

ARE WE THERE YET?



Mid Yorkshire Advanced Motorists Newsletter

March 2021



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Cover Photo – Brussels

This landmark building in Brussels on the Heysel Plateau was originally constructed for the 1958 Brussels World's Fair. Its nine 18m spheres are connected so that the structure forms the shape of a unit cell of an α -iron crystal magnified 165 billion times. It is now a museum.

Forthcoming Gatherings and Events

Because of the current Covid-19 situation the committee is following government guidelines and has cancelled the skill check meetings, and the social and committee meetings at the Carlton Club.

The provisional dates for the meetings for this year were published in last month's newsletter. We are still planning to hold the AGM in May, by video conference call if necessary.

We will inform members of the resumption of the social and skill check meetings via the newsletter, and our Facebook and website pages.

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Memories of an earlier time. The view from Wray Castle in the Lake District.

From the Editor

I'm looking out of the window as I write this at the snow in our road. Very few vehicles have been up and down but I've had few problems getting out however those journeys have been short and few and far between. We did have one longish journey recently to collect a few items from a well known Swedish store in the West Yorkshire Retail Park, although it was not without a significant amount of frustration. The items were ordered on line for collection between specified times. We turned up at the store, rang the number to say we had arrived then spent around half an hour waiting in the car park to be called to our collection point. Then up to the collection point for another long wait for someone to bring the items out. Overall our wait for collection was longer than the journey there and back. Not impressed and we paid an extra £5 for the privilege of collecting it (delivery by courier was £15, almost half the cost of the items).

This was a rare journey and on checking my records I've done around 2500 miles in the last year and Caroline's car has done less than 1000 miles both mainly on short journeys. Later in the newsletter there's an item on keeping your battery in good condition over the winter. It's also important to keep an eye on the brakes, as discs can corrode through lack of use, and to make sure the washer bottle has sufficient washer fluid to ensure it doesn't freeze. And don't forget the tyres. If you have summer tyres these will not be as effective in snow and low temperatures as winter tyres. As an alternative to avoid having to find somewhere to store the wheels and tyres following the change from summer to winter tyres, and vice-versa, All Season tyres can be fitted. I have All Season tyres on my car and have not had any problems during this winter. Our daughter had All Season tyres on her last car but not on her current car and she's noticed the difference.

There's one journey I'll definitely be taking soon as I've just been notified that I can now book my Covid vaccination. The choice is either at a vaccination centre or, my preference, at the local GP surgery but for that I need to wait until I get the call from them. However things are looking up and hopefully restrictions will start to be lifted later in the year.

Keith

Will any Member wishing to have an item, article or picture included in the newsletter please submit it to the editor no later than the 15th of the month, these may be edited to save space. Thank you.

Disclaimer

The items contained in this newsletter are the views of the Members who contribute and not necessarily the views of the Institute of Advanced Motorists (I.A.M.) or MYAM.

GROUP MEMBERSHIP NEWS

Welcome to the Group

New Associate

Jane Blakeley

New Membership Secretary and Chief Observer

Following the resignation of our Chief Observer, Membership Secretary, and Webmaster, David Rushfirth, late last year, we were left with a difficult situation. David had served in these positions for several years and was highly valued by everyone within the Group.

However, I am delighted to announce that, following expressions of interest in the roles of Chief Observer and Membership Secretary from two of our Members, it was agreed at a recent Group Committee meeting that Chris Marrison should be appointed as Interim Chief Observer and Graham Crawshaw be co-opted to the Committee as Membership Secretary.

Some of you will know Chris Marrison, as he was a Member and long-serving Local Observer of the former Wakefield Group, and, after the formation of MYAM, he became a well-respected Local Observer of the newly-formed Group. Chris was also a regular attendee at the monthly Skill Check Drives at Sigma (M62 J.32).

Graham Crawshaw was a long-standing Member of the former Harrogate Group before joining MYAM when the new Group was formed in 2014.

Both Chris and Graham followed very demanding careers, but, having retired during last year, they both felt that they would like to take up a new challenge and devote some time to a role within MYAM. Their offer to take up the two roles is very much appreciated.

I, and the MYAM Committee, are delighted to welcome Chris and Graham to their new roles, and I am sure that we all wish them well in their new positions.

Janice N. Haigh
Chairman

MYAM Online



WEB SITE Our website is packed full of information and is the go to place for everything you need to know about our events, courses, meetings and news about us as a Group. How about copies of the newsletter going back a few years.

Need to know who the Committee are or see our Observer team? We are all on there.

See us at www.iamroadsmart.com/groups/midyorkshire

We are adding to the content all the time so keep dropping in to see what we are doing.



FACEBOOK provides details of events and local news. Go and visit www.facebook.com/midyorkshireiam and like our page.

How about inviting a few of your Facebook friends to like our page too. It helps getting our name out there.

The Group Telephone number is 0113 314 9969

Data Protection – Privacy Notice (GDPR)

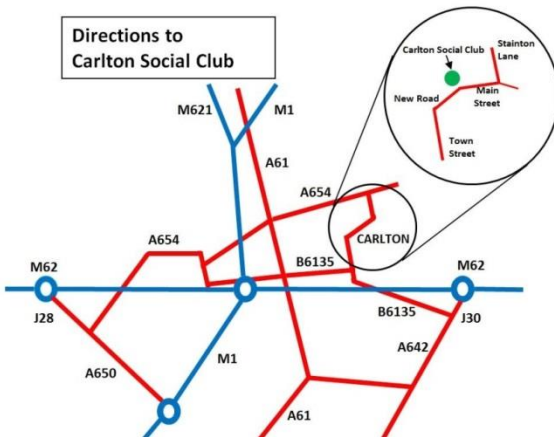
Mid Yorkshire Advanced Motorists (MYAM) is committed to looking after the information that it holds on behalf of its members in a way that complies with the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR).

MYAM has a legitimate interest in keeping sufficient personal information to communicate with its members and other local people with an interest in road safety, and to permit the renewal of subscriptions. A member can ask to see a copy of their personal information, correct any errors and ask for all or part of it to be deleted.

MYAM is affiliated to the Institute of Advanced Motorists (IAM) and will use a member's information to support them if and when they are assessed by IAM. MYAM will also ensure that any data shared with IAM is accurate. We will not share your details with anybody else.

Directions to the Carlton Social Club

Main Street, Carlton, Wakefield WF3 3RW



From the M62 West leave at Junction 28 and take the A650 towards Wakefield. At the next set of traffic lights turn left onto the A654 toward Rothwell. Follow the A654, turning left in Thorpe on the Hill. Cross the A61 and continue into Carlton. Turn right into Stainton Lane then turn right into Main Street. The Social Club is on the right immediately after the Unicorn pub.

Take the next right, B6135, towards Lofthouse. Follow the B6135 under the M62 onto Ouzlewell Green towards Carlton and Rothwell. Follow the road past Carlton Primary School and the Social Club is on the left just before the Unicorn pub.

From the M62 East leave at junction 30 and take the A642 towards Wakefield.

There is a car park with overspill parking available on the grass area opposite the club.

How's Your Battery?

With all the lockdowns and restrictions over the last year many of us are not using our cars as much as we were and many of our journeys are shorter than we are used to. All this can take a heavy toll on our cars leading to problems due to the lack of use.

The battery in particular can be seriously affected as short journeys often mean it is not getting charged enough to keep it in good condition. The colder weather also means a greater strain on the battery as the oil is thicker and it can take more effort from the starter to turn the engine over. When the engine is turned over with a cold engine the battery voltage can drop enough to give a weaker spark so the engine won't start. This was a common problem with older cars in winter and the motoring rescue services often state that battery failure is a common problem in winter. Diesels can also be affected as they have glow plugs which warm the combustion chamber to make ignition easier. These take many amps from the battery which can seriously affect the batteries ability to turn the engine over.



A typical battery charger from the 70s

One way to overcome this is to use a battery charger when the car is not in use but you need to be very careful what type of charger you use.

Years ago car batteries were standard lead acid types and could be charged with a simple charger (left), the sort that was available from car accessory shops and only cost a few pounds but these days different battery types are often fitted requiring a more specialised

charger, such as the CTEK charger shown below. These chargers monitor the state of charge and regulate the voltage and current to prevent overcharging and can be left connected to the battery without any risk of overcharging.

If your car is fitted with a stop start system you will have a different type of battery, typically an AGM (Absorbent Glass Mat) type, it's still a lead acid battery but is more suited to the more frequent starting of a car with stop start. The car will also be fitted with a battery management system which monitors the state of charge of the battery and controls the alternator so that the load on the engine can be reduced when the battery is



CTEK Intelligent Charger

so that the load on the engine can be reduced when the battery is

charged. This information is needed by the stop start system as it only works when the engine is warmed up and the battery is in good condition. One sign that the battery does need charging is if the stop start doesn't operate when you would expect it to.

Because of the battery management system you shouldn't connect the charger directly across the battery as you used to do with the older chargers. The charger has to be connected to the battery positive terminal and an adjacent ground point on the car body. This allows the battery management system to monitor the charging. The cars manual should have details of the location of this ground point.

One disadvantage of this type of battery is that it is more expensive than the older type and it may require the management system to be "informed" if the battery is changed. So it makes sense to keep the battery in good condition during this period of shorter journeys and cold weather.

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Highways England Safety Alert - Vehicle Compliance Checks

In September 2020 Highways England commenced a programme of compliance checks on vehicles and drivers working on our schemes across the country. Our checks are intended to provide assurance that vehicles and drivers in the supply chain are safe and legal.

Each compliance check is run in collaboration with the principal contractor. The vehicle and driver checks are conducted by Warwickshire Police, on behalf of Highways England, by stopping vehicles for examination at the scheme compound. The focus is on education, rectification and data gathering rather than prosecution. However, the police reserve the right to take formal enforcement action for serious issues.

Vehicle Compliance Checks 13 November 2020 Findings:

So far compliance checks have been completed on 2 separate Smart Motorway Schemes. A total of 173 vehicles have been examined. The checks are predominantly on vans and trucks, but some passenger cars, both private and company, have been checked as well.

We are extremely concerned that 61 vehicles (35%) were found to be non-compliant (illegal) in some way. A broad range of issues were recorded, but there were clear trends with some issues being found repeatedly. Police were requested to apply a 'light touch' in issuing penalties, but still issued a number of penalty notices and prohibitions to the most serious issues.

Neglect Items – A significant proportion of the issues found are what are termed 'neglect' items. These are problems with the roadworthiness of a vehicle that should be picked up

by the driver during their pre-use check. For example; the checks revealed 16 vehicles with defective tyres and 13 vehicles with non-functioning lights.

Vehicle Loading – The checks identified 18 vehicles unsafely loaded, predominantly flat-bed light goods vehicles, carrying tools and work equipment. Additionally 2 light goods vehicles were found to be substantially over their maximum vehicle weight.

Licensing - There have been 4 occasions of drivers not complying with the requirements of their driving license including a driver who had an expired disqualification, but had never re-applied for their license. This also included drivers using vehicles without the correct license categories.

Operating companies have been contacted directly about issues with their own vehicles and asked to take remedial action.

Graham Crawshaw

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M1 deaths: Coroner Calls for Smart Motorway Review

A coroner in South Yorkshire has called for a review of smart motorways following an inquest into the deaths of two drivers following a collision on the M1 in June 2019. The accident occurred on a section of the M1 where the hard shoulder has been converted into a permanent running lane. Coroner David Urpeth said smart motorways without a hard shoulder carry "an ongoing risk of future deaths". A verdict of unlawful killing was recorded at Sheffield Town Hall. He added he would be writing to Highways England and the transport secretary asking for a review.

The inquest heard the deaths of the two men may have been avoided had there had been a hard shoulder.

Highways England said it was "addressing many of the points raised".

Having driven down the same section of the M1 many times the level of traffic does not, in my opinion, justify the need for all lane running during off peak times. During these times I can see no reason why the hard shoulder cannot be re-instated as the technology exists to control the lanes.

With all lane running there is also the problem of detecting broken down vehicles quickly so that the lane can be closed. The radar technology used to detect stationary vehicles is only fitted to around 10% of "Smart" motorways but how reliable is it and although it is supposed to take around 20 seconds to close the lane what about vehicles already in that

lane. Remember that at 70mph a vehicle will cover approximately 625m (0.4miles) in that time. The refuge areas are also too far apart, in the case above the next refuge was around a mile away. The original pilot on the M42 had the refuges every 500m (0.31miles) apart but on later “smart” motorways they were up to 2.5km (1.6miles) apart. What happens if you breakdown 10m after a refuge?

Those of you who have had the misfortune to travel on the section of the M62 between Leeds and Bradford during the “rush hour” will have experienced the fact that there is a limit to any increase in traffic capacity by converting it to a smart motorway.

Have you ever experienced a near miss or a breakdown or witnessed a near miss on a smart motorway?

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More on Social Distancing

A few months ago I wrote a few comments on the subject of social distancing, on four wheels, of course. I make no apology for returning to the subject, to draw attention to developments you may easily have missed.

It may surprise you to know that when I started observing, over thirty years ago, tailgating was very, very common, much more so than now. For observers, it usually manifested itself in a following vehicle trying to push a driver to exceed the speed limit, which made encouraging associates actually to observe the limits doubly difficult. It was one lack of social distancing on wheels that in those days was a dangerous menace. I would guess that the improvement over the years has mainly derived from increased traffic levels and consequent lower speeds, but I do find it quite noticeable these days that most following cars will do so at a reasonable spacing. Even the ones who close up by exceeding the speed limit you are observing more often than not will adopt a safe following position, recognise you are obeying the law and not get too close in an attempt to intimidate you into accelerating up to their chosen speed. The same often holds true on open roads, where many drivers are content to follow a car moving at less than the legal limit. How often have you found yourself in a queue ambling along at 45 or 50 mph?

Motorways and dual carriageways are a little different by reason of the ‘overtaking’ lane, for want of a better way to describe it. It is far more



common to see a queue in the outside lane, well bunched up, trying to exceed the limit as likely as not, and getting nowhere. Meanwhile the left lanes are well spaced, and, ridiculous as it may seem, often tending to move faster than traffic to the right. Of course, this is the very situation which, when matters sudden go awry, leads to a significant amount of bent metal being created.

The other major difference that has affected drivers over the years is camera enforcement, which now accounts for the overwhelming majority of motoring penalties. The sight of a car at the side of the road having been pulled over by the police is quite rare. Now you might think that it would be difficult to identify tailgating by use of a camera, but apparently not. Highways England have been running a pilot scheme to do just that. How extensive it was and where it was carried out I cannot say but it is reported they identified 10,000 offences, which would be prosecuted as driving without due care and attention, in just two weeks. It seems the system is accurate, and can differentiate between a continuous close following position and a coming overtake, for example. It is claimed to be effective and fair. The miscreants were not prosecuted but all received a letter giving 'advice' on their manner of driving. I bet that raised a few eyebrows!

The proliferation of speed cameras has had a noticeable effect on traffic speeds as the years have passed, and it is pretty obvious that the next target for safety enforcement, or revenue raising if you are a born cynic, may well be tailgating. So there we have another sound reason for social distancing on wheels. Remember your two second (at least) rule. Big Brother has a new toy.

Mallard

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IAM News Releases and Tips

Better training is essential to make ADAS a safety benefit and not a potential hazard



Vehicle manufacturers, dealerships, DVSA (Driving and Vehicle Standards Agency) and driving instructors should include a comprehensive lesson for motorists on how to use advanced driver assistance systems (ADAS) so they are a road safety benefit and not a potential hazard, says IAM RoadSmart.

The urgent call has been made by the UK’s largest independent road safety charity following the publication of a highly influential report by the Fédération Internationale de l’Automobile (FIA) entitled ‘How to maximize the road safety benefits of ADAS’.

Some of the most widely known ADAS – many of which will become mandatory in new vehicles from July 2022 – include adaptive cruise control, autonomous emergency braking systems, lane keeping assist and driver monitoring for drowsiness and distraction recognition.

However, awareness and understanding of these systems is generally low among drivers. The FIA’s report finds that most users do not receive any training when first encountering ADAS but have to rely on information from the user manual, and most alarmingly by applying a ‘trial-and-error’ method.

Neil Greig, IAM RoadSmart Director of Policy & Research, said: “Advanced driver assistance systems have the potential to improve road safety, but only if used correctly.

“If used incorrectly, not least without a full understanding of what the systems are and are not capable of, they can have the opposite effect, with potentially worrying consequences for all road users.

“IAM RoadSmart therefore believes the time has now come to include a comprehensive lesson from every car dealer supplying vehicles and further, for more about ADAS to be included in the UK driving test. This is crucial as these tools begin to be supplied as standard on an increasing number of vehicles.”

Meanwhile, further recommendations from the FIA report, which IAM RoadSmart endorses, include a comprehensive explanation to end-users of the systems’ limitations, more consistently accurate functioning of ADAS in practice and the introduction of fail-safe communications to alert users if any of the systems fail, helping to mitigate any potential road safety risk.

Neil added: “There needs to be a much higher emphasis on educating drivers in the best use of technology. Vehicle manufacturers and car dealerships are key, ensuring that when a customer drives off the forecourt they understand and use the various safety systems correctly.

“Until this becomes the norm, IAM RoadSmart is exploring the potential for video tutorials that will plug the current gap.”

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I've had several "driver aids" in my cars and before using them in anger have tried them out in a controlled environment. One is the hill descent control which is useful in snow when travelling downhill. It will brake each wheel individually maintaining a constant speed without the driver having to use the accelerator or brake pedals. All I have to do is steer. Before using it in snow I tried it out in the summer in our cul-de-sac, which is downhill to our house, primarily to see what it did and what I needed to do. When it snowed I knew exactly what to do and what to expect when the system was working. Many years ago when I had my first car equipped with ABS I tried it out on a quiet section of road with no other vehicles in the vicinity and slammed the brakes on hard experiencing the pulsing brake pedal. Fortunately I've very rarely had to experience the ABS working in anger.

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Is Your Car Subject to a Recall?

Have you ever had to take your car to a garage because it's been the subject of a manufacturers recall? A vehicle manufacturer will only issue a recall if it's discovered a fault, usually caused by a defective component or faults during manufacture, that could be a danger to life such as faults in the braking or airbag systems.

A recent article I found on the internet [2020 – The Most Recalled Cars in Europe « Car-Recalls.eu \(car-recalls.eu\)](https://www.car-recalls.eu) gives details of the recalls for the most recalled cars of 2020 and the top ten are shown below.

	Manufacturer	Recalls	Models
1	Mercedes Benz	57	27
2	Peugeot	28	11
3	Ford	24	16
4	Volkswagen	24	12
5	Toyota	22	14
6	Audi	19	12
7	Citroen	18	13
8	BMW	17	18
9	Renault	15	11
10	Opel	14	7

Reading through the list of faults makes me wonder what the quality control departments of some of these manufacturers are doing although it's often their suppliers who are responsible for supplying components which have been subject to faulty manufacturing.

And Finally.....

Out of the mouth of Babes.....

I've been transcribing some of my old childhood diaries as part of a long standing family history project and came across some gems.

My brother and I bought a rabbit and named him after our father. The diary entry read "We bought Harvey the rabbit (not dad)." Dad outlasted the rabbit by many years.

Later in the year another entry read "Went to Flower Show. Brian (my brother) had four teeth out". Flower shows were very different back in the sixties!

Another incident from my very early childhood occurred on a visit to my grandparents. I was watching my grandfather, and listening to everything he said, in his garage checking his car then went back inside and, according to my parents, proudly announced, to my parents and grandmother "We're not going out in the car because there's a bloody big hole in the silencer". I can't actually remember this but would have loved to have seen my prim and proper grandmothers face!

Roll on a few decades and I was at my parents and my young nephew was there looking out of the window at my car which was covered in dirt following a rainstorm. He then said "It's dried rain". Which in a way it was!

This Month's Teaser

The cover picture shows a landmark building in Brussels but what is the building called?

Last Month's Teaser

Last month I asked "An electric car once held the land speed record. What was the highest speed recorded and in which year was it achieved?". In 1899 the Jamais Contente set a new land Speed Record of 65.79mph.

Your Committee

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Website	Position vacant		myam.webmaster(at)outlook.com
Newsletter Editor	Keith Wevill	01274 815281	myam.newsletter(at)outlook.com
Chief Observer	Chris Marrison		
GDPR Manager	David Rockliff		

Due to computer hacking and high levels of spamming we have had to remove the hyperlinks to our e-mail addresses and have replaced the @ symbol with (at) so you will need to retype the address in the correct e-mail format, i.e. replace (at) with @, with no spaces.

URGENT REQUEST

David Speight has taken on the role of Speaker Secretary but we still need a minutes secretary for our committee meetings and someone to look after the Website. Please contact any member of the committee if you are interested in any of these positions.