

Your Committee and other Group Contacts

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FORWARD

Newsletter of Somerset & Wiltshire Advanced Motorists

www.swam-iam.org.uk

Registered Charity No 1050592

May — July 2025

Issue 21

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Summer Events

We have two new events organised for this summer:

Treasure Hunt, Wednesday, 11 June at 18.30:

See page 17 for full details of this event which will start from Beckington Memorial Hall*, and which will involve a drive of about 30 miles around parts of Somerset and Wiltshire, using our advanced skills of Planning, Observation and Anticipation to help us work out the questions and challenges posed by the Hunt. Please come along to join us for this exciting event.

*The address of Beckington Memorial Hall is Bath Road, Beckington, Frome, BA11 6SH (just off the A36).

Classic Vehicle Show organised by Norton Radstock Classic Vehicle Club:

This event will be held in Camerton, near Bath, on Sunday, 3 August. We plan to take our gazebo to this event for the first time and would welcome volunteers to join us in the gazebo. There are normally between 500–600 classic vehicles at this event, so there will be plenty to see and enjoy.

Editorial



Welcome to the latest edition of *Forward*. In this issue we have a report on the AGM held in March, which we urge you to read as it sets out our plans for the future of SWAM [see page 10]. The AGM was followed by an entertaining talk from Richard Gladman, Chief Examiner and Head of Driving and Riding Standards at IAM RoadSmart.

One piece of news which was announced at the AGM is that our President since the foundation of SWAM, Helen Schofield, has decided to resign from this position, and we are delighted to tell you that Dave Edwards has agreed to become our President in her place. Dave has been responsible for organising our Outdoor Events for several years, and will bring his enthusiasm to his new role [see page 16]. We would like to thank Helen for all the support she has given to SWAM, and before that to the Bath & District group, over many years.

On page 17 you will see more details of the Treasure Hunt which was mentioned in the last issue of *Forward*. It is going to be held in June, and we are looking forward to an entertaining evening. Please come along and join us for this new event for us.

On pages 3 and 18 you will see information about the Classic Vehicle Show at Camerton which we are planning to attend with our gazebo for the first time. This should be an interesting event, and we will need volunteers to help us on the day. Please support our group by coming along to help in August, and tell our Secretary if you can help: email: secretary@swam-iam.org.uk.

Clare Hogg, Sue Phillips

The next edition of *Forward* will be published in August 2025. Please submit motoring-related articles and/or digital photographs to the Editors (who reserve the right to edit them) by Friday 4 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 4th Annual General Meeting Thursday 20 March 2025 at 19.30

1. Introduction by Mac McGarry and Apologies for Absence:

Present:

Lindsay Flower; Acting Chair.

Rosemary Tandy; Secretary.

Clare Hogg; Treasurer.

David Major; Chief Observer.

Robin Clark; Public Relations Officer.

Peter Huntington; Membership Secretary.

Mac McGarry

Richard Gladman; Head of Driving and Riding Standards IAMRoadSmart

44 Members

Apologies for Absence

Helen Schofield, Judith Pepler, Anthea Kemp, Michael Muncer, Paul Pywell, Sandra England.

2. Minutes of AGM 2024

The Minutes were signed off.

Matters Arising: There were none.

3. Report from the Acting Chair, Lindsay Flower

Don't people love change eh...?

But the world is changing fast around us — Covid changed us. The internet has changed us. Information is changing fast — most of it is online and we are increasingly used to using the internet for information. But there's something else that's changed as well: my

perception is that cars aren't as popular as they used to be as a hobby and the Government tells us 2023 car traffic estimates remain lower than those before the pandemic. (-4.4% when compared to 2019).

People are concerned about climate change and increasingly moving to only using cars when absolutely necessary and then cars which are perceived to be more 'green'. Car clubs, where a car is shared between families, are on the rise. Cars are more sophisticated and don't need to be maintained by the owner. This is perhaps something that as an organisation we have not completely taken on board, but it perhaps explains the decrease in the interest in our sort of car club meetings of the past. The exception is very specialist, and usually elite, car clubs, which seem to be doing extremely well. We need to be embracing and responding to these changes in the world if we are not to become like the dinosaurs. Our Objectives, which you will see later, will, I hope, reflect this.

In the past, car clubs had an active social element — but is this the case now? Do people want that? As far as I can see, they don't. Should we be putting our energies into becoming the best training facility we can possibly be with the occasional supporting event? Is that our future? I don't know either but I think it's possible and I'd love to hear from you.

We hear a lot about young drivers, but I'd like to take the opportunity to wave the flag for older drivers; you remember? the ones who have some money... Lots has changed since many have passed their tests: the roads: faster/more info; the cars: auto/safety features/computers/sat nav/no starting handles; but mostly we change as we age: reactions are slower, vision particularly — light/dark for eyes, slower. OK it's not sexy, but are we missing the opportunity to make the roads a safer place — our main aim I'm working on for this coming year. Is the world angrier? Is it intimidating?

When I said last year that we needed volunteers, largely people assumed I didn't mean them, so just to clarify — I really do mean you.

This year I'm taking a different tack and I will be phoning lots of you. When I phone you, please be open to ideas and please be open to taking responsibility. Neil Bannister was last year's volunteer and is helping with our Facebook account and, so far, it looks promising. Thank you, Neil.

I thought I would do a quick SWOT analysis – just my view.

We have huge potential and I'm sure we've turned a corner, but it will take more than six people on the Committee to bring it to reality. I am going to thank my colleagues on the Committee for keeping us going, advising me when I'm about to fall on my face, and picking me up when I do. Thank you – all of you!

4. Reports from Clare Hogg, Treasurer and Newsletter Editor

Treasurer:

Looking at the accounts for 2024 (see pages 8-9) you will see that we have ended the year with a healthy balance. Our main expenses, as last year, have been on Observer training and events. I have to thank Ken Fryer once again for kindly auditing the accounts. If you have any questions, please ask them now.

I am giving advance notice that I will be resigning as Treasurer within the next two years. Mike Twitchett has agreed to become my Deputy Treasurer, and we will work together so that I can hand over to him within that time. Thank you, Mike.

Newsletter:

Our newsletter, *Forward*, has continued to be produced quarterly. Mostly it is sent to members by email but it is available in print version for those who are not on email, and for those who prefer to read it in print. There are a few copies at the back of the hall so please take one if you wish. If you would like it sent in the post in future, please let me know.

SOMERSET & WILTSHIRE ADVANCED MOTORISTS

REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER 1050592

INCOME & EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31ST DECEMBER 2024

Statement As 31/12/2024	31/12/2024	31/12/2023
INCOME	£	£
Full Membership Fees	1,853.50	1,848.50
Gift aid	337.33	379.15
Associate Membership Fees	1,048.50	1,314.00
Door takings	0.00	0.00
Donations	110.00	0.00
Interest Received	72.29	31.79
Total	3,421.62	3,573.44
EXPENDITURE		
Newsletter expenses	331.10	349.09
Stationery	38.50	198.84
Events & Promotions	234.13	788.67
Room Hire & Speaker Expenses	540.48	710.31
Canteen	15.23	40.99
Group Insurance	203.65	176.79
Observer Training	653.56	1,074.68
Conferences	0.00	49.50
Quiz prizes	0.00	0.00
Raffle costs	0.00	0.00
Shirts	108.00	162.00
ICO (payment for GDPR)	35.00	35.00
Website & IT	130.45	0.00
AGM expenses	0.00	0.00
Meeting with IAMRS CEO	0.00	136.70
Sundries	134.05	84.45
Total	2,424.15	3,807.02
SURPLUS/(DEFICIT) FOR THE YEAR	997.47	-233.58
(Unrestrict General Reserves ed)		
Brought Forward	9,133.67	9,367.25
Carried Forward	10,131.14	9,133.67

SOMERSET & WILTSHIRE ADVANCED MOTORISTS

REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER 1050592

BALANCE SHEET

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2024

Statement As 31/12/2024	31/12/2024	31/12/2023
	£	£
CURRENT ASSETS		
Bank Account - savings	8,767.82	7,895.53
Bank Account - current	1,363.32	1,248.14
Cash	0.00	0.00
	10,131.14	9,143.67
CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Accruals - cheque from 2022 cashed in 2023	0.00	10.00
Creditors	0.00	0.00
	0.00	10.00
NET WORKING CAPITAL	10,131.14	9,133.67
UNRESTRICTED GENERAL RESERVE	10,131.14	9,133.67
	10,131.14	9,133.67
	0.00	0.00

The accounts were approved by the committee on 3rd March 2025

Lindsay Flower Clare Hogg Acting Chair Treasurer

The accounts were independently examined on 4th March 2025

Ken Fryer 8 Coronation Road

Bath, BA1 3BH

Report from the Chief Observer, David Major

We have 25 National Observers including 1 Trainee.

(We lose 3 Local Observers end of March, not going for National, so numbers amended from 28 to 25 National Observers)

Associates passed for year:

26 Associates of which 11 got F1RST (42%)

We have 23 Associates but only 16 Active

Members pack going digital April 2025

Associates pack going digital later?

Many thanks to all Observers. Well done.

Report on Objectives from the Public Relations Officer, Robin Clark

SWAM Objective ID	IAM RS Strate- gic Aim Cross Reference	<u>Objectives</u>	<u>Target</u>	Actions and Updates
Obj.1/25	Growing Our Brand	Attend public events (e.g. car shows). Develop new ideas for Group events.	Aim to attend x1 public events per annum. Stretch Target x2 Review and find x1 new event every year.	
Obj.2/25	Growing Our Brand	Engage with Media, whether TV, Radio or online (e.g. Facebook, Instagram, TikTok). Develop website presence.	Undertake x1 TV or Radio media interview per annum to attract 50 Taster sessions	
Obj.3/25	Growing Our Brand	Develop Facebook presence through Ads, to increase local interest in SWAM activ- ities and aims.	Take up of interest in advanced driving via online contact leads to 35 new associates	
Obj.4/25	Increasing our Skills	Upload a selection of IAM RS video tips & guidance onto website and make available via Social Media, then measure in 6 months how many people have viewed.	Target remains fluid as this is new ground for the group. Tentatively looking for 1000 hits in 6 months, with a 10% follow up for enquiries to purchase course or request Taster Session.	
Obj.5/25	Increasing our Skills	Maintain and develop structured training and improvement programme for SWAM Observers. Cross-fertilise training and awareness with other IAM local groups (e.g. Swindon)	Pending Associates (not seen for >3 months) provided opportunity to change Observer. Chief Observer to provide monthly stats for review.	

SWAM Objective ID	IAM RS Strate- gic Aim Cross Reference	<u>Objectives</u>	<u>Target</u>	Actions and Updates
Obj.6/25	Developing a broad, diverse and inclusive Community of passionate road users	Provide Associate Training to achieve the desired level of 'pass' that best meets the Associates' expectations.	50% FIRSTS achieved as a proportion of tests.	
Obj.7/25	Developing a broad, diverse and inclusive Community of passionate road users	Ensure sufficient trained Observers exist to provide effective coaching to our Associates.	Structured training provided each year. Reassessment every 5 years (unless MASTERS Mentor = 3 years)	
Obj.8/25	Developing a broad, diverse and inclusive Community of passionate road users	Develop collaboration with other vehicle groups such as WaBaM and (Dave Edwards) 4x4 Group. Increase distribution of Taster Sessions as pre-cursor to achieving course enrolments.	Increased course interest and enrolment of Associates – 15% Increase skills representation throughout our group.	
Obj.9/25	Developing a broad, diverse and inclusive Community of passionate road users	Develop closer relationship with other suitable Groups.	In the event of SWAM not being able to succession plan there is a clear and appropriate path to provide a hub for current group members.	
Obj.10/25	Developing a broad, diverse and inclusive Community of passionate road users	Advertise what we do and offering free Taster Sessions	Focus on encouraging updating driving skills for older drivers – e.g. via U3A	
Obj.11/25	Promoting our Charity	Maintain a healthy, constructive and forward thinking SWAM Committee, which seeks to continually develop and improve its thoughts, ideas, processes and controls, in-line with corporate strategies and initiatives.	SWAM Committee effectively leads and drives the group to continued success and growth – evidenced by continued course sales to Associates and maintaining existing Pass rates. Financial controls maintain a clear audit trail of income and expenditure to ensure activities are of benefit to the group without compromising medium to long-term affordability.	
Obj.12/25	Digital to the Core	Maximise use of technology (mobile phones; web sites; laptops; Zoom)	'Soft' IT based solutions employed whenever possible, reducing use of 'hard' re- sources to the minimum.	

To Elect Nominees to form SWAM Committee

The following Nominees were duly elected for 2025/2026:

Acting Chair Lindsay Flower Secretary Rosemary Tandy

Treasurer Clare Hogg

Deputy Treasurer Mike Twitchett

Chief Observer/Associates Co-ordinator David Major

Membership Secretary Peter Huntington

Newsletter Editor Clare Hogg
Public Relations Officer Robin Clark

Any Other Business (AOB)

There was none.

There followed a talk by Richard Gladman, Chief Examiner and Head of Driving and Riding Standards, IAM Roadsmart.

He introduced IAMRS as the country's leading road safety charity dedicated to providing insight into human factors in road safety, remarking that human factors are the only thing that can be affected through training.

He values the use of sites such as Facebook and TikTok as empowering the passenger in a vehicle to control the driver.

Richard asked what skills and experience he has which makes him the right person for the position of Chief Examiner. He outlined his previous experience as an Advanced Police Driver and Motorcyclist and as an Instructor at the Hendon Metroplitan Police Motor Driving School (MPMDS) and remarked that everyone needs to keep learning every day.

He also loves go-kart racing which he does around the country.

He showed a number of slides showing the progression of the police cars he drove as well as his own cars. The photo below on the left is the first police car he drove and the other is his own car at the time.



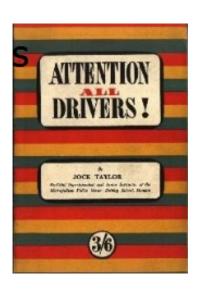


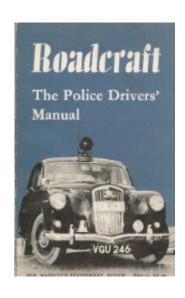
These two photos are of the cars which Richard drove when he 'got to be a proper advanced driver'. The one on the left is his police car, and the one on the right is his own car.





Richard then spoke about the work of the Hendon MPMDS, which was established in 1934. The first documentation of the system of car control was devised by the Driving School in 1937 (left photo) and published as a manual in 1954, becoming Roadcraft in 1960 (right photo).





Richard said that the manual helps to teach people how to be good drivers and also helps them to pass the test. He feels that drivers should drive every piece of road as if they were driving it for the first time, even if they know it well.

Returning to his role, Richard said that the experience and skills learnt in his various roles enabled him to be the replacement for Peter Rodger, his predecessor as Chief Examiner.

Richard then turned attention to the Highway Code. The first edition was printed in 1931 and the current 17th edition in 2022.

He feels that not much has changed for Advanced Drivers as they are already aware of factors such as the Hierarchy of Road Users because

the training makes them considerate of others and they understand their responsibility for the safety of others.

He remarked on figures produced by both the AA and IAMRS showing how few people are aware of the changes and how few had read it!

As time was running short, Richard asked if there were any questions.

There was much discussion about the use of bright headlights and he was asked if the IAMRS was attempting to influence the motor industry in this area. Richard had sat on the 'bright headlights group' which is trying to reduce the use of bright LED headlights as well as bright red lights. This reduction is not only necessary for the danger to drivers' driving but also because the lights are felt to be actually damaging people's eyes.

There was another brief discussion about the introduction of 'driverless controls' in modern cars. The question of turning off such assistance, for example Intelligent cruise control, was raised. It was felt that switching off may affect drivers' car insurance.

As time had run out the Chair for the evening drew the talk to an end, thanked Richard for his interesting talk, and wished everyone a safe journey home.

Want to earn £30?

Let our Chief Observer know about someone you would recommend

who buys the Advanced Course with SWAM, and it's all yours!

Contact David for information chiefobserver@swam-iam.org.uk

Welcome and Congratulations

We Welcome New Associates

Jennifer Crossey [Observer: John Cameron]

Adrian Jones [Observer: Barry Seed]

Josef Karthauser [Observer: Simon Cowley]

Mike Loughlin [Observer: Lindsay Flower]

Nick Warner [Observer: Rob Norburn]

We Congratulate

IAMRS Test Pass

Julie Arblaster observed by Lindsay Flower

Brian Brooks observed by Val Czerny

IMI National Observer Programme

Graham Bennett mentored by Rob Norburn

Ken Fryer mentored by Thomas Flynn

President

We would like to thank Helen Schofield for all her support for SWAM and before that for the Bath & District Group of Advanced Motorists (BADAM). Helen has had a long career in the IAM and was an active member of BADAM. She was Regional Co-ordinator for the South West in the early 2000s, and became Secretary of BADAM in 2005. When she retired from this position, she became President of BADAM,

and subsequently President of SWAM on its foundation in 2020 as a result of the merger of BADAM and Melksham Advanced Motorists. We are very grateful for all her support during this time. Thank you, Helen.



Dave Edwards, our new President, has a long-held interest in cars and driving as shown here: My earliest memories include travelling in the back of my parents' AC Aceca, a '50s sports car which didn't have a back seat. I lay across the load bay / parcel shelf, without a seat belt, in an exposed position which we would never consider now. My parents helped to run the AC Owners club, and my Dad occasionally com-

peted on the track, all of which started my interest in cars and driving.

I joined the IAM during 1987 shortly after buying our first house in High Wycombe. Having sold my nice car to finance the deposit, I passed my IAM test in a Renault 4 (a Renault version of the Citroen 2CV). I enjoyed the training and continued on to become an Observer; within a year I was Chairman and Chief Observer.

A work move to Chippenham in 1992 meant that I joined the Bath & District group as an Observer, and it wasn't long before I became Chief Observer here. When the IAM introduced a test for a Senior Observer qualification, we quickly had more Senior Observers in the Bath group than all the other groups combined (largely due to Andy Poulton's training). When I ran out of spare time due to a demanding job, I returned to regular Observing which I am still doing today.

During those years I was a comms design Engineer for a project in Corsham, then in management roles with BT, finishing as General Manager Delivery in BT Security. I managed to continue some observing and regular RoSPA retests. I was fortunate to have a number of interesting cars: a Cavalier 4x4 turbo, Nissan 300 ZX TT, Nissan 200SX, BMW M5, Alfa Romeo 156, Discovery 4, Audi S3 and a Range Rover. More recently I was able to buy my dream car, an Aston Martin

Vantage V12 which I still have and adore.

I took early retirement in 2018 and top of my list was taking the Masters test. I spent several months preparing (thanks again to Andy Poulton), and even planned a RoSPA retest as Masters preparation. I loved the training and taking Masters provided a challenge that I hadn't experienced since my first IAM test. My test with Shaun Cronin went well (he was very good at putting me at ease) and I was delighted to be awarded a distinction. I've recently retaken my Masters and fortunately I maintained my standard.

Since retiring I have been a trustee for Wessex 4x4 Response (a charity providing emergency and bad weather logistics to Police, Rescue etc), and became part of the crew at the Glastonbury Festival as part of the artiste transport team. I am an enthusiastic member of my local Rock Choir, performing at the Edinburgh Fringe, Nick Mason's garden party (lots of cars), Bath & West show, shortly an Abbey Road recording and many other gigs. I am also a keen geocacher.

I was delighted to be invited to become President of SWAM, and look forward to supporting the committee to build on their success with the group.

Treasure Hunt—Wednesday, 11 June at 18.30

Good advanced driving is about improving OBSERVATION alongside ensuring EARLY ANTICIPATION of hazards, to help PLAN how they can be best and safely negotiated, taking account of all road users and of course road conditions.

This treasure hunt aims to embrace all of the above qualities over a 30 mile car-hike along the roads of Somerset and Wiltshire. <u>Each team must consist of two people</u>, one driving, plus one keeping a tab on the notes and questions/challenges that need to be worked out.

WE MUST STRESS THAT THIS EVENT IS NOT, REPEAT NOT, A RACE.

The 'Hunt' should take about an hour, but no prizes will be given for arriving back early!

We do hope that you will join us for this event, and to try and ensure that a convoy isn't created, we will be staggering each team's start time by a minute or two.

It would help us in organising this event if you could let the SWAM Secretary know if you intend taking part in this event, so that we can plan for the number of Treasure Hunt Notes to be produced. Also with regard to numbers for catering etc. Contact: secretary@swam-iam.org.uk

Those taking part should aim to arrive at Beckington Village hall at 18:30, where refreshments will be available, both before as well as after the 'Hunt', so there will be plenty of time for catching up with other SWAM members.

We look forward to seeing you on the day.

Forthcoming Events

Wednesday, 30 April at 19.00: 3-in-a-car meeting at Beckington Memorial Hall*. There will be a talk about the Cockpit Drill in the hall to begin with, followed by an opportunity to practise what has been discussed and then have a drive with one of our National Observers, and benefit from their experience and advice. You can either drive or be a passenger, so please come along to make the most of this opportunity. There is a Cockpit Drill leaflet which will be emailed along with the invitation to the meeting, and a few copies will be available on the day.

Wednesday, 11 June at 18.30: Treasure Hunt starting from Beckington Memorial Hall*. Full details are on pages 17-18. This is going to be a fun evening, so we look forward to seeing you then.

*The address of Beckington Memorial Hall is Bath Road, Beckington, Frome, BA11 6SH (just off the A36).

Sunday, 3 August at 10.00—16.00: Classic Vehicle Show at Camerton Community Hall, Camerton, Meadgate, Bath, BA2 ONL. We will be taking our gazebo to this event and would welcome volunteers to join us. Please let the Secretary (email: secretary@swam-iam.org.uk) know if you are able to come; there are usually 500—600 cars on show for you to see.

Speed Control in Australia



Traffic performance within the Burnley Tunnel, located in Melbourne, Victoria, (with noticeable inclines on exit) has long been an issue for the community and asset owners, Transurban. Studies identified that flow through the tunnel was below capacity, with drivers reducing speed leading to traffic congestion on the incline exiting the tunnel. This speed variance, in addition to maintenance and replacement needs, led Transurban to undertake investigations into an innovative solution.

SMEC's design, chosen by Transurban, is a dynamic pacemaker lighting system which creates a visual cue along the tunnel walls via energy efficient LED lights. The lighting will regulate traffic flow speed more effectively, creating a safer and smoother driving experience. This tunnel enhancement allows drivers to intuitively keep pace with the speed conditions in the tunnel environment, and increase travel speeds at the uphill section of the tunnel.

The pacemaker lights give drivers a nudge to maintain their speed on the Burnley Tunnel's steep incline. And one year on, Transurban is happy to report the lights are doing the job. Since their installation there has been a 17% increase in speed (about 6km/h) through the tunnel during the morning peak and a 12% increase in the evening peak.

[Thanks to Dave Edwards for telling us about this project.]

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.

Speed limit signs

I was taken aback recently, travelling on the A371 south of Shepton Mallet, to see 40 mph roundels painted on the road in a national speed limit area. I think that they are new advisory warning signs because they are at the approach to a series of bends. However, as they are painted on both sides of the road, they are present for the straight stretches as well. I began to wonder if I had missed a 40mph speed limit sign, even though there were no repeater signs. In fact, it really was a national speed limit area and I am now wondering why they are painted on both sides, and whether they have any legal force. They are certainly confusing the first time you see them. I would be very pleased to hear from you if you have seen similar signs elsewhere, so please let me know. In general, I like having the speed limit painted on the road, as sometimes the signs at the side of the road are covered by vegetation and can easily be missed, but if the limit painted is not the same as the actual speed limit, they could quickly lose their value.

Clare Hogg

PLEASE NOTE

The views expressed in this Newsletter are those of the authors and are not necessarily shared by the Committee of Somerset & Wiltshire Advanced Motorists, nor by IAM RoadSmart.

Due acknowledgement is made whenever material is taken from other sources.

SWAM keeps names and addresses of members on computer to assist in group administration. This information will not be passed outside IAM RoadSmart.

SWAM may from time to time publish photographs taken at group events in *Forward* and on the website, or display them at publicity events.

If you have any concerns or wish to opt out of having your photograph taken or published by SWAM, please email or ring the Secretary (details on page 2) and request an acknowledgement in writing.