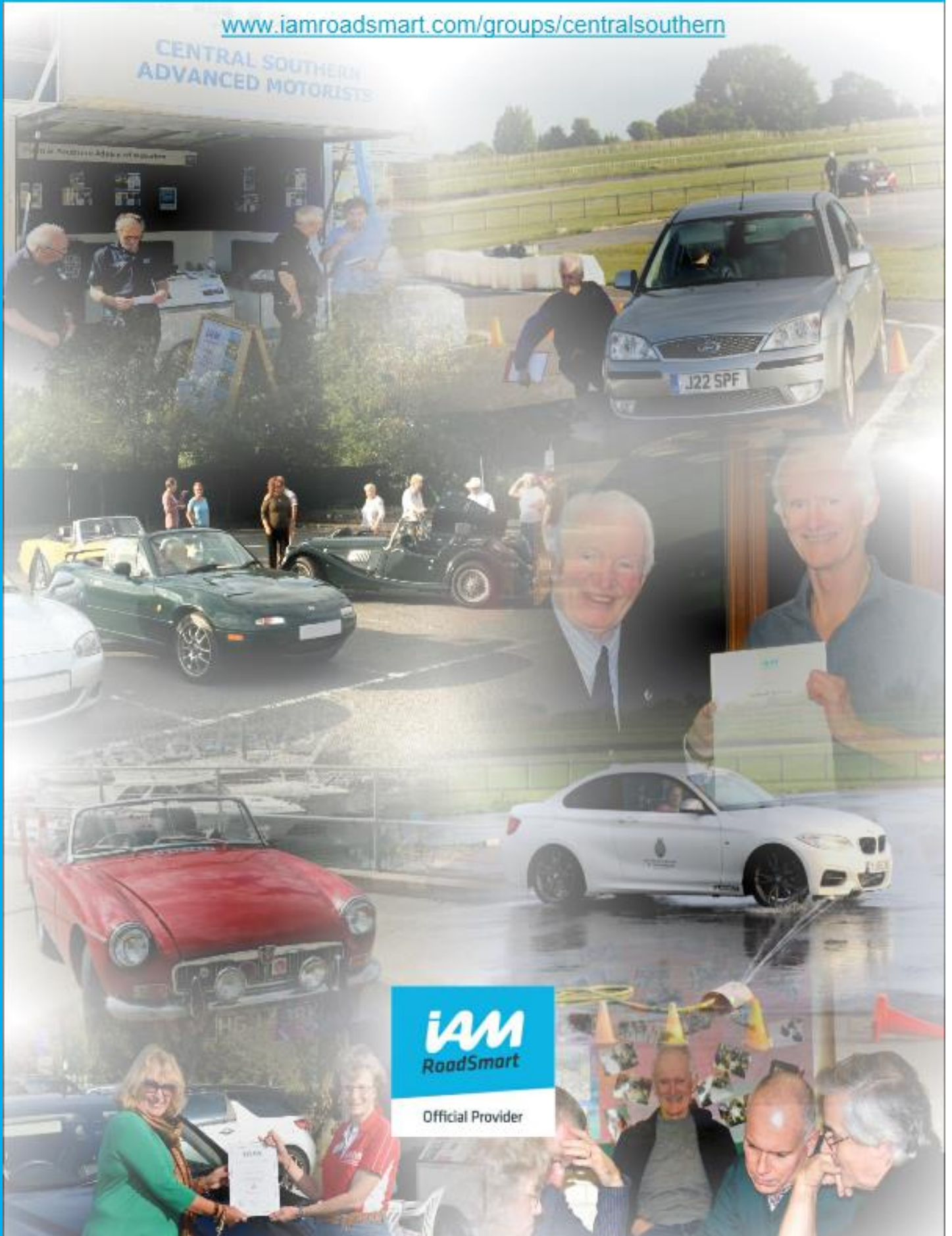


Autumn Newsletter

CENTRAL SOUTHERN ADVANCED MOTORISTS

www.iamroadsmart.com/groups/centralsouthern



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Dennis Clement

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From the Editor



Welcome to our Autumn Newsletter of 2020.

CSAM has been subjected to a Group Audit which was undertaken by Stuart Haythorn our Area Service Delivery Manager and I am pleased to let you know that a grading of Commended was achieved in all areas Group Performance. Congratulations to all involved in the audit.

Many thanks to Malk Monro who made me aware that you can sit a driving licence Theory Test if you follow this [link](#) This is a chance for drivers like myself who took their driving test before there was a Theory Test to check themselves or maybe to try a Theory Test for a different class of driving licence to see how you would do, for instance, as a coach driver.

I recently received an email from Dennis, our President, where he told me;

"As you know I have a Peugeot 508. It has a remote control key for keyless entry and starting.

About 3/4 weeks ago the key fob failed to open the door so I changed the battery and away we went.

At the same time I checked the spare key which had been in the house for as long as I have had the car. It had not been used in anger and it failed to work so I also changed its battery but, regrettably, it did not want to know. After trying to reset it I went to the Peugeot garage and they tried to reset it with their computer but were also unsuccessful. "Mr Clement you need a new key", ouch, mega expensive! Apparently, unused remote control keys can die over time. The garage representative, after taking my order for the new key, suggested that when I get it I rotate the keys every 2 to 3 months to ensure that they both stay alive, use them or lose them.

Perhaps a useful tip for our fellow drivers in your excellent Newsletter. I have checked the Handbook and read all 9 pages of small print about keys and it says nothing about their regular rotation, so I hadn't missed it when I read the Handbook's 333 pages when I bought the car!

A very expensive lesson learnt."

Now my own Skoda Superb came with three keys, the spares I keep in a drawer next to my desk from where I can see my car when parked so although I don't rotate my keys I do just try them from time to time. I did this to check that the batteries were still good so now I have second reason to do this. It is hoped by both of us that Dennis' unfortunate experience which he has passed on may save others from this considerable but avoidable expense.

When I put my wife's car into the garage for a service, new cam belt and air con re-gas she was very pleased with the outcome. Karen would not be interested in the cam belt replacement which she would never see but to have the air con working again in the recent very hot weather was worth every penny. Which brings me to my point, it is always important that the driver is as comfortable as possible when driving, any discomforts that take their attention away from the task in hand add to the risks when driving. This is why when asked by an Associate, would I mind if they turned the heater or the air con up, I always answer

CENTRAL SOUTHERN ADVANCED MOTORISTS

that I want them, the driver, to be comfortable, so unless the vehicle has individual climate controls please adjust your system so that you are comfortable.

On a similar theme I recently took my step-son to Redhill from Fareham twice. First to deliver his car to a garage who were going to fix his faulty folding roof and then to collect the car when finished. Due to a couple of sheared lugs he was unable to raise or lower his soft top. Not an especially scenic run on A3M and M25 motorways most of the time but good to get a few miles under my belt after so many months of hardly using the car at all because of not going anywhere due to the Corona virus. This journey also reminded me of how big a group CSAM is as I drove from just outside our western boundary to just outside our northern boundary. Elsewhere in this newsletter news about how CSAM are getting ready to resume Advanced Driver training.

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

From Our Chairman



So It's amazing how quickly time seems to be passing during lockdown, you'd think it would be the opposite, but for me, it seems like only yesterday that I was writing my last note for the newsletter.

Like last time, there has been no on-the-road activity since the last newsletter, but that doesn't mean nothing has been happening.

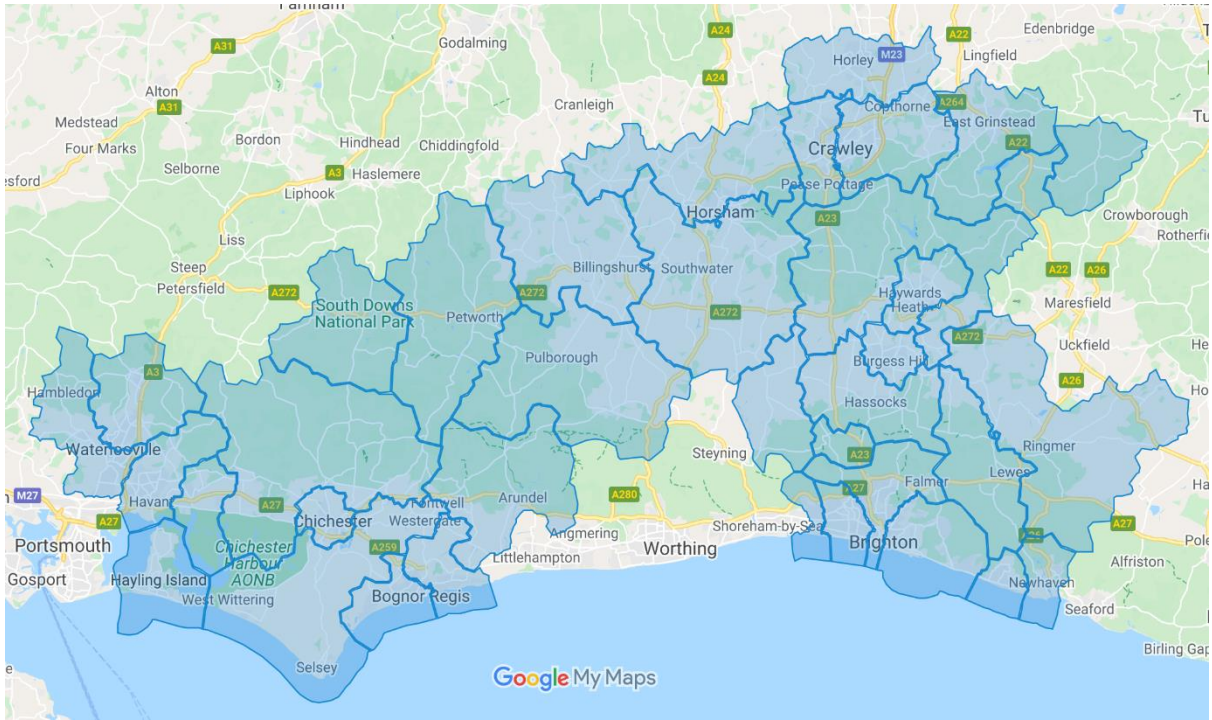
As you will have seen from the e-mails from IAM RoadSmart, they have sanctioned the commencement of observed runs in line with the DVSA guidance for Approved Driving Instructors (ADIs). In response to this, we have canvassed both Associates and Observers regarding their appetite to resume our business as usual, and as I'm sure you can imagine, opinions vary widely.

It is our intent to support all Members. So those who wish to resume can, albeit in accordance to strict guidelines; those that wish to wait a little longer can do so without penalty.

These are, as I'm sure you can imagine, difficult decisions and the Committee makes them together as the nominated trustees for our group; the decision to work toward resumption at the end of August passed unanimously and is to be reviewed on the 13th August.

In other news, yes, there is activity other than COVID-19, the geographical footprint of CSAM had expanded slightly, with the addition of the PO7-8 postcodes, effectively adding Waterlooville. This area we have inherited from the Guildford group (GAM).

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One final thought: as we have all been doing less mileage lately, what better time than now to take advantage of a Member Refresher run with an Observer to build a little on-the-road confidence again. Just drop us a line and we will do our best to accommodate you.

Stay safe on and off the road,

David.

Acting Chairman

Central Southern Advanced Motorists

Chief Observer's Corner



I am looking forward to the resumption of activities but want to remain cautious, it is in no one's interest to put Observers and Associates at a higher risk than pre-Covid operations without proper consideration and preparations.

We are checking with Observers and Associates regarding their views about restarting observed runs. Where Observers are not happy to restart it may be necessary to reallocate Associates to a different Observer so that their courses can be completed.

We have been considering what we need to do to restart, we have worked through a list of things that we set ourselves in preparation for a restart in the near future if we believe it to be possible.

We have started the preparation now for restarting because:

- IAM RoadSmart has asked us to restart.

CENTRAL SOUTHERN ADVANCED MOTORISTS

- Our membership and in particular Associates are expecting us to complete their courses.
- We are thinking about what needs to happen now, so that we are prepared when we do eventually agree a date to restart.

What date do we think would be a good target date?

- I have proposed that we work toward a restart date of the end of August. My thinking is that by then any adverse effects from the government relaxations at the beginning of July will be understood i.e. 2 weeks incubation period, 2 weeks for any adverse effects to be reported plus a safety margin.

We have considered:

- If we should impose an age related limit. IAM RoadSmart hasn't give any specific advice, the government seems to be saying anyone over 70 is more vulnerable. Our view is that this decision is best left to the individual Observer and Associate to decide, they are the only two people who know their own situations and if they feel that their age is a limiting restriction.
- We will be offering to supply PPE to Observers; masks, sanitising wipes and sanitising hand gel, are expecting Associates to supply their own.

We are instructing that:

- When making arrangements for a run the Observer and Associate should let each other know if they have had Covid or are suffering from and of the symptoms e.g. persistent cough, high temperature, loss of taste or smell and if either have been in close contact with someone who has had Covid or any of the symptoms.
- Associate should sanitise their vehicles before and after an observed run, paying particular attention to all touch points.
- That both wash their hands thoroughly before leaving home and after returning from the run.
- On the day of the run both should declare if they are fit and well or have any symptoms that could be Covid related, in such circumstances the run will must not proceed.
- That social distancing is maintained outside of the vehicle.
- Briefings and debriefings will take place outside the vehicle.
- That no physical contact is made e.g. no hand shaking.
- That both should use sanitising hand gel before getting into the vehicle.
- That face masks should be worn during the run.
- During the run it is recommended to keep the windows open.
- Use of air conditioning should be restricted to demisting of windows using air from the outside only (no recirculating air).

CENTRAL SOUTHERN ADVANCED MOTORISTS

- The Observer will not be able to complete the Associates logbooks at the time of the run. Run sheets completed by the Observer and will be photographed and sent to the Associates mobile phone or will be typed and sent via e-mail to the Associate.

IAM RoadSmart has said that they will extend any Associate's membership by 6 months at the time of their next renewal to cover the lost time during the lockdown. To activate this offer the Associate will need to call IAM RoadSmart Customer Support on 0300 303 1134 at the time of their membership renewal.

We all need to ensure that we keep safe. If in doubt we should not proceed with a run.

When we do restart I hope that everyone enjoys getting out and about again.

Phil Coleman

Chief Observer

Membership Mumbblings!



Hello, how are you? It has been one of the strangest times I have ever experienced. I am sure I am not the only one reflecting on the aftermath, digesting the frequent changes on what you can and can't do and deciding how comfortable you feel as another restriction is lifted. There is still a lot of uncertainty of the future, the worry about if the virus is coming back and this can be quite unnerving. Who would have thought this time last year what 2020 would bring to us all and how much this year would change humanity.

We are in that transition period where people are either trying to hold onto the past or edging to move forward and embrace change. This naturally is going to mean we have huge challenges to face and will bring fear, anxiety and panic too many people. This will undoubtedly stop people focusing on the right priorities. I was presenting a topic at a board meeting the other week on leadership in the new normal. I started the session with an initial reflection just to grasp the mind-set of the leaders in the team. I asked how many were still taking the same precautions that they did over the last few months, whether they were still fearful, and did this fear come across in their leadership in the workplace. This set the tone for the rest of the presentation and highlighted the importance of managing yourself as well as your team during this time.

Outside of work I decided to take it one step further and think about whether any of the feedback of how they felt at work reflected on other parts of people's lives. It became fairly obvious that this fear anxiety and stress was clearly noticeable on the roads. There appears to be a mix of nervous drivers and those driving like they needed to be somewhere an hour ago. I think it is safe to say that the current situation is still very unsettling and overwhelming for some. Human emotion has a huge impact on the driving and I feel the personality on the roads at the minute is a clear reflection of the thoughts of the general population.

So how can we manage this? Roadcraft reminds us that human factors play one of the key factors in the safety of you as a driver on the road. Your personal characteristics can increase or reduce your risk of a collision compared to other drivers. Tiredness, stress, emotions and mood all affect driving behaviour. On the road at the moment we have those worried about

their family, their job security, anxious about going shopping. They may have lost loved ones or friends during the pandemic. A lot of us have a lot on our minds at the moment and this ultimately is then portrayed when we get behind the wheel. Page 12 of the latest edition of Roadcraft has a table showing the four levels of the GDE matrix (Goals for Driver Education that are:

Human Factors

1. Can you detach yourself from the wider problems and stresses when you get into your vehicle?
2. Do you react or disengage from other road users' aggressive behaviour.
3. Do you know how operational stress affects your driving?

My personal reflection on this is that while driving at the moment I need to maintain my ability to appreciate the level of distractions we are all having and anticipate that decision making and the ability to process the surroundings hazards (including myself and other drivers) can be heavily affected during the current level of uncertainty. Actually I found I could quite easily flip into reflection while driving to and from work. It was that period of time in between my home and work life that was my personal time to try and comprehend what was going on. I also realized the distraction this caused and ended up doing full commentary to focus my attention.

The purpose of your journey

1. Are you fit to drive?
2. What can you do to reduce the risk of general distractions?
3. What can you do to reduce distractions from operational tasks?

The biggest distraction I am having at the moment is the huge variation of journey time. This added time pressure if unchecked can lead to red mist (what is perceived as causing the delay) and fatigue from the longer journeys. My route is very familiar and I remember just how long the journey took during lockdown. Appreciating that this is a thing of the past will really help me overcome this. I have tried setting off earlier and then having a break before work. This takes away the time pressure and reduces the stress out of the demanding rush hour drive.

Traffic Situations

1. What are the traffic, road and weather conditions?
2. How should you adjust your driving for the conditions?

It certainly has been hot lately. After a day wearing a face-mask, a 10 minute walk back to the car I have then had to face a sweltering hot car. Actually it was so hot the button to turn the fan off (which I can be quite honest say has not been touched) cracked this week. Even the car was struggling. Tired, hot, uncomfortable I set off every evening on my 40 mile journey home along the A27. Not surprising everyone else is setting off with the same discomfort. It is really important to maintain a high level of alertness, scanning the road so you can anticipate what is likely to happen next. Identifying the distracted driver making a mistake to the driver who "just wants to get home".

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Vehicle and vehicle control

1. Is the vehicle fit to drive?
2. Are the seat and steering wheel adjusted for best position and comfort?
3. Do you know how its safety features behave?

It is so important this is not overlooked, regardless of whether your car has been used all over lockdown or not. Seasonal changes, wear and tear. Stay safe and don't forget your POWDERY checks. I have to say I have truly felt the benefit of the training of the IAM and the local CSAM group. The ability to maintain self awareness, be critical and honest about my driving, aware of the changing risks and adapt to the experiences I face continues to make me a safe and better driver. There is no such thing as a perfect drive but we all joined this group to become better drivers and that remains the heart of what we do. Thank you for being part of this group and making CSAM what it is.

I hope we can see each other again soon. Safe driving.

Matt

Membership Secretary

Associates' News



Since the last Newsletter, I am pleased to report that three new Associates have joined our group. They are Sara-Jane Thornley from Pulborough, Kevin Bradburn from Hove and Jeremy Marriage from Bosham Hoe.

Ms Thornley originally joined CSAM in 2013 but, due to personal circumstances, did not complete her ADT. We are very pleased to welcome Sara-Jane back.

As you know, all Associates have been asked to express their views regarding a possible re-start of Observed Runs. We are still awaiting some responses. Those we have received so far varied from fully supportive to somewhat negative based on the individual's personal circumstances. Thank you to those who have responded as this provides important input to the Committees decision making process.

As we continue to wait to re-start Observed Runs, our waiting list now stands at seven.

Let's hope that we will be meeting up again in the coming weeks rather than months.

John France

Associate Liaison



Why does a chicken coop have two doors?

Because if it had four doors, it would be a chicken sedan.



THE SILENCE BEFORE AND AFTER

Did you notice the silence, how eerily quiet it was as soon as lockdown began?

The usual rattle of traffic along our home streets was suddenly absent and the silence was deeper than ever before. It was disquieting and unnerving at first until I realised that I was missing the background hum from the dual carriageway A 24, normally clearly audible from my tiny back garden deep within Horsham, a good mile or more away from the traffic laden offender. Now there was deep silence. Just quiet. And then the birdsong and the sound of bees. Then rustling in trees. The scrabbling of squirrels. And most of all the enormous racket made by blackbirds as they toss over the leaves in the undergrowth. These small pleasures of a rustic retreat were knifed by the pulsing sirens of too many ambulances, ferrying burdens of pain and contagion of which we could only guess.

When did it all begin?

I'm convinced I had it myself while on a barge holiday along the Seine last September – the exact symptoms, the high temperature, the horrid cough --- and all over in a matter of days. That may be coincidence but my neighbour's story is much more sinister.

It involves someone at high risk and an expensive Mercedes.

My neighbour collects cars from all over the country from clients whose lease has come to an end and the car is to be collected for disposal. He drives about 40-50,000 miles in a year and I must admit I haven't yet had the courage to suggest an IAM course to him. I haven't experienced his driving and I'm assuming he's pretty good given his experience with so many cars and such mileage. I know high mileage doesn't necessarily translate into good driving but as my neighbour is accident free after years of driving, he's probably OK.

Back to the Mercedes.

He was told to collect a coupe Mercedes from a certain address and take it back to the holding site to await sale. He picked up the car and drove it for several hours across London, left it as requested and went home to Horsham by train without further reflection. Shortly afterwards, he developed the most horrible cold he'd ever had and was prone in bed for some days. He recovered and just grumbled about the worsening state of the traditional flu in winter. That is until he heard differently. He'd picked up the car in November and the lessee was an international wine dealer. He had just returned from China and has since been identified as patient 00 that is the first person in London to contract Covid 19.

So is my neighbour the first person in Horsham to contract it? Who knows? Horsham's death tally is now 104, caught from too numerous sources to calculate and too varied ever to be established accurately. The conclusion which we can draw surely enough is that confinement in a car which has been polluted by the virus is enough to infect an unwary user.

The virus is measured in units of 10 to the minus 9 metres and Corona viruses are about 70 units across. They're not alive so think of them as a minute sort of pollen and treat a strange car in a like manner as if you suffered severely from hay fever. Open the doors and windows, turn on the air blower to full blast with every vent open and let it run for a couple of minutes. The flow of air will dislodge the virus and should leave the cabin safe for occupancy. Just to be sure, give the interior another blasting after a half hour or so.

CENTRAL SOUTHERN ADVANCED MOTORISTS

I'm basing this opinion on the research done after the spread of SARS - Sudden Acute Respiratory Syndrome - in 2003 in Hong Kong. SARS spread throughout a block of flats and found its way from floor to floor through the drainage channel in the bathrooms. If the air conditioning had not been on and a few windows opened quite a few lives would have been saved.

Whatever the case with my neighbour, we can more confidently reflect on the strange change in road usage during the lockdown. At first there were very few people about, then a few more pedestrians and then a notable number of very young children been taught to ride their colourful bikes by a watchful Daddy. The empty streets were a godsend to van drivers who were positively cheerful as they zipped about at triple their usual speed, delivering on time and unfazed every job. Reports reached us of some who abused this new found freedom and were clocked reportedly at 154mph on the M1. London traffic speed was put at an average of 37 mph which seems unlikely to me as traffic lights were still operating and that slows down the average a lot. More credibly, a Porsche driver was logged at 144mph in a 50 zone for road works and we sincerely hope he was suitably dealt with.

Pedestrians have become notably more casual since the lockdown and for those of us who have been regular drivers during this time our observation focus has had to switch much more to the pavement. Several times I've almost been caught out by two pedestrians approaching each other. Nothing unusual you may think and perhaps not even notice them in normal times. These aren't normal times and nor is the behaviour of the pedestrians normal. They approach each other and one of them decides to give the other a wide berth. One will step into the road often without looking behind - after all there's no traffic about is there? - and right into your path without warning. A tell tale sign is if they are wearing those ear pieces for listening to entertainment devices because then they certainly won't hear your approach.

There are two lessons to be drawn from these two observations:

There will be many avoidable collisions after lockdown while those hitherto unused to driving re-acquire skills now rusty and meet up with those who've got used to a reckless freedom on open roads, and

There will be too many misses or near misses with casual pedestrians whose concern with social distancing has become a habit, one which is now constrained by vehicle laden streets.

One last remark on habits acquired and otherwise. A recent medical necessity took me along the A 24 towards Dorking. Long stretches of the dual carriageway have a 50 mph limit, strong testimony to speed abuse in earlier days. I stuck to the limit and acquired a tail of about six vehicles, all strung out in good order and following me at 50. In my offside rear mirror I saw a white van coming up fast in lane two. A quick speed check showed I was at 49mph so I stayed where I was and awaited the expected whoosh as Van Man shot past.

What did the six behind do?

Yes, they all pulled out and overtook me.

Man is a creature of habit, even a habit of mimicking, and in this case unwisely.

Don't lose your own good habits acquired by years of Advanced Driving and do stay safe until we can gather again to inculcate the better habits of responsible motoring.

REFLECTOR.

Cycle lane road signs and markings – Tips from IAM RoadSmart

Do you know your solid white line cycle lane from your broken white line cycle lane?

New powers have been granted to local councils to enforce cycle lanes – but do you know your road markings? Ignorance of the law is no defence, so with new bicycle facilities popping up all over our towns and cities at the moment, as cycling is encouraged to ease pressure on public transport during the Coronavirus pandemic, it is now more important than ever to know where and when you can park.

Cars or motorcycles illegally parked on mandatory cycle lanes can force cyclists to deviate from their path and put them at risk of conflict with passing vehicles. From today (22 June 2020) councils can use CCTV vans to record offences. There will always be a right of appeal if signage is unclear or mistakes have been made, but that can be a time-consuming hassle with no guarantee of success.

Neil Greig, IAM RoadSmart's Director of Policy and Research, therefore has these top tips to help brush up your knowledge and ensure you know the rules of the road around cycle lanes and where you are allowed to park:

Dust off your [Highway Code](#) and [Know Your Traffic Signs](#) knowledge. You can view both online to make sure you're familiar with road signs and markings and what they mean.

Rule 140 of the Highway Code is the main one for cycle lane advice. It states: "You must not drive or park in a cycle lane marked by a solid white line during its times of operation. Do not drive or park in a cycle lane marked by a broken white line unless it is unavoidable. You must not park in any cycle lane whilst waiting restrictions apply."

When it comes to a cycle lane marked with broken white lines, use common sense in relation to the term 'unavoidable'. While you should not normally cross them, there may be occasions when the confines of space or the nature of traffic dictate it as unavoidable.

It is your responsibility as a driver to check signage on street lights or poles to find out exactly what the parking restrictions are and the hours of operation of the cycle lane. These may have changed since you last visited your town centre. Even if a cycle lane looks temporary, if it has a solid white line it will be mandatory and the parking and stopping advice will apply.

You can 'pick up and set down passengers' but that means you must never leave your vehicle unattended or stay too long. Loading information will be on plates or on kerb markings. If in doubt, park or load somewhere else.

With the introduction of pop-up cycle lanes and other initiatives to promote walking and cycling and keep public transport use to a minimum, check before you head out on the roads. Your local roads may be familiar to you, but they may have changed since you last ventured out on them.

Neil added: "Watch out for more cyclists than before on our roads. They have no airbags, crumple zones or seatbelts to protect them. Treat them the way you would want to be treated. It is important to give people the space - at least 1.5m - they need to use the road. At this time you should also expect a wider range of ages and abilities as more people try it out for the first time to avoid public transport."

(From an IAM Roadsmart blog dated 22/6/2020)

RISK OF DRIVING WITH A FACECOVERING

(Taken from the Graham Feest Consultancy's Newsletter, www.grahamfeest.com)

Many driver trainers have decided to wear face coverings during the course of giving lessons and in some instances have asked pupils to do likewise. There is not legal requirement for either party to but it has thrown up a potential safety issue which would be equally applicable to drivers should they in the course of their work either choose to do so or their company has set it out in their procedures that they will wear a face covering.

A driver trainer who was on a lesson with an NHS nurse asked if he felt tired after wearing a mask all day. She said that breathing carbon dioxide from exhaled breath can make you feel tired from prolonged use of face masks. She said a consultant at the Hospital had mentioned it and that's why nurses have to take a break every two hours, with mask removed. The Deputy Chair of the Approved Driving Instructors National Joint Council said that one of his instructors had mentioned that he'd walked up 5 flights of stairs something they do quite regularly without trouble but with a mask on was puffed out.

We know that driving whilst tired is a big issue with people falling asleep at the wheel and whilst face covering may well be desirable and indeed in some settings essential. It would seem that more research is required to get a full picture of the implications.

It is suggest that you make sure you have regular breaks outside the vehicle without masks on and make sure you take in lots of fresh air. Also it would see that people are finding they get very dry and so carrying a drink with you is important.

Please note that any unbroken period of masked driving with CSAM should be well inside the suggested 2 hour period. Also that when outside of the vehicle and when the 2 metre distance can be maintained the masks need not be worn. Editor

Chairman's Blogs (From our website, since the last newsletter)



The lost art of the overtake

While driving to do our weekly shop on Saturday morning, we got caught in a long queue of traffic, with a slow driver at the front. The slow driver was quite within their rights to do 40mph in a national (the limit is a limit and not a target); what was painful was to see the tail of impatient drivers bunching up behind, all compromising the two-second rule; none of whom appeared to even considered an overtake when the numerous opportunities presented themselves.

It's a testament to how important this topic is that Roadcraft, The Police Driver's Handbook, devotes a whole chapter to it.

It is one of the more hazardous manoeuvres we are perform while driving, requiring the most from out observation, anticipation and planning. We must assess the speed differential of our own vehicle, the one we are overtaking, and any oncoming traffic, to assess if we can complete the overtake safely in our own eyes and the eyes of others involved. Our observation of the

road context and conditions must also be greater to ensure that it will be legal and also advantageous (i.e. if there's a limit change to 30mph shortly after we've completed the overtake, what was the point?).

As we approach the vehicle we may consider overtaking, if the overtake is not on, we must make sure we hold at a safe distance as usual, this we call the following position. When we feel the overtake may be on, we move to the overtaking position, generally a little closer and positioned to the right for a better view. Our enhanced view will confirm if the overtake is on or not; we must be 100% sure to move to the next phase. If we are not 100%, we can stay in the overtaking position if safe to do so or revert to the following position if we see oncoming traffic, or the reasonable chance of overtaking reducing (e.g. a series of bends, or junctions coming).

Once sure, after mirror checks and indication, the next step is to move further right until we have a clear path visible beyond the vehicle we wish to pass without any additional acceleration. If still safe to do so, we can then accelerate and pass the vehicle, otherwise we drop back into the following position.

While accelerating, we must of course be sure that we do not breach the prevailing speed limit, so we need to consider this differential at the outset, i.e. if the vehicle we may wish to pass is within 5–10mph of the limit, the distance we need to pass them will be considerable.

As advanced drivers, a confident and safe overtake should be something we have in our tool bag. As an Observer, it's fantastic to see a driver looking to overtake if held up behind a slower driver, even if it turns out not to be possible.

Looking to the future for CSAM

I thought this time I'd steer clear of my usual discussion of an advanced driving topic and put my Chair hat on and provide an update on the current hiatus and look a little further to the next Annual General Meeting.

With IAM RoadSmart having already allowed the resumption of observed runs in bike groups, and the DVLA announcing the staged resumption of driving lessons and tests, the obvious question is "when will we resume observed runs in cars? The answer to this is a little less obvious and it's occupying your committee. We hope to receive some guidance from IAM RoadSmart in this coming week, but even if they give the go-ahead, it will be a CSAM committee decision when we resume, given our duty of care over CSAM members. The last guidance (at the time of typing this) was social distancing of one meter plus precautions and most cars don't allow this.

Rest assured, whatever decision we take, it will be because a majority of the committee support it. Even then, observers and associates will not be pressured to resume runs until they feel they are ready.

Despite the fact we have been confined to our homes for a long time, the year is passing quickly, and my thoughts are already on the upcoming Annual General Meeting in October.

I do hope by then that we will be able to meet in person as usual, but if not, we will set up a video conference open to members to participate in. I have seen many other groups up and

CENTRAL SOUTHERN ADVANCED MOTORISTS

down the country doing this successfully – we have had two committee meetings this way successfully.

The AGM as we know is where committee roles change hands amongst the group membership. We, like all IAM RoadSmart local groups are entirely dependent upon volunteers from our membership. If you feel like helping out, please do not hesitate to get in contact and you can always sit in on the July and/or September meetings prior to making a committee commitment. If you'd like to see changes in the group, what we do or how we're run, also please do not hesitate to get in contact, or better still join the committee and in the words of Mahatma Gandhi:

"Be the change that you wish to see in the world".

OK, maybe not the world, but perhaps a small charity in the South coast of the UK.

We have recently lost our Vice Chair and have another couple of committee members considering stepping down having already served three and four years in their current roles. A rich seam of volunteers is critical to the sustainability of the group, so please do get in contact – it really isn't that burdensome and is a fulfilling way to give a little back to the community.

The offside rule

If you thought explaining the offside rule in football was hard, well, try explaining off-siding in advanced driving! Also known as straight-lining, apexing, taking the racing line, etc.

Well, here goes...

Off-siding, put simply is using the other side of the road to gain an advantage. The advantage is generally to increase the radius of the curve(s) that we are driving; this results in both a smoother ride and being able to carry a little more speed. A by-product of this, by reducing the amount of deceleration on approach to the hazard and acceleration after will be fuel efficiency (small I know, but it all adds up – to go off on a little tangent briefly, a recent telematics study commissioned by IAM RoadSmart showed the CO2 emissions of advanced drivers was significantly less than their control group).

So, off-siding, straight-lining, call it what you will, has benefits and should be in the advanced driver's toolbox, ready for when the opportunity arises.

It wouldn't be advanced driving without an acronym to help us remember a systematic approach to off-siding, in this case its: SLAP.

SLAP stands for Safe, Legal, Advantageous, and Perception; it's a simple and easy way to determine if you should straighten out a bend or not:

Safe: is our planned positioning safe? This typically refers to our view– are we certain that no one is coming towards us if considering straightening out a right-hand bend, or is there someone behind us who could be turning right if taking the straightest line over a roundabout?

Legal: is what we're doing legal? Clearly, we must not cross any solid white lines and also follow all other instructions we receive in the way of road markings and signs.

Advantageous: do we actually achieve anything? If not, then why bother?

Perception: what do those around us likely think of what we're doing? Are we sending them some form of car body-language that could be misleading? Or do they just think we're being a hooligan?

Straight lining the beautiful country roads of Sussex can be such a pleasurable driving experience, but before you do so, make sure to give yourselves a SLAP.

Inspired by Shaun Cronin's article in the Spring/Summer 2018 RoadSmart magazine, which can be found here: https://issuu.com/advanced_driving/docs/iam_spring18/46

Courtesy, confusion, controversy

Up until now I've tried to cover aspects of advanced driving that, while in the IAM RoadSmart curriculum, aren't widely or well understood. Moreover, when I discuss with Observers, I get a range of opinions.

This time I'm going off-piste a little and what follows below is not necessarily the position of IAM RoadSmart or CSAM but my own observations.

While driving to Worthing one morning last week, I was faced with some awkward decision making, or to be more precise, the planning in Observation, Anticipation and Planning (OAP). This was mainly because I couldn't be sure about what I was anticipating...

I was approaching a T-junction, preparing to turn right; with the fairly open sightlines I could see one car approaching from the left, so I stopped at "the give way to traffic on major road" lines to wait for a suitable gap. The driver of the other car then proceeded to indicate right and pull to stop with space for me to pull out, they didn't flash, gesture or otherwise signal apart from waiting in an odd position. By the time I had realised their intent, which was of course to let me out, another vehicle was approaching from the right and it was not safe for me to pull out; this new vehicle on the scene was also unsure what was happening and sensibly slowed considerably.

What had happened was a moment of well-intentioned courtesy from one driver that created confusion for the drivers of the two other vehicles.

Why were we confused? Well, we all know what the Highway Code tells us about when we should give way to others, it has a clear set of rules and conventions, but the well-intentioned courtesy was a break from these rules.

The moment we diverge from these rules we create uncertainty and doubt: is the intent of one driver understood by other drivers? This is a question that we cannot be sure of the answer.

This then leads to hesitation, which can then lead to frustration in others, and perhaps the originally courteous driver changing their mind suddenly... what could possibly go wrong?

A quick search through the Advanced Driver Observer or Associate Handbook for the word courtesy yields little, but for an explanation on the reverse of the test sheet, stating:

"Does the Associate use courtesy in the way they approach hazards (thanking other road users, giving way when appropriate etc.). Do they consider their effects on others (such as when overtaking or approaching puddles near the kerbside)."

The key words here is "giving way when appropriate". In my example above, it was appropriate for me to give way as per the road markings, not the other way around. There is a fine line between being courteous and overly courteous.

So, my plea to everyone is very simple: please stick to what's written in the Highway Code – it's a clear set of rules and conventions that we all share and (in theory) know.

Restarting Observed Runs with CSAM

In last Thursday's CSAM Committee meeting (16/7/2020 meeting at time of this blog), we voted unanimously to plan a general restart of our in-car operations, targeting the end of August as the restart date.

This delay, compared to the IAM RoadSmart recommendations, provides us with a few key opportunities:

- Prepare more detailed guidance to for both Associates and Observers;

- Monitor the infection rate as the country opens up more;

- Run a small trial and gain feedback for the guidance we provide based on real experience.

We will have another interim committee meeting on the 13th August to make the final "go / no-go" decision; if the current trends continue and there is no "second spike" then we'll be back in business.

We plan to embark not only with the 1-1 observed runs for our Associate members, free tasters and member refresher runs, but also (subject to council approval) the monthly meet in the Chichester Northgate car park; this will however be strictly on a booking basis only so we can contribute contact tracking data if the need arises.

We must also stress that there will be no pressure on any individual, Associate or Observer, to participate if they are in a vulnerable group, or just not ready for any other reason. The final decision rests with those that are in the car.

We will be providing PPE to our Observers in line with guidelines provided by IAM RoadSmart. We are fortunate to have an NHS staff member on the Committee whose advice though this period has been invaluable.

CENTRAL SOUTHERN ADVANCED MOTORISTS

As we have all been driving a lot less over the last quarter, do consider a Member refresher run, one of the benefits of being an active member of the group.

While we're talking about membership, I would encourage you to please keep up your membership of the group, your £10 a year helps to fund the group's activity, which in turn play a part in improving road safety.

As IAM RoadSmart have recently stopped collecting this on our behalf via their Direct Debit, a Standing Order (which you have more control over) is the perfect alternative, a short e-mail or conversation with Matt who looks after membership, or Duncan who looks after the money, is all it takes to get the information you need.

I thank you in advance for your continued contribution to help this most worthwhile activity. Just one coaching session with an associate, existing member or a member of the public could impart the crucial knowledge and skills that helps prevent an accident... not bad for a tenner!

Block changing

Another little discussed topic is one of block changing.

When my father taught me to drive in nineteen-eighty-something, he was very clear in telling me to sequentially change down through each gear while decelerating. His rationale was to be in the appropriate gear for my speed at any point in time. My driving instructor didn't disagree.

Things have moved on since then and the mantra behind the IPSGA system of car control is to, where practical, do one thing at a time. Ignoring the I (as information is constantly gathered), we look to break the changes we need to make to speed and direction into distinct phases – i.e. do one thing at a time, do it well:

Change position

Change speed

Change gear

Change speed (really, the reapplication of power to the driven wheels to maximise control while negotiating the hazard)

So when we're slowing, it's all about the SG: we brake (ideally in a straight-line) from whatever speed we were travelling to the safe speed to negotiate the hazard, then we change into an appropriate gear for the speed we are now travelling (still heeding part of my father's guidance).

So, if the change in speed is great enough, this may warrant a block change, e.g. from fourth to second. Note we are not arbitrarily skipping gears, we are, to paraphrase the Advanced Driving Course Handbook, "changing to our chosen gear without using an intermediate gear".

CENTRAL SOUTHERN ADVANCED MOTORISTS

Conversely when we finish accelerating, say when joining a motorway, we may make a similar block change into our chosen gear for cruising: here during acceleration we may use 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, then once at our target speed, make a block change to 6th.

Obviously, and like all facets of advanced driving, it's situationally dependent and should be done as and when appropriate.

Whenever I drive a manual car, which isn't often these days, this I find is the hardest part of Advanced Driving to put into practice. Practice makes perfect and without access to a manual car, I don't get much practice.

As an aside, and follow-up to my last message, we are watching the news carefully around the infection rates of COVID-19 and will make a determination on the 13th August regarding restarting our in-car operations.

David

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What do you call a Ford Fiesta that ran out of fuel?

A Ford Siesta.

What do you call a Mexican who lost his car?

Carlos.

Who can drive all their customers away and still make money?

Taxi drivers.

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PLEASE NOTE

The deadline for contributions to the next Newsletter is 31st of October 2020