

Warrington Group of Advanced Motorists

(Registered Charity Number 1048554)



An IAM RoadSmart affiliated Group for Cars and Bikes
<https://www.warram.org.uk>

Group Newsletter



February / March 2019

CHAIRMAN'S CORNER

I am pleased to introduce myself as the new Chairman for Warrington Group of Advanced Motorists.

But first and foremost I would like to pay tribute to our outgoing Chairman, Andrew Bloomer, Andrew has demonstrated excellent leadership whilst running the group. Andrew has decided to step down, but remain as a committee member.

The change in leadership has always been on the agenda for this year and Andrew and I agreed that a staggered hand-over would be beneficial to the group for continuity.

For those of you who do not know me, I have been driving for 50 years; my past employment has been with the Fire Service and Police. During this time I gained experience driving several types of vehicles from LGV's to motorcycles. About 4 years ago I joined the Warrington Group of Advanced Motorists and in that time I have qualified as National Observer, Masters Mentor and Local Observer Assessor for the car section.

I thoroughly enjoy assisting others to achieve their respective driving goals. From joining the group I have always been keen to help move the group forward and as a result 2 years ago I joined the committee as Vice Chairman and have been actively involved with the running of the group and I will embrace any changes which will be beneficial.

Please feel free to contact me or any other committee member with any issue or new ideas.

Ian Ross

AGM GROUP AWARDS 2018.....



Colin Keiley from the biking section, being presented with the 2018 " bubbles " award by Geoff Kelly at our annual Christmas meal, in appreciation of his contribution to the group activities.

CONGRATULATIONS

I'm delighted to announce that Ian Ross has recently applied to become a Local Observer Assessor on the Car side and has been accepted by IMI. This brings our number of Local Observer Assessors (LOA) to 4, being myself, Mike Lyne, Jean Carter & Ian. We are the people who deliver training to our Observers and also train and qualify anyone wanting to be become an Observer.

Well done Ian!

Andrew Bloomer
Chief Observer (Cars)

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS AND CONGRATULATIONS

Welcome to new members Lizbeth Spence, Jack Gynane, Jill Cudd, Kristina Boneva, Matt Thirsk and Owen Battye who have joined the Car section. Also, a warm welcome back to Ken Cockburn who has re-enrolled to take the test again after passing with the Warrington group some thirty odd years ago.

WELCOME

Should you have any questions or queries please ask and we will endeavour to resolve them.

Congratulations to Tony Barber on passing the car test.



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

DIRECT BANKING TRANSFER TO SETTLE YOUR SUBSCRIPTION

Many thanks to all members that have already used automated bank transfers to renew their 2018/19 annual subscription with the group. These were due 1st October and remain at £5. Details to make a bank transfer are as follows:-

Sort Code: 09-01-51 Account No: 71840801
Account Name: Warrington Group of Advanced Motorists

As you can appreciate there will be lots of entries all for £5 and so the treasurer requests that you place your name in the payment reference field. For those members who prefer traditional methods then a cheque payable to Warrington Advanced Motorists or cash can always be sent in the customary white or brown envelope to:- Mr Vince Scriven.
10 Martindale Road, Beechwood, Runcorn, Cheshire, WA7 2TU.

Associates still under training are exempt from this fee as are honorary members. We no longer need the membership form to be completed but please do contact our membership secretary if your personnel details have changed (contact@warram.org.uk). Receipt of your subscription will be deemed as allowing WAM to hold your personnel data in accordance with new GDP regulations 2018.

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

The recent backing of a scheme to build a bridge linking Scotland and Northern Ireland by former Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson and Arlene Foster of the DUP reminded me of the great project that revolutionised motorists' means of travelling to the continental mainland...the Channel Tunnel.

Opened by our Queen and President Francois Mitterand on the day after my birthday in 1994, you will have guessed I was privileged to be one of the first journalists to make the crossing both by car and the Eurostar. I also bought shares in the outfit (thinking that like those a great aunt bought in an obscure railway company in Canada in the 19th century which became part of the Canadian Pacific and made her a millionairess several times over) that the investment would do the same for me. Dividends in the tunnel have been dire - but my great grandchildren may still thank me for investing.

All of this takes me back to pre-tunnel days when ships provided the only means we could drive our way across to the rest of Europe. One of those trips was especially poignant - a week before the Herald of Free Enterprise sank off Zeebrugge in 1987 my wife and I were invited by its owners, Townsend Thoreson, to make the trip aboard that very ferry. I knew the press office staff very well; each of their lives were totally changed for the worse by the impact on them by the sinking in which almost 200 people were drowned.

The Townsend ferry was originally the only opposition to the railway-owned boats that enabled one to cross the Channel. The Dover to Dunkirk night train ferry service left Dover just after midnight and one was awakened at 3.30am to be ready for breakfast half an hour later. Disembarkation was at 4.15 - if the lock gates had been opened.

An early start for the delights of Brittany or beyond? Not so...the customs officers didn't arrive for work until after 6am.

Ellerman Wilson line's ferries took 16 hours to cross from Hull to Rotterdam; nowadays the magnificent North Sea Ferries ships have to slow down overnight so that customers can enjoy a good night's sleep - as long as the sea is in a friendly mood.

Not much fun was a return trip from the Loire Valley to La Havre to Portsmouth; a miscalculation meant that my wife and I and our four children arrived at the ferry port too late to book a hotel and so we had to sleep in the car in the terminal car park ahead of the morning crossing.

That event even had a precedent: we once arrived in the middle of the night at a Haven camp site in northern France, saw the main gate was closed, and bedded down in the car. We awoke next morning to see a sign at the gate - Welcome to the Domville family. Use the side gate; wine is in the fridge...

Naturally, I believe that being able to use a car increases the enjoyment of one's holiday in Europe - if you plan it right!

TRIP OF A LIFETIME....

As some of you may know, I put a tick in my Bucket List by travelling to New Zealand on the run up to Christmas with a couple of mates for a bike trip around the North and South Island. The actual tour was 16 days/17 nights, but we tagged on a couple of days either side of the tour so were gone for the best part of 3 weeks. We hired BMW FS850 GS bikes which were perfectly adequate for our purposes and started the tour at Auckland. Each day consisted of travelling around 150 miles although on one day we did do 258 miles.



On the North Island, where we spent just 4 days we took in Rotorua, Napier and Wellington and took a trip to the real Middle-earth on the most picturesque private farmland near Matamata in the North Island, where I visited the Hobbiton Movie Set from the Lord of the Rings film trilogy for a two-hour guided tour.

We then went on arguably the most scenic ferry ride in the world going from the North to the South Island via the Cook Strait before heading off to Nelson, Hanmer Springs, Punakaiki, Franz Josef, Queenstown, Te Anau, Milford Sound, Dunedin, Tekapo and finally our destination Christchurch.

There were far too many highlights to tell you about them all, from the glow worms at Te Anau to the 8th wonder of the world (as described by Rudyard Kipling) Milford Sound where we encountered dolphins and seals, to the stunning scenery of Fiords, glaciers, snow crested mountains and the like. For bike fans and anyone who's seen the film "The World's Fastest Indian", we also saw Burt Munro's 2 bikes that he set land speed records on at Bonneville in 1967 at the tender age of 68 on a 47 year old bike.



To cap it all, the roads were near empty and kept in good order (very few pot holes encountered) and for those of you who don't know, New Zealand has a greater land mass than the UK but only has 4.5M occupants, whereas we have 66M, so you can appreciate that we generally had the roads to ourselves.

This was a brilliant trip with 2 great mates in a fantastic country where the locals were probably the friendliest people I've ever encountered.

I'll leave you with a few photos to try and give you a flavour of the beautiful country that is New Zealand.

[Andrew Bloomer]

SMARTER OR NOT?

The internal combustion engine has changed the world as much as almost any other invention of the last 150 years. The car has reshaped our cities and colonised our imaginations. It seems to offer autonomy for everyone. There is something almost delightful in the buoyant detachment from reality of advertisements showing mass-produced cars, almost all impossible for any but obsessive's to tell apart, marketed as symbols of individuality and of freedom when most of their lives will be spent making short journeys on choked roads.

For all the fuss made about top speeds, cornering ability and acceleration, the most useful widgets on a modern car are those which work when you're going very slowly indeed: parking sensors, sound systems, and navigation apps which will show a way around upcoming traffic jams. This seems to be one of the few areas where the benefit of sharing personal information comes straight back to the sharer: because Google knows where almost all its users are, and how fast they are moving almost all the time, it can spot traffic congestion very quickly and suggest ways round it.

The problem comes when everyone is using a smartphone which tells them to avoid everyone else with a smartphone. Traffic jams abound where no one has enough information to avoid them. When a lucky few have access to the knowledge, they will benefit greatly. But when everyone has perfect information, traffic jams simply spread onto the side roads that seem to offer a way round them. This is exactly what the tragedy of the commons would predict, and now there is research to show that it is actually happening.

This new congestion teaches us two things. The first is that the promises of technology will never be realised as fully as we hope; they will be limited by their unforeseen and unintended consequences. Sitting in a more comfortable car in a different traffic jam is pleasant - or at least less unpleasant than life was in the dark ages before smartphones - but hardly the liberation that once seemed to be promised. The second is that self-organisation will not get us where we want to go. The invisible hand does not straighten out the world, but knots it up more tightly. The efforts of millions of drivers to get ahead do not miraculously produce a situation in which everyone does better than before, but one in which almost everyone does rather worse. Central control and collective organisation can produce smoother and fairer outcomes, though even that much is never guaranteed.

Similar limits can be foreseen for the much greater advances promised by self-driving cars. In March 2018, one operated by Uber struck and killed a woman pushing her bicycle across a wide road in Arizona. This was the first recorded death involving a car which was supposed to be fully autonomous. (An earlier fatal crash killed the driver of a Tesla Model S car that was on semi-autonomous autopilot mode.) Experts have said that it suggests a "catastrophic failure" of technology, and have noted that the human "safety driver" in the car did not appear to have been monitoring the road in automatically recorded video.

Increasingly, even Silicon Valley is having to acknowledge the costs of the intoxicating hurry that characterises its culture. When these appear only on balance sheets, they are easily written off as externalities, but when that momentum is translated into the physical world, the costs are higher. What traffic teaches us is that headlong and uncontrolled change is as likely to make us collateral damage as it is to benefit us, and that thoughtful regulation is necessary for a better future.

[ack: [The Guardian Editorial, 25 Mar 2018](#)]

IAM E-MODULES FREE FOR A LIMITED TIME

As part of IAM RoadSmart's mission to improve driver skill and road safety in the UK, the charity's e-learning modules are designed to help non-advanced drivers refresh their knowledge of the rules of the road and boost their confidence behind the wheel. If you know a non-advanced driver who you think could benefit from our e-learning modules, we are currently offering them free of charge. Please click www.iamroadsmart.com/courses/e-learning-modules for further information, and pass on our discount code 'Freemodule' to access the online course(s).

IN MEMORIAM



Mike Quinton, Chief Executive Officer, and the Trustees and staff of IAM RoadSmart are sad to hear that Peter Shaw, our former Vice Chair, passed away last week following a long illness. Peter had been Chief Executive of Thatcham Research for seven years until last summer. He was instrumental in developing significant research into vehicle safety during his time at Thatcham and was a dedicated supporter of IAM RoadSmart and its charitable aims. Mike Quinton said: "We are extremely saddened by Peter's passing. His commitment to road safety was absolute and his contribution to our charity was both highly significant and very much appreciated. We pass on our sincere condolences to his family and friends."

[ack: Inform: Weekly NewsIssue 230: 30 January 2019]

IAM MEMBERS RECEIVE DISCOUNT OFF GERBING HEATED CLOTHING.

Gerbing, a leading supplier of heated motorcycle clothing, is providing IAM RoadSmart members with a 15% discount on all orders totalling £50 or more placed throughout 2019. The code to use is IAM15 and the full range can be seen at www.gerbing.co.uk

FUNNIES.

Two dogs are walking along a street. They are passed by a third dog driving a lorry load of logs. One turns to the other and says: "He started fetching a stick and built up the business from there."

Two cheese trucks ran into each other. De brie was everywhere. (oh come on!!)

BIKERS AND TECHNOLOGY - MAKING THE RIGHT CONNECTIONS?

I read a lot about autonomous and connected cars every day in my work but very little about how these technologies could help improve motorcycling safety. This week however, I have come across two reports which suggest great potential if we can get researchers, bike manufacturers and riders to work together to embrace new technology.

The first report from Sweden suggest that the number of motorcycle accidents where riders crashed while braking has been halved since 2015. These figures come from an insurance company called 'Svedea' and have been welcomed by the Swedish Motorcyclists' Association SMC as evidence of the positive effects of Anti-lock Braking Systems (ABS). They became mandatory for all motorcycles above 126cc sold in Europe in 2016. SMC has worked assiduously "to inform about the benefits of ABS and arranged advanced training for riders on the correct braking techniques".

They firmly believe that it has now been proven that it has become safer to ride a motorcycle with ABS than without. The article however, also highlighted a comment from 'Svedea' that it is still more difficult to collect information regarding safety equipment, such as ABS and traction control, for motorcycles than for cars. This means that while the overall benefits seem clear they are yet to offer insurance discounts for ABS fitted bikes in Sweden - you win some/you lose some!!

My colleague Bert Morris then sent me a major report for the USA Department of Transport on the potential for technology to save the lives of those on two wheels. The top technology they recommend is ABS but also the need to look at the BMI (as opposed to HMI). That's 'Biker Machine Interface' and it's clearly even more important than 'Human Machine Interface' that we know so much about in cars. New tech must enhance the rider experience and not add to distraction.

The report is a big read but in essence it is calling for more engagement with the biker community to get them involved in research and to encourage them to embrace new technology. There could certainly be a role here for IAM RoadSmart and its members to help riders give useful feedback to research institutions. The reports also warns about big data and security concerns which also figure highly in car drivers worries for the future. One of the advantages of more 'connected bikes' could be the ability to increase safety, enhance mobility, and collect more robust data on motorcycle usage (speeds, volumes, etc.) and safety. It's really good to see the positive role that motorcycling and new technology can play in future mobility solutions getting into the mainstream.

You can find the report here <https://rosap.ntl.bts.gov/view/dot/37089>

[Ack: Inform and Neil Greig, IAM RoadSmart director of policy and research]

SUDDENLY, BUT IT'S OK.... AS I'M DEAD RIGHT

Extract from a Blog post posted on 07/12/18 |

With the festive season now upon us my mind occasionally turns back to Christmas 1990, 14 December to be precise on a very cold early turn.

An ordinary routine patrol day now etched forever on my memory. This was to become a defining career moment, attending my first fatal road crash. As a police officer I had achieved my dream job, I was now a traffic officer. I had attended numerous sudden deaths in the preceding five years, but with that white cap and bright yellow coat came a big responsibility: the job of investigating why people had died on the road. It is possible to train in all the aspects of the law, become proficient at dealing with collisions, but nothing in reality can train you for that first time you have to search someone, now a lifeless body, who has been involved in a catastrophic collision, for something to confirm their identity. Then once you find out who they are, you are making that dreaded trip to a front door and in an instant, your words will change a family's life forever.

Over the years I investigated numerous collisions from slight bumps to fatal crashes, and in the main people had those collisions for the following relatively simple reasons, sometimes for more than one of these reasons:

- Speed on approach - the big one, just arriving at situations too fast for the circumstances with no time to react to road or traffic conditions
- Cornering - see above and often with no idea how to assess them correctly
- Overtaking - most are never taught this skill so they learn by experience
- Distractions - once it was tuning the radio or changing the cassette - now mobile phones
- Intoxication - from both alcohol and drugs

Have you ever noticed when people talk about a driving or riding incident that happens on the road, they use that word - 'suddenly.' But was it? Was it really suddenly, or was there something to be seen or anticipated? You listen now when people go to great lengths to tell you their personal story and you will hear what I mean. 'Suddenly all the traffic stopped in front of me.' 'Suddenly he just pulled out from the junction.' 'I was overtaking and suddenly a car appeared.'

In advanced driving and riding we use the term TUG to refer to the information that is around us, i.e. we take, use and give information at all times to make an informed driving and riding plan. We use the information to plan what can be seen, what cannot be seen and what we can reasonably expect to develop. So ultimately we observe, anticipate, prioritise, decide and act accordingly for the prevailing circumstances.

So if we all did this much better would there be zero collisions? Well probably not quite, as to err is human and humans are behind the wheel or the handlebars. Personally, I suspect there would be a hugely significant reduction in people being killed or seriously injured.

Another one to watch out for is those who are exercising their rights. 'But it's my right of way' I hear them cry and profess it wasn't their fault that the other vehicle 'suddenly just pulled out' into their path. We don't actually have a right of way but we do have a priority over others depending on road signage and markings. But you know what ... there is nothing worse than being 'dead right.' As it doesn't matter if you are in the right but dead - as you will still be dead.

Instead of thinking 'it's my right of way' we really should be thinking: 'What is my plan to mitigate the possibility of them pulling out in my path,' 'Can I do anything to help the situation' etc. etc. That is much better than being dead. As being dead is very final and someone has to come and deal with that.

In closing I want everyone to reflect on those two things, the 'suddenly' and being 'dead right.' Neither actually need to happen. A driving licence is a privilege earned not an absolute right and we all have a duty to equitably share the road space with each other.

No one wants to receive 'that' knock on the door this Christmas, or at any other time of the year for that matter. I speak for those police colleagues still serving, in saying that they actually don't want to have to knock on your door either.

[Ack: Inform and Shaun Cronin, IAM RoadSmart regional service delivery team manager (southern) [Ed's comments - I appreciate that this article could have appeared in the last edition leading up to the festive season but the message could apply to any time of the year.]

NEW UK DRIVING LAWS 2019 EDITION

With an increasing number of cars on the roads, it's no surprise to see a rise in regulations, changes and laws.

- Learner drivers can now use the motorway
Previously motorists have had to wait until they have passed both parts of their driving test before driving on the motorway. As of June 2018, learners can now use these roads with a qualified instructor in a dual-control car on their driving lessons. This will be optional for learner drivers.
- You could be fined for overtaking a cyclist too close
A 1.5m gap between car and cyclist when overtaking is required according to The Highway Code. This is now going to be supported by fines following 2018 law changes. If motorists do not leave enough space, they risk three points and a £100 fine.
- MOT Regulations
The defect categories have now increased - something which drivers will need to understand. These now include:
Dangerous - fail. Risk to the environment or road safety and needs repairing in order to pass the MOT
Major - fail. Potential risk to the environment or safety and needs repairing in order to pass the MOT
Minor - safety is unaffected however it's advisable to repair as soon as possible
Advisory - there's a chance this could become a problem in the future
Pass - the current legal standard has been met

April / May 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 April/May 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 17th March 2019.



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.

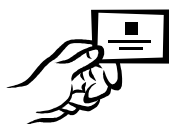


DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

[Cars] Sundays at 10:15: Every Sunday except Christmas and New Year and Easter Sunday	Observed Runs (car) Refresher Runs (car)	Holiday Inn Woolston Grange Avenue Woolston, Warrington WA1 4PX
[Bikes] On arrangement with your observer	Observed Runs (bikes)	On arrangement with your observer
Sunday 31 th March	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 1 st February at 19:30	Committee Meeting	Holiday Inn Warrington, WA1 4PX
Sunday 17 th March	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.