

MINI ROUNDABOUT

April 2010

MELKSHAM

SPEED
GEAR
POSITION
ACCELERATION
INFORMATION

INSTITUTE OF ADVANCED MOTORISTS MELKSHAM & DISTRICT

www.m-a-m.org.uk
Registered Charity No: 1055930

WHAT'S ON?

All monthly meetings are held on the third Thursday of the month, at the Riverside Club in Melksham, unless otherwise advised, and start at 19:30. There is a modest charge of £1 to cover refreshments and a ticket for the raffle.

If you are not sure where the Riverside Club is there is a map on our website.

Bring a friend: All welcome, including non-members and members of other groups

April 15th	Parish Stewards – Graeme Hay from Wiltshire Council
May 20th	20 th Annual General Meeting. Speaker: DriveTech from Castle Combe
June 6th	Skid Pan, Castle Combe, 1:30pm (contact Helen Pickett if interested)
June 17th	The Universe, 42 and Everything – Peter Rodger, Chief Examiner, IAM
July 15th	Skittles Night, The Oliver Cromwell, Bromham, 7:30pm <i>(N.B. There will be no meeting at the Riverside Club on this date)</i>
August	NO MEETING DURING AUGUST
September 16th	TBC
October 21st	Life as a Coach Driver – Jon Shobbrook from Beeline Coaches
November 18th	Sharing the Road with Horses – Julie Garbutt, British Horse Society
December 9th	TBC <i>(N.B. This is the second Thursday of the month)</i>

The most up-to-date information can be found on our website. Please check this regularly, as regrettably, last minute changes to events do occur. If you have any suggestions for events or speakers for monthly meetings, please contact Helen Pickett at events.coordinator@m-a-m.org.uk

AGM – 20th May

Riverside Club, 7:30pm

Please find enclosed with this month's *Mini-Roundabout* the Calling Notice and Agenda for the 2010 AGM, along with the Draft Minutes from the 2009 AGM. Please support your Group by attending on 20th May. Our speaker after the AGM will be John Yeo of DriveTech Ltd. from Castle Combe. John will be talking about everything that is on offer, just on our doorstep. We look forward to seeing you there.

Further Information on Upcoming Events

For a full list of upcoming events see the front page of Mini-Roundabout or visit the website at www.m-a-m.org.uk

Skid Pan – 6th June

Castle Combe Skid Pan, 1:30pm

There are still a couple of payments outstanding and the deadline for payment has now passed. We will be writing to individuals who have not paid. If you do not pay soon we will offer your place to someone else, so if you have not yet done so please send your cheque for £70 (members), £90 (non-members) to the Treasurer, Graham Bennett, 38 Osmund Road, Devizes, SN10 3GD as a matter of urgency. Thank you.

Skittles Night – 15th July

The Oliver Cromwell, St. Edith's Marsh, Bromham, SN15 2DF, 7:30pm

We only have a few names on the list for our annual skittles night. Please sign up at Group meetings or contact Helen at events.coordinator@m-a-m.org.uk to book your place. Cost £4, which includes food (sandwiches, savouries & chips). Guests welcome. N.B. There will be no meeting at the Riverside Club on this date.

Caption Competition

No further entries were received for last month's picture, so Pete's caption "Deadly Serious Challenge" is the winner. Thank you very much to Pete for providing a caption every month, but seeing as there was often only one entry the competition is now being retired. Any ideas for future articles and competitions should be sent to roundabout.editor@m-a-m.org.uk.

Highgrove Visit

The morning of the Highgrove Visit looked promising, with some blue sky and sunshine. Would the weather hold out for us? Everyone arrived at the Riverside Club in plenty of time, which left me with a nervous wait, checking that I had booked the coach for the right day! Arriving in Tetbury, it was difficult to see where Highgrove could have been located, but our coach driver navigated us down a narrow lane before necessary security and identity checks were carried out by the Police. We were slightly early so had to wait for a while, this time nervously looking at the black clouds that had begun to develop. More identity checks followed, but we were soon greeted by our tour guide, Marjorie, in the Orchard Room, named after the orchard that stands behind the building. This area has only recently built to accommodate HRH guests for dinner parties, as Highgrove House itself is not big enough, and marquees on the lawn were becoming unsuitable due to the climate in Gloucestershire. Marjorie proceeded to lead us through each of the numerous different gardens, giving very knowledgeable and detailed descriptions of everything that could be seen (and everything that couldn't be seen at this time of year). 15 minutes into the tour the sky finally opened up and we all learnt a new skill in negotiating umbrellas around trees and walls! This was bearable, however, due to the amazing sights around the garden, and Marjorie's interesting commentary. Thankfully it was not until the last 10 minutes of the two hour tour that the heavens completely opened. Unfortunately there was not time to stop in the tea room or shop but instead we continued into Tetbury town centre to have a look around the larger Highgrove shop and to grab something to eat before returning to Melksham. Despite the distinctly damp weather enjoyment was had all round: the three year wait was worth it!

If you missed out on the visit with the Group it is possible to visit Highgrove individually. Details can be found at www.highgroveshop.com/highgrove-garden.aspx or by telephoning the booking office on 020 7766 7310. The Gardens are open on weekdays when TRH are not in residence, from the end of March to the end of October, by prior booking only.

On the Library table you have...

Here are just a few of the items held by Pat in the Library. The Library is available at every Group meeting, unless otherwise advised. Items can be loaned free of charge. For a full listing please visit our website at www.m-a-m.org.uk. If you would like to reserve a particular item please contact Pat at librarian@m-a-m.org.uk.

On Roads

Thank you to Mr John Joy, who has kindly donated the book *On Roads* to the Library stock. *Pat's review:* I found the book quite amusing and interesting to read. When you are reading this book, you will come across quotations and statements such as: Spaghetti Junction, Batheasaton – Swainswick Bypass, M1, M6, M62 etc: Telly Savales, Cliff Richard, Jayne Mansfield, Stirling Moss, Donald Campbell, George Melly, Jools Holland, Lord Montagu of Beaulieu, Eddie Stobart, Barbara Castle, Marple must go, Harold Wilson, David Cameron, Margaret Thatcher: BBC Panorama; spaghetti grows on trees, Jeremy Paxman on Newsnight; Queen and Prince Philip, Ford Zephyrs, Caravans, Numbering roads, Road signs – fonts, bilingual, Gaelic; Road rage, Sleeping Policemen, Car Navigation, Sat Nav. Phew!! It is interesting to note when the Preston Bypass was first opened and to read that a couple lived in a Travelodge for 22 years! For more interesting facts take a look at *On Roads*.

The Essential Trustee

Members of your Committee are the Trustees of the Melksham and District Group of Advanced Motorists. This Charity Commission publication gives you questions and answers regarding the Trustee's positions.

IAM Motoring Facts

As the title says, Motoring Facts. There is a lot of information here, together with colourful graphs, plus a DVD with a running time of 31 minutes 49 seconds.

Your Scrapbook

For those of you who were unable to take the day trip to Highgrove and Tetbury, Luke's report (see above) will appear in the Scrapbook. I think Helen and Luke ought to be thanked for organising this day out for Members of the Group and their friends.

Pat

Message from the Webmaster

We have had a few problems recently where members are trying to contact us but are using the incorrect email addresses and so emails are not being received. Please ensure that you copy the addresses accurately from the back page of *Mini-Roundabout* or from the website to avoid your emails getting lost in cyberspace! The following email accounts will generate an automatic response if you contact us: roundabout.editor; events.coordinator; group.secretary; membership.officer. If you contact any of these addresses and do not receive a response noting that your email has been received, please check that you sent it to the correct address.

It would also be extremely helpful if you could add all of the m-a-m.org.uk email addresses to your address books, if you have one, so that any emails from us do not go into your spam folders. The Roundabout Editor's email address is the one that you will particularly need to add.

If you do not have an email address you can contact Angela on the Group's mobile telephone (07780 743555) who will pass on messages to the relevant people. Please note, however, that this means it may take longer for you to receive a response.

IMPORTANT GROUP INFORMATION

We are pleased to announce that we have received a volunteer for the position of Secretary, so the Group has been saved (at least for a year anyway). We are always looking for fresh ideas though, and with Marie Green stepping down this year the Group is still looking for new:

Committee Members

We would like to thank Marie for all her hard work whilst on the Committee, particularly as Events Coordinator. If you or anyone you know would like to become more involved with the Group, please make yourself known to the committee and come to our AGM on **Thursday 20th May 2010**

Cyclists: claim your lane, says IAM

The IAM has urged cyclists to make themselves seen and to “claim their lane”, moving out into the middle of the lane when approaching a junction or parked cars.

Duncan Pickering, IAM Cycling Development Manager, said: “There has been some debate as to whether cyclists should stick to the kerb or push out into the road when riding in built-up areas. Our advice to cyclists, based on a comprehensive study, is to stay near to the kerb on long even stretches, but to assert yourself when approaching a junction, pushing out into the road and putting yourself in the direct view of drivers.

“Sticking to the kerb where drivers are not necessarily looking means they are less likely to see you.”

Studies have shown that drivers primarily pay attention to the major stream of traffic when navigating a junction, paying little attention to auxiliary roads which are more likely to have cyclists on them.

“Drivers are more likely to notice bikes travelling in the same direction as the oncoming traffic and, when turning left, mainly focus their attention on cars coming from the right, as they don’t see the left as posing a particular threat. This means they fail to see cyclists from the left early enough,” added Mr Pickering.

The IAM, the UK’s largest independent road safety charity, recommends cyclists:

- Take up a primary position around 75-100m before reaching a junction, in the centre of the lane, providing it is safe to do so. This move will mean that drivers exiting the junction will be more likely to see the cyclist as they are in the same traffic flow as more hazardous vehicles.
- Take the “secondary position” when cycling along a straight stretch of road which is clear of junctions and parked cars.
- Keep a sensible distance, about half a meter, from the kerb to avoid hazards such as slippery drain-covers.
- Remember it is not always sensible or appropriate to take the centre of the lane especially if traffic is heavy.

While a lack of awareness on the part of some motorists is no doubt a huge factor in car/bike collisions, it pays for the cyclist as the more vulnerable road user to ride to be seen where possible.

Be safe and save money – now responsible young drivers can earn insurance savings with IAM

As part of its campaign to address the most at-risk drivers on our roads – young drivers – the IAM has provided an incentive for young drivers to be safer.

IAM Surety Insurance, offered exclusively to IAM members via Adelaide Insurance, has until now been targeted at drivers aged 21 and above. From March 2010 IAM Advanced Drivers aged 19 or over driving a low-grouped car can benefit from reduced car insurance.

Parents trying to get their son or daughter insured will know that car insurance for young drivers is expensive and difficult to acquire. With the papers citing frequent examples of recklessness and inexperience, many safe and responsible young drivers get tarred with the same brush, having to pay very high insurance premiums.

However, although they make up only 9% of the driving population, under-25s are involved in almost a quarter of all crashes that cause death and injury. To turn these statistics around, a concerted effort is needed by motoring organisations, governments and the drivers themselves – this incentive is a key step towards safer roads for everybody.

By offering lower premiums to drivers aged 19 years or above who have passed an advanced driving test, the IAM is supporting the group that needs it most.

Simon Best, IAM Chief Executive, said: "The insurance industry has been quick to penalise young drivers, but is much slower to do anything to help improve their driving standards. By introducing a financial incentive, IAM Surety is going some way towards improving young drivers' skills and behaviour on the road, and investing in their driver education at a time when they need it most."

IAM launches Road Safety Manifesto

The IAM has published its Road Safety Manifesto for the upcoming election, calling for urgent support from all political parties to promote driver and rider improvement on UK roads.

Two of the more radical ideas in the IAM manifesto, which is designed to cut the unacceptable number of road deaths and injuries every year, are new incentives for Chief Constables to provide high profile policing, and tax breaks for companies offering their staff drivers further driver training.

"A lifelong approach to learning, delivered through advanced training, is the single biggest factor that can benefit road safety," said Simon Best, IAM Chief Executive.

"Human error is the biggest cause of crashes, so improving driver ability is the best way to deliver real reductions in road deaths and injuries: better driver behaviour must be the key road safety priority for the next ten years. Young drivers, older drivers, motorcyclists and business drivers are the groups that would benefit the most from further training, and the IAM has solutions that could potentially improve their safety record," added Mr Best.

The IAM calls for Government to play its part by providing simple incentives for those considering further training such as tax breaks and VED (Vehicle Excise Duty) discounts, with any cost to the exchequer being redeemed through savings from fewer crashes. The IAM considers visible policing to be a much overlooked deterrent to reckless driving. More police on the road will encourage good driver behaviour and deny the use of the road to a reckless minority.

[The full manifesto can be viewed by visiting www.iam.org.uk/manifesto]

How to save on fuel this [Easter]

Businesses will be mindful that the chancellor has announced an extra 3p rise in fuel duty over the coming months. The IAM has responded to the fuel hike by putting together some tips to help motorists reduce their fuel bills [as we enter the bank holiday season].

Many Bank Holiday round trips can be up to 500 miles long, the equivalent of driving from London to Strasbourg, but there are many opportunities to make each litre last longer with good journey planning and forward thinking.

IAM Chief Examiner, Peter Rodger, said: "A rise as little as 1p per litre will quickly add up. Simple measures such as looking well ahead and slowing down earlier instead of always using the brakes to slow down can make a real difference.

"A smoother driving style is the single best eco-driving tip we could offer. Good eco-driving starts with safer driving and anticipation."

In light of the fuel rise, businesses may want invest in some fuel saving training with IAM Fleet and Drive & Survive's *ecolution* which can teach you how to improve fuel efficiency by up to 25 per cent, as well as reducing vehicle repair and maintenance costs. More information on IAM Drive & Survive's *ecolution* training can be found on www.ecolution.uk.com

Other money saving tips from the IAM:

- Sticking to 70mph, instead of 80mph, can save around four pence per mile.
- A smooth driving style as opposed to an aggressive one has been estimated to save 15 per cent fuel consumption.
- An empty car roof box can increase fuel consumption by 20 per cent on a motorway – if it's not needed, don't take it.
- Correct tyre pressure reduces wear and helps fuel economy. Under-inflated tyres are unsafe, need replacing more often (an environmental problem in itself) and can increase fuel consumption by five per cent. Check the pressure is right and that they are damage-free.
- Remember to switch off the air con and heated windows when they aren't needed. Used together these can increase fuel consumption by 15 per cent.
- Take the unnecessary baggage out of your boot – the added weight will affect your fuel efficiency.

Worst Driver Award

Space permitting, I am planning to replace the Caption competition with awards for the worst drivers (not from an IAM Group as far as I am aware!) Thanks to Pete for these pictures.

Although this is not a caption competition, if you have an interesting or amusing caption that you would like published please email

roundabout.editor@m-a-m.org.uk.

We begin with 10th place:



IAM car safety for kids

[As we are now in the Easter holidays,] the IAM has issued advice to parents on how to keep their children safe on the road, both in the car and on the pavement.

Peter Rodger, IAM Chief Examiner, said: "The key to keeping your child safe on the road is vigilance and information. Knowing which seat to use and when to use it is just as important as knowing the right way to fit it.

"You should also lead by example, as children's behaviour is heavily influenced by their parents. Act responsibly when you drive, walk or cycle and your children will learn from your behaviour."

More IAM road safety advice for parents:

In the Car:

- Ideally a child under three should travel in the back and they must be in an appropriate child restraint, not an adult belt. Children under the age of 12 (or under 135cm tall) must use a child restraint if possible. If not, it's acceptable for an adult seat belt to be used instead.
- Children aged 14 or over must always use an adult seatbelt if available.
- Never put a rear facing baby seat in the front where there is an active passenger airbag.
- If an appropriate restraint or seat belt is in the front, but not the back, a child aged three to 11 years old must use that.
- Isofix seat mounts are the safest way to secure a baby or child seat in your car. Most seat manufacturers make products designed specifically for use with these super-strong mounting points, which are common in many modern cars, and very easy to use.
- Once it's in, grip the car seat and push it backwards and forwards - if it is fitted properly, the car should move and not the car seat.

On the Pavement:

- Don't push the buggy out first when checking if it's OK to cross the road.
- If your child is walking or running ahead of you on the pavement, never let them get further from you than they are from the road.

Child Safety Facts

- Around 550 children aged up to 19 years will lose their lives on Britain's roads this year.
- Five times as many children aged 5 to 14 die in a road accident than are killed by criminal assault.
- 10 per cent of the deaths of 5 to 9-year-old boys are in road crashes; 34 per cent of the deaths of 15 to 19-year-olds are on the roads, mostly in cars.

FURTHER NOTICES

- **Observers:** If you think you would like to be an observer and/or would like more information about observing please contact David Major, Chief Car Observer, by telephone on 01985 217050.
- **Email addresses:** Help the environment - if you have an email address but receive your newsletters by post please let the Editor, Luke Pickett, know your email address. You benefit from early receipt of Newsletters, early notice of special events, and we save on postage, time and effort, as well as using up fewer trees! A win-win situation.
- **Speakers:** If you know of someone who could give us an interesting talk, or have a suggestion for a talk, at our monthly meetings please advise the Events Coordinator, Helen Pickett.
- **Contact Details:** If you move house, or your email or telephone number changes, please inform Luke Pickett and Angela Summers so that you don't lose contact with us.
- **DriveCheck:** Remember that MAM is offering a FREE observed run for all potential new members so tell your friends now! For more information please contact David Major.
- **Website:** For the most up-to-date information, check out our website at www.m-a-m.org.uk

CONTACT US

07780 743555

www.m-a-m.org.uk

or:

Chairman: Paul Wilkins: contact Chris at group.secretary@m-a-m.org.uk

Secretary: Chris Tarbitten: group.secretary@m-a-m.org.uk

Treasurer: Graham Bennett: treasurer@m-a-m.org.uk

Librarian: Pat Ham: librarian@m-a-m.org.uk

Membership Secretary/Associates: Angela Summers: membership.officer@m-a-m.org.uk

Chief Car Observer: David Major: chief.car.observer@m-a-m.org.uk

Events Coordinator: Helen Pickett: events.coordinator@m-a-m.org.uk

Mini-Roundabout Newsletter Editor: Luke Pickett: roundabout.editor@m-a-m.org.uk

Webmaster: Luke Pickett: webmaster@m-a-m.org.uk

If you have any suggestions about this News Sheet, or any other aspect of our activities, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Disclaimer

Any opinions expressed in this or any other newsletter published by the Melksham and District Group of Advanced Motorists are those of an individual or the editor. They should not be taken to represent the views of the IAM, its officers or the Melksham and District Group Committee, unless made explicit. As such, no legal responsibility can be accepted for any statement. The articles are published in good faith. Members are requested to seek confirmation of event details before attending, since regrettably last minute changes to plans do occur.