Sunday	Observed Runs (car) Refresher Runs (car)	Fairfield & Howley NBH Project, Fairfield Street, WARRINGTON WA1 3AJ
[Bikes] On arrangement with your observer	Observed Runs (bikes)	On arrangement with your observer
Sunday 29 th April Sunday 27 th May	End of month run (bikes)	Poplar 2000, Lymm
Every Thursday at 19:00 (weather permitting)	Chippy Run (bikes)	Let's Eat Cafe and Tall Trees filling station layby (off A49 in Lower Whitley)
Wednesday 2 nd May at 19:30	Committee Meeting	Fairfield & Howley NP
Sunday 13 th May	Newsletter deadline	

Further details of all of these events can be found on our website:
www.warram.org.uk or by asking any committee member.

FINISHED READING? PASS IT ON....



Personal recommendations from members are one of the main ways we recruit new associates, so please feel free to pass on this newsletter.