

**iam**  
RoadSmart

# FORWARD

Issue 17



The Newsletter for  
**Somerset & Wiltshire**  
Advanced Motorists



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# FORWARD

Newsletter of Somerset & Wiltshire Advanced Motorists

[www.swam-iam.org.uk](http://www.swam-iam.org.uk)

Registered Charity No 1050592

May — July 2024

Issue 17

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## Bath Festival of Motoring—15-16 June

We will be attending the Bath Festival of Motoring again this year. It will be held on Saturday and Sunday, 15 and 16 June, at the Walcot Rugby Club (directly opposite the Lansdown *Park & Ride* terminus at the top of Bath's Lansdown Hill).

The Festival will feature an extensive programme of parades, exhibitions, demonstrations and supercar rides, alongside competitions, live music and family activities.

Please come and join us at this event and if you would like to volunteer to help man our gazebo, please let us know as soon as possible. Dave Edwards and Robin Clark are organising the event so please contact Robin (details on page 2) if you would like to help. We welcome support and there will be plenty of time to have a look round the Festival. We need as much help from members as possible at this kind of event and it will be a fun day out.

Welcome to this edition of *Forward*. On page 5 you will see a report of the AGM which was held in March. Please read this report as it includes important information both about what SWAM has been doing in the last year, but also what we plan to do in the next year. Robin Clark, our Public Relations Officer, gave a presentation about SWAM's Objectives for 2024. We have tied our Objectives to IAM RoadSmart's recently published Strategy document, so it is clear how our Objectives relate to the national organisation.

We have two articles in *Forward* this time about the achievements of two of our members. Alistair Andrews recently retired from his invaluable work as a Masters Mentor, among his many other contributions to SWAM, and earlier to BADAM. He will be much missed. Following on from Oliver Ganfield's success in gaining a distinction in his Masters at the age of 18, another SWAM member, Emily Cooper, has passed her Advanced Test, also at the age of 18, with a F1RST. See page 19 for more information about Alistair and Emily.

We will again be attending the Bath Festival of Motoring in June. Last year we had an enjoyable and successful weekend with good weather, so we hope for the same this year. Details are on page 3. We welcome volunteers to help at the gazebo, and there will be plenty of opportunity to look around the Festival as well, with free entry. Please contact Robin Clark (details on page 2) if you are able to help. We look forward to seeing you there.

*Clare Hogg, Sue Phillips*

**The next edition of *Forward* will be published in August 2024. Please submit motoring-related articles and/or digital photographs to the Editors (*who reserve the right to edit them*) by Friday 5 July at the latest. Names of authors and their home addresses should be disclosed to the Editors who will withhold them from publication on request.**

# Somerset and Wiltshire Advanced Motorists

## Minutes of 3rd Annual General Meeting

### Thursday 21 March 2024 at 19.30

#### **Present**

Lindsay Flower, Acting Chair; Rosemary Tandy, Secretary; Clare Hogg, Treasurer; David Major, Chief Observer; Peter Huntington, Membership Secretary; Robin Clark, Public Relations Officer; Judith Pepler, Vice President; and 23 Members

#### **1. Introduction and Apologies for Absence**

Judith Pepler, Vice President, opened the proceedings and welcomed the group.

Apologies for absence were received from Jeff Vincent, Paul Moignard, Paul Pywell and Valentine Czerny.

#### **2. Minutes of AGM March 2023**

The Minutes were approved.

#### **3. Matters Arising**

There were no Matters Arising.

#### **4. Report from Acting Chair, Lindsay Flower**

We are not the only organisation having difficulty in recruiting people for the Committee and it seems to be a common cry from many organisations. My concern about this fuelled a trip to meet the CEO of IAM RoadSmart, Tony Kildare, along with my two colleagues, Robin Clark and Dave Edwards. We had what we all considered a good meeting and it has been encouraging to note that some of our suggestions are creeping into the IAM agendas.

However, the future of the Groups continues to concern me. Mergers, of which there are an increasing number, are a quick fix and what we need is a new organisation. As I've said before, the days of sitting in a hall listening to a live speaker are over – present speaker excepted – younger people simply won't come and so far as I can see, older people don't want to either.

It really does seem that the pandemic changed the world forever! Attendance at Zoom Events has been abysmal and Group Events haven't been much better. As a consequence, we will be running fewer of these in the coming year so, when we are running events, please, please put yourselves out and attend – We have to!!

Our training is excellent – we get fantastic feedback and an incredible number of F1RSTs due to our dedicated and talented Observers – but that's what people like doing – training. I wonder if this is the way forward and we move to being a strictly 1:1 training organisation offering Observer Training and the only events being 3-in-a-car and the attending of external events such as the Bath Festival of Motoring. In the coming year, Observers will be obliged to attend at least one Training Session either in the evening here at Beckington or on a Saturday at Swindon.

We need help for the external events and this should be something that any Observer/Member can do. We rely on you for this – the Committee can't do it all. Fewer events = fewer Associates = less for the Observers to do. Come and help us!!

Our number of Associates passing through our club has proved better than expected given the cost of living crisis and the increase of course fee, as has the number of people willing to train to be Observers. We could do with more women, and I say this as the only woman Observer, and I would like to thank David, our Chief Observer for his fantastic input.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of my colleagues on the Committee. Without their hard work and ongoing commitment, there would be no Group. If you think that you have anything to offer, I would be delighted to hear from you.

## **5. Report from Secretary, Rosemary Tandy**

I have very little to add to Lindsay's report. We have had excellent results from our Associates, all thanks to David Major and his Observers, and, even more pleasing, we have had a few young people passing as Advanced drivers with flying colours. We want more young people to

join, as better drivers make fewer accidents.

Since Covid, it seems people are reluctant to attend evening meetings, either on Zoom or in person, which is a shame as we do try to find engaging speakers; however the training events have proved very popular, so do please try to attend them. It's always good to refresh your skills. And please tell us what you like or don't like about SWAM.

If any of you would like to offer your help by becoming a committee member, or helping at outside events, we would welcome you with open arms. Please speak to one of us later.

Thank you, Penny, for serving the refreshments, always welcome at the start of our meetings, and to Adrian who updates our website.

Finally can I thank my fellow committee members for their support. Without Lindsay, David, Robin, Peter and Clare, (and me,) you would not have the group, so please keep coming to events and pass on the message of Advanced Driving.

## **6. Report from Treasurer, Clare Hogg**

You will have had the opportunity to look at the annual accounts for 2023.

Our main expenses this year have once again been on Observer Training and Events, as we regard these as being two of the prime purposes of our work as a group. Room Hire has increased because of holding Observer Training events. All our Observers now have IAM RoadSmart shirts.

If anybody has any questions about the accounts, please feel free to ask them now. Once again, I would like to thank Ken Fryer for auditing the accounts for us.

## **7. To Elect Nominees to form SWAM Committee 2024/2025**

Lindsay Flower, Acting Chair. Rosemary Tandy, Secretary. Clare Hogg, Treasurer and Newsletter Editor. Peter Huntington, Membership Secretary. David Major, Chief Observer and Associates Co-ordinator. Robin Clark, Public Relations Officer.

All nominees were re-elected.

<b>SOMERSET &amp; WILTSHIRE ADVANCED MOTORISTS</b>				
<b>REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER 1050592</b>				
<b>INCOME &amp; EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT</b>				
<b>FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31ST DECEMBER 2023</b>				
<b>Statement As 31/12/2023</b>			<b>31/12/2023</b>	<b>31/12/2022</b>
			<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>INCOME</b>				
Full Membership Fees			<b>1,848.50</b>	2,016.50
Gift aid			<b>379.15</b>	396.13
Associate Membership Fees			<b>1,314.00</b>	1,098.50
Door takings			<b>0.00</b>	0.00
Skid pan			<b>0.00</b>	891.00
Refresher course			<b>0.00</b>	40.00
Refund of room hire			<b>0.00</b>	0.00
Interest Received			<b>31.79</b>	0.53
Total			<b>3,573.44</b>	4,442.66
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>				
Newsletter expenses			<b>349.09</b>	171.60
Stationery			<b>198.84</b>	232.48
Telephone			<b>0.00</b>	0.00
Advertising & Events			<b>788.67</b>	426.06
Room Hire & Speaker Expenses			<b>710.31</b>	367.82
Canteen			<b>40.99</b>	20.00
Group Insurance			<b>176.79</b>	152.00
Observer Training			<b>1,074.68</b>	457.65
Conferences			<b>49.50</b>	36.00
Quiz prizes			<b>0.00</b>	0.00
Raffle costs			<b>0.00</b>	10.00
Shirts			<b>162.00</b>	10.00
ICO (payment for GDPR)			<b>35.00</b>	35.00
Website			<b>0.00</b>	0.00
AGM expenses			<b>0.00</b>	0.00
Meeting with IAMRS CEO			<b>136.70</b>	
Skid pan			<b>0.00</b>	1100.00
Sundries			<b>84.45</b>	44.49
Total			<b>3,807.02</b>	3,063.10
<b>SURPLUS/(DEFICIT) FOR THE YEAR</b>			<b>-233.58</b>	<b>1,379.56</b>
General Reserves	<b>(Unrestricted)</b>			
Brought Forward			<b>9,367.25</b>	7,987.69
Carried Forward			<b>9,133.67</b>	9,367.25



**SOMERSET & WILTSHIRE ADVANCED MOTORISTS**

**REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER 1050592**

**BALANCE SHEET**

**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2023**

<b>Statement As 31/12/2023</b>	<b>31/12/2023</b>	<b>31/12/2022</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>		
Bank Account - savings	<b>7,895.53</b>	<b>6,363.74</b>
Bank Account - current	<b>1,248.14</b>	<b>3,037.51</b>
Cash	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>
	<b>9,143.67</b>	<b>9,401.25</b>
<b>CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		
Accruals - cheque from 2022 cashed in 2023	<b>10.00</b>	<b>34.00</b>
Creditors	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>
	<b>10.00</b>	<b>34.00</b>
<b>NET WORKING CAPITAL</b>	<b>9,133.67</b>	<b>9,367.25</b>
<b>UNRESTRICTED GENERAL RESERVE</b>	<b>9,133.67</b>	<b>9,367.25</b>
	<b>9,133.67</b>	<b>9,367.25</b>
	0.00	0.00

The accounts were approved by the committee on

Lindsay Flower  
Acting Chair

Clare Hogg  
Treasurer

The accounts were independently examined on

Ken Fryer

8 Coronation Road  
Bath, BA1 3BH

## 8. Report from Robin Clark, Public Relations Officer, on SWAM's Objectives for 2024—2025

Robin Clark gave a presentation about SWAM's Objectives for the coming year, highlighting how they are aligned to IAM RoadSmart's new Strategy document.



### Our values



### Our delivery

We will deliver our strategy with the support of our community to include:



# Becoming a force for good

## In our strategy, we are focused on:



**Growing the brand name and corporate identity to be recognised nationally**, with an increased presence and authoritative voice in the policy and campaigning space. We will:

- place road safety at the heart of all we do
- elevate our policy and campaigning activity to make impact on road safety issues in the UK
- address challenges such as static road death numbers and the evolution of on road and in-vehicle technology



**Increasing skills development, knowledge share, competency**, and on road confidence through education and coaching. We will:

- make road safety skills and education up to date, relevant and accessible to all
- diversify and refresh educational tools and products to engage existing and new audiences
- reflect new road safety challenges, embracing new learning styles and technologies, engaging with those who put the most drivers and riders on the road and those who use the road for a living



**Developing a broad, diverse, and inclusive community** of passionate road users across the UK. We will:

- support an increasingly diverse community of road safety experts across the United Kingdom
- be inclusive, recognising those that have passed the advanced test demonstrate the highest level of skill that is up-to-date and relevant, as well as those that choose not to take the advanced test but still have a passion and interest in road safety
- provide support to enable our community to ensure it is sustainable and that it can continue to deliver key services



**Promoting a well-led, progressive, ethical charity** that lives and breathes by its culture and behaviours. We will:

- be well-run and sustainable, supported by effective leadership, governance, systems, and infrastructure
- monitor effective stewardship of resources and assets to ensure the charity has an impact on improving road safety
- work to mitigate any negative impacts we may cause



**Embracing being digital to the core**. Enabling and simplifying our service and offerings, growing our reach and enriching the community experience. We will:

- transform using best-in-show technology to support our growth and diversification ambitions and continuously measure our progress and deliverables
- work with IT experts, providers, and originators to adopt and apply tried and tested, 'plug and play' market solutions in delivering for our customers and members

## Making roads safer for all





## Growing the Brand

Events

Media, TV & Radio

Training & LFE



## Increasing Skills Development, Knowledge Sharing and Competencies

Local Groups

Tips & Guidance



## Developing a Broad, Diverse & Inclusive Community

Minority Group Involvement within SWAM Taster Sessions



## Promoting a Well-Led, Progressive and Ethical Charity

Corporate Governance Review

Align with IAM RoadSmart Aims & Values



## Embracing Opportunities to be Digital to the Core

Develop Social Media Presence

Maximise Available

Technology

Develop Online Training Packages

## **9. Any other business**

There was no other business.

We welcomed Martyn Buckland, our speaker for the evening.

Martyn introduced himself as both a member of SWAM and an examiner for IAMRoadSmart, but said he was giving his talk in his role as a member, and as an ex-Observer.

He explained that he knows a number of routes that would be suitable for test routes, some in the areas in which Associates live and



some in the area around Beckington. He had been out that morning and had taken a series of short videos from his windscreen of a local route that might be familiar to those attending the meeting. They gave a passenger's eye view of the route and he explained that his talk would concentrate on what would be expected of a test candidate. He said that he would, in effect, be giving a commentary on the run, although he acknowledged that not all Associates are happy to comment continually.

The first hazard met was entry to a dual carriageway and Martyn stressed the importance of making both mirror and shoulder checks, which should also be made at junctions to look for potential dangers. He had taken the opportunity to reach 70mph on the dual carriageway, and this would be expected during a test if it was possible.

As the drive progressed, Martyn commented on issues such as road markings, limit point of vision, looking ahead, checking for parked cars and vehicles doing strange manoeuvres, road signs, box junctions, and speed limit signs (and not anticipating the speed limits ahead!). When he approached a narrow bridge, he was prepared to stop if traffic was coming the other way, including bicycles. As the car approached traffic lights, Martyn stressed the importance of looking ahead to assess the state of the lights. For example, had the lights changed on approach? Was the red light showing on approach? Was there a queue of traffic indicating that the lights might change soon? Such information would help to decide whether it would be a long stop or a short stop. If a long stop is necessary, Martyn would expect 'HBN' – the handbrake applied before engaging neutral gear. If a short stop, he would expect 'GBH' – engaging the correct gear for pulling away before applying the handbrake. He spoke about separation from the vehicle in front, especially on hills, and stressed the importance of 'Tyres and Tarmac' – drivers should be able to see the tyres of the vehicle in front as well as some tarmac between the two vehicles.

For the final video clip, Martyn asked for a member of the audience

to volunteer to give the commentary and a brave member who is a Trainee National Observer did so in a competent and confident manner.

It was an amusing and informative talk, relevant to both Associates and to those who had passed their test some years ago, and to Observers in training their Associates.

Lindsay thanked Martyn and presented him with a gift as a token of appreciation.

At the end of the meeting, Lindsay thanked Judith for Chairing the AGM and thanked the members for attending. She also wished everyone a safe journey home and looked forward to seeing them all at future meetings.

## SWAM Events Programme—Summer 2024

### SWAM Summer Events 2024:

#### **Saturday and Sunday, June 15-16: Bath Festival of Motoring**

See page 3 for details.

#### **Thursday, 20 June at 19.00: 3-in-a-car event**

There will be a short talk in the hall by David Major on ‘Tyres and all you ever wanted to know about them’, a very important subject. This will be followed by members going out on the road, with at least one Observer in each car. Refreshments will be available.

#### **Monday, 15 July at 18.00: Observer Training**

#### **Tuesday, 20 August at 18.00: Observer Training**

#### **Tuesday, 17 September at 19.00: 3-in-a-car event**

There will be a short talk (topic to be announced in the next issue of *Forward*) followed by members going out on the road, with at least one Observer in each car. Refreshments will be available.

Details of any further events organised for later in the year will be in the next issue of *Forward*.

## ***We Welcome New Associates***

<b>Karen Allen</b>	[ <i>Observer:</i> Jeff Vincent]
<b>Richard Dickinson</b>	[ <i>Observer:</i> John Badley]
<b>Ken Fryer</b>	[ <i>Observer:</i> Thomas Flynn]
<b>Oliver Hicks</b>	[ <i>Observer:</i> Graham Bennett]
<b>Susan Loader</b>	[ <i>Observer:</i> Jeff Vincent]
<b>Nichola Tarr</b>	[ <i>Observer:</i> Mark Ellis]
<b>Steven Tarr</b>	[ <i>Observer:</i> Mark Ellis]
<b>Sally Vivian</b>	[ <i>Observer:</i> Lindsay Flower]
<b>Valerie Woolmore</b>	[ <i>Observer:</i> Dave Edwards]

## ***We Congratulate***

### ***IAMRS Test Pass***

<b>Sandra Cole*</b>	observed by Ray Robbetts
<b>Emily Cooper*</b>	observed by Paul Pywell
<b>Elissa Gay</b>	observed by Lindsay Flower
<b>Tim Jenkins*</b>	observed by Dave Edwards
<b>David Little</b>	observed by John Morley
<b>Catherine McCoy</b>	observed by John Cameron
<b>David Vincent*</b>	observed by Paul Pywell

\*FIRST pass

### ***IMI National Observer Programme***

<b>John Cameron</b>	mentored by Ray Robbetts
<b>Thomas Flynn</b>	mentored by Ray Robbetts
<b>Barry Seed</b>	mentored by Alistair Andrews

## Group News

In January SWAM held a 3-in-a-car event focusing on Night Driving. Lindsay Flower welcomed Dave Edwards, a very experienced National Observer, to give a short talk on driving at night, prior to members going out in cars to practise what they had learnt from Dave's talk.

Dave began by talking about the additional hazards which come with night driving. He said that 40% of all collisions happen at night. The majority of these occur between midnight and 6.00am, and after the clocks have changed. Street lighting has been reduced in recent years, and 33% of lights are dimmed and 12% have been turned off, which makes it harder to see. Other hazards include tiredness and dazzle from oncoming cars. It is harder to see unlit or non-reflective objects, such as pedestrians, cyclists or wild animals such as deer. Another problem is that familiar routes can look different in the dark.

Next Dave spoke about preparing your vehicle for driving at night. He spoke about vehicle checks of, for example, headlights and indicators, and making sure that all windows, mirrors and wipers are clean to avoid glare and improve visibility. He stressed the importance of understanding your vehicle, for example the different functions of headlights, such as if they are LED, auto switched, manual, auto beam, matrix, and the main beam indicator. Lights must be correctly adjusted, especially LED lights. Dashboard lights can be dimmed and interior lights should be switched off. Last, but by no means least, he mentioned an emergency kit including a torch, mobile phone and a warning triangle.

He went on to talk about preparing yourself for driving at night, first talking about your knowledge of your vehicle and how it works, especially the headlights, and where you are going. He mentioned the use of lights, where you can park, and pubs and clubs closing times. Another question to consider is 'are you fit to drive?' Eyesight is particularly relevant here and eyesight defects can make it difficult to drive in the dark. The following pictures show the effect of some common eyesight defects on what you can see at night.



**NORMAL VISION**



**NIGHT BLINDNESS**



**Blurry road signs and distant objects (myopia)**



## Glare from headlights



You also need to make sure, if you wear glasses, that they are clean and free from scratches. Anti-glare glasses are available, and this picture shows the difference they can make.



Then Dave went on to give advice about driving at night. His main points were:

Use lights between twilight and dawn;

Use main beam where possible, and watch for signs of other lights;  
Dip your headlights for all vehicles in front;  
Look for hazards in the gloom;  
With reduced visibility, reduce your speed and be able to stop in the distance you can see is clear;  
Look out for wild animals;  
Beware of dazzle;  
Keep your distance from the vehicle in front;  
Other road users may be more erratic (they may be tired or have been drinking, etc.);  
Allow more time for your journey.

Dave was thanked for his presentation and after his talk those present divided up into groups of two or three, each group including at least one Observer, to go out to practise driving in the dark. This was felt to have been a useful exercise and a successful evening.

## Members' News

We have two articles here about members of SWAM, one of whom has served the IAM for many years, both at BADAM and then SWAM, and who has now retired, and the other who is a new young member who has the remarkable achievement of obtaining a F1RST in her Advanced Test at the age of just 18.

### Alistair Andrews

Alistair Andrews started his working life as an Aircraft Engineering Apprentice at RAF Halton and remained a member of the RAF for 14 years. After leaving the RAF, he served in various roles, including Project Management, for different companies, before a change in career led to him becoming a Driving Instructor. This is what he says about his career in driver training and road safety.

'I heard about the IAM and RoSPA and soon joined them as a Fleet

Trainer and eventually became Team Leader for both parties. While at RoSPA I became a Fleet Examiner. On behalf of the IAM I was assessing St John Ambulance drivers in Bristol when they asked me to join them as a Driver Trainer. I soon realised there was no formal training to conduct blue light driving so I was then trained as an Emergency Response Driving Instructor/Examiner at the NHS driving centre in Chippenham. In the meantime, I was a contractor with the Gloucestershire Council as a Trainer for those who committed the offence of driving without due care and attention – interesting times. At this time I also became a Skid Pan Instructor at Castle Combe.

‘I retired (for the first time) in December 2004, but kept my interests going with the local IAM Group in Bath. Then one day Andy Poulton told me I was now a Masters Mentor. I have been with the IAM since 1984 and in that time of 39 years I have trained approximately 3,500 Fleet and National Driving Improvement drivers and about 500 ‘L’ drivers and about 500 IAM drivers for the Ordinary Test/Final assessment before Ordinary Test/National Observer/Masters, plus those who wish to keep up with their driving skills from time to time.

I finally retired from the IAM on 31 December 2023 and another chapter is now unfolding.’

SWAM very much appreciates all the work which Alistair has put into the IAM and Road Safety in general, and in particular into SWAM and the Bath & District group before it. He has made great contributions to the group and the roads in our area are all the safer for his work.

## Emily Cooper

Here Emily Cooper tells us about her route to gaining her F1RST in her test.

‘My name is Emily Cooper, and I am 18 years old, and I recently obtained an IAM F1RST in February. I was bought an IAM voucher by my grandfather, Malcom, for my 18th birthday. He is a member himself, and has been since not long after the IAM's conception; it is something that he is incredibly passionate about. We both really enjoy driving,



and had been on a few drives together since I passed my driving test at 17, and getting my IAM qualification was something that he recommended.

'I was put in contact with my phenomenal observer Paul Pywell, and then went on to complete my test with examiner Martyn Buckland, both of whom I thank for guiding me through this process, and helping me to achieve my best!'

## IAM RoadSmart Tips

Following on from what Dave Edwards said at the January meeting about the importance of eye health and driving at night, we are publishing here some tips from IAM RoadSmart about eye health and driving in general.

### The importance of good eye health

What are the implications of poor eyesight and driving? According to official UK government statistics, in 2020, uncorrected or defective vision was a contributory factor in 10 fatal crashes, 56 serious injury crashes and 99 slight injury crashes.

IAM RoadSmart's Richard Gladman, Head of Driving and Riding Standards, has spoken about the importance of good eye health and the need for regular eye tests to keep yourself and other road users safe.

### What is the legal eyesight standard for driving and riding?

Drivers must be able to read (with glasses or contact lenses, if necessary) a car number plate made after 1 September 2001 from 20 metres. It's a simple test, so give it a try – if you have any problems then it's worth using a tape measure. Visiting your optician regularly will help you keep a check on your eyesight and general eye health, so make sure you don't miss those all-important appointments.

### What are the dangers of driving and riding with poor eyesight?

Taking care of your vision is vital, and good vision is essential for safe

driving and motorcycling. The law only sets a minimum eyesight standard, and drivers and riders can be fined up to £1,000 if you do not tell the DVLA about a medical condition that affects your driving, and this could result in being prosecuted if you're involved in a crash as a result.

Poor eyesight means you may miss seeing and reacting to hazards, such as road debris, other vehicles and sudden changes in traffic movement, as well as being unable to clearly see road signs. Even drivers with strong eyesight can find it challenging to drive in poor weather conditions or in the dark, so if you've got weak eyesight, you'll be particularly vulnerable to risks on the roads.

## **What should I do if I feel my vision is getting worse?**

The NHS recommends that you should have your eyes tested every two years (more often if advised to do so), and since your eyes rarely hurt when something is wrong with them, having regular eye tests is important to help detect potentially harmful conditions. According to RoSPA, conditions such as cataracts cause more significant impairments when driving and riding than most other forms of poor vision, especially at night.

Eyesight problems become more prevalent as we grow older, and older people's driving is more likely to be impaired by eyesight problems. Drivers aged over 70 must declare when renewing their licence that their eyesight meets minimum legal standards. Whilst drivers and riders don't have to provide evidence of this, they could be held liable if they're in a collision and it's believed that poor eye health was a contributing factor.

## **Do you need to declare it to the DVLA?**

Drivers and riders must tell the DVLA if they've got any problems with their eyesight that affects both of their eyes, or the remaining eye if they only have one eye – this does not include being short or long sighted or colour blind. You can report a condition to the DVLA at <https://www.gov.uk/eye-conditions-and-driving>.

## Richard Gladman, Head of Driving and Riding Standards at IAM RoadSmart, said:

'It is easy to allow your eyes to deteriorate gradually and develop coping strategies to convince yourself all is well. The problems will usually start as the light fades day to night, and you struggle to pick up movement in the shadows. If this is the case, try the simple 20-metre eye test in those conditions, and it's worth visiting your optician's for advice. If you have been recommended to use glasses or contact lenses when driving, don't take a chance without them – you wouldn't chance it with a missing brake pad, and this is equally important.'

If you're wondering what eye conditions need reporting, please visit the DVLA at <https://www.gov.uk/eye-conditions-and-driving>.

### Editor's Corner

*Editor's Corner is an opportunity for me to air issues which occur to me in relation to cars and driving, while I am out and about. If you have anything you would like to air in a similar way, please get in touch.*

#### Indicating

I am going to repeat myself in Editor's Corner this time around because I think the situation has got worse in the last 18 months – or I am noticing it more – when drivers don't indicate when I think they should.

Many drivers don't indicate, for example at roundabouts, when, as a pedestrian or as a driver, I would benefit from knowing what they were planning to do. Many drivers only start indicating, if at all, when they have nearly finished their manoeuvre. How often have you stood waiting to cross a road not sure whether an approaching car is going to turn off before it reaches you? Or, as a driver, you approach a roundabout and wait for an approaching car to pass you and then find it is turning left before it reaches you? Many drivers

seem to think that because they are in a left only lane, they don't need to indicate, not thinking, or not realising, that other cars, and pedestrians, can't see the lane markings. We are advised as advanced drivers not to indicate unless other road users will benefit, but many drivers don't seem to consider pedestrians as other road users. I know that the vast majority of other drivers are not advanced drivers, but if they get the idea that signalling is optional, maybe that is a bad idea.

In the last edition of *Forward*, in the report of the Q&A session in November last year, the question of indicating was discussed. David Major said that 'he would rather "waste" an indication than not indicate at all.' Andy Poulton, as an examiner, has said in the past that more people fail their test because of not indicating enough, than because they have indicated too much.

Please let me know if you have similar feelings about indicating, or any other topic relating to driving. I would love to publish your views as well as my own. We could introduce a Members' Corner as well as having the Editor's Corner. You can contact me at [accounts@swam-iam.org.uk](mailto:accounts@swam-iam.org.uk).

Clare Hogg

#### **PLEASE NOTE**

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