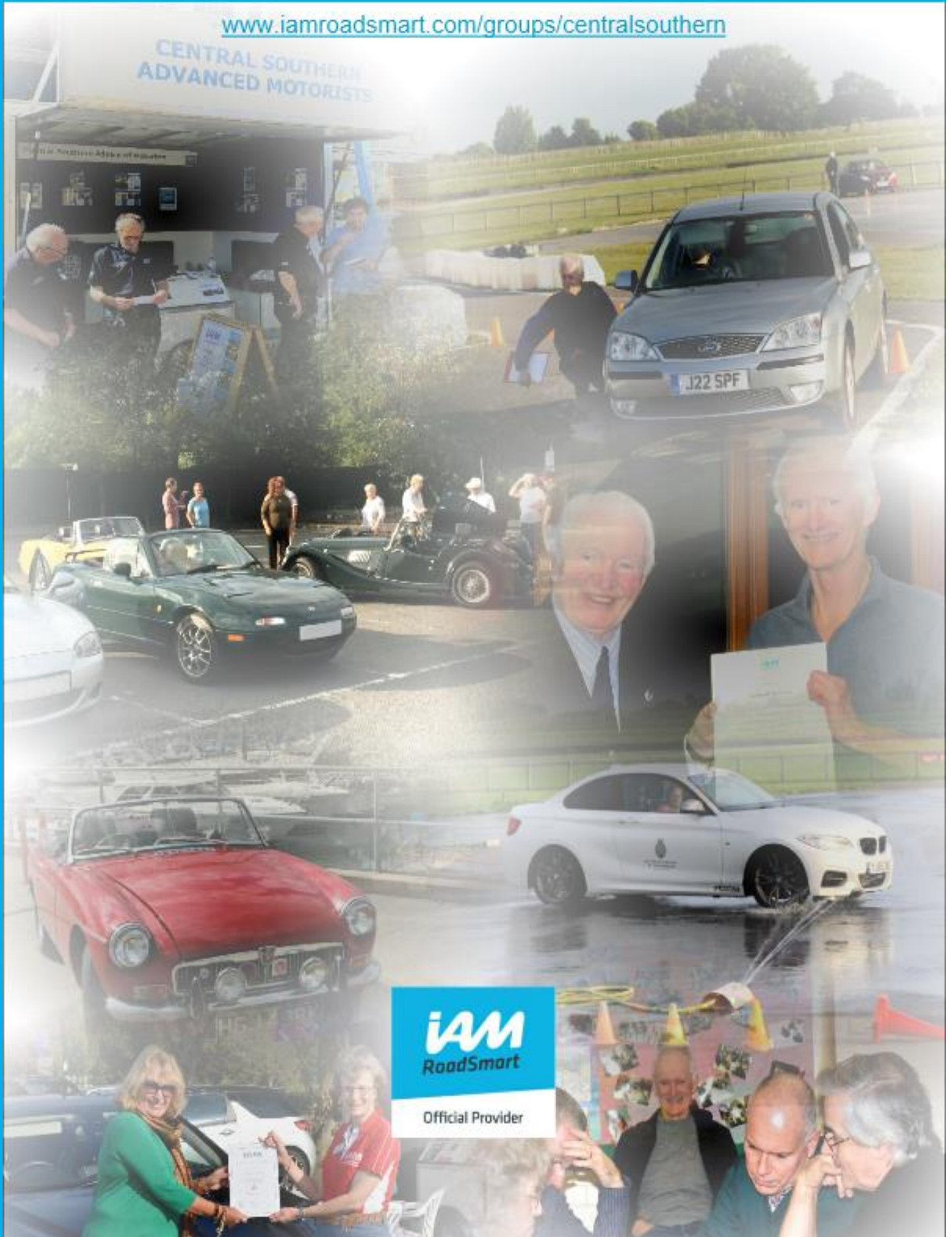


Spring Newsletter 2022

CENTRAL SOUTHERN ADVANCED MOTORISTS

www.iamroadsmart.com/groups/centralsouthern



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Dennis Clement

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Registered address 72 Rushams Road, Horsham, West Sussex, RH12 2NZ

Registered Charity No. 1079142

From the Editor



Welcome to our Spring Newsletter for 2022. I need to remind members that if they haven't had a email from me to tell them that this newsletter is ready on our website for downloading that it could be because their email address on the IAM Roadsmart membership database needs updating.

I recently enjoyed a day out at Sammy Miller's Motorcycle Museum at Bashley in the New Forest. There are over 450 motor cycles to be seen there many of which I remembered from my own days before a growing family moved me to four wheels. For those of you interested in bikes this would make a great day out and whilst there is a charge for the entry to the museum it is only £12.00 or £10.00 for seniors. There are also animals, a restaurant and a craft shop for any members of your family not interested in motorcycles and there is no entry charge for these other attractions. Sammy Miller MBE is a motorcycling legend. 11 times British Champion and winner of over 1400 events, with a competition career spanning more than 50 years! The Museum houses one of the finest collections of fully restored motorcycles in the world, including factory racers and exotic prototypes, with the collection constantly evolving as new bikes are acquired. This is a living museum with almost every motorcycle in the museum in full running order.

Being of an age when most men would have had their first experience of motorised transport on the roads astride a motorcycle or a scooter I was reminded of the owner of a transport business who once told me that, when interviewing for lorry drivers, if he had two candidates where everything was equal between them but one also held a motorcycle licence he would hire the driver with motorcycle experience because he believed that they would be more aware of what was going on around them when on the road. Now I don't know if the statistics bear this out but it sounds like a good theory to me.

Further into this edition Paul Davies, our Chief Observer, talks about our MDU (Mobile Display Unit) which is taken out to help in our recruitment of new Associates. As people leave the group or change their vehicles to ones without the ability to tow we have a dwindling number of volunteers to tow the MDU which is box shaped and the size of a smaller caravan. If you are able to offer your services in towing the MDU to and from where it's parked near Chichester could you please let Paul know. Paul can be emailed at chief.observer@csam.org.uk.

Recent editions of this newsletter have had much to say about electric vehicles, and rightly so as this is the way our Government is directing us. However I have an observation regarding EV design. Why do so many manufacturers put the charging point at the front of the vehicle, thereby encouraging people to drive in and reverse out of their parking places when we all know that it is far safer to reverse in and then to drive out. How difficult would it be for these manufacturers to place the charging port to the rear?

I am always looking for articles for this newsletter, if you have anything to say which you think our members would appreciate please forward a copy to me. Contributors, both old and new, would you please forward your work to my newsletter email address, editor@csam.org.uk.

Andy Wilson, Newsletter and Website Editor

CENTRAL SOUTHERN ADVANCED MOTORISTS

Forthcoming CSAM Events

Members are advised to check the Events page of the CSAM website before setting out in case of last minute changes. Please click on the links on the website to find maps showing approximate location of venues.

Unless otherwise indicated, events and activities are open to all Members; everyone is encouraged to come along and, if they wish, to bring a guest or family member(s).

[CSAM Events Page Link](#)

Date	Event	Location
Saturday 2 nd April 9:00am	Observer Training Day	BC
Thursday 21 st April 7:30pm	A talk by Magistrates in the Community	AFH
Sunday 8 th May From 9:30am	Free Observed Runs for Associates and members of the public with one of our highly qualified Observers. Full Members are also encouraged to book a refresher drive. See website for other dates, then please contact our Chief Observer Paul Davies to book. Contact details on page one.	NCP

BC: Billingshurst Centre, Roman Way, Billingshurst, RH14 9EW

NCP: Northgate Car Park, Chichester (entrance on eastern side of large roundabout)

AFH: Allan Fletcher Hall, Offington Park Methodist Church, South Farm Road, Worthing, BN14 7TN (entrance to the car park is in Broomfield Avenue)

From Our Chairman



Back on the road again

It's great to see a steady increase in the number of Advanced Driving Course certificates that I receive in the post. Not mine I hasten to add, the last once I earned was quite a few years ago now. Whenever an Associate passes the course, in addition to receiving a certificate themselves, their local group also receives a copy for presentation purposes.

This is a very good indicator that we are getting back to our normal on-the-road activities again with an increasing flow of passes and firsts. Our observing team, while not quite back up to 100% strength, is back and plying their trade well and under the skilful leadership and guidance of Paul, our new Chief Observer.

However, these certificates, while a very good and welcome sign, are stacking up a little in my study. This highlights the need to organise an event to celebrate the success of Associates, which in turn celebrates the success of the observing team. So please watch this space for news... especially if you passed the course in the last few years.

On the subject of events, I'm really pleased to see more in this regard, with the Christmas dinner & bowling, and a trip to Brooklands. My heartfelt thanks go out to Sally for organising

these. Please do show your support and appreciation by signing up to one or two during the year

I will add my, now usual, call for volunteers for the committee. We will need three new members to step up in October for a stint. Both Sheila and John have signalled their intent to stand down at the next AGM, so we will need a new group Secretary and Associate Liaison; both are very rewarding roles and essential to the smooth running of the group. If you're interested would like to learn more about them, I'm sure Sheila or John wouldn't mind giving you an overview. In addition, we have not had the Vice Chair role filled for a number of years and its really time to fix that, so if you fancy being Chair in a year or two, please do consider joining us in this capacity.

So, if you'd like the opportunity to help steer and guide CSAM over the next few years, please do get in touch with a call to me on 07483 233740.

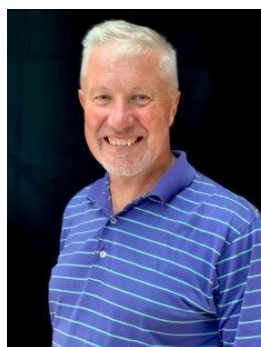
Finally, I'm pleased to see the dawn is already in progress when my alarm clock goes off in the morning, indicating Spring is well and truly here and a return to more pleasant driving conditions. Not that we can sit back of course; it's in these periods of transition that we must be even more observant as the prevailing conditions change around us (and new hedge growth covers road signs).

Stay safe,

David.

Chairman, Central Southern Advanced Motorists

Chief Observer's Corner



As we look forward to spring days, it's good to see the activity of our associates and observers since Christmas ramping up as restrictions are lifted on our ability to undertake observed drives and support all our associates on their journey to becoming an advanced motorist. We currently have over 50 associates supported by 27 active observers across the region and by the end of March, we will have put 9 associates through their test since the beginning of the year. I would like to thank all our volunteer observers for their time and dedication working with all of our associates and hope that as the summer approaches we see more and more people getting back to driving and passing their advanced driving test! After such a disjointed period of over two years, it will be great to get more stability to everyone's development and course completion.

Talking of our observers, it's important that we support all observers with maintaining their own development and skills that are required for the role supporting our associates. Every observer undertakes regular training and assessment to ensure that they are up to date with current standards and requirements for observing that IAM Roadsmart set for us as a group. Observers currently train and qualify in one of two ways. Local observers are trained by existing observers and once the training programme is completed and assessed to the required

standard, they are approved by one of our qualified local observer assessors. An alternative that many observers choose to take, including many local observers is to progress your training to a level that is assessed directly by an IAM approved assessor – i.e. an external assessment, to be awarded a National Observer qualification, which is valid for a period of 5 years before being required to be re assessed. To keep observers up to date we also hold two training days a year where all observers and trainee observers are invited to attend. These training days include a number of talks, discussion and the opportunity to undertake check drives with other observers. Each observer is required to attend at least one training day a year to keep active and in circumstances where that is not always possible, individual assessments will be carried out by team leaders and observer assessors. Observers are crucial to our ability to support and provide guidance to all our associates and we are always keen to welcome new observers to the team, and if you feel you would like to join the team of over 30 observers based across our region we would love to hear from you!. We provide all the training you will need. You just need to have passed your advanced driving test, be a good communicator with good “people” skills and be keen to help others do the same. If you are interested in becoming an observer please contact me at the email address below.

At the end of February the Highway Code was updated and the big change, amongst others has been the introduction of the concept of a hierarchy of road users. As roads get busier, we all need to share the road space with other users, and by setting a principle based on priority by vulnerability, we all need to make adjustments in our driving, however small, to make the most of the new guidelines, maintaining safe progress. We are all getting use to this, and the IAM has provided some clarity to the guidelines in the new Highway Code on their website. The hardcopy version of the new Highway Code is due to be published early April 2022.

We will have had our first Sunday open session for associates, members and the public at Northgate in Chichester in mid-March. To keep these sessions going, we need volunteers – both observers to take individuals on drives and members to help attend the stand our display unit we have on site. This becomes an increasingly difficult thing to do without the volunteers that regularly do this for us. Our next day will be in May – details to follow, but I am interested in any other opportunities to do something similar in other centres within our region – Brighton, Crawley / Horsham and Worthing maybe? Can you help? Please get in touch if you are able to support us with these initiatives.

Finally, I thought I would reflect on a recent trip to Iceland (not the food store) and I was surprised at how many electric vehicles were driving around Reyjavik. For those of us with Electric or hybrid vehicles, the immediate thought of an electric car in a sub-zero climate is range..?.. The temperature impacts range on an EV substantially so why all these EVs in Iceland? Surely they can't be efficient? But Iceland generates the vast majority of its electricity from geothermal power sources which means the price of electricity is very cheap compared to imported fuel prices and the electricity prices we are used to coupled with the fact that over 65% of the population live in Reyjavik and its surrounding areas, most journeys will be quite local. A different perspective on need and economics!

Paul Davies

Chief Observer

CENTRAL SOUTHERN ADVANCED MOTORISTS

Membership Mumbblings!

This my first Newsletter and I have to admit that I’m still finding my feet and trying to fill Matt’s shoes to mix my metaphors. I must first thank Matt for all his hard work over the last few years.

To introductions: I’ve been an IAM Member for 14 years (where does time go?), an Observer for 5 years and a Masters for 6. Having recently been through my Masters Recertification exam, I can empathise with all our associates and recently qualified full members! My driving experience is less varied some of our members – no HGVs or exotic sports cars! These days, it is restricted mainly to local driving. However, any and every drive is an advanced drive and an opportunity to enhance our skills.

Speaking of exams, I would like to congratulate and welcome our 6 recently qualified associates: Lisa Carmel, Kenneth Carter, Dave Cheeseman, Matthew Davies, Ben Humphreys and Adam Thompson. Also, a warm welcome to our 9 new associates – I hope that you are all enjoying the process of becoming an advanced driver.

So to our membership numbers more generally. We currently have 275 members in total which includes 187 Full members, 13 Fellows 60 Associates. As we start to emerge into “the new normal” a number of members have chosen to retire from driving and others have moved out of the area so our membership has decreased a little but with so many new associates, the group continues to have a healthy future.

Having recently had to sit in the hot seat for an IAM exam, what advice can I offer associates? Well, it is the same advice that we should all follow for every drive. Remember that driving is what you are doing right now, not “..... whilst I drive”. Secondly, IPSGA is your friend – use it as a framework to focus on. This will help you concentrate and, when on test, give you something to use to displace the nerves.

Look out into the distance and back to the car, take in the full width of the road then check your mirrors. What did you see? What could therefore happen? What are you going to do about it, what are your options? There is always something of note, ask yourself what has changed since I last looked? It might be major – a child running towards the road ahead or more subtle – you’ve come onto a worn area of road. Perhaps you need to Give information, adjust your Position, your Speed or your Gear. Perhaps circumstances indicate Acceleration is appropriate.

Finally, ask yourself what your observer would be asking you or suggesting to you.

Whatever the reason for your drive, make it safe and systematic one.

David Stevens

Membership Administrator



What would a cat driving an F1 car sound like ?

Miiiiiiiiaaaaaooooowwwwww.....

Associates' News



Since the last Newsletter six Associates have completed their courses, up from four in the last reporting period. This shows that slowly but surely we are coming back to our pre-COVID levels of activity. We also have three Associates with Test Dates confirmed in the next two months and two Associates waiting for pre-Test Drives.

Our Chichester sessions will restart on 13 March after the winter break. They continue to be a primary source of contact with the public and an important venue for Observers to meet up and exchange ideas. Already, the March session is fully booked including two potential new Members.

Since my last report 14 Associates have joined CSAM, up from 12 and 9 in the previous two reporting periods. We have one taster session booked which hopefully will result in a further new member. Again, these statistics paint a positive picture of a return to normal.

All this interest and activity means that our Waiting List is increasing in areas where we are short of active Observers. Additionally, some Associates whose membership of IAM had lapsed during lockdowns have renewed and re-joined the Waiting List that now stands at 10.

The average waiting time for a new Associate is now close to 4 Months. Again, I would ask every Observer to look closely at their current workload to see if they have space for another Associate and if so, please let me know.

Just for information to Associates, although I would hope that nobody will need this, the cost of a retest from 1 April 2022 will increase to £45 from the current £39.

With Spring arriving and COVID in retreat let us take this opportunity to progress our Associates to complete their courses and enjoy a summer of unrestricted driving pleasure.

John France

Associate Liaison



A motorist is stopped in stationary traffic on motorway for an hour. Then he sees some men walking down the lines of cars talking to the drivers. One man gets to him and says "The reason for the hold-up is some terrorists have captured Grant Shapps, Minister for Transport and the man ultimately responsible for Smart Motorways. The terrorists are holding him just down the road and saying if they do not get a ransom of £10 million they will douse him in petrol and set him on fire so we are taking up a collection."

"How much is each person giving?" asks the driver.

"Most people are donating a litre." Comes the reply.

News from Worthing Hub

The February Worthing Hub meeting was very successful with Katy Bourne, Police and Crime Commissioner for Sussex as our guest speaker. She gave a very interesting talk about her role as and how the focus of policing in Sussex is very much based on what local people have identified as their priorities. The talk was very well received by those present and we look forward to a return visit in the future.



The next Worthing Hub meeting is on Thursday 21 April when we look forward to welcoming the Community Magistrates. The talk will focus around the court system in general and they also plan to run a "mock trial" where we run through a scripted trial and have to decide if the defendant is guilty or not. We have had the Magistrates before and they were very popular.



If you have not already booked your place for our trip to Brooklands Museum on 16 July you need to do so very soon. The total cost, including transport and a guided tour of the museum is just £19. The coach will pick up at Worthing and Horsham. The deadline for booking your place is 18 March. Details have already been sent out but if you need to know more please let me know.

Sally Holmes
Worthing Hub
worthing@csam.org.uk

A Hybrid surprise (An article by Gordon Farquharson, Chairman of Guildford Group and reproduced here with his permission)

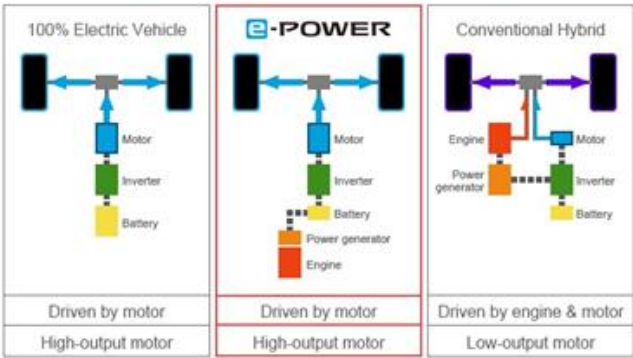
When mentoring GAM associates we always stress the importance of knowing your weapon. We would expect an associate to be able to vocalise, be sensitive and maximise the attributes of the vehicle. Typically this would include power source, transmission, and drive train. We recently hired a modest 'Nissan Note' to drive around Hokkaido, Japan. The hire car reservation wasn't vehicle specific, just identifying size class, automatic and including essential Sat-Nav. Imagine our surprise when we discovered what we were driving only when we had set off.

The booking process worked fine, the car was ready, the hire firm rep was charming (no English), and all the driving and technical instructions in Japanese. Now, if you use Google Translate (via a camera) you'll find it rather flaky dealing with Kanji characters used in Chinese and Japanese writing. So we jumped into our black Nissan Note e-Power. We had no idea what this car was under the skin, so without time to research off we went into the Sapporo traffic.....clearly it was 2 pedal auto with a traditional looking auto selector with a normal and sport mode. In the traffic all seemed normal.

CENTRAL SOUTHERN ADVANCED MOTORISTS



Then we noticed some unusual things. First the engine speed related to road speed seemed disconnected, auto engine start/stop didn't directly relate to the vehicle start/stop and there was a modest size energy graphic on the dashboard.....we had rented a petrol hybrid car. We already knew it was a petrol car as diesels are very rare in Japan. Watching the graphic and sensing the engine note I realised this was a 'series hybrid', generally not found in the UK other than in the new Honda CRV and the Vauxhall Ampera. The BMW i3 is a little different again in that it is a full EV with the ability to extend range with a small petrol engine powered generator. What a surprise! My experience with hybrid cars has been with parallel hybrids like Toyota and Lexus models and their competitors.



What is the difference between series and parallel hybrid? We explored the principles in an earlier GAM Newsletter. In simple terms a parallel hybrid uses a petrol internal combustion engine (ICE) and electric motor (powered from a relatively small battery) both coupled to the drive train, an automatic gearbox (CVT or DCT) for

the petrol engine, and a sophisticated computerised management system to optimise power delivery and battery charging. On the other hand, a series hybrid is somewhat simpler. The vehicle is always driven by the electric motor (powered from a slightly larger battery of 3-5 kWh capacity, there is no gearbox, and a small 3 cylinder ICE charges the battery as required. Braking by electrical regeneration is provided. The following diagram illustrates the differences.

Why have Nissan gone down this route? I decided to look into this and found some interesting articles. This style of hybrid allows Nissan to share many principles and components with their EV Nissan Leaf, the car is much simpler and cheaper to make, and you get all the EV performance advantages without the need to plug in. Of course you get tail pipe emissions, but these are minimised because the ICE operates intermittently at optimum efficiency to charge the small battery.

What is it like to drive, does it work? How to summarise in a few words? I would say the Nissan Note e-Drive is a simple effective small town car, comfortable up to 120 kph for short runs, quite quiet for a small car, and reasonably economic (50-75 mpg) depending on your right foot.

Would it matter if I had no interest in the technical stuff? The car is sufficiently conventional to operate enabling you to jump in and drive away safely, the system of car control can be readily applied as for any automatic vehicle but with the additional need to use regenerative braking for maximum efficiency. Therefore, I would conclude that you don't need to know how it works, but an Advanced Driver would want to know.

Helpful Nissan promotional video here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EYVZ8dix36I>

Whilst writing I thought you might be interested in some jottings about 'Driving experiences in Japan.' The culture influences the way Japanese drive, and you immediately notice it as soon as you take to the road driving or as a passenger.....respectful, careful, obedient, polite and calm are all terms that come to mind. The roads we used were generally in excellent condition, no sign of Surrey potholes.

Street furniture - Generally the Japanese seem to love signs, notices and posters. On the roads lines and signs are in abundance, but always in good condition.

Speed limits – We thought we should stick to the speed limits only to find the 80 kph limit on many dual-carriageways was completely ignored by the locals because they consider them unnecessary. We were overtaken by cars travelling at more than 120 kph.

Rest and fuelling stops – clean toilets usually with the corner of the loo paper folded showing they have been recently cleaned.

Fuelling – Fully automated, no human assistance, one problem everything in Japanese. Solution find a friendly local with a smattering of English and pump expertise. Thankfully we found the Japanese so friendly and helpful. I love the high throughput gas stations with ceiling mounted pumps and dangling hoses. There were very few EV charging points in evidence.

Gordon Farquharson – GAM National Observer



MYSTERIES AND HORSHAM HORRORS

Slowly over recent months we have begun to resume more normal patterns of social behaviour including driving more frequently. The roads have filled up again and there is a slightly uneasy feeling that all is as it was except it isn't. The figures on the TV news for infections and deaths are horribly high, yet it's a human habit to get used to things repeated and we're quite inured to the daily tale of others' woes. Put in perspective, the death numbers per twenty four hours expressed as a weekly average yield a figure equivalent to a Lockerbie air disaster every day. Nevertheless, we drive on.

Recently there was a news item on the death toll on our roads and it seems as if the latest estimated figure shows a disappointing increase in the total to about 1,600 from the 1,460 recorded in 2020. The latter number is a 17% fall from 2019 which shouldn't be so surprising as road traffic fell by 21% in the year of lockdown. (House of Commons Library)

If the reported increase is confirmed then it raises an interesting question. Did the experience of lockdown, with much reduced traffic on the roads, breed dangerous careless

habits? Did we let down our guard and take unwise risks on emptier roads, risks which have since proven fatal as traffic built up again?

Readers, do let us know your experiences to confirm or deny this impression.

Here in Horsham my impressions are that conditions are worse and driving has become a little bit more careless than it was, not by much but noticeably so.

Let's begin somewhat further north on the A 23 just past Gatwick Airport. There's a stretch of dual carriageway which leads to a roundabout with the A 23 taking a right turn to continue on towards Horley. We slowed for the roundabout, indicating right, in the right lane, glancing across the approaching traffic lanes, preceded by a mirror check. All clear until a van clipped us on the left wing mirror as he undertook us at speed, careered around the island and shot over to the right and off down a side road much to the horn-blowing annoyance of everyone else. Was it carelessness, or was the driver drunk or drugged?

Closer to home, we have the Harwood Road which leads out of Horsham in the direction of Crawley. We didn't encounter anyone this particular Saturday noon but we were aware of them. A huge gouged pair of skid marks ploughed across the green island for about twenty meters -- it's a large tree crowned island -- and were visible too on the pedestrian refuge before the junction. Whoever drove that vehicle must have come at high speed up the Harwood road and completely missed the looming roundabout. They hit the curved curb of the crossing at the meeting of the road and the roundabout, shot clean over the roundabout and were halted by the earth and grass on the central hillock. When we saw the evidence there was nothing else in sight to tell the tale -- no wreckage, no damaged trees, just the possibility that the concrete curb had limited the impact on the landscape. If there had been anyone coming around that roundabout, they would have driven into disaster.

Reckless driving might be expected, I suppose, late at night and on dual carriageways or motorways out of town. Don't be too sure. Some mad driving happens in surprising places. Walking along the Carfax which is the central square of Horsham one evening at nine o'clock, I was obliged to pause on the pavement by a black Mercedes doing a fishtail skid right in front of me on the raised crossing. It takes some determined mishandling to provoke a skid in such a car and this certainly was determined. The driver skittered away sideways down the square, wheels spinning and the car drifting wildly, out of control. It righted itself fifty meters further on and the unabashed driver sped off, presumably to build up speed for his next dodgem car display.

Was this more drugs or drink? I regularly sift through the summary of court hearings as reported in the West Sussex County Times and week after week more than half the dozen cases reported are for dangerous or careless driving, usually with drink or drugs involved. If you think that's a 'late at night' problem then reconsider. Quite frequently the offence occurred in the day time or early evening, well within the hours when there are many road users about. My presumed brush with the drug peddling traffic did happen at a normal hour; it was six thirty on a Sunday evening. Well, I presume it was a brush with such a felony, you can judge for yourself. I was taking friend home after a drawn out Sunday lunch and turned into their road which is a dead-end T shaped affair. Outside the unlit house in the dark was a very scruffy Vauxhall, as unlit as the driveway. I stopped behind it with dipped headlights when much to my surprise the engine started and the Vauxhall drove off round the corner in complete darkness. I was stopped at the right hand side kerb and could see our darkened

fellow driver turning in the T section. He then paused and re-emerged from the top at speed with lights on full beam. I flashed my lights as a warning I was still there, which provoked an outburst of swearing which I could clearly hear inside my locked car. He passed, drove round the corner and was still there with the lights out when I emerged a few minutes later. Was he a dealer interrupted on his phone or was he drugged himself or what?

Whatever the facts about that situation, the event at the traffic lights was just thoughtless aggression. The junction of Springfield Road and Albion Way is where a single carriageway branches into double lanes for the twenty meters to the lights themselves. Joining at the back of a queue of six vehicles lined up in the right hand lane I waited for the signal changes and kept a watchful eye on the rear mirror. A SUV loomed up, I dabbed the brakes to flash the lights at him to stop in time but to no avail. He just mounted the pavement and drove along it to get into the empty space at the front. He gained at most a few meters and probably thought nothing of it. My opinion of that manoeuvre is equally low.

What can we learn from all this?

Perhaps firstly, that social behaviour as experienced in our driving goes way beyond that which the trite regulations of the Highway Code might lead you to expect. We rehearse the hazards every time before we drive --- climate, topographical, other road users --- yet we can still be caught by surprise by the wilful erratic behaviour of fellow drivers. We can make shrewd judgements about the weather, about the flow of the road and the lie of the land, but the capricious actions of others leaves us vulnerable. We can pick up small hints and some rules of thumb do work as forewarnings. A dirty vehicle or a missing hub cap often predict carelessness. Unrepaired body damage and broken wipers are usually clear signs of possible trouble. As well as this there's the type of vehicle. Blacked out windows and loud music are too obvious to mention, but think also of the exotic vehicle closing up in the approach to a speed change up to the national limit. So often they overtake before the change, so be prepared and let them. As advanced drivers, we repeat IPSTGA to ourselves and remember that information wraps around everything else. See the hazards, prioritise them, select the most pressing, decide what to do, and then revise as the scene unfolds.

Now do it again.

Spotting a doubtful vehicle alerts our cautious sense, and even if all passes off uneventfully we remember that the sloppy owner will almost certainly come unstuck some other time if not now. A tacky vehicle, carelessly driven is one of the quickest routes to A & E.

Watch for vehicles but scan too for road marks and edge damage which speak volumes of the problems experienced by others. The chevron signs tipped into the ditch tells of a corner not taken, the ploughed up grass on roundabout or by the roadside tell of poor steering and foolish speed. The skid marks at traffic lights tell the flow is too fast so monitor your mirror while you're stationary waiting at them.

On the A 24 there's a poignant bundle of faded flowers tied to a tree. She died unnecessarily here because her date for the evening couldn't handle the humped back bridge. It's well sign posted beforehand, the road is twisty and narrow and is notorious for collisions. Foolish overconfidence cost a life, at 19.

I know nothing more about her, except that the urge to improve my own driving and perhaps help others to do so is founded upon pity for her loss.

Oliver Farley. (a.k.a. Reflector)



RED X ENFORCEMENT NEARLY READY TO GO

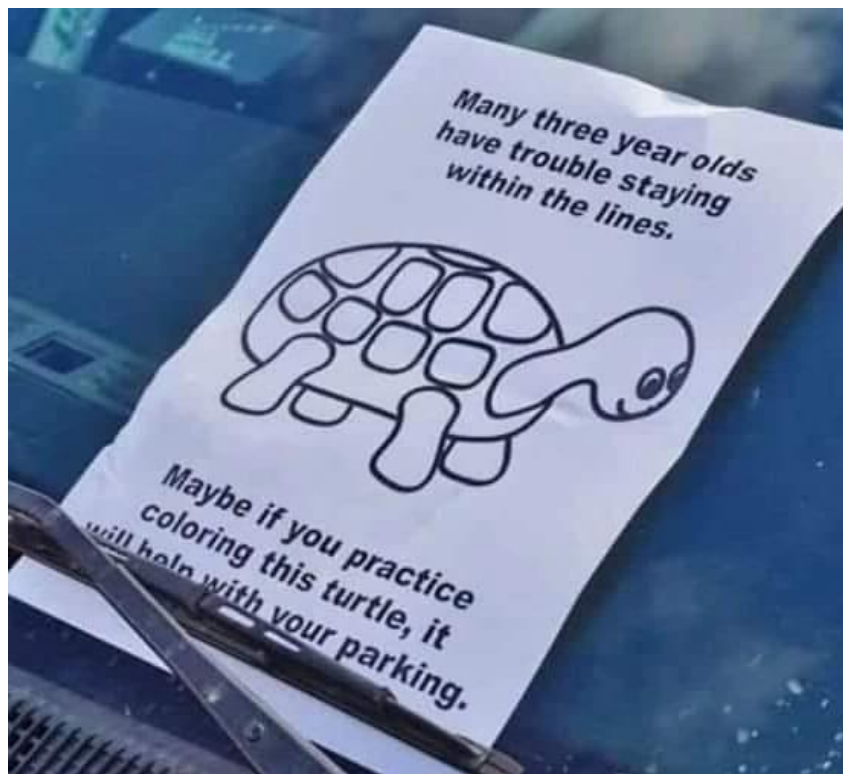
National Highways is on track to upgrade enforcement cameras that automatically detect vehicles in motorway lanes closed by a Red X ahead of a September deadline.

It has been an offence for more than two decades to drive in a lane closed by a Red X but in 2019 a change in legislation allowed evidence to be used for prosecutions from cameras that detect vehicles passing illegally under a Red X or entering the lane beyond it. However, this required cameras to be upgraded and last year National Highways committed to completing the upgrade programme by the end of this September 2022.

It is now reporting that nearly all (97%) cameras have been upgraded and more than three quarters (78%) have been tested and are fully commissioned and could be used to enforce the law and they expect the remainder to have been done ahead of the September target.

(From Graham Feest Road Safety Consultancy Newsletter)

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E.V. Battery Fires



The Austrian-based international fire department supplier Rosenbauer has presented a new extinguishing system for burning traction batteries in electric vehicles. Also in Austria, a study has been published on electric vehicles fires in Austrian road tunnels.

First, let's go to the Rosenbauer development: The manufacturer claims that the system can be used to extinguish high-voltage batteries based on lithium-ion technology "safely and efficiently". Efficient, because the system is supposed to enable direct cooling of the battery modules or the cells within the modules and thus a quick stop of the chain reaction of the cells passing through. Safe, because only a short stay at the burning vehicle is necessary for the emergency forces and the system can be activated at a sufficient distance.

According to Rosenbauer, the extinguisher is ideally positioned when utilised on the vehicle while standing between the vehicle and the

roadway, which of course only works if the car is standing on all four wheels. Alternatively, the extinguishing unit can act on the top of the battery via the interior and boot when the vehicle is on its side or roof. The fire extinguisher has a hose that connects it to a control unit.

When the system is activated at the control unit (from a distance of about eight metres), the extinguishing spike is driven into the battery with a force of several tonnes and the extinguishing water is spread directly inside the battery through the perforated extinguishing lance. The water is then supposed to completely fill the battery casing. Important for the fire brigades is that the amount of water of a "normal TLF/HLF" (i.e. a tanker or an auxiliary fire-fighting vehicle) should be sufficient "to ensure extinguishing success", according to Rosenbauer.

Rosenbauer says it has tested the system on batteries with pouch cells, prismatic cells and round cells in various vehicle platforms. Various plant fire brigades (including those of the Porsche plant in Leipzig), professional fire brigades and volunteer fire brigades in Europe have also had the system in training, apparently proving with their crews that it is "compatible with existing resources and tactics".

The battery-powered firefighting system can be ordered now, according to the manufacturer, and will begin shipping early next year.

(This article was from Rosenbauer after the existence of the system was brought to my attention by Derek Williams, it is to be hoped that our local fire services will be able to obtain this kit or something similar. Editor)

Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor,

I hope everyone would agree that the future is EVs, but the status on charging is affecting take up because for many it is a negative experience. I have experience of driving to a charger that turned out not to be working on two occasions, and in the past few days a woman recounted her experience of having to stay in a hotel on Boxing Day because she could not find a working charger.

To most people the solution seems very simple - pass a set of laws compelling the companies who operate chargers to behave like one of the few good companies. When visiting my son, I always go to the same place because I know the charger will be working. If you are wondering, the good company is Instavolt.

If nothing is done, eventually the commercial pressure will cause things to improve, but we need improvement now. Can the IAM act as a 'super consumer' (like Which does) and get the unwilling government to act?

Yours sincerely,.....Chris Skerry



There's a Motorway and a Dual Carriageway in a really rough West Country pub enjoying a pint of cloudy scrumpy to demonstrate just how HARD they are.

The Dual Carriageway is impressing these pretty little A-roads with his central reservation and the Motorway is showing off about his hard shoulder and they're getting on really well.

They are just about to take the A-Roads "back to their place" when a red/brown piece of tarmac walks in through the door. The Motorway and the Dual Carriageway turn white with fear and they dive for cover beneath the table.

Well, the A-Roads are not impressed at all as you may imagine. The red/brown tarmac downs a triple vodka and walks out of the bar. The Motorway and Dual Carriageway get out from under the table realising that they've blown it with the A-Roads.

The first A-road asks the Motorway "Why did you go white and dive for cover when that piece of tarmac walked in -- you're supposed to be the king of the roads?"

The Motorway replies, "WHY? That guy's a blooming Cycle Path!!"

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PLEASE NOTE

The deadline for contributions to the next Newsletter is 31st of May 2022

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