



Newsletter ~ April 2025

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.

With the clocks going forward and increasingly lighter nights I'm sure that many of us are feeling a sense of expectation of better weather and things to come. It's certainly true of the Group where the seeds of our labours are bearing fruit. We have our developing rider group, we have a new Advanced course in May and our recruitment activities are ramping up and being well received.

Most of the time we don't know what impact our Advanced Driver Courses have on our Associate's driving / lives. We hope to be a 'force for good' and change people's lives, it's not often we can see the results of our efforts.

However, I'm pleased to say that one of our current Associates, Peter Bellis, has kindly sent us some feedback which I've put onto our website—click [here](#). It's great when we receive positive feedback like this. We can help change lives in very tangible ways. Previously submitted feedback from our Associates can be seen by clicking [here](#).

Some of you will know that the IAM has a collaboration with the [Young Driver Foundation](#) and we have also decided to support this. Members of the Committee will be attending some of their events at Haydock Park racecourse throughout 2025. We will have the opportunity to talk to pre-licenced young drivers and their parents / grandparents about IAM

RoadSmart and the St. Helens Group. The Young Driver Foundation is an excellent organisation and so if you want to see first hand what they do you are more than welcome to join us at Haydock Park.

Our AGM is on Thu 12th June and I'm delighted to say that our speaker is Mike Newman from [Speed of Sight](#). This is a fantastic organisation and its quite humbling to learn what they do for blind and partially sighted people. As sighted people we take so much for granted.

Safe driving and riding

Mark Farnworth
Group Chairman



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More Information (click links)

[SHGAM News](#)

[IAM News Releases](#)

[SHGAM Driving Tips](#)

[IAM RoadSmart Advice](#)

[Our Courses](#)

[Course dates](#)

Stay Alert Behind the Wheel - IAMRS News 4th Feb

Driving can be quite an adventure, but it can also be exhausting, especially if you're on the road for hours or driving late at night. Feeling tired behind the wheel is no joke - it can really affect your ability to drive safely.

Rest Well Before Driving: Ensure you are well-rested before getting behind the wheel to reduce the risk of micro-sleeps which can last from a fraction of a second to 30 seconds.

Avoid Chronic Sleepiness: Consistently miss-

ing one or two hours of sleep can result in ongoing drowsiness. It's important to avoid driving when you're sleep-deprived.

Take Regular Breaks: Split up long stretches of motorway driving to avoid drowsiness. It's good practice to stop at least every 100 miles or every two hours, and make sure to stop before fatigue sets in.

Heed Vehicle Warnings: Some newer vehicles have smart tech that warns motorists when their driving style shows signs

of fatigue. If a warning appears, it's time to take a break.

Plan Overnight Stops: Stop and take a nap in a safe location; it will allow your batteries to re-charge. Ideally, book a hotel and start afresh in the morning.

Avoid Peak Sleepiness Times: If possible, avoid driving during the two peak times for sleepiness: between 3-5am and 2-4pm.

Check Medication Effects: If you are taking

prescribed medication, consult your GP about whether it's safe to drive. For over-the-counter medication, read the instructions or, ask a pharmacist, or check here for more information.

Driving for Work: People who drive for work are particularly susceptible to tiredness, with factors such as long hours, physical fatigue, and irregular shift patterns often having a cumulative impact. Employers need to take note of the serious consequences of driving while tired and make sure they don't ask too much of their employees.



Majority of drivers are missing out on technology that can make their journeys safer

News Release 20/03/25

Only a quarter are regularly using driver assistance aids which may reduce collisions and improve driving comfort.

Younger drivers and those travelling more than 10,000 miles a year are more likely to embrace vehicle technology

Millions of drivers could be missing out on the benefits of potentially lifesaving in-vehicle assistance aids when they're behind the wheel with new research* showing that a third (33%) of drivers never use them.

Out of six of the most prominent driving assistance aids** in modern vehicles – including collision warnings and cruise control - and among those whose vehicles have these technologies, only a quarter (25%) say they regularly or often use them. In contrast, one-in-five (19%) rarely use these aids or have used them only once. A worrying third (33%) say they never use the technology. Just over a fifth of drivers (22%) state their vehicle doesn't have the technology, but this varies depending on individual assistance features.

There are significant differences in frequency of use depending on age and gender. Drivers aged 17-34 are around twice as likely to use driver assistance systems compared to someone aged 70 or over, while their use is also higher among male drivers. Those travelling at least 10,000 miles or more a year are also far more likely to be engaged with this technology, primarily because they may use it for work journeys.

Driver assistance systems have become far more prevalent on newer vehicles over the last decade, with many now including adaptive cruise control, intelligent speed assist, lane departure warnings and emergency braking systems among many others. More advanced systems such as drowsy driver warnings and automated lane keeping systems are providing even greater protection for those on the road, but there is concern that many of these benefits are not being used by drivers, potentially endangering themselves and others in the process.

New IAM Examiner - Valerie Cunningham



Congratulations to Val Cunningham on becoming an IAM Examiner. This is fantastic achievement. Val joined our Winter Advanced Driving Course in 2018 as an Associate and passed the Advanced Driving Test with a FIRST in July 2018. Val then became a Trainee Observer for the St. Helens Group and became an IAM Local Observer in May 2019. In December 2023 Val passed the IAM Master Driver Test and achieved a distinction and in January 2024 she passed the IAM National Observer Assessment. In June 2024, Val became the Group's Driver of the Year at our AGM.

Well done Val, for your ongoing commitment to develop your observing and driving skills. Best wishes as you begin your new role as an Examiner.

Mark Farnworth
Group Chairman

Notice Board

Welcome

Welcome to new driver Associates James Irwin, Christine Miles, Laurence Miles, Bill Friar and Liza Berry and new rider Associate Cassandra Wade.

Best wishes to you all. I'm sure you'll enjoy the experience.

Visit to RAF Burtonwood Heritage Centre

Saturday 3rd May

Gulliver's World, Warrington, WA5 9YZ

2.30pm start, free access, Donation optional

Contact Kay Heppenstall if you are planning to attend.

Car Treasure Hunt

Saturday 28th June

We will be holding a 'Treasure Hunt' on Saturday 28th June, finishing with a meal in a restaurant /pub early afternoon. The general area will be the south west part of the Forest of Boland. Observer Simon Brook has kindly offered to organise this event.

For those of you not familiar with how car Treasure Hunts work here is some info. Each participating car will be given a set of clues / riddles that will direct them to the first destination. On route and upon arrival, they have to make a note of several local features such as the name of a local pub or information on a sign. They then move onto a second destination and possibly a third destination following sets of clues / riddles

with questions to answer on route to and at these destinations.

They finally arrive at a nice pub / restaurant for a meal. If at any point they can't identify a destination then they just open a sealed envelope that tells them! **This is not a timed event.** The winner is identified as the one with the most number of points generated by finding destinations and answering questions correctly less any penalty points for opening envelopes.

More information TBA. For the moment, put the date in your diaries!

Congratulations

Congratulations to Driver Examiner and ex St. Helens Group Observer Oliver Fullerton for passing the IAM Rider National Observer Assessment. Oliver's training was provided by SHGAM.



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

**to be held at 8pm on Thursday 12th June 2025
Ibis Hotel, Haydock, WA11 0GR.**

Guest Speaker: Mike Newman, Speed of Sight

We are delighted that Speed of Light co-founders Mike Newman BEM and John Galloway, will be attending our AGM. Speed of Sight is committed to the promotion of opportunity for blind and partially sighted children and adults of all abilities. They provide a motorsport experience. See page 4 for more information.

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.

NOMINATION FOR 2025/2026 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)

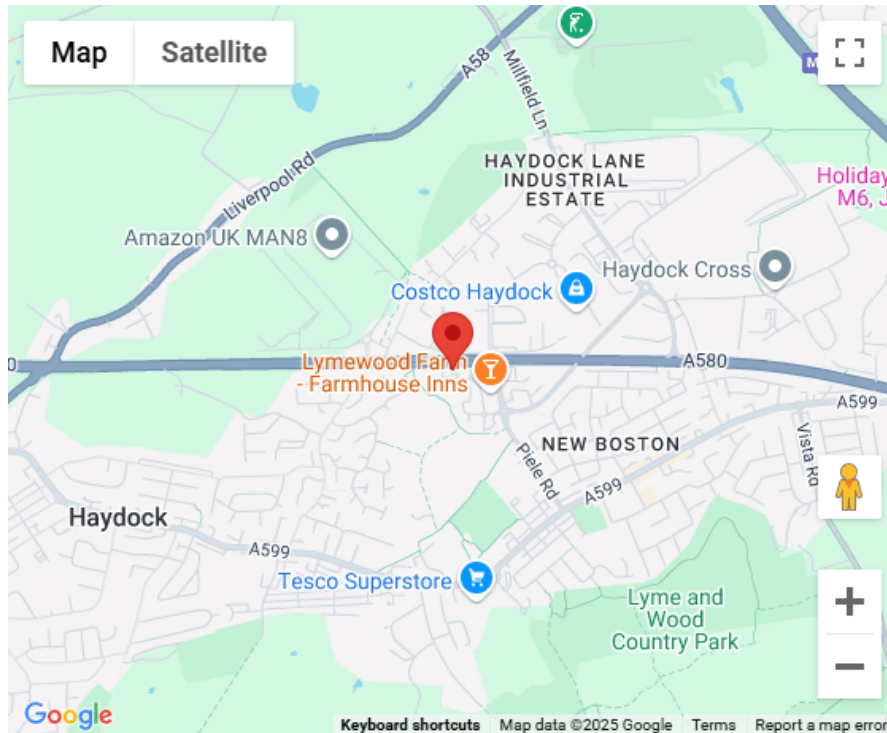
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Proposer (full name in capitals) **Seconder** (full name in capitals)

_____ (signature) _____



St. Helens Group Annual General Meeting Ibis Hotel, Haydock, WA11 0GR



NOMINATION FOR 2025/2026 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 29th May 2025**

Please send an email to register your Nomination via the
following email address
editorshgam@gmail.com

Speed of Sight

Our mission: Speed of Sight is committed to the promotion of opportunity for children and adults of all abilities. We believe that people who are able to take part in a sporting or physical activity find it helps with their self esteem, social interaction and physical and mental well being. With this in mind, we provide a motor sport experience for people with disabilities.

We're thrilled to be joining St. Helens Advanced Motorists AGM to share the incredible work of Speed of Sight, a charity dedicated to empowering people of all abilities through the thrill of driving. Our talk, presented by Mike Newman BEM, the world's fastest blind driver and Speed of Sight's co-founder, will highlight how we're changing lives one drive at a time. Through our specially adapted race cars, we provide life-changing driving experiences for people with disabilities, giving them the freedom, confidence, and joy that many never thought possible. We look forward to inspiring conversations and potential collaborations—see you there!