

MINI **ROUNDABOUT** August 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 social evenings are held on the third Thursday of the month at the Riverside Club, Bath Road, Melksham, SN12 6LP unless otherwise advised, starting 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

August	NO SOCIAL EVENING DURING AUGUST
September 16th	Speed Limits? – Rodney Hart, Retired MAM Senior Observer
September 18th	Archery Taster Session, afternoon
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	Archery - Paul Wilkins (N.B. This is the <u>second</u> Thursday of the month)
January 20th	Sound Design – Archer Endrich
February 17th	TBC

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 social evenings, please contact Helen Pickett at events.coordinator@m-a-m.org.uk

New Look Website!!

Our website has been refreshed and updated! Please take a minute to check it out by visiting www.m-a-m.org.uk. If you have any comments on the new look, or if you have any interesting material you think could be published on the site, please contact Luke Pickett at webmaster@m-a-m.org.uk.

Remember that our website is the best place to find the most up-to-date information.

www.m-a-m.org.uk

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

Archery Taster Session – Saturday 18th September

Avonmead, Batheaston, Bath, afternoon session

We have organised an archery taster session for the afternoon of Saturday 18th September. All members and non-members of any age welcome. Cost: £15 per head for around two hours. Please bring cash payment with you on the day. If you would like to participate in this please contact Helen Pickett at events.coordinator@m-a-m.org.uk. You will be contacted individually confirming your place. This event will be followed by a presentation on archery by Paul Wilkins at our social evening on 9th December.

Future Events

We are looking at the following events as a possibility for the not-too-distant future:

- * Karting
- * 4x4 training
- * Skid Pan
- * Archery taster

We are also looking at the following trips as a possibility in the not-too-distant future:

- * Atwell-Wilson Motor Museum, Calne
- * Beaulieu Motor Museum
- * Haynes Motor Museum

If you would be interested in any of these activities please sign-up at Group social evenings or contact Helen at events.coordinator@m-a-m.org.uk

Britain's most expensive car wash

A former accountancy student and car enthusiast has turned his hand to luxury car washes for the super rich. Gurcharn Sahota charges luxury and supercar owners up to £7,200 per valet, which easily makes him Britain's priciest car wash. Sahota works from his parents' garage, which he has lined with special tiles that help to reflect small dirt particles on the cars. Notable tools of the trade include wax that costs £8,200 per tub and a £5,000 police microscope that can detect miniscule scratches. It takes Sahota 250 hours to clean each car, so the vehicles are often with him for up to a month. His top service involves polishing each part of the car five times. His company, called Elite Detailing, was launched five years ago and he has since cleaned all manner of Ferraris, Lamborghinis and McLarens - to name but a few. Clients have included Premiership footballers, famous actors and lawyers. Sahota became interested in the car valet world while he was at university, but it wasn't until he cleaned an Aston Martin DB9 for an Aston Martin dealer - free of charge - that he decided to set up his business. The dealer was so impressed with the finish that he passed Sahota's details on to Aston owners, and Elite Detailing was born.

[Article source: yahoo.com – thanks to Mike for pointing this out]

Worst Driver Award

6th place goes to...



EU Road Safety Programme a ‘missed opportunity’ for driver training

The IAM is disappointed that a new EU road safety initiative has failed to take driver training into consideration beyond the learner test.

The EU Road Safety Programme (2011-2020), launched on 20 July, makes no mention of further training for business drivers either.

Neil Greig, IAM Director of Policy and Research, said: “This is a missed opportunity to highlight the benefits of a lifelong learning approach to driving. There is convincing evidence that further training makes drivers safer, and could be relatively cost-effective compared to some of the other suggestions which involve massive changes to cars and roads.”

The IAM welcomes the new Europe-wide focus on motorcycle safety that the programme brings, but still has concerns about proposals for post-test probationary periods which have yet to prove any long term benefit.

Greig added: “A common education and training strategy for safer roads will go a long way towards reducing the number of crashes involving foreign drivers here in the UK. It is essential that training standards in the UK do not slip, and that the role of post-test and business driver training is recognised.”

More riders taking pleasure in our roads

An IAM poll has found that motorcycle use is on the rise, with more than 60 per cent of riders stating that their overall bike usage has gone up since last year.

The online poll found that 78 per cent of the 5,717 respondents owned both a motorbike and a car. The majority (88 per cent) use their bike for leisure at some point, with one third using the bike just for recreational riding.

Neil Greig, IAM Director of Policy and Research, said: “Most of this increase appears to be in riding for pleasure, so is unlikely to be a short-term, recession-linked trend: only a tiny proportion of bikers are using their machine exclusively for business or commuting.”

The poll also found that over 90 per cent of respondents felt that motorcyclists should be allowed in bus lanes in every town and city across the country.

Mr Greig added: “Feelings are running high on access to bus lanes for bikers after a successful experiment in London recently, so it comes as no surprise that there has been such positive feedback from the riders.

“A nationwide approach to consistent signposting and regulation would mean improved safety as bikers and the wider public would be more aware of the rules.”

The current state of our roads was also a key issue with respondents, with almost half believing that any available public money should be spent on better roads and infrastructure. Only 1.2 per cent cited safety cameras as the best use of public money.

Pedals and Pimms don't mix, says IAM

If you're planning to have a few drinks at a barbeque this summer don't cycle home, warns the IAM.

Although drink-driving is socially unacceptable, many people wouldn't think twice about cycling home after consuming more than the legal blood-alcohol limit for driving.

Neil Greig, IAM Director of Policy and Research said: "Cycling crashes are underreported, and we need more research into hospital-based records to see how big this problem really is. A lot of cyclists that fall off under the influence just go to A&E, meaning the police never record the incident.

"Many people will have a bit of a wobble on the way home, but while you may be of less risk to other road users than when in a car, you could easily fall into a dangerous situation or cause someone else to swerve and crash to avoid you. If your cycling does result in a collision you are likely to come off worse.

"It is often the case that people who have had a couple of extra drinks will be cycling home in the dark, increasing the danger involved."

Drink-cycling can also cost you financially. Anyone riding a cycle under the influence of drink (or drugs) to such an extent as to be incapable of having proper control of it on either a road or other public place, can be fined up to £1,000.

So if you're planning to use any public right-of-way with excessive levels of alcohol in your body this summer, then you are better off in a cab or getting a lift.

[Ed: A maximum fine of £500 can also be applied if you are caught cycling on the pavement]

More cyclists will lead to better awareness, says IAM

The IAM has welcomed the launch of Barclays Cycle Hire scheme, and hopes the influx of new riders will make drivers more aware of bicycles on London's roads.

Duncan Pickering, IAM Cycling Development Manager, said:

"Research shows that many drivers aren't looking to see cyclists, as they are just not as common as cars on the road. The introduction of easily accessible bikes throughout the city centre will no doubt tempt more would-be cyclists onto London's roads, be they commuters, tourists, or those simply wanting to give it a try.

"The IAM predicts that, with the critical mass of cyclists going up, drivers will be more aware and be looking out for people on bikes around town, hopefully leading to a more positive sharing of the road.

"Providing all parties behave courteously, and give each other the necessary space, the scheme will encourage more Londoners to take up cycling, and benefit from the health, economic, and environmental rewards it brings," added Mr Pickering.

For advice on how to use your cycle hire bike on the road more safely, the IAM's guide *How to be a better cyclist* is a good place to start, available at iam.org.uk.

[Ed: Do you think the Barclays Cycle Hire Scheme is a good idea? Will it catch on in other cities? Email your thoughts to roundabout.editor@m-a-m.org.uk]

Crossing case should serve as a reminder

Following an incident where a pedestrian was knocked down due to overgrown shrubs, the IAM has called for councils and motorists to play their part in preventing accidents caused by overgrown trees and hedges.

A little publicised legal decision last month [Yetkin v Mahmood and Another] has emphasised the responsibility of councils to keep foliage clear, maintaining good sightlines and road safety.

Views of a pedestrian crossing were obscured by foliage, and the claimant sued the driver and the London Borough of Newham as the highway authority.

IAM Chief Examiner Peter Rodger said: "At this time of year the issue is at its height, with road signs all over the UK being obscured by foliage, and little or no indication of any maintenance work being done.

"While the IAM would expect a driver to take account of the obstruction to their view, and encourage all road users to look for clues other than traffic markings, the council is legally obliged to keep signs and crossings well visible, and this case should serve as a reminder to both drivers and to local authorities."

[Ed: Wiltshire Council have a good scheme in operation to tackle these problems, as referred to in our recent presentation on Parish Stewards. If you have a concern about overgrown trees and hedges, dirty or vandalised signage, or any form of road defect you can report it to Clarence by phoning 0800 23 23 23 or emailing clarence@wiltshire.gov.uk. You will be given a defect number and can chase up the problem to see how it is being resolved if you wish]

Winter Resilience Review

An Independent Review of how our transport systems coped with the last two winters has recommended measures to get national Government, local councils and the public in England ready for the coming cold season.

The Review, commissioned by Transport Ministers and chaired by transport expert David Quarmby recommends in its Interim Report:

- that Government imports quarter of a million tonnes of road salt to help ensure we have enough salt to deal with a winter as bad as last year
- that all local authorities review and update their winter plans, including consulting fully on the networks to be treated, and considering whether less salt can be used while maintaining effective coverage
- that Government helps the public to help themselves by issuing a short, simple code on clearing snow and ice from pavements, to reassure and encourage them, and help guard against negligence claims.
- that properly coordinated research is needed to update various technical standards, so that local authorities have authoritative guidance for improving salt utilisation.

The Review's interim report makes 17 recommendations covering highway authorities' winter maintenance, the road salt supply chain, public expectations, weather forecasting and self-help by the public. It focuses particularly on the need to keep our road network moving in the event of snow and ice next winter.

Speaking about the Review, David Quarmby said:

“Last year, we just managed to keep traffic moving on the nation’s roads due to the concerted effort of local authorities, national Government and the road salt suppliers. But we came perilously close to running out of salt and many people found the winter months very difficult. We can’t know when such a severe winter will hit us again, but we can take steps as a nation, to ensure that when it does, we will cope better. This report highlights the short-term need for national Government and local councils to ensure that they have plans in place, and enough road salt, to deal with the possibility of another severe winter in 2010/11. Our Final Report in the autumn will deal with a longer term strategy for road salt, and report on the rail and aviation sectors”

The Review concludes that England could be up to half a million tonnes or more short of salt were next winter to have the same weather pattern as the last. It therefore recommends an import of 250,000 tonnes before the winter season starts, to be stored and managed by the Highways Agency on behalf of the government. This would be available to local highway authorities, at a premium price, both to reflect the costs of importing and storing it and to provide an incentive to authorities to build up their own stocks. At the end of December, salt usage and stocks should be reassessed, the latest weather forecasts reviewed and decisions made whether further additional strategic supplies are required, in addition to what the UK producers can supply.

The Review Panel was also concerned to hear that people were put off from tackling the snow and ice in front of their houses last winter because of apparent confusion over possible liability. David Quarmby said:

“People and local communities want to be able to take practical steps to clear snow and ice without fear of litigation. The confusion which arose last year was unhelpful. We are recommending a simple code of practice, to be drawn up by Government, distributed by local authorities and promoted to householders and businesses. This would set clear advice for self-help, and - if observed - guard the public against negligence claims.”

The Panel’s Final Report, covering the rail and aviation sectors, a longer term strategy for the road salt supply chain, and the economics of winter resilience will be published in the autumn.

[Ed: If you receive *Mini-Roundabout* electronically you can view the full report by clicking [here](#)]

IAM response to the *Winter Resilience Review*:

Neil Greig, IAM Director of Policy and research, said: “The IAM is very supportive of the proposed new code of practice to assist the public when snow clearing. Clarification on the right course of action in winter weather means people will be confident that, when they are clearing the snow outside their house, they are doing a good deed rather than exacerbating the problem. The code will help people to help themselves as well as their communities.

Mr Greig added: “Councils also have an important role to play in supporting local people by providing salt supplies, keeping grit bins topped up and making their information more accurate and timely.”

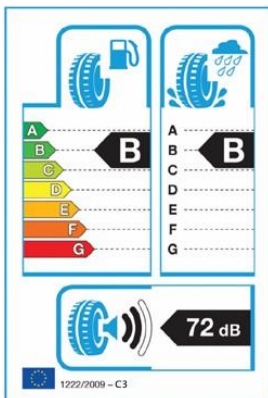
In its submission the IAM highlighted the need for better advice on winter driving but stopped short of any form of compulsory skid training which would be totally unfeasible. For IAM advice on dealing with snow and ice visit www.iam.org.uk/driving_tips.

Are you and your tyres ready for 2012?

[Article Source: autoblog.com – thanks to Mike for pointing this out]

The countdown to 2012 is well underway but who is actually ready for it? No, we're not talking Olympics but an event that will still affect many people in the UK, particularly those with a keen interest in rubber. From November 2012, a new law from the EU compels all new tyres sold to carry information that grades wet braking, rolling resistance and noise levels, using a picture system similar to that already used when buying electrical equipment such as fridges. Tyre manufacturers will have to ensure the information is supplied with every new tyre that leaves the factory while retailers will also have to make sure the customer is shown the information before sale.

So, why is this such a big deal? Well, with the new grading system comes higher standards that could mean many tyres currently on sale and at the bottom end of the market, particularly those from China, will become illegal overnight. Upgrading tyres will inevitably cost the consumer money initially although in the long run, cash might be saved.



Companies such as Continental and Bridgestone and retailers are already raising awareness but many consumers are unaware of the impact that different tyres can have on fuel bills as well as the environment. With the new labelling system it is expected that the use of more fuel efficient rubber will increase considerably; that in itself will be a major contributory factor in reducing Co2 emissions while lowering fuel consumption and costs will always bring a smile to the face of motorists.

But what do those in the industry think of the proposals? Mike Welch, the founder of online tyre retailer, BlackCircles.com, believes the new regulation will be 'extremely beneficial' for customers and should have been introduced a long time ago.

"As well as giving the customer more information – and therefore making them much more confident in their purchases – I believe the new labels will be extremely important in helping the EU in its quest to drastically lower Co2 emissions and noise levels. Once the customers are able to clearly see which tyres are the most eco-friendly, I feel that we'll see a steady increase in the standard and efficiency of tyres on the market. The tyres which do not grade well on important issues like wet grip, fuel efficiency and noise levels will be gradually phased out, thanks to a reduction in demand."

Daksh Gupta, chief executive of one of the country's biggest dealer networks, Marshall Motor Group, was also in favour.

"I think it will be good for consumers as it will give them a choice to make an educated decision on what they spend their money on as well as raise the awareness of why having high quality tyres is important. As a result of this consumer awareness I am sure it will help dealer tyre sales who are often perceived to be more expensive than independent tyre sales outlets."

That's not a view shared by all though. One used car dealer from the north-west was naturally concerned about profits.

"Used car buyers already want the very best when they come into the showroom," he commented. "These tyre regulations will mean they'll simply demand rubber with these markings on used cars. This squeezes profit, so we have to either put used car prices up to compensate or swallow the cost. The latter is hard to do - especially in these current times."

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 social evenings please advise the Events Coordinator, Helen Pickett.
- **Publicity:** If you are able to display posters or distribute a few leaflets around your local area please contact Luke Pickett to obtain some.
- **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

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

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