

St. Helens Group of Advanced Motorists

Registered Charity 1058971

Annual Report

8th June 2023 to 6th June 2024



Charity's Principal Address

**Chris Bradley
12 Coalport Walk
St. Helens
Merseyside
WA9 5GD**

Trustees and Governance

Charity's Governing Document

The St. Helens Group of Advanced Motorists' Governing Document is IAM RoadSmart (formerly the Institute of Advanced Motorists) Group Handbook.

Names of Trustees (Officers and Committee Members)

The Trustees of the St. Helens Group of Advanced Motorists are:

Mark Farnworth Chairman and Group Vice-President

Phil Sharples Vice-Chairman

Chris Bradley Secretary

Stephen Dumont Treasurer

Kay Heppenstall

Anita Clift

Ken Nevitt

Alan Prescott

Jim Cunliffe

Andrew Farrimond

Trustee Selection Method

Trustees must be Full Members of the Group and must not be disqualified by law from acting as a Charity Trustee. Those wishing to become Trustees are first nominated and seconded by Full Members in writing prior to the Annual General Meeting (AGM) and then elected by Full Members at the AGM.

In the absence of sufficient written nominations prior to the AGM, nominations may be taken from the floor. These may not supersede properly proposed and seconded nominations received in writing.

The Trustees may, between AGMs, co-opt Full Members as Trustees with the same responsibilities and voting rights as elected Trustees. Those elected in this manner are required to stand for election at the next AGM.

Objectives and Structure

The objectives of the St. Helens Group of Advanced Motorists are to promote the improvement of the standard of driving and the advancement of road safety, for the benefit of the public.

The St. Helens Group is one of 175 Groups located throughout the UK, each with the same objectives and each affiliated to IAM RoadSmart. Each Group endeavours to achieve these objectives primarily by providing guidance to those preparing to take the IAM Advanced Driving Test. The Test is administered by IAM RoadSmart, which is also responsible for determining the area of operation of each Group. The St. Helens Group has been allocated St. Helens and the surrounding areas in which to operate. The St. Helens Group organises and promotes the IAM RoadSmart Advanced Driver Course with guidance given by its team of Observers who are all unpaid volunteers. Full Member and Associate Member subscriptions and donations fund the Group.

Organisational Structure of the St. Helens Group of Advanced Motorists

The named Trustees are all jointly and equally responsible for the management of the Group. The Trustees consist of Officers and Committee members and are commonly called 'The Committee'. The Committee meets every month to discuss Group business and make decisions about the running of the Group.

Of Special Note

At the March 2023 Committee meeting it was decided to reduce the 100% cashback to a 50% cashback for anyone under 30 and 65+ completing an Advanced Driver Course with the St. Helens Group. The 100% cashback was to provide financial support at the height of the cost-of-living crisis. This action helped those who find the normal course fee to be too high and has kept Associate training high – providing Associates for our Observer team. However, the 100% cashback is not sustainable going forward.

Another notable achievement was the setting up of a Recruitment and Publicity sub-Committee in November 2023. Observers Val Cunningham, Garry Maddocks and Observer / Committee member Andrew Farrimond have formed the core team supported by Treasurer Stephen Dumont and Group Chairman Mark Farnworth. This committee has been very active and has led to engagement with several outside organisations to raise awareness of what we do.

An opportunity has presented itself for the Group to develop an Advanced Riding element of the Group. We are developing this and more will be reported in the coming months.

Achievements and Activities

From April 1st 2023 to March 31st 2024 we had generated 11 Tests with 10 passes and 1 fail. Since the Group began in 1985 we have had 681 Passes and 75 Fails. This equates to a pass rate of 90 % and is a testimony of the hard work done by our Observers over the last thirty seven years. [There are now significant signs of an upturn in Associate numbers with seven joining the Spring 2024 Course. These are not included in the above statistics].

Group Events

More people have become interested in attending Group events following a reduction after the Covid years. Group meals have been very popular with venues at the Red Cat, Rainford on the 22nd June last year, the New Era Greek restaurant on the 30th November and the Maturo Meat House, Prescott on the 23rd February. We have also been to the Old Docks,

Liverpool on the 22nd July last year and the Lancashire Mining Museum on the 11th May this year.

Observer Training

The observing team currently comprises 11 Observers who are all very keen to help associates to pass the Advanced Driving Test. With the demise of the Local Observer qualification and the role of Local Observer Assessor, it became apparent that there was a need to change the observer training within the Group. Previously, the Group had prepared trainee observers and assessed their competence via the Group's LOAs who constituted the Training Committee, the whole process being completed in-house with input solely from the LOAs. Now, a trainee observer's competence is assessed by an external examiner. It was felt that, as all observers will eventually be National Observers, they should all have a role to play in training new observers.

At the same time, it was agreed that the role of the Training Committee was becoming more administrative and so the decision was made to restructure the Training Committee. The Group's Committee approved the new structure of 5 members on the Training Committee. These will be the Training Officer, Lead Observer and Associate Co-ordinator who will all serve throughout their tenures of office. Each year, after the AGM, two other members will be appointed to serve for that one year. In this way it is hoped to open up the Training Committee, giving more opportunities for membership. Finally, it was agreed that any observer who wishes should have a role to play in training new observers.

Thanks

It is estimated that approximately 1,500 hours are freely given to the running of the Group each year by the Committee, Observers and other volunteers and the Group and the Committee would like to recognise this by saying a big thank you. You are:

Presidents

Lady Kirsty Pilkington (President) and Mark Farnworth (Vice-President)

Trustees (Committee Members)

Mark Farnworth	Chairman, newsletter editor and web manager
Phil Sharples	Vice-Chairman
Chris Bradley	Secretary
Stephen Dumont	Treasurer
Anita Clift	Membership Secretary / Deputy Associate Co-ordinator
Ken Nevitt	Training Officer
Alan Prescott	Associate Co-ordinator
Kay Heppenstall	Events / Group Contact / Pre-course Co-ordinator
Mark Hemans	Lead Observer
Jim Cunliffe	
Andrew Farrimond	

Observers

Mark Hemans	Mark Farnworth	Jim Cunliffe	Phil Sharples
Andrew Appleton	Anita Clift	Chris Bradley	
Andrew Farrimond	Garry Maddocks	Val Cunningham	
Jeff Fishwick	Retired from observing 9 th October 2023		
Ken Nevitt	Trainee (re-started after long break September 2023)		
Alison Jones	Trainee (started Jan 2024)		

All of the Group's Observers are Institute of Motor Industry (IMI) qualified.

The Membership: All the Members - without whom the Group would not exist.

Examiners: Dennis Nicholson, David Cox and Oliver Fullerton for attending Meet an Examiner Sessions.

The St. Helens Community Fire Station: For their support in allowing the Group to operate in their premises and to their helpful and friendly staff.

Funding

Overall, Group Funds are in good shape and the Group is in a reasonably secure financial position going into 2024/2025. Please see the Annual Accounts for the full picture. The accounts have been officially audited and passed. As a matter of prudence the Committee will continue exploring ways in which savings can be made and unnecessary spending avoided.

Policies

Reserves Policy

The Trustees have decided that the Group should hold a reserve fund of £1,000 and that this should be maintained within the General Funds in the Group's ordinary bank account.

These reserves have been set at a level that would meet the Group's expenditure for approximately one year to ensure the future of the Group during potential financial hardship.

As at the financial year end the target reserves were held within the General Funds.

Review of Financial Risks

The Trustees have undertaken a risk review and, where necessary, systems have been established to mitigate the major risks to which the Charity is exposed, as identified by the Trustees.

Review of Operational Risks

A review of operating procedures for observed runs and demonstration drives has been undertaken and appropriate training opportunities have been provided.

Signature and Declaration

Approved by the Trustees and signed on their behalf:

Mark Farnworth, Chairman, St. Helens Group of Advanced Motorists
31.05.2024