



THREE SPIRES



Lichfield Advanced Motorists
(Registered Charity 1027300)

Group Newsletter

Issue 50 Autumn

YOUNG DRIVER EVENT AUGUST 2019 FULL DETAILS INSIDE

AND EVEN YOUNGER
DRIVERS.....



"The day demonstrated the commitment and proactive approach of the Lichfield Advanced Motorists Group. A well organised event that brought together industry professionals creating a positive opportunity to enable a particularly vulnerable road user group, and their families, to receive a valuable introduction to the responsibilities of safer road use and give them a great start on their driving journey."

Alan Prosser, IAM RoadSmart Head of Retraining

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Chairman's Chat

By LAM Chairman, Nigel Rogers



A warm welcome to all LAM members and anyone else who takes a moment to read our Autumn 2019 newsletter.

Our last edition was in Spring this year, but it seems as though our **"British Summer" was a non-event** and so here we are contemplating the rapid approach of Autumn and all the good (and not so good) that comes with it.

We have had a lot to manage this year, including not only our hugely successful Young Drivers event, but more mundane things like Privacy Policy and other such paperwork that seems to be essential these days for some reason.

As mentioned last time, privacy does not seem to extend to those trying **to sell me Bitcoin, no matter how often they go into my email "spam" file.** My thoughts about this sort of offer relate to why would anyone who is supposedly making a mint out of bitcoin trading want to tell me about

it? If I was that lucky person, I would be spending my time in warmer climates, where the mode of transport is somewhat more relaxed than here in the UK!

I am delighted to announce that Mr Russell Bowen is now Vice Chairman of our Group. Russell brings with him a wealth of experience and knowledge on 2 and 4 wheels, which will be of great benefit to our Group operation and future direction. Please do take a moment to have a chat with him. He usually arrives in his Tesla or on his Harley, one of which you do not hear and the other you definitely do!

In general, experienced bikers come to us with superb observation, positioning, anticipation and planning skills. I think that is because it does not matter who is at fault the road, the biker tends to come out of a traffic incident somewhat the worse for wear. Car drivers perhaps tend to be more complacent about risks, being cosseted inside a comfortable safety cage and tending to think of themselves insulated from the outside world and its consequences. None of that stops some 2 or 4 wheel riders and drivers doing idiotic things, perhaps based upon attitude (Human Factors), impatience and a poorly aligned sense of priorities.

Having had a driver tailgating me yesterday through Armitage village and waving his arms about in frustration of my 30mph in a 30 zone. I then went into a 60 zone, then into a 40 and a 30 zone again, whereupon he kept a reasonable following distance. I wonder sometimes, if some drivers and riders actually see the speed restriction signs?

Grahame, our Chief Observer will be updating you all about our Young Drivers event and together with Margaret will, I hope, chat about our past and planned events, so I am not going to steal their thunder, except to say that all have been very professionally managed and have resulted in fabulous events and visits, with more planned for this year and next.

Perhaps needless to say, but I will anyway, some of the visits require a minimum number of people attending to allow us to benefit from things like Group discounts, various concessions etc.

Despite the visits and events being deliberately chosen to appeal to a wide range of interests within and beyond motoring, we often struggle for enough people signing up. We have something like 120 current Group members, the vast majority of whom do no more than their drives. Please bear that in mind, because if the numbers signing up are not sufficient, the event or visit will not take place.

As I hope you are all aware, we have a new LAM Website now, thanks in the main to the tireless determination of Margaret to get what turned out to be a very complex task completed (almost). Our new website is hosted by IAM RoadSmart (IAM RS) and we are supposed to be able to plug our

Group stuff into that as easy as you like. Well, we have been there before! The task has been a marathon effort, but now it looks very professional, 99% of it works as intended and we can update it fairly easily (he says, not knowing much about all this).

Our new site is: <https://www.iamroadsmart.com/groups/lichfield>

My particular beef this time relates to the poor state of our roads. Perhaps "poor" is too weak a word and maybe "appalling" would be better. I do not know about you, but smiley politicians popping up with statements like "another £40 million to fix potholes" is just nuts. Most of the potholes are in parts of road where the entire surface needed taking off and replacing 20 years ago! We need £billions, not a few millions.

The entire procedure of "pothole identification" is flawed in my view:

- On very rare occasions, someone from the Highways wanders along, spots a hole (not difficult), measure it and compares it to the "this is the definition of a pothole" guide and if it is a pothole, paints some nice lines around it. If other holes are nearby which are not quite within the official definition of a pothole, they get ignored, and even though it's obvious they will be "proper potholes" in a week or two.
- Months go by and a gang of blokes with a van, a set of "pop up traffic lights," a pile of cold tarmac and a shovel arrive. If they can still see the lines, they fill in the marked hole (and make a bump) and go away, despite the holes that were not quite potholes a few months ago now definitely being wheel-breaker potholes.
- Months or years later, the Highways people wander along again.
- Full circuit back to item 1.

So, now you know why a stretch of road with a line of potholes might have some recently repaired and the ones next to it not repaired.

I doubt whether the UK being "in or out" of Europe will make any difference to our roads, but



someone needs to consider that broken-up road surfaces are a real hazard to every road user. Pedestrians suffer as vehicles and bikes swerve around holes in the road. Those that are unavoidable and full of water lead to users of the pavement getting soaked too. No joy for anyone it seems!

I personally do not think that many journeys currently undertaken by road can be conveniently switched to rail, unless perhaps you live within an easy walk of a train station and your destination is likewise. The car sits there, just waiting for us to drive it for a purpose or even on a whim.

Changing to electric cars, electric bikes, push bikes or whatever still requires roads. That means that drivers and riders will still face the same road hazards regardless of technology. I wonder if fully autonomous vehicles will be clever enough to avoid random potholes without swerving into the path of another, so causing the "redundant drivers" to spill their morning coffee and stopping all traffic, whilst various super-computers drain their batteries trying to work out what to do? Perhaps the multi-media screen inside the vehicles will stop playing last night's soap opera and simply state, "oops, over to you mate"?

I hope you enjoy our Autumn edition of this newsletter and safe driving, wherever you go and whatever hazards you face. Use IPSGA all the time, because it works!

Nigel Rogers



The latest drink-drive figures from the Department for Transport issued today (28 August) have revealed a disappointing lack of forward progress – and road safety charity IAM RoadSmart has again called for a long-term plan to tackle the issue in a meaningful package of measures.

The figures show that in 2017 (the latest full year statistics are available) there were 220 fatal crashes where alcohol was a factor – no change from the previous year (reference 1).

The figures also showed 1,110 serious crashes, up by 100 on the previous year. There were 8,600 **total casualties from road crashes, which although down from the previous year's total of 9,040, is up** on the figures from 2013-5.

Measures being advocated by IAM RoadSmart include a further lowering of the drink-drive limit in England and Wales to match Scotland, wider use of drink-drive rehabilitation courses and also following the example of Scotland by seizing the vehicles of repeat offenders.

Statistical Release 28 August 2019

Department for Transport

Reported road casualties in Great Britain: final estimates involving illegal alcohol levels: 2017

About this release

This publication presents final estimates of casualties arising from reported accidents involving at least one motor vehicle driver or rider over the legal alcohol limit for driving, in Great Britain in 2017.

Figures are derived from the STATS19 forms completed by the police plus toxicology data for road fatalities from coroners and procurators fiscal.

Provisional 2018 estimates will be published in February 2020.

Statistically significant

The 95% confidence level is the standard against which statistics are typically tested. It means that in 100 years with the same risk of fatalities (or injury), 95 of those years will result in a number of fatalities (or injuries) between a given range. If the actual change falls outside of this range then we can be 95% confident that the change is as a result of a genuine trend (statistically significant) rather than a product of chance (not statistically significant).

In this publication

- Drink-drive casualties
- Drink-drive accidents
- Country and English regions
- Gender and age
- Other data sources
- Strengths and weaknesses
- Background information

Final estimates for 2017 show that between 230 and 270 people were killed in accidents in Great Britain where at least one driver or rider was over the drink-drive limit, with a central estimate of 250 deaths.

- The final estimate of fatalities for 2017 is similar to levels seen since 2010 and the rise from 230 in 2016 is not statistically significant (see definition).
- An estimated 8,600 people were killed or injured when at least one driver was over the drink-drive limit. This represents a reduction of 5% from 9,040 in 2016, and is reverting to a similar level to 2015.
- The total number of accidents where at least one driver was over the alcohol limit fell by 8% to 5,700 in 2017, reverting to a similar level to 2015.

Chart 1: Fatalities in reported drink-drive accidents: GB 2007-2017; error bars show 95% confidence intervals

Year	Fatalities
2007	~240
2008	~240
2009	~240
2010	~240
2011	~240
2012	~240
2013	~240
2014	~240
2015	~240
2016	~230
2017	~250

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Neil Greig, director of policy and research at IAM RoadSmart, said: "It is truly disappointing to find yet another year of very little progress. Successive changes in government means we do not get the continuity or the focus that is required to create a long-term plan that will tackle this in a structured and cohesive way.

"There is no one simple answer to reducing these figures, but IAM RoadSmart believes we now need an emergency package of measures from the government including a lower drink-drive limit to reinforce good behaviour, the fast-tracking of evidential roadside testing machines to release police resources, as well as the introduction of innovative approaches to help drivers with alcohol problems.

"Rehabilitation courses work and we think all those convicted of drink-driving should be sent on one automatically rather than having to opt in. More use of alcohol interlocks and extra penalties such as vehicle forfeiture, as used in Scotland, could all be part of more joined-up approach to the problem, ultimately leading to fewer need-less deaths on our roads."



IAM RoadSmart says it's time to bust the myth of multi-tasking behind the wheel, to ensure drivers are fully aware of how dangerous a hands-free mobile phone can be.

With the report *Road Safety: Driving While Using a Mobile Phone* issued today (13 August) stating that **"using a mobile phone while driving is dangerous, with potentially catastrophic consequences,"** IAM RoadSmart says there needs to be much stricter controls on the use of hands-free mobile phones in cars – and they remain a major distraction to the task of driving. However, the charity said that it cannot see **how any ban can be enforced, with a lack of police numbers meaning drivers feel they won't get caught.**

Today saw the House of Commons Transport Committee issue its report on the use of hands-free mobile phones with MPs calling for tougher restrictions, enforcement and education on the issue. Official statistics show that in 2017 there were 773 casualties; including 43 deaths and 135 serious injuries, in collisions where a driver using a mobile phone was a contributory factor. The figures show that the number of people killed or seriously injured has risen steadily since 2011, however alarmingly the rate of enforcement has dropped by more than two-thirds since then.

Two years ago, motorists caught using a hand-held phone have faced a punishment of six points on their licence and a £200 fine – a doubling of the previous penalty.

Neil Greig, IAM RoadSmart director of policy and research, said: "IAM RoadSmart strongly welcomed the House of Commons Transport Committee report as it fully confirms what we have known for some time – multi tasking is a myth and any form of smartphone use at the wheel is distracting.

"Clarifying the law so that any use of a phone that involves holding it or placing in the driver's lap is made illegal should be a top government priority. It doesn't matter if it's for music selection or social media updates, it all increases risk behind the wheel particularly for new drivers.

"New laws and tougher penalties are welcome but will only work if the fear of being caught is increased. This can be done through more high-profile policing but could also given an immediate boost by issuing clear guidelines for the use of mobile speed cameras to prosecute any driver they spot with a phone to their ear.

"The final piece in the jigsaw for IAM RoadSmart would be a revamping of the mobile phone awareness course with every first offender being sent on one to see and feel the real impact of their behaviour." He added: **"Technology is changing however, and with the introduction of call blocking while in motion and other such measures, we would support the legislative change to ban hands-free to match hand-held."**

IAM RoadSmart also called for the greater use of education campaigns to ensure drivers are aware of the risks of a hands-free call.

IAM NEWS IAM NEWS IAM NEWS IAM NEWS

Lichfield Advanced Motorists Group Newsletter

Events

Earlier this year, Forthcoming Events and Updates

Margaret Manuell and Grahame Ottewell, Events Team



Photos by Grahame

Warwick Castle Visit

March 20th saw members of our group congregating on the Warwick Castle battlements. It was a wonderful dry day. The event was organised by Margaret who managed to get a really good special offer, with greatly reduced admission prices.



JCB Visit

A group of us met up at the JCB HQ in Rocester on the afternoon of 17th April to visit the company museum and a tour of the of factory, some of us lured there by the incentive of the cream tea that followed. After an entertaining film about this family firm, we saw the history display which was fascinating and well displayed, illustrating the development of the company from its beginnings as a farm whose owner wanted better machinery to do jobs still reliant on muscle, so he built them himself. We weaved our way through examples of their machinery from the earliest through to the most modern. We had a very engaging guide, an enthusiastic retired employee who then took us around the factory. Very interesting



Photos by Margaret.

Evening Talk by Alan Prosser - Driver Retraining Courses

On the evening of 20th May Alan Prosser visited our group for an interesting talk on the IAM RoadSmart Driver Retraining courses in relation to Drinking and Driving and also a bit about Speed Awareness courses.

It was interesting to see how alcohol affected people differently and what we interpreted as a single measure or unit of alcohol. At the end of the talk it was very clear that the only way to stay safe was to not drink and drive and that included not drinking the day before you drive in some cases as that is where most people get caught out. They would have a taxi home but then drive next morning still over the limit. Beware!

*IAM ROADSMART
HEAD OF DRIVER
RETRAINING
ACADEMY:
ALAN PROSSER*

Observer Training / Updates Morning with Steve Ellis

On 1st June our voluntary observers attended a Saturday morning session at Fradley village hall with our Area Service delivery Manager, Steve Ellis. The session included updates on courses, including course structures and training methods. It is important that we as a group keep up to date with IAM RoadSmart latest criteria. Fortunately we started with tea and biscuits because Steve ploughed through the morning session at full speed without a break.

*IAM ROADSMART
AREA SERVICE
DELIVERY
MANAGER:
STEVE ELLIS*



Morton Hall, Worcestershire

Again, we were bathed in sunshine on July 23rd for our morning tour round the six gardens of this hidden gem. After a very fascinating introduction about the origins of the hall and the modern development of the gardens, we were taken through the first three – each with a distinct design and character. Then the owner met us to take us through the other half of the tour, explaining how all the gardens had been designed to ensure there would always be plenty of interest, whatever the season. We finished the morn-

ing with a light lunch, prepared in the Hall, and are planning another visit, on an afternoon in May, followed by tea & cakes.

Young Driver event

Tuesday 13th August was the day we had all been planning for. It was our second Young Drivers Event. Nigel Rogers has done a wonderful write up for this newsletter already so please have a read of that. The Young Drivers event has taken a lot of planning and resources. 40 volunteers mainly from our group pulled together to make this event work. Well done everyone.

Forthcoming events

Our end of month drives and talks are still busy. A different talk every month takes place at the meetings held on the last Sunday of each month at Fradley village hall. Latest topics include "Black Box Thinking which was done by John Watson one of our Masters qualified observers, Driving Tips which included videos from IAM RoadSmart Ambassadors, Electric Cars and their running costs by Harry Sheppard who is a wizard on electronics. We have just had a talk by John Watson again on "Cyclists and Other Loveable Animals".

OCTOBER:
TYRE SAFETY
MONTH

Everyone is welcome to come along to these end of month talks. Have a coffee, bring a friend and enjoy a chat. Forthcoming talks planned are Tyre Safety, to fit in with Octobers Tyre Safe Month, Drinking and Driving where we shall look at the measures people hand out at Christmas time to their guests.

In addition to our usual end of month drives and Mid Week drives and Theory talks we also have some other events in the pipeline. Already being arranged are the following

Reasonable Weather" Picnic Sunday 15th September Elford Walled Gardens

This FREE event was held as planned on Sunday 15th September. As soon as you get out of the car on the car park there is a wonderful peaceful ambience . All you can hear is the birds singing. Despite the cloudy sky we had a dry day with the odd bit of sunshine breaking through.

There were some nice new picnic benches under the trees which we grouped together. We even found a room by the allotments where we served ourselves with tea and coffee and had home made cake and just left a donation. Some of us purchased home made jam and we watched the wildlife from the Boat House observatory by the river. The sensual garden area was wonderful with different plants, sitting areas and different types of underfoot areas to walk on. Everyone who came was amazed by this little known "secret" garden in Elford which is on our doorstep.



Christmas Buffet at The Owl, Lichfield

Following the success of our last buffet at The Owl on London Road, Lichfield we are to arrange another one. We are to meet at 7.00 pm for a 7.30 pm start on Friday 3rd January 2020. Places are limited so you will need to book for this one. Further details will be circulated nearer the time but please register your place with Margaret at iammargaretmanuell@gmail.com?subject=Events

Directions can be found at <http://theowlatlichfield.co.uk/contact/>

There will be vegetarian options available but please let Margaret know if you want the veggie dishes so that the staff can arrange suitable catering.

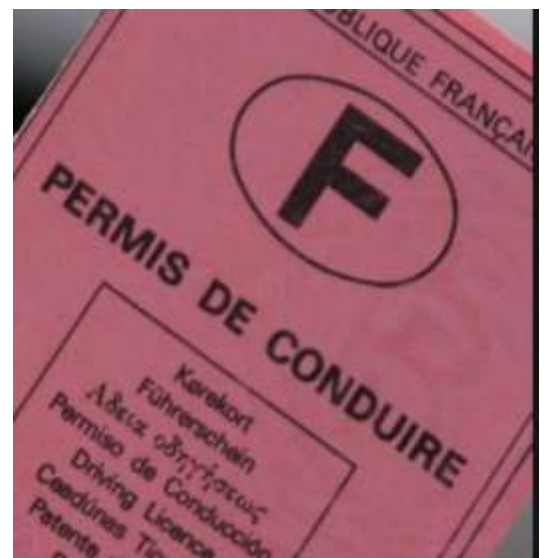
Some events are fixed up at short notice and we try to let as many of you know as possible via email. So please make sure you emails are up to date with our Membership Secretary Sally Basketfield Email lamsallybasket@gmail.com

Also we have always had a calendar on our website to show forthcoming events. Our website has now changed but the calendar is still available on it. Check it out at <https://www.iamroadsmart.com/groups/lichfield/about-us/events> Then scroll down to the calendar.

FRANCE – LEARNING TO DRIVE

Is the UK looking the wrong way with the suggested changes to learning to drive and restricted licences? May be with regards to the age you can start to learn. Below I set out the French system which my eldest Grand Daughter is doing.

1. You can start to learn to drive at the age of 15.
2. First you need to pass their version of the highway code. To do this my Grand Daughter went to a driving school to learn, as you must do for at least a few hours to be entered into the relevant system. When she was considered proficient, she was told to contact La Poste (yes the Post Office) and arrange to attend to take the test at one.
3. Having passed she now had a 1hour lesson with a Driving Instructor to assess how many hours it was expected to take to reach the test standard. The minimum number of hours is 22. This is not fixed and can change as the pupil progresses. At this stage pupils can only drive with an Instructor.
4. Once the pupil has reached test standard a provisional licence is issued. They can now drive accompanied. The following sticker must be on the rear of the car, "CONDUITE ACCOMPAGNÉE". A log must be kept of each journey giving details of the date, distance, time, weather conditions, amount of traffic, any manoeuvres (e.g a reverse) and how they felt. The police can ask to see it so must be with the person. Motorway driving is restricted to a maximum of 110km
5. After a 1,000 km a further lesson with a driving instructor to check her competence. They can be told to take further lessons.
6. Once the person has driven 3,000 km, they can apply to take their driving test but must be aged 17.
7. When the test is passed the person must continue to be accompanied until the age of 18. The letter "A" must be on the rear of the car for three years.
8. The licence issued is restricted with a lower alcohol limit and can a loss of 6 points, not 12, results in a ban. Points level increases to 9 from age 19 and 12 from age 20. No restriction on Motorway speed.
9. Note that any offences committed whilst accompanied (until the age of 18) result in the fully licensed person losing points.



For those 18 and over the situation is, that once they have passed the Highway Code element, they can only drive with a driving instructor and cannot have extra "tuition" with anyone

else. On passing their test the licence is again restricted with the points being 6, then 8, 10 & 12.

One final point - insurance. Given the loading one would see in the UK why are the French able to allow driving from age 15. Simple - it is illegal to charge extra on a policy for the 15/16/17-year-old. Excesses may alter.

Young Driver Event - 13th Aug 2019

Lichfield Advanced Motorists (LAM) staged their second Young Driver skills and experience day on August 13th, courtesy of the generosity of the Committee of the nearby Curborough Sprint Course, who donated their private sprint track and facilities to us free of charge.

The primary purpose of the event was to attract people below the age of 26 who are either currently taking driving lessons or are newly qualified as drivers, so they could experience a snap-shot of the practical use of Advanced driving (IPSGA) in the safe environment of a private track. We were fortunate to once again benefit from the incredible generosity of Sytner-Mini of Tamworth, who loaned us a very nice Mini Cooper to use for the day and also provided a new Mini Cooper Hybrid as a display car.



Our guests greatly enjoyed being "at the wheel" of a Mini Cooper under the supervision of our Observers. We took them around the challenging sprint circuit at quite a respectable speed and demonstrated the practical use of IPSGA, as applied in a real but safe environment. Amongst the common "bad habits" we discovered was the old issue of braking too late and having to do multiple tasks whilst negotiating corners. However, with a bit of instruction and patience, most of them got the hang of and could understand the benefits of getting the car set up in the best position at the correct speed and in the appropriate gear before negotiating the hazard. The results of doing all this "the Advanced way" could be felt by all in the comfort and balance of the car.

Our event was supported not only by those already mentioned, but by "Gist" (a large UK haulier) who brought along a 40ft articulated truck (which was huge) so that we could experience the "HGV drivers view of the road". Despite all the features of this modern truck and its array of mirrors, it was incredible to realise that if you follow an articulated truck at anything closer than 5 or 6 car lengths, the HGV driver cannot see you!



We also welcomed for the first time the Staffordshire Fire and Rescue educational pod and its team of enthusiastic people.

The pod expanded into a cinema, where our young drivers and those soon to be experienced a very realistic interactive and multi-sensory video, showing why succumbing to distractions whilst driving is a sure way to become yet another collision statistic.

IAM RoadSmart generously supported us with educational information about the hazards of driving whilst under the influence of alcohol or drugs (or both). I think they surprised a lot of people, in hopefully a good way, when they learnt what comprises a "unit of alcohol" as related to a variety of popular tipples. Folks then tried on a pair of "beer glasses" and soon realised that doing anything involving driving whilst under the influence can only result in the direst of consequences!

Our members and the "Tesla Owners Club" brought along some very tasty, top specification Tesla cars, including one that performed its own "singing and dancing act" to music, with lights flashing, "gull-wing" doors and wing mirrors flapping, much to the amazement and amusement of all our visitors.



We were very pleased to welcome some very high performance conventionally powered new and old generation Mini Cooper special edition cars, one of which took those of a certain age back to the days of modifying and tinkering with our own Mini cars to extract more performance (and noise). Mind you, my old Mini could not deliver over 200hp and survive in one piece, but our members "John Cooper Works" Mini sure does!

Of particular mention was our ability to offer our younger visitors, age 14-16, the opportunity to drive a car for the very first time or for those a little older, to do so with our ADI's.

Lichfield Accident repair centre generously loaned us two cars free of charge for our "first timers" to drive along a route that could be adapted to their abilities by their LAM **Observer**. **Our ADI's provided their own cars and alternated** in the use of a separate area of the Curborough track, so that our visitors experienced a snapshot of a real driving lesson in a safe environment.



Our young drivers got into the cars wearing rather nervous expressions but emerged with beaming smiles and offered their heartfelt thanks to their mentors, for the unique opportunity to experience their professional instruction and encouragement.



Our very own actor, (professionally known as Margaret Jackman) attended with a wide array of material covering just some of her roles on small screen and in Theatre, which attracted great interest from our visitors, both young and not so young.

We even had a dry, warm sunny day for the event, which seems to have turned out to be the only day of the week that has not blown or washed people away, so how's that for planning or just good fortune!

It's obvious that an event of this complexity has to be professionally organised and managed, otherwise it all falls to dust if even a small matter is overlooked. On the day I think we had in excess of 15 LAM members managing the reception, running the tombola, supervising drives and generally running about and helping anyone who needed help or just helping those who looked lost. A fabulous effort by everyone and thank you all for stepping up to the mark and devoting so much of your time into making the day so successful.

We are greatly indebted to our Chief Observer and Young Drivers event organiser for his tireless work in organising this complex event and "rallying the troops" as required.



"Some years ago the Lichfield IAM group helped me through my test and I met some great people at the group and made some real friends there as well as enjoying my learning experience. I was also training at that time to become a driving instructor. When I was asked if I would help with their day for young drivers recently I didn't need to think twice, it was an honour to give some time back to the group who had helped me so much. The day is so well organised and as the weather was kind to us we had a really good day with the young drivers. Their enthusiasm and thanks for the help they received made it worthwhile. When drivers come to me at 17 years of age to learn to drive we can't always start in such a protected environment as the day that Lichfield IAM found for them. It certainly helped some younger ones who were nervous on arrival but realised it was possible and that they would want to begin lessons at 17. I think everyone enjoyed the day and went away with a new learning experience so many thanks to the Lichfield Group for all their hard work."



LYNNE BARRIE
ADI SCHOOL OF
MOTORING



With thanks to all our sponsors on the day



Ian: 'Very well organised event. Lots of interesting and useful workshops for the youngsters to participate in'.
John: 'All young drivers should take the opportunity to attend the day'

John and Ian Training Providers at Gist Ltd.



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JEFF	BANKS
MARK	BATE



Hannah Hawkins
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Jeff Banks -
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New Members

HANNAH	HAWKINS
DIANNE	RICHARDS
DAVIS	PAYNE
BEN	COTTERILL
SAM	HOULDERS
RUTH	RANAHAN
MARTYN	PROCTOR
LOUISE	PURKESS
PAUL	COCKRILL



Paul Cockrill
Advanced Pass



Ruth Ranahan -
Advanced Pass

Congratulations to Geoff Russell and John Watson on achieving their National Observer status.



John Watson -
National Observer



Geoff Russell -
National Observer

Chief Observers Blog - Grahame Ottewell

Associate Advanced Driver Course Update

The new Advanced Driving Course (ADC) structure is now in full swing. Feedback has been good from both observers and associates. The associates find it useful to know what direction they are heading in, their targets and what the next drive will consist of.

Having attending National meetings in the past I discovered that around 50% of the people who apply for the Advanced Driving Course do not go on to do their Advanced test. That can be for various reasons. Some just want to improve their driving standards or improve their confidence on the road, some may not reach the required advanced test standard, some may go for the Group Sign Off route rather than the Advanced Driving Test with an examiner. We have not yet had anyone wanting to do the course via the Sign Off route. When someone purchases a course from IAM RoadSmart they are given the choice of the normal test route or the Sign Off route. All of those who then come to us direct from IAM RoadSmart have already chosen the test route. To cater for those who do not go on to do the test we have now got a group advanced course participation certificate. The certificate is not given away lightly though. The associate must have shown some improvement in their driving standards and that they understand IPSSGA.

Geoff Russell (Training Officer) and myself have listened to comments and feedback from observers and associates and as a result we have made a couple of small tweaks to the ADC Guide. We do not now include the Pre Test as a drive. This is due to the Pre Test being just that, to confirm that the person has reached test standard so no real driving input is given, just some feedback at the end of the Pre Test. Also if an associate helps out at Curborough Breakfast meetings then it is unfair to include that observer training session as part of the associate training session as the observer may be covering a certain element or driving topic that the associate does not really need. Another example is that should we have a situation where 2 associates go out with 1 observer at Fradley then that drive will only count for the hours that relate to the each of the associates driving time. E.g. If 2 associates go out for 2 hours and they drive 1 hour each then only 1 hour will be shown on their ADC Guide. This is reflected in the hours entered onto the ADC Guide. These changes or tweaks are to give the associate the full time allocated to their maximum 10 (2hours sessions) course to enable them to make full use of the training they need.

Local Observer Training

- Geoff and I are currently putting together a Local Observer Training Course for new observers.
- If anyone is interested in becoming an observer then please contact me via email.

We can only take on a few at a time, so please do not be disappointed if you are not in the first batch. IAM RoadSmart guidelines are that we should not have more than 10% of observers in training. That equates to just under 2 trainees. However with approval from IAM RoadSmart we hope to increase that very slightly. Observing does have a commitment. Observers are now mentors and also do demo drives. Training has to be done in accordance with IAM RoadSmart and Institute of Motor Industries (IMI) standards as the award is nationally recognised. Being a good driver does not mean that a person is necessarily a good observer as there are different skill sets involved. So there is some interesting things to learn. The rewards when someone passes their test or reach their goals is worth the effort. Finally, we have come through a very difficult patch when we recently almost reached full capacity for our associate intake. Some surrounding groups had to close their doors on taking in new associates, well not exactly closed their doors but have now got some waiting lists before an associate is allocated a course with them. However thanks to you, the observers, pulling out the stops we coped and no one was put on long waiting lists. Well done!

Introduction from new group Vice Chair - Russell Bowen

Recently the Committee of the Lichfield Advanced Motorists Group (in their infinite wisdom of course) agreed to appoint me as Vice Chair of the Group and I have been asked by the Chair to write a short introduction.

I'll start by stating the obvious: I love driving cars (and riding motorcycles)! There is nothing more satisfying, in my opinion, than enjoying a smooth and progressive drive around our wonderful roads, and the only potential frustration is the occasional demonstration of poor or dangerous driving by other road users. And this is why I love working with IAM RS and LAM - **the very raison d'être for our group is to continue the IAM RS mission of improving driving standards and therefore improving road safety.**



So, what have I been up to in my time at IAM? Well, I came to the Lichfield Motorcycle Group five years ago and I have to say that I really enjoyed the professional and thoughtful training that enabled me to reach test standard with minimal fuss. When I was then asked if I would like to train as an observer I was delighted - what more excuse did I need to ride my bike every week with like minded riders and spend time helping others ride safely and progressively. But, as my riding continued to develop, I became more aware of how many bad habits I still retained in my 4-wheel driving "style", and this led me to Lichfield Advanced Motorists. I can still remember my first observed drive with Sally Basketfield and how **patient and supportive she was despite what must have been quite an "exhilarating" hour as my passenger (that's the kindest way I can think of to describe my enthusiastic driving techniques).** All of the observers were fantastic, but I must acknowledge a particular debt to former Chief Observer Graham Simkins, who just "got" me and helped me so much, but who is sadly no longer with us.

Well, I managed to pass my test, and I was thrilled to be asked to join the car observer team too. Initially I was worried that car observing would not be as engaging as bike observing. With the bikes you get to ride your own bike around behind the Associate whilst memorising all the feedback that you later pass on - **it's quite challenging and you get to improve your own riding too.** But I have to say that car observing is just as rewarding - the opportunity to pass on feedback immediately and to watch how your Associate is responding is wonderful and it helps to build a real positive bond between Associate and Observer much more quickly.

Fast forward to the here and now, and I am now a qualified National Observer (for bikes and car), a Local Observer Assessor (for bikes) a Committee Member in the bike group (with a responsibility for developing observers) and now the Vice Chair in the car group. I am delighted to be able to give something back to this wonderful organisation. We are very lucky to have such a well run group - the driver training is exceptional, as is the observer training, the events programme is wonderful, the Committee is full of dedicated and hard working individuals who give huge amounts of time and energy in the background to make everything flow so easily, and the group is well managed to ensure a stable footing on which to move forward.

Do You Belong to a Group

Lichfield Advanced Motorists offer FREE talks on topics such as

Motorway driving; Parking and Manoeuvring; Vehicle technology; Night driving; Lone driving

Please contact

lichfieldadvancedmotorists@gmail.com for more information

As individuals we should keep learning, keep stretching ourselves and keep looking for new opportunities to enjoy new experiences - **it's** psychologically proven to be good for us!

So, how could such a wonderful group "move forward"? Well, in my opinion, there is nothing that we do badly, but as with all things, if we stay still and rest on our laurels, then we might miss a great opportunity to further our aims of developing better driving and safer roads in the UK. In this vein I would suggest that we focus on two priorities: sharing more and developing our membership.

They say that you never stop learning. I really don't subscribe to the rather annoying saying about old dogs and new tricks!

As individuals we should keep learning, keep stretching ourselves and keep looking for new opportunities to enjoy new experiences - **it's psychologically** proven to be good for us! So I set out a challenge for each and every one of us: after passing your test consider becoming an observer, joining the committee, helping out with events, attending meetings, visiting other groups, or helping with the website or the finance - the opportunities are endless!

As a group we should keep on learning. We have a wonderful group of brothers and sisters in the Lichfield Advanced Motorcyclists group, from whom we could learn lots and with whom we could share our own ideas and developments. Then there are the other local car groups - we should visit their social meetings, events and training meetings. This sort of thing is already happening but we could do more - so please offer to be an ambassador for sharing and then go out there and pinch some great ideas!

Finally I'd like to talk about developing our membership. A thriving membership will ensure a thriving group and the more diverse our membership is the more opportunities we will have to learn from each other. I believe that we need to retain our focus on enhancing the membership of vulnerable groups such as younger drivers. Statistically this group are the most likely to suffer road collisions often with catastrophic consequences. We already have promotions, marketing campaigns, discounts and events targeted at younger drivers, but what we also need to do is to hold on to them afterwards - they need to enjoy the course and then tell their (younger) friends! And we need to find ways for them to continue to engage with the Group even after they have successfully completed their course.

Yes, the focus is on safer roads and better driving, but let's not forget the fun factor! Everything we do should be enjoyable and rewarding - from taking the Advanced Driving Course, to becoming an Observer or joining the Committee, all the way to being the Chair! So this is my final challenge to you all - if you are enjoying or have enjoyed any part of being a member of this wonderful group, then please tell us, and better still join in with helping us to create more of these enjoyable experiences. Equally, if there have been elements of your membership which have not been so enjoyable, please also tell us - we would really appreciate the honest feedback and it gives us a chance to make things better.

I look forward to talking to you about your experiences as members of Lichfield Advanced Motorists, but most of all, I look forward to doing my bit to make it all as much fun as possible!

PLEASE KEEP ASKING FOR MORE DRIVES

The Advanced Driver Course is a demanding course and the Observers in the group work really hard with our Associates to help them build the skills and the confidence and to develop a higher standard of driving that will then hopefully lead to an Advanced Driving test pass.

Whilst the ADC is a very structured course we do encourage Associate members to engage at their own pace with as many Observers as possible. Driving with a broad variety of different Observers gives Associates a good breadth of different advice and experience (whilst remaining consistent in the basics of course!), and we would like to encourage Associates to request drives from as many different Observers as possible. But we do recommend doing the first three with your mentor if possible.

Of course there are times when you may not be able to find a mutually agreeable time for an observed drive and we would ask you to keep trying other observers until you can get the drive that you need.

Did you know that all observers are actually unpaid volunteers? None of us in the Lichfield Advanced Motorist Group are paid staff working for IAM RoadSmart. An observer is someone who has passed their IAM RoadSmart test and then decides to give something back by doing observing and helping others to reach their targets, be it to take the test or to improve their driving. Observers have to go through a fixed training system which complies with IAM RoadSmart standards and also Institute of Motor Industries (IMI) standards which is an external examining body. That takes time and commitment.

When you add this to the fact that a lot of our observers are doing a full time job, with family and other commitments on top of their volunteer drives, it may not come as a surprise that sometimes observers **cannot do drives at specific times and we don't want it to appear that they are not interested in helping Associates out.**

Most IAM Groups do fixed term courses or drives, for example every Saturday or every second Saturday from a fixed meeting place. We at our group go that extra mile by offering a Sunday end of month drive plus a Wednesday evening mid month drive. In addition to that we even offer all of our observers up for you to try to arrange a drive outside of those fixed drives, which is not always possible for the reasons outlined above. We do this because we believe that it is very much your course and it gives Associates a great chance to make arrangements with Observers with a good match of available time.

In an attempt to try to offer even more flexibility we are going to revamp the observer contact sheet to show meeting points for drives rather than the home locations of Observers. This is because some Observers are able to travel to a wider selection of meeting points rather than just around their home location. They are willing to do that at their own costs to help associates and we think this will provide even more flexibility for our Associates.

Did you know that we have also been running drives throughout the summer from the Curborough Sprint Course once a month as well, and we are hoping that more Associates will take advantage of these in the **future. The last meeting is on Saturday 12th October so please book a drive! And don't forget that the Wednesday mid month drive meeting is available for all Associates for drives so please prebook with Pat Round and make use of Fradley Hall which we have booked for that purpose.**

So Associates, please make use of our extra drive facility but please, if the observer cannot fix up a time that is suitable to you, try other observers or try to attend the Fradley drives instead. If you can plan far enough ahead for drives then you are much more likely to get what you need. We want to help, but our observers also have to deal with other training drives, their own refresher training, meetings and personal commitments, in addition to observed drives.

We really do hope that you will be able to get the drives you need. And please keep trying different Observers until you can find someone who can fit in with your needs, but if you are having problems then please get in touch with me. We are here to help!

Grahame Ottewell
Chief Observer



Follow LAM on Twitter! @AdvMotorists



Follow LAM on Facebook!



Watch the IAM RoadSmart on YouTube.com

LAM – Stats Online

Twitter:

We have 2,308 Followers

Retweets and replies from IAM RoadSmart, Lichfield Mercury and other IAM Groups

Facebook:

Our most popular posts have been about our events and monthly meetings

Flickr:

See our gallery of pics on Flickr. Search for Lichfield Advanced Motorists



Lichfield Advanced Motorists

Lichfield Advanced Motorists (LAM) is one of a network of over 200 local IAM RoadSmart groups across the UK.

The group is run by dedicated volunteers who give their time and expertise in an effort to improve driver skills.

In addition, the group is a place where full and associate members can share ideas and contribute to the IAM RoadSmart's work in developing and promoting innovative road safety strategies. It also provides a social focus where members can meet and enjoy the company of fellow driving enthusiasts.



IAM RoadSmart

At IAM RoadSmart we make better drivers and riders. As a registered UK charity formed in 1956, **we've spent more than 60 years making our roads safer** by improving driver and rider skills through coaching and education.

Our qualified experts, our network of thousands of volunteers and 200 local groups are our lifeblood. They champion our cause and help drive our vision – to be the best, most recognised provider of coaching and advice for all post-licence drivers and riders – and our mission is to make better drivers and riders.

We also help businesses to develop their staff to become more confident, skilled and responsible on the road. IAM RoadSmart provides a range of risk management and training services, include e-learning, on-road coaching and seminars. We are proud of our **achievements but there's always more to do. In 2015 we welcomed 6,000 more people as full IAM RoadSmart members, helped 150 achieve Master driver or rider status and awarded our 1,000th F1RST Register membership.**

We also helped Go Ahead London to win the Prince Michael International Road Safety Award. At any one time there are over 7,000 drivers and riders actively engaged with our courses, from members of the public to company drivers, while our Driver Retraining Academy has helped 2,500 drivers to shorten their bans through education and support programmes.

And, as the voice of advanced drivers and riders in the UK, last year we made 5,500 media appearances and had a place on 24 major transport and road safety panels. Everything we do is designed to inspire confidence, respond to individual driver and rider needs, make our courses and services enjoyable and drive progress

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