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### Safer Driving in Spring

**Every year, Spring springs surprises - and this year is no different.**

Vehicle technology is improving faster than ever. Road conditions are deteriorating at an alarming rate. Weather is increasingly unpredictable. Ever-changing rules and regulations, not just from our Road Safety authorities but also from ***iAM RoadSmart***.

So, unless you have updated your knowledge, skills and confidence recently, there is a risk that the decisions you take when behind the wheel are no longer as appropriate nor as safe as they used to be.

This issue is packed with helpful ideas, suggestions, tips and techniques to help you. Not least are the free refresher observed drives to which you are entitled as a paid-up member. Then there will be a fundamental change in the way we shall be running our own courses, tailoring them even more closely to the needs of Herefordshire drivers of all ages.

So, please pass the word around, or talk to David or Alan about your personal "Driver's Spring Clean".

As always, your contributions of items of interest will be most welcome.

## Herefordshire headlines



**Kath Watts**

Events Coordinator

### **Action-packed Driver Refresher Day, for Hereford WI: 31 March**

60 members of Hereford Federation of Women's Institutes took part in a Driver Refresher Day we ran at Hereford Racecourse.

It was great to see so many ladies wanting to become better, safer drivers. The presentations covered speed awareness, current motoring legislation and motorway driving. Each participant also experienced an hour's assessment drive on a variety of local roads with a qualified Observer, who gave them practical, friendly advice on advancing their driving skills.

Tina Lawrence was in fine form and the Observers, who also did a sterling job, commented on how receptive the ladies were to the suggestions as to how they could improve their driving and their enthusiasm.

Robbie Downing, our new Area Service Delivery Manager, presented sessions on Motorway Driving and commented on the response he had from the ladies, the questions they had asked and the answers given to his questions, which showed on the whole an understanding of the subject. Many thanks for your valued support, Robbie.

Veronica Madgen, who organised the W.I. participants, said "Everyone I spoke to agreed that it was an interesting, informative and enjoyable day. The presentations were very professional and relevant to all aspects of



*David presenting Tina and Robbie to our guests*

better, safer driving in Herefordshire. We have lots to think about and put into practice".

Such was the interest that she has asked us to run further events with the WI during the coming year.

Visiting Observers and guests seemed impressed by the day, both in the organisation and the liveliness of the questions and answers during presentations and the willingness of the WI ladies to learn.

Those from Aston Ingham W.I. who took part said that they would like to thank us for the fantastic day they had "The delivery of the course was excellent and we left with our confidence much enhanced ready to become much more aware of all the hazards that we may encounter on our County roads"

Well done, everyone who supported us on this, our largest event so far. Here's to the next!

#### **Editor's note:**

*We are keen to run similar events for other safety-minded Herefordshire-based Groups so, if you know of any which would be interested, please let Kath know (01981 540382).*



*David salutes our team of supporters.*



**David Williams**  
Chief Observer

## Driving Horizons

### ***iAM RoadSmart*** are proposing some interesting changes.

In response to many members' enquiries about retesting, the proposal is to create a grade of Fellow, which would require a regular retest. The frequency of retest would be three-yearly.

The impetus to introduce this has arisen from statistics produced by IAM Surety, which show that accident claims increase after three years and the longer a member has been driving without a retest.

Observers, National Training Team Members, Assessors and Masters are already retested regularly. Members will be invited to apply for Fellowship when they first pass their advanced test and otherwise at annual renewal. More information will follow next month.

Secondly, it is proposed to introduce a route to membership without taking the Advanced Driver test. This is perhaps controversial, so safeguards will be put in place.

The proposal is being considered because there is a large drop-out of Associates who are so nervous of taking a test. The system will cater for such people who want to improve their driving - indeed who want to reach Advanced standard - but shy away from having to take a formal test.

The proposal will allow for the Assessor in the Group (the Assessor currently signs off Local Observers for their IMI accreditation).

To sign off an Associate who is rated by their Observer (who must be an IMI accredited National Observer) as having reached test standard.

To be allowed to do this, the Group must satisfy the Area Service Delivery Manager of *iAM RoadSmart* that they are at a suitable quality delivery standard, rated by their normal throughput of Associates to Membership.

Having seen the draft of the proposal, I have concerns over some of the criteria the IAM propose to apply, which – to me at least- have nothing to do with the quality of delivery.

One of these is that we should have a succession plan in place for Group Officers. I would love to have a succession plan in place but too few members are getting actively involved in Group affairs for us to identify potential candidates.

I need to be convinced how this can have any bearing on the overall quality of what we do. Again, more information will follow.

As a suitable aside, we are desperate to have more active volunteers at all levels within the Group.

We need those of you with marketing, admin/management and IT skills, as well as those who would like to become Observers, Course Presenters, or just generally to offer an extra pair of hands at events.

There will be several key vacancies at this year's **AGM on Friday 30 June**, so **PLEASE step forward now** and find out how you can be a vital cog in the running of the Group, adding to the value we deliver to our Members and Associates

***David***

# Safer Driving in Spring



## Spring Brings Variable Weather

The arrival of Spring and warmer weather can bring rapidly changing road conditions. Heavy showers can occur very rapidly and are often heavy enough to seriously affect vision.

## Pedestrians

Warmer weather brings more people out onto the streets and children are out playing in residential areas requiring drivers to be very alert.

## Vehicle Maintenance

- if you've been using winter tyres, replace them with summer tyres. Check the tyres thoroughly for damage and check the pressures before setting off. Doing so can help to optimize tyre performance, fuel economy and help to reduce damage from potholes and other road hazards
- be sure your vehicle is ready for rain. Windshield wipers should be replaced at least once a year to help ensure the best visibility during inclement weather. When it is raining you should increase your following distance.
- If you haven't given your car a full spring clean yet now is a good time to wash off all the grime and road salt. Use a pressure washer to clean the underside, but take care with delicate areas and don't spray directly onto oil seals or rubber areas. Better still, let a professional clean it.

Give your windows a good clean on the inside too – dirty windows are more prone to misting up. Simply use washing up liquid in water to get them squeaky clean.

**Richard Gladman: iAM RoadSmart's head of driving standards**

## Inclement Weather

Spring showers wet driving conditions.

Be sure to increase your following distance and drive slower when road conditions are slippery.

Road conditions can be especially dangerous when rain first begins since the rain mixes with oil and debris on the roadway, causing slippery road conditions.

**Puddles:** Avoid driving through large puddles.

Spring showers can wreak havoc on road surfaces. The best advice is to stay clear of puddles, because they can compromise your brakes, splash water on your windshield, causing you not to see. It is also an offence to drive in such a way as to soak pedestrians on the pavement.

**Flooding:** Flooding in the spring can occur anywhere. Avoid driving into flooded areas.

**Potholes.** Potholes generated in the winter months can be very deep and the depth is completely concealed when filled with water.

**Windscreens:** Make sure your windscreen is clean and have your sun glasses ready.

Spring may well bring on hay fever so use the air conditioning and re-circulation settings on your ventilation system to help reduce the effects.

Richard said: "It's easy to overlook when the temperatures aren't in the high twenties, but make sure you keep a pair of sunglasses with you too – the sun tends to be very low at this time of year and these will come in handy when dealing with glare in the early morning and evening.

"In this light dirt and grime on the windscreen and mirrors can be even more distracting– keep them clean throughout."



**Alan Eastough**

Membership Secretary

members@advanced-drivers.org.uk

### Here we are then; Spring 2017 . . .

I have recently got back from spending a week with farmer friends in glorious Cumbria helping to bring new lambs into the world, amongst bright sunshine and daffodils....what better confirmation could we need?

Just before I left, and indeed immediately I got back, I have been working my way through our membership data and subscriptions status.

Your particular situation details will be in the letter that provides this Spring 2017 magazines "mailing information".

If there is no letter (just a mailing label attached to the outside of the envelope, that might even mention "Subs received ok; thanks!" this means that our records show that we have received your subscription - if it was due - and you need do nothing further.

If there was a letter enclosed forming your name and address label through a window envelope, then there is a problem that needs to be addressed and I ask that you to respond accordingly in your particular circumstances, as explained in the letter.

If you think our records are incorrect, please let me know and I will be pleased to sort this with you.

Currently, our members Subs status for 2017 is telling us that:

- 69% have paid (thank you, it helps so much when payments are readily dealt with)
- 20% remain outstanding from our request for payment over 3 months ago
- 11% are paying too much or too little to the wrong (or to both) of our bank accounts (we need to close our Lloyds account)

I am almost 3 years into the Membership Secretary role now and there are still quite a lot of outstanding membership and Subs

issues that we can easily resolve if you can just give me the little bit of help I need to get everything right. We may soon need to be less obliging in sending out our communications to those who are not paying correct contributions so please check your own circumstances and work with me to get any issues with subscriptions sorted. If you are finding all or any of this somewhat confusing, just contact me directly and I'll happily work through it with you.

Talking of a little bit of help, may I thank my fellow "parking attendants" who all very ably assisted me with marshall cars around at Hereford Racecourse for the WI Driver Refresher Day on 31st March. I know it was a little challenging on occasions with well over 100 vehicles to get parked in around 25 minutes, but I am really grateful for the parts played by Adrian, Iain, Graham, Martin, Mike and Ted in making it all happen....Brilliant effort, thanks!

To close off, my previous paragraph sums up what we need to improve the group a little from our already good position; we need small amounts of contribution from a few more people.

A recent agenda item at our last meeting was ".....attracting more Committee Members". Can you offer some help here? We really need to share out some parts of the bigger tasks to a few more people as we are all really very busy with trying to make things happen. If you have new ideas and a bit of time and enthusiasm towards our improvement, we would love to hear from you.

Enjoy safe Spring and Summer driving in our beautiful county of Herefordshire in the months ahead.

Best regards

## Phoning & driving



A recent survey by **Brake**, the road safety charity and **Direct Line** reveals around half of drivers aged between 25 and 34 are taking huge risks by texting, using apps or going online on mobiles whilst behind the wheel.

- Almost half of drivers aged 25-34 use apps while driving (49%)
- More than half of 25-34 year olds read or write text messages while driving (55%)
- Drivers aged 18-35 are most likely to text or use apps behind the wheel
- More than half (55%) of 25-34 year old drivers questioned admitted they had sent or read a text message on their mobile, while behind the wheel of their car, in the last year.

Despite it being illegal to use a hand-held mobile phone at all while driving, more than four in 10 (42%) revealed they send or read messages at least once a week.

One in five young drivers (18-24) confirmed they regularly text and/or instant message when they are behind the wheel.

Just under half of drivers (49%) aged 25-34 admitted they sometimes go online or use apps (other than sat nav apps) while driving. Almost a third of drivers in that age group said they do that several times a week at least.

Driving is a highly unpredictable and risky activity, so it requires full concentration at all times. Drivers who divide their attention between their phone and the road are significantly increasing their risk of causing a devastating crash.

Reading and writing messages – whether texting, emailing or using apps or social networks – while driving is even more distracting than talking on a phone, as it takes your mind, hands and eyes off the road. Texting drivers' reaction times are 35% slower and they also have poor lane control.

One large-scale study found texting drivers were 23 times more likely to crash than a driver paying full attention.

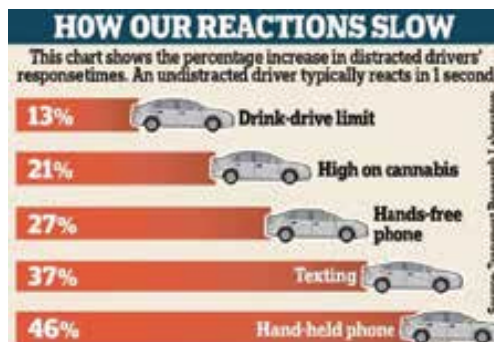
Reaching for a mobile phone can be an irresistible temptation for some, despite knowledge of the risks.

In the UK, experts have warned of increasing levels of smartphone addiction by users who are unable to go without checking their phone for short periods or through the night.

A study of in-vehicle video footage estimated that 22% of crashes could be caused, at least in part, by driver distraction. It also showed that drivers who perform a secondary task at the wheel are two to three times more likely to crash.

Many drivers allow themselves to be distracted because they believe they are in control and do not believe distraction poses a significant risk.

However, research shows drivers are not able to correctly estimate how distracted they are and 98% are not able to divide their attention without a significant deterioration in driving performance.





## Cooperating with other road users

The roads in the UK's towns and cities can be very busy, so it's vital to cooperate with other road users to help keep traffic flowing and to avoid incidents. Always scan the road ahead to gather information about your route.

Remember that not all road users have to follow the same rules: drivers of large vehicles or vulnerable road users such as cyclists and motorcyclists will do some things differently to car drivers. For example, when turning left, a large vehicle may first swing out to the right-hand side of the road to make the turn. Allow these road users plenty of space.

Look out for other road users and try to predict what they're likely to do. This is especially important for vulnerable road users, such as:-

- cyclists and motorcyclists, who might look over their shoulder, showing they might be about to move out or turn
- children, who might run into the road
- the elderly, who might not be aware of approaching traffic because of poor eyesight or hearing.

While you're driving in a stream of traffic, remember to:-

- keep checking the traffic ahead of you, behind you and, if necessary, beside you keep a safe separation distance between you and the vehicle in front
- anticipate problems so that you can slow down in good time.

Driving without care, attention and consideration for other road users is an offence for which you could be given penalty points, which could lead to you losing your licence. See <https://www.gov.uk/> for more information on penalty points given for driving offences. ***With acknowledgements to "Safer Driving for Life"***

### Fixation

On our second drive, my Associate and I are heading into a small Herefordshire town to work on observation and planning.

Weather is dry but dull; visibility is good. The road is 2-way and 40 yards ahead is what could be a T-junction but is, in fact, a junction where traffic coming from the right must give way. We have priority, with the road turning sharply left into a narrow high street. Before the junction are parking bays on the right, mostly occupied.

As we approach, we seem to be the only moving vehicle until, just before we reach the parked cars, one of them starts to pull out and heads in our direction. The width is quite restricted and, either the other driver returns to the bay, or my Associate gives way. Neither gives ground and fortunately, with no vehicles behind us, the Associate has no option but to reverse and allow the other driver through.

Our man is not best pleased and tells me the other fellow has a duty to back up because he is on our side of the road. Thinking he has got that episode out of his system, we proceed towards the junction. Suddenly, a Range-Rover emerges from the road on the right; the driver seems completely unaware of our presence and the vehicle carries on up the High Street.

Still being a bit fixated by the two previous events, we turn the corner and my chap completely fails to see the guy on his mobility scooter who is charging up the street. Using my most commanding voice, I give a warning and avoiding action is taken.

A few minutes later, reverse parked into a bay, we sit for a few minutes and have a chat. Asked to talk through the sequence of events, my Associate is able to work out for himself how errors can so easily be compounded and a situation get out of hand. More importantly, he is able to see that by just holding back when the car was leaving the parking place, it could have all worked out much better.

The lesson he learned is to acknowledge your errors, put them behind you and move on.

It's easy to become fixated!

***Nigel Jenkins.***

# New Courses for 2017



To cater for the needs of the majority of drivers in Herefordshire, we run two levels of course, regularly throughout the year and at different locations.

**1. iAM RoadSmart Advanced Driver courses** for which we are the local Official Provider.

For drivers to raise their skills to advanced level and fulfil their potential as a driver.

Our approach to running this programme is different in several ways, which you will find will work better for you:-

- an open learning process, encouraging self-analysis
- interactive presentation, with team participation and open discussion
- non-judgmental, no pressure . . . just working at your own pace - and enjoying it!

**Accompanied drives:** you are assigned a Qualified Observer who will guide you progressively in advancing your performance.

**In 2017, our Advanced Driver courses will be run on Saturdays: 0930 - 1600 at Saxon Hall, Hereford:-**

- 13 May
- 15 July
- 14 October

Please ring David Williams (01981 580382) or email him at [chief-observer@advanced-drivers.org.uk](mailto:chief-observer@advanced-drivers.org.uk)

For information on **iAM RoadSmart Advanced Driving**, please go to their website at [www.iamroadsmart.com/courses](http://www.iamroadsmart.com/courses)

## 2. Safer Driving Refresher Days

Specially designed for licenced drivers of all ages, who need to update their skills and for those who have lost confidence whilst driving nowadays, whether for leisure, business or necessity.

Each is adapted to the particular needs of those participating, to help them:-

- become more aware of other road users and driving hazards
- reduce the risks of accidents
- get up-to-date with the new Regulations
- feel more confident, with or without passengers

**Programme: Fridays: 1000 - 1600**

Each session includes an update on rules and regulations, discussion about driving in Herefordshire and a drive in your own car, accompanied by a friendly Observer, who will give you constructive advice which will prove invaluable for years.

<b>Ledbury</b>	<b>9 June</b>
<b>Ross-on-Wye</b>	<b>28 July</b>
<b>Leominster</b>	<b>1 September</b>
<b>Hereford</b>	<b>6 October</b>

**Please let us know if you, your family and friends would like to join in one of these.**

**Booking is essential to avoid disappointment.**

**Please ring Kath Watts today on 01981 540382 or**

**email: [events@advanced-drivers.org.uk](mailto:events@advanced-drivers.org.uk)**



## What's on the road ahead?



**Saturday 13 May: 0930-1600: Saxon Hall, Hereford HR2 6EH**  
**NEW Advanced Driver Course structure: NEW Venue** (above)  
 Please ring David Williams on 01981 580382 or email him at [chief-observer@advanced-drivers.org.uk](mailto:chief-observer@advanced-drivers.org.uk)



**Friday 9 June: 1000 - 1600: Ledbury**  
**Safer Driving Refresher Day**

Participants are assured of an action-packed Day, similar to our recent W.I. Day (see page 2).

**Please ring Kath Watts on 01981 540382 or email her at [events@advanced-drivers.org.uk](mailto:events@advanced-drivers.org.uk)**



### Annual General Meeting

**Thursday 29 June: 1830 for 1900 start:**  
**Saxon Hall, Hereford HR2 6HE**

In addition to our duty as a charity to inform members about our performance in the past year, ratify the Annual accounts and elect Officers to the Committee, there will be a presentation by an entertaining speaker (tbc)

**Would you please confirm to Stella (01432 840835) that you will be coming and, if you bring family or friends, how many of you there will be?**



# Algernon says . . .

## An excellent Road Safety initiative!



During the last 12 months GPs have received guidance on passing information to DVLA.

GPs must tell the DVLA if a patient continues to drive when they are not medically fit, the General Medical Council (GMC) has said.

In new draft guidance, the GMC said doctors have a public protection duty to inform authorities if a patient is driving against medical advice.

Doctors do not need a patient's consent to inform the DVLA (or DVA in Northern Ireland) when a patient has continued driving. The strengthened advice is part of a public consultation on the GMC's core guidance on confidentiality.

This aims to help doctors balance their legal and ethical duties of confidentiality with wider public protection responsibilities. The guidance says doctors must disclose information if there is a need to protect individuals or the wider public from the risks of death or serious harm.

This can include risks of violent crime, serious communicable diseases, or risks posed by patients who are not fit to drive.

## Combatting illegal use of Disabled Bay parking.

New technology that could eliminate the issue of inconsiderate drivers parking in disabled bays is being trialled by Westminster Council.

The trial, which is being carried out in partnership with Smart Parking, means that disabled drivers can be issued with electronic permits, known as EPermits or RFID tags, which communicate with sensors in the road.



## How it works . . .

Should a car without a tag park in a disabled bay with a sensor illegally, nearby traffic marshals will be alerted so that they could go to the site and ask the driver to move on.

They also have the power to issue a fine as a last resort.

The pilot project is set to last around eight weeks and evaluation will be carried out before a decision will be made on a wider roll out.

# Bromyard Festival of Speed 2017

On a glorious sunny April day, Steve and I were leaning on the barriers, about a hundred yards from a Bromyard street corner, eagerly awaiting the first group of vehicles.

Several Morgans including 3 wheelers, made the link with their Malvern factory. We spotted that groups were led by a super car which "marshalled" them to a moderate speed. They soon twigged and dropped well back before bursting into a furious razz up the 'igh Street.

Squealing brakes, hot rubber and flashing lights prevented metal sandwiches. Roars of delight from the crowd.

Next, stately Bentleys, Rolls Royce and Jaguars plus an ancient Land Rover flowed smoothly round. Rally minis, Fords and fat racing cars all being chased by a police Sergeant in his little black Ford Prefect and tinkling bell!



The next batch was classic cars. Enormous Bentleys, one looking like a bathful of noisy children, all waving. All groups were now playing the hang back and rush game.

Until then, it was single file for the drivers, but next it was motorbikes

and anarchy! A beautiful fawn-coloured Matchless and sidecar potted gently round keeping left and a Vincent H.R.D. and bullet sidecar. Passing them in droves were Manx Nortons, Triumph Bonneville's, Moto cross and Enduro machines doing wheelies.

Standing on the pegs of his trials bike came this apparition of a huge rider with a big red beard. Bringing up the rear, was a motorised shopping buggy, which had a Villiers engine inboard and zoomed past changing gear with a walking stick! The last two cars made the houses shake before they came around the corner and opened up.

"The Beast from Turin", a maroon monster Fiat, five foot tall, was followed by a replica copy of "Bluebird", Sir Donald Campbell's record breaker.

We noted that no Marshall's car was brave enough to lead them round. Imagine hearing them behind and seeing them in your mirrors!! With all the noise, dust, smell of racing fuels and Castrol R, we found we had eaten our ration packs and pressed



through the packed pavements to get a hot dog and ice cream! Steve once rebuilt a Morgan three wheeler and is good with things mechanical, having been an engineer in the merchant Navy. An all-round good egg, whom I meet at skittles, boule and our exclusive Grumpy Old Men's Club.

During the afternoon display we could hardly wait to dive into the pits where each group was gathered. Talk to Owners and examine machinery and ferret through stalls and stands of Motoring stuff.

Fortunately we had paid to go in the paddock housing The Bluebird and the Beast just as the interviews were over and the monsters were firing up for their run. The Beast is 28 litres, 4 cylinders and flames a foot long were coming from the exhaust stubs, accompanied by a shattering roar.

It was a day to remember.

Shops were open and Bromyard was full to the brim.

**Mike Oliver**



# Driving in a changing world



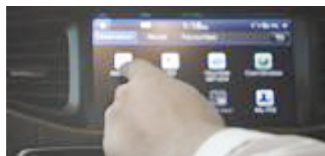
## Driving assistances for safety advances

JLR plans to increase its test fleet to more than 100 research vehicles over the next four years. Back in February 2016, JLR revealed plans for a 41-mile real-world 'living laboratory' on motorways and urban roads around Coventry and Solihull.

The initial tests will involve vehicle-to-vehicle and vehicle-to-infrastructure communications technologies that will allow cars to 'talk' to each other and roadside signs, overhead gantries and traffic lights.

Ultimately, data sharing between vehicles would allow future connected cars to co-operate and work together to assist the driver and make lane changing and crossing junctions easier and safer.

## Driving with technology



Mobile communications and GPS systems used as sat-navs are becoming very common in cars. Whether you are connecting your Bluetooth to blast tunes or looking for the nearest Waitrose, these have become a fundamental part of the daily drive for many of us.

This week's tips give advice on using technology to complement your driving, from IAM RoadSmart's head of driving and riding standards Richard Gladman.

Whilst a sat-nav aids in getting you from A to B try to not become reliant on it. It is important to pay attention to road signs and the road ahead,

in case there's a diversion sign that the device may not have picked up

- Get to know your sat-nav before you set off and always programme it when stationary. Many people trust their sat-navs not to get them lost but you also need to know about roadworks, diversions and places to stop. Keep an old fashioned map to ensure that you limit the chances of going completely off track
- Create your playlist before you start your journey. Taking your eyes off the wheel to look or adjust your music can often prove to be hazardous. It only takes a few seconds distraction to cause an accident. Remember to also keep your music down in some circumstances; your hearing can keep you safe, so be prepared to turn the music off
- Don't make or take calls when driving and never text or engage with social media on your smartphone. Through extensive research it has been shown that making calls, even hands-free affects concentration and slows reactions when driving
- Some vehicles have the ability to create a Wi-Fi zone allowing internet access. This should be used as a luxury for passengers whilst ensuring they do not distract you as the driver. For instance a computer screen reflecting in the dark is a dangerous distraction

Richard said: "The latest driver assistance systems can be the perfect back-up to cover our occasional human failings but are no substitutes for concentration. The driver must always remain connected to what is going on around them. Multi-tasking is a myth and all too often that glance away can become a complete switch-off to an emerging risk. No text, tweet, check in or status update is worth crashing for."



## My IAM Journey

**by Anthony Mansfield**

*who passed his Advanced test at 19 and qualified at 20 as an IMI-Accredited Local Observer*

The term **IAM** has been a household one for me since I first registered that interest in things vehicular – my Father had passed the Advanced test and also qualified as an Observer where we used to live in Brecon. I suppose for me, the word ‘advanced’ was, at a very young age, something I thought of as “cool”, but as I grew up, I realised was actually more something to aspire to, whatever the word advanced was a prefix to. Having always had that interest in driving, I think I just assumed that when I was old enough, I too would take the Advanced test.

Whenever Dad drove me anywhere, I’d always be asking questions to do with the road; what signs meant, or why that person just did as they did. As well as answering those queries, he’d also impress upon myself and my sister why, (and how), what he was doing was safe and ensuring good progress was always made. Knowing those pointers as well as applying common sense, much of which I believe the **IAM** course is, stood me in good stead when I took my Advanced test.

My career aim, since I was about 14 has been to join the Police as a regular – the common idyll of a bobby on the beat was what I wanted to do. With this in mind, to have higher qualifications of driving seemed to be very appropriate. After passing my standard test, I had a year working away from home; but it was soon as I was back that I contacted David Williams with regard to taking the Advanced course. Six months since the first classroom session, I was delighted to be told that I’d passed first time, as a result of the close observation by Phil James.

At this time, I was about a year and a quarter into my application to the Police, ie, since the date I sent in the first form. By this time, I’d passed the application form, the assessment

centre, final interviews, medical and fitness checks so having passed the Advanced test I was feeling pretty happy!

Not satisfied with just the Advanced test, I soon contacted David with regards to becoming an Observer. We met up at the Pandy Inn, Abergavenny, and there I undertook the theory test required of an Observer and passed those. The next meet was the assessment drive which I was pleased also to pass with a very high score, which David realised as he was adding it up was one that he’d been marking by the National Observers’ scoresheet, not the Local one, so even better!

My work at the time meant that I wasn’t free to take my test drives with David at ‘normal’ times. This resulted in my doing an intensive set of six drives across just under two weeks, after which David was easily satisfied I was up to the required standard. With the paperwork sent off, and after only one mix-up by the IAM head office, I was sent my certificate with confirmation of the achievement.

I am currently (at the time of writing), six drives into observing my first Associate and relishing the challenges it is bringing. I started the New Year with a new career - I have now started my career with the Police.

I’d like to take this moment to thank all those that have helped and guided me along the way, with a special mention to David Williams, without whom I would not have got where I am now and whose watchful eye is second to none!



# Skid Pan Experience

**March 18th** saw two groups of members, family and friends descend on Castle Combe Skid Pan for some useful training – and an enjoyable experience, certainly if measured by the smiling faces as they got out of the cars!



The **Skid Pan Experience** can be difficult to describe to those who have yet to undertake it, but what draws many of us to go and refresh our skills on a regular basis is an understanding of how easy it is to skid, even at very low speeds and how quickly we can get to understand what we can do about it.

To leave, feeling that you have the confidence to take appropriate action should you get into a skid and, probably more importantly, to understand how you can end up in a skid in the first place - makes these sessions so very worthwhile.

Keep an eye on your Newsletter, Magazine and website for future Experiences - and remember, please, to **BOOK EARLY!**



## Mirror, Mirror . . .

How often do you check your mirrors? How often, as an advanced driver, do you think you should check?

Let's look at first principles of advanced driving. We need to know what's going on around us, so that we can make informed, safe decisions, e.g. before and during turning right at a junction.

Those of you who have suffered my input on courses, will know that I express the degree of observation as akin to blowing a bubble. The slower you are driving, the less you blow, the rounder the bubble i.e. your observation must be 360°. As your speed increases, so you are blowing harder into the bubble and it extends; i.e. your observation forwards has to be extended, commensurate with your speed, so that you observe things well in advance.

Your use of mirrors is no less important. I suggest your mirrors are the equivalent of eyes in the back of your head. I advocate reversing looking forwards, using your mirrors for exactly this reason; you now have 'eyes' in all directions, whereas turning in your seat to look backwards immediately deprives you of forward vision.

My question was, how often do you use your mirrors? I look back before accelerating, before slowing, after passing a junction, before negotiating a junction, at the end of a straight piece of road, before entering a bend. In other words, it depends on how and where I'm driving, but it is hardly any less than my forward vision. After all, it only takes a fraction of a second to see if there is something you should be aware of, and then you can give it more attention.

This is what gets rid of 'suddenly'!



# Congratulations!

## Are you a Master in Waiting?!

Have you thought about taking your driving skills to another level?

Becoming an Observer is one way- and a very fulfilling role. After the qualification process, it requires no more than 20 hours a year, although most Observers enjoy it so much that they give much more time.

The next step could be to become a **National Observer**, where you could be involved in Observer training and guidance, but again only requires a minimum of 30 hours pa.

Then there is the ultimate challenge; to become a Master Driver. It is defined as 'Driving with sparkle. Putting a smile on your Examiner's face'

If anyone is interested in taking their driving to this level - and we have several in the group already - we can arrange for a demo drive, for you to understand what is expected.

Please ring me to discuss this, without any obligation, to see how we could help you advance your skills still further.

David

## Advanced Test passes

Congratulations to the following, who have passed their Advanced test in recent months:

#### Member

Peter Baldus\*

Luke Jones\*

Andrew Lloyd

Marilyn Reynolds

Corinne Rover-Parkes  
/David Williams

Kate Taylor-Edwards

#### Observer

Jon Baker

Nigel Jenkins

Peter Hodge

David Williams

Anthony Mansfield

Ann Nevelós

\* congratulations to Peter and Luke, who achieved a **F1rst** level pass.



## Our Volunteer Teams

As a Charity, we rely on our team of volunteers who cover the whole of Herefordshire, ready to help you in any way to become a better, safer and well-informed driver:-

- delivering our Quarterly magazine
- distributing promotional leaflets to local shops, parish halls, safety organisations and charities
- providing or locating suitable venues for our courses
- arranging event bookings

If you would like to join in, choose which area you would find best and ring **Stella Boyd-Carpenter on 01432 840835**

# Herefordshire Advanced Drivers



## Who's who?

### Committee 2016/17

#### President

**Maj. Gen. Ted Willmott, CB, OBE**

#### Chairman & Chief Observer

**David Williams, MBE, QFSM**

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chairman@advanced-drivers.org.uk

#### Events Coordinator

**Kath Watts**

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#### Membership Secretary

**Alan Eastough**

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#### Group Secretary

**Stella Boyd-Carpenter**

01432 840835

secretary@advanced-drivers.org.uk

#### Group Treasurer

**Kieran Lappin**

01432 340252

treasurer@advanced-drivers.org.uk

#### Younger Driver contact

**Nerys Palmer**

07909 631823

events@advanced-drivers.org.uk

#### Committee Members

**Christine Barlow, Dawn Cox, Ted Hayward,**

**Mike Leigh, Ann Nevelos**

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#### Marketing

**Mike Warnock**

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**Herefordshire Advanced Drivers** is a Road Safety charity, developing better, safer driving.  
A division of IAM Herefordshire. Registered no. 049679.

Affiliated to the **IAM** (Institute of Advanced Motorists).  
Official Provider of **IAM RoadSmart "Advanced Driving"**

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