



# Newsletter ~ April 2022

**St Helens Group of Advanced Motorists**  
*Working to make our roads safer every day...*

## Welcome

Hello everyone and welcome to the April edition of the newsletter.

Although the Covid situation is not over with infection rates very high there are signs that we are over the worst. As a Group we have continued to function, albeit at a low level, over much of the last two years. Observers are now returning to the Group and we have been dealing with several Associates in recent months. A big thank you from me to all those who have been supporting the Group. Whatever members do for the Group is much appreciated.

As you may know IAM RoadSmart has increased the cost of the Advanced Driver Course from £149 to £175. It is quite an increase but to be fair it has

been at £149 for quite a few years and all companies are having to deal with higher working costs in these challenging times.

I'm pleased to inform you that the committee has decided to not only keep our Young Driver and 60+ cashbacks but to increase the Young Driver cashback from £89 to £100. The 60+ cashback remains at £50.

Please let your family members and friends know of these cashbacks. Our plan is to ramp up our recruitment activities, gently at first.

Another piece of news is that the Ibis Hotel, Haydock has told us that due to a new contract its meeting rooms are not available to public groups

and we can't use the Ibis as a meeting place on Sunday mornings. Thus, our AGM which will be on Thursday 9th June will be at the Town Hall and we plan to run our Sunday meetings from the Ravenhead Retail Park to make use of the facilities there.

I'd like to congratulate Phil Sharples, Chris Bradley and Andrew Appleton for passing the Institute of the Motor Industry (IMI) National Observer Test. This test is very challenging and it's a testimony to both their dedication to observing and preparation for the test.

Best wishes.

**Mark Farnworth**  
*Vice-Chairman and Chief Observer*



St. Helens Group website

[www.shgam.org.uk](http://www.shgam.org.uk)

### Contacts:

contactshgam@gmail.com  
07849 674393 (after 6pm)

editorshgam@gmail.com

### **More Information** (click links)

[SHGAM News](#)

[IAM News Releases](#)

[SHGAM Driving Tips](#)

[IAM RoadSmart Advice](#)

[Our Courses](#)

[Course dates](#)

## **IAM RoadSmart checklist: Before you start the engine - Blog**

The most important consideration, and something not enough people think about before they jump into their car, ...is it actually fit for the road? We advocate that you check your vehicle every time you go to drive it. Of course, realistically not everyone is going to do a full check every time, but you'll find that advanced drivers will have a walk around their car, each time before they get into it either at home, or if they've left it parked somewhere; there's no point driving off if you've got a flat tyre.

Some members might be familiar with the POWDERY Check:

**P**etrol – or diesel – and today, of course battery charge – check you have plenty for the journey.

**O**il – also brake, gear box, clutch fluid and power-steering fluid all need regular checks

**W**ater – including your screen wash reservoir, which if empty could cost you a penalty notice

**D**amage – is there any fresh body damage – is there anything hanging

down below the vehicle?

**E**lectrics – are all your lights – interior and exterior, working and don't forget the reversing light? Does your horn work?

**R**ubber – regularly check your tyres, pressures treads and make sure there are no cuts and bulges. Always include the spare and keep it at the highest pressure you may need. Also make sure your windscreen wiper blades are ok – not nicked or cracked.

**Y**ourself – if you were drinking the day or night before, are you fit to drive now? Not only should you think about how much you have to drink, but also what time you stopped drinking. You may need more than just overnight for alcohol to be out of your system.

The reality is though that non-advanced motorists in particular are unlikely to do a full POWDERY Check, but at the very least you need to ensure you have enough fuel for your journey.

**Richard Gladman, Head of Driving and Riding Standards at IAMRS**



## Code red ... millions of motorists unaware of Highway Code changes

### **News Release 5th April 2022**

In the wake of widespread changes to the Highway Code earlier this year, millions of drivers are running the risk of breaking the rules of the road and endangering the safety of other road users and pedestrians.

Research commissioned by the UK's largest independent road safety charity, IAM RoadSmart, has revealed that one in five (20 per cent) of the 1,000 motorists surveyed were unaware of the latest changes to the code, which came into force on 29 January 2022. This potentially represents over seven million out of the 35.9 million drivers in the UK.

Worryingly, over half (51 per cent) of respondents admitted they can't remember the last time they referred to the Highway Code, while over a third (34 per cent) of those surveyed said they hadn't read the code in over a year. This is despite the fact that well over three quarters (80 per cent) of respondents believe changes and regular updates to the Highway Code are important.

Among the January updates to the code was the formation of a hierarchy of road users, a risk-based policy which states that those in charge of vehicles that can cause the greatest harm in the event of a collision bear the greatest responsibility to take care and reduce the danger they pose to others. The updated code also introduces a new section that when pedestrians are waiting at a junction, other traffic should give way.

Neil Greig, Director of Policy and Research at IAM RoadSmart, commented: "An alarming number of motorists are driving on Britain's roads without awareness of key changes which fundamentally shift the dynamics of shared use. This is a serious safety risk which could actually see the updated code causing more conflict on our roads rather than less."

The lack of awareness of the changes could explain the fact that more than half (51 per cent) of drivers think that the government has not done a good job of communicating changes to the Highway Code.

Neil added: "Before the roll out of

the new Highway Code changes, we warned that a huge education campaign would be required to ensure the amendments are disseminated and fully adopted by the millions of existing drivers, motorcyclists and road users. Unfortunately, our survey shows that the government education campaign did not effectively communicate

Following a short PR campaign at the time of the changes a bigger campaign is now planned for the late spring. Our survey shows that this cannot come quickly enough to ensure the proper messaging is getting through. We also think that an easily accessible and engaging online learning resource for existing drivers would be a very useful addition to improve knowledge. In future, we would urge the Department for Transport to be more realistic about the impact that simply changing a seldom read document will have on the behaviour and safety of road users."

**The new Highway code is online**

**Click [here](#)**

## **Notice Board**

### Spring Advanced Driver Course

The course starts on Sunday 1st May. Let your family and friends know.

### Welcome

Welcome to Will Heyes who has joined the Group as an Associate Member to join our Spring Advanced Driver Course.

### Group Event

**Walk to and around the Dream statue, Sutton, St. Helens, WA9 4BB**

Saturday 18th June, 1.30pm start

Contact Kay Heppenstall, our Events Organiser if you plan to attend.

### Goodbye Eric

It is with sadness that we report the death of ex Observer Eric Lowe. Eric was a stalwart Observer for the Group and hung up his clipboard in February 2019.

Our thoughts and prayers are with his wife Beryl and family.



### Congratulations

to Chris Bradley, Phil Sharples and Andrew Appleton for passing the IMI National Observer Test

### Carr Mill Walk

Saturday 5th February

A small group of us enjoyed a great walk around the lake on a lovely sunny afternoon.





**You are cordially invited to the  
St Helens Group of Advanced Motorists  
Annual General Meeting**

**to be held at 8pm on Thursday 9th June 2022  
St. Helens Town Hall, Victoria Square. Prompt start**

**Guest Speaker: Chief Inspector Michael O'Malley  
of Merseyside Police**

Chief Inspector O'Malley will talk about Merseyside Roads Policing. We hope that the new Mayor or Deputy Mayor of St. Helens will be able to attend. Our President Lady Kirsty Pilkington will also be attending.

Due to these special guests we are looking for a good turnout and encourage you to make every effort to attend. Wives, husbands, partners etc are welcome.

For covid safety we politely ask attendees to wear a face covering.

**NOMINATION FOR 2022/2023 ST HELENS GROUP COMMITTEE**

I \_\_\_\_\_ (full name in capitals)  
\_\_\_\_\_ (signature)

wish to be elected to the following position:-

- \*Chairman                      \*Vice-Chairman                      \*Secretary
- \*Treasurer                      \*General Committee. Member                      \*Other (specify)

*\*delete as appropriate*

**Proposer** (full name in capitals)      **Secunder** (full name in capitals)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ (signature)      \_\_\_\_\_



**St. Helens Group Annual General Meeting**  
Town Hall, Victoria Square, St. Helens, WA10 1HP



**NOMINATION FOR 2022/2023 ST HELENS GROUP COMMITTEE**

N.B. The Nominee, Proposer and Seconder must be **full** members of the St Helens Group.

Nominations **must** be **submitted** to the Group Secretary, Mr Chris Bradley by **Thursday 26th May 2022**

Please send an email to register your Nomination via the following email address

editorshgam@gmail.com

~ ~ ~