



# Newsletter ~ February 2021

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

We continue to live through remarkable times. Due to the national lockdown the Group is essentially 'on hold'. I'm sure that you, like me, are looking forward to the day that we can restart our driving and social activities.

In the meantime, stay safe, keep powering through and remember that there is an end/beginning in sight, hopefully we'll all see each other soon.

**Tom Field, Group Chair**

Since all Group activities have stopped it is obviously not possible to welcome and congratulate Associates or let everyone know about Group meetings and social events.

For this newsletter I've decided to make you aware of where to find web and social media resources and news relating to advanced driving or driving in general. Apologies to those of you who don't have access to the internet but, hopefully, you'll find the articles printed in the newsletter interesting.

The IAM RoadSmart and SHGAM websites and Facebook pages contain reliable sources of information and news so I will concentrate on these platforms.

Stay safe.

**Mark Farnworth, Vice-Chairman and Newsletter Editor**



St. Helens Group website  
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- More Information**  
(click links)
- [SHGAM News](#)
  - [IAM News Releases](#)
  - [SHGAM Driving Tips](#)
  - [IAM RoadSmart Advice](#)

## Keeping your vehicle in good running order - Blog 26/1/21

With COVID travel restrictions back in place across the UK it can be easy to forget about your car or motorcycle. It is not often that your vehicle may sit unused for days at a time. So how will it survive for a period of minimal activity or complete inactivity?

**Tyres**  
- Check your car or motorcycle's tyres frequently. Look for cuts and bulges and that they have sufficient tread depth. This should be 1.6mm for cars and 1mm for motorcycles. Read TyreSafe's advice [here](#) if you need further information.  
- Keep the tyres inflated to the manufacturer's settings and if the car is sitting for some time, rotate the wheels to distribute any deformation in the carcass.

**Battery**  
A modern car battery which is in good condition should stand up well to

periods of inactivity and newer cars will shut down most systems if they're inactive for a long period of time. There may however be a small drain due to an alarm system.

To compensate for any power drainage in your battery over time, try connecting a maintenance charger which will charge and discharge the battery as necessary. These are available for home delivery from a range of online retailers. If you do not have access to a power socket, there are some solar devices available that will do the same job without the need for mains power.

**Oil**  
Checking your engine oil levels is quick and easy with many new cars now having a self-checking system in place, and making sure your oil is kept at the right level will mean you're ready to start as soon as you can

get back on the road. If you have to do it the traditional way, then make sure your car or bike is on level ground and that the engine is switched off and cool before proceeding (unless the handbook requires the oil to be warmed first).

**Lights**  
Making sure your car or motorcycle lights are in good working order is essential if it is to remain in a road legal condition. You should make sure that your headlights, indicators, reversing lights, fog light and brake lights all work properly. This check is simple, but you may find it easier to ask someone to help you. Alternatively, you could park near a window or garage door and use the reflection to see if your lights are fully operational.

**Water and screen wash**  
Check your engine's cooling system. Most are filled with a specialist mixture which improves performance in varying weather conditions. You can check the protection levels using a readily available.

Keeping your screen wash topped up will ensure you're ready to get back on the road as soon as coronavirus restrictions are lifted. Getting the correct screen wash solution will also prevent the system icing up and help remove bugs and grime.

**Richard Gladman, head of driving and riding standards,**



## IAMRS PRESS RELEASE

### New crash statistics reveal significant reduction in UK road deaths but raises concerns over volume of cycling casualties

Posted 28th January 2021

Figures released today from the Department for Transport have revealed that UK traffic collisions in the 12 months up to June 2020 are down 16 per cent and road deaths have reduced by 14 per cent compared to the equivalent period in the preceding year.

The research indicated that there were 131,220 casualties of all severities (compared to 156,034 previously) and 1,580 road deaths (down from 1,827 the previous year), representing significant reductions.

The decline in UK road deaths and casualties is directly linked to the reduction in traffic as a result of national lockdown restrictions from the COVID-19 pandemic. In April 2020, for example, during the first

lockdown which commenced on 23<sup>rd</sup> March, casualties fell by 67 per cent as road traffic reduced by 49 per cent.

Neil Greig, Director of Policy & Research at the UK's largest independent road safety charity, IAM RoadSmart, said: "Despite fears that speeding has increased substantially during the first lockdown it does now look as if the number of casualties has gone down in line with falling traffic numbers. This is certainly good news as it shows that the vast majority of car, van and lorry stuck drivers to the rules. "However, the only way to confirm these trends and measure the true impact of local traffic closures and temporary cycle lanes is for the government to publish more details on what has happened throughout the rest of 2020.

"IAM RoadSmart thinks that it is unacceptable that we may have to wait until June 2021 to get the full picture for UK road safety during the pandemic. Other countries seem to be able to produce crash statistics much more quickly, allowing planners to deal with safety issues as they emerge and not after the event."

While the reduction in overall casualties is good news for road safety

generally, the reduction in casualties for cyclists were however less impressive, with the number of cyclists killed or seriously injured down just four per cent in the period covered by the DfT's report, compared with 26 per cent of car users and 25 per cent for all other road users in the same period. Neil concluded: "While motor traffic reduced as a result of national lockdowns, cycling traffic increased and there has unfortunately not been the same positive impact on cycling casualties when compared with other road users. We therefore urge all road users to continue to be extra vigilant for cyclists as more people take to their bikes during lockdown."

The full report from DfT can be found [here](#).

### **2021 /2022 Group subscriptions**

Due to ongoing complications because of the Covid-19 pandemic could I ask all of you who pay your annual subs by cheque to send them to me after the end of March. More details about Group subs will be in the April Newsletter.

**Alison Matthews,  
Group Treasurer**

## Sources of information and news

### **IAM RoadSmart Tips and Blogs**

SHGAM website: [RoadTips \(top of Homepage\)](#) / [National Advice and Insights](#)

IAMRS website: [Home page](#) / [Media and Policy](#) / [Tips and Blogs](#)

### **IAM RoadSmart Press Releases**

SHGAM website: [News \(top of Homepage\)](#) / [IAM RoadSmart](#)

IAMRS website: [Home page](#) / [Media and Policy](#) / [Newsroom](#) / [Press releases](#)

### **Social Media: IAMRS Facebook / Twitter / Blogs / LinkedIn / Soundcloud / YouTube and SHGAM Facebook / Twitter**

SHGAM website: [News \(top of Homepage\)](#) / [Social Media](#)

### **St. Helens Group Driving Tips / Tips from the top / IAMRS YouTube driving tips**

SHGAM website: [RoadTips \(top of Homepage\)](#)

### **Motoring news from newspapers, breakdown /recovery organisations and other organisations**

SHGAM website: [News \(top of Homepage\)](#) / [Motoring news](#)

### **Useful links**

SHGAM website: [About Us \(top of Homepage\)](#) / [Useful links](#)