

MINI **ROUNDABOUT** July 2010

MELKSHAM

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

July 15th	Skittles Night, The Oliver Cromwell, Bromham, 7:30pm <i>(N.B. There will be no social evening at the Riverside Club on this date)</i>
July 22nd	Observer's Meeting for all current and prospective Observers The Bell on the Common, Broughton Gifford, 7:30pm
August	NO SOCIAL EVENING DURING AUGUST
September 16th	Speed Limits? – Rodney Hart, Retired MAM Senior Observer
September 18th TBC	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 <i>(N.B. This is the second Thursday of the month)</i>
January 20th	Sound Design – Archer Endrich

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

Skittles Night – 15th July

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

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

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

Observer's Meeting – 22nd July

The Bell on the Common, Broughton Gifford, SN12 8LX, 7:30pm

This meeting is for anyone who wishes to find out more about the work of our Observers. All current Observers are expected to attend along with any prospective Observers. If you would like to find out more about becoming an Observer please come to this meeting. Further information can be found at www.m-a-m.org.uk and clicking on 'Coaching' and then 'Training Dates'. Please contact David Major at chief.car.observer@m-a-m.org.uk or on 01985 217050 to confirm your attendance.

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

Archery Taster Session – 18th September, afternoon (TBC)

We are planning on organising an archery taster session on this date (Saturday). All members and non-members of any age welcome. Cost: £15 per head. If you are interested in this please contact Helen Pickett at events.coordinator@m-a-m.org.uk

IAM España 2010

The IAM have announced the IAM España 2010 escorted driving tour in conjunction with Travel Destinations - an opportunity to enjoy a fabulous Spanish driving holiday with other IAM members. Following the success of recent touring holidays to Ireland and Scandinavia the latest tour will take place in Spain from 5th – 14th September and a few places are still available for IAM members. Full details plus the tour itinerary can be found at www.traveldestinations.co.uk/category.html?id=7. This is a perfect opportunity to combine your love of driving with a superbly organised tour of Spain with Travel Destinations and the IAM.

Worst Driver Award

7th place goes to...
(Check out which way round the helmet is!)



Windscreen water infection risk

Windscreen wiper water may be the cause of 20% of cases of Legionnaires' Disease in England and Wales, the Health Protection Agency [HPA] says.

Stagnant, warm water is a breeding ground for the Legionella bacterium, which when inhaled causes pneumonia. Yet adding screenwash kills the bacteria and could save lives, the Agency advised. The finding came after researchers spotted that professional drivers are five times more likely to be infected.

Legionnaires' disease is fairly rare. Most cases are sporadic and a source of the infection is not found. The number of cases vary from year to year, but in 2009 there were 345 in England and Wales - although some infections were caught overseas. It mainly affects the over 50s and is generally more common in men. Early symptoms feel similar to flu with muscle aches, tiredness, headaches, dry cough and fever. It is fatal in around 10-15% of patients.

To work out why people who spend a long time driving were at higher risk of infection, the research team in the south-west branch of the HPA carried out a questionnaire of people infected. They found that those most at risk were those who drove or travelled in a van, those who drove through industrial areas, and those who spent a lot of time in the car or who often had the car window open. In all they found that the biggest risk was associated with not adding screenwash to windscreen wiper water, the European Journal of Epidemiology reports. In a pilot study carried out by the HPA, traces of Legionella were found in one in five cars that did not have screenwash, but in no cars that did.

Dr Isabel Oliver, regional director of the HPA South West, said more research was needed but people may want to check they have screenwash in their cars as they usually contain agents which would stop the growth of bacteria.

"It does not spread from person to person but is present in water environments and is breathed in when it gets into the air in fine particles or mist."

Professor Hugh Pennington, an expert in bacteriology, said the advice to add screenwash was very sound - especially as it would also lead to a cleaner windscreen.

"This is a bug which lives in the environment and will take advantage of warm water systems that are not cleaned out. Legionnaires' is rare but it kills people and it's an extremely unpleasant disease. If you can prevent it with something this simple then it's a no brainer really."

[Article Source: www.bbc.co.uk]



IAM supports motorbikes in London's bus lanes

The IAM, the UK's largest independent road safety charity, has welcomed TfL's proposal to open up bus lanes to motorcyclists, but urges riders to use the lanes with care.

Neil Greig, IAM Director of Policy and Research, said: "The IAM supports TfL's plans to open up bus lanes to motorbike riders as there is a growing proportion of riders a city, and many roads that struggle to cater for all traffic. Bikers are vulnerable and need all the help they can get. The growing lack of nationwide consistency over use of bus lanes needs to be addressed as drivers, riders and pedestrians need to know what to expect. The IAM would also urge motorcyclists to use the bus lanes sensibly, and to respect the buses, bicycles and other vehicles who are entitled to be there."

IAM comment on council funding of fixed speed cameras

Responding to Mike Penning's official announcement that no more money will be provided by the Government to councils for new fixed speed cameras, and that local authorities will be expected to fund cameras, Neil Greig, IAM Director of Policy and Research, said:

"The IAM is glad to see that the real role of fixed speed cameras has been made clear. The perception that speed cameras are solely revenue raisers has changed the whole debate on safety cameras, shifting the focus away from their undoubted success in saving lives where they have been successfully sited. The new coalition's policy will allow local councils and safety camera partnerships to start planning long-term solutions to their local problems. Fixed speed cameras have been, and should remain, an important component in the road safety tool kit for local Councils. The safety camera should not disappear overnight, but return to its role as a solution to speed related crashes until that particular road's problem can be engineered out permanently, for example by improving the layout."

Maintain road safety spending to save money

The IAM is urging the government to maintain spending on road safety following its first Budget. IAM research, released today, proves the value of setting casualty-reduction targets and funding them consistently. Since targets were first introduced in 1990, an estimated 31,000 lives have been saved, benefiting the UK economy by a massive £50bn.

Neil Greig, IAM Director of Policy and Research, said: "The impact of casualty reduction targets has been enormous. If we continue at our current rate of investment, annual road deaths in the UK could slip well below 2,000 by 2020 - a further saving of £4bn and 2,500 lives over the next decade. Punitive cuts in road safety budgets will jeopardize these huge financial and social gains.

"IAM research shows that continued investment in road safety over the next few years will produce substantial rates of return to the economy. Our message is simple: spending on road safety saves money. Fewer casualties mean reduced NHS bills, fewer people absent from work, less congestion and much lower costs associated with long-term injuries." The DfT has already announced a 27 per cent cut in road safety revenue funding and a £17.2m cut in capital grants for road safety as well as other cuts in major projects.

Mr Greig added: "Every death on UK roads costs society £1.68m. We need investment in safer drivers, safer cars and safer roads if we are to maintain current trends and make Britain's roads the safest in the world."

IAM cycle-hire tips for Londoners

The IAM is offering newcomers to city cycling advice on how to use the capital's roads safely ahead of the launch of the Barclays Cycle Hire scheme next month.

Sky-high fuel costs, global warming and congestion have led to more cyclists than ever on city roads. The new cycle scheme will bring even more new and inexperienced cyclists on to London's busy streets.

Last year 13 people died in cycling accidents in the capital, ten of whom were female - a disproportionate figure considering there are three times more male than female cyclists in London. A high number of these incidents result from collisions with lorries (source: CTC).

Duncan Pickering, IAM Cycling Development Manager said: "Cycling is an enjoyable and efficient way to get around big cities, and we expect a huge influx of riders in the coming months. Drivers and cyclists need to be aware of each other and of the need to give each other space."

The IAM proposes the following tips to get you started:

- **Prepare your bike:** Ensure the saddle height is adjusted and the gears and brakes work properly before you set off, and check lights where appropriate.
- **Know your route:** The best route for drivers is not necessarily the best route for cyclists; you may want to check your journey out before committing to it. Look for cycle guides and websites to find more cyclist-friendly routes.
- **Be seen:** Visibility is essential, so wear something bright or hi-viz and always use front and rear lights, not only when it's dark but whenever visibility is low, (dawn, dusk, rain, fog etc). Hi-viz gear won't be provided by cycle scheme operators, so bring your own. All bikes will, however, be fitted with automatic lights.
- **HGVs:** If you can avoid it, never cycle alongside an HGV or bus, especially on the near (left) side of it. Many HGV and bus drivers can't see a cyclist, even when they look in their mirrors - blind spots and gloomy areas can easily hide a cyclist on the left of a bus or lorry, especially when light levels are low.
- **Look behind:** Always look behind before signalling and committing to a manoeuvre. This 'lifesaver' check allows you to know what traffic is immediately behind, and making eye contact confirms that the motorist has seen you.
- **Wear a helmet:** Although not mandatory, wearing a helmet is a good idea. Helmets won't be provided so bring your own.

Mr Pickering added: "Cycling around London can be faster than driving but make safety your priority, not the journey time. Wait behind lorries and buses at traffic lights rather than going up the inside, and don't race to beat red lights. To get yourself fully up to scratch, consider further training. An hour or two with a professional instructor can give you the skills and confidence you need to tackle most roads and situations."

The IAM's new publication *How to be a better cyclist* is a comprehensive and accessible guide for cyclists of any level. It is available online at www.iam.org.uk.

Cuts must not halt drive to reduce road deaths, says IAM

The reduction in the number of people killed and seriously injured on our roads must not be compromised by anticipated cuts in government spending, said the IAM as the latest figures were released by the Department for Transport (DfT).

Neil Greig, the IAM's Policy and Research Director, said:

"The IAM is pleased to see the continued downward trend in road deaths in the UK. As ever there is no single factor that you can point to. We would argue that the focus on rural roads in the last two years has undoubtedly helped with rural road safety campaigns by the DfT and the police raising awareness that drivers are most at risk in the countryside.

"Two other factors to consider are that fewer youngsters are taking the test due to demographic trends and we are all driving safer cars as the old pre airbag, non crash tested bangers go off the road."

Mr Greig said that the IAM's main concern is that road safety is an easy cut in the light of the public sector spending problems. "We must maintain budgets if this downward trend is to continue and we are to make Britain's roads the safest in the world," he said.

Today's DfT figures show overall casualties down. The number of people killed in road accidents fell by 12 per cent from 2,538 in 2008 to 2,222 in 2009. In accidents reported to the police 26,096 people were killed or seriously injured in 2009, six per cent fewer than in 2008. There were just over 222,000 road casualties in Great Britain in 2009, four per cent less than in 2008.

"If the results continue to improve like this, we will be well below 2,000 fatalities by 2020," said Mr Greig.

Older driver refresher courses benefit all, says IAM

The IAM has welcomed the new RAC report on older drivers which finds that 84% of drivers aged 70 or over acknowledge the value of a refresher driving course.

Neil Greig, IAM Director of Policy and Research said: "With ever-growing numbers of older drivers looking to stay safe and maintain independence, it is encouraging to see that there is a high degree of support for refresher courses.

"Older drivers have most of their crashes on high speed roads, particularly on slip roads and at junctions and roundabouts. Updating their skills to deal with these hazards and helping them to stay mobile for as long as possible should be the key aim of refresher courses. The IAM provides a Drive Check 55 refresher course which specifically addresses these issues.

"The IAM does not support compulsory retesting or medicals as we believe they will force many perfectly safe drivers to give up driving too early. This loss of mobility makes them a far greater financial burden on society and less able to access services and support. GPs need more training and information to help them advise patients on giving up driving and refresher courses."

'Most dangerous' roads in Britain named by safety group

Half of all fatal road crashes occur on one-tenth of Britain's roads, according to the Road Safety Foundation charity. Its report, covering 28,000 miles of A-roads and motorways, says on average Scotland has the highest-risk highways, followed by parts of northern England. The most dangerous individual road was the A537 between Macclesfield, Cheshire, and Buxton, Derbyshire. The charity wants government spending to be targeted at improving safety on the most dangerous roads. Its report, entitled Saving Lives for Less, suggests the high cost of emergency services and hospitals could be avoided by spending small sums in accident blackspots.

The foundation is the British arm of the European Road Assessment Programme, the sister organisation of EuroNCAP, which measures car safety. It examined accident data relating to roads across Britain. Among its conclusions were:

- A third of all fatal and serious crashes happen at junctions
- Single roads carry six times the risk of motorways and twice that of dual carriageways
- One-in-four fatal or serious crashes on A-roads or motorways involves a motorcyclist
- There was a 5% reduction in the number of fatal crashes on such roads in the past three years
- West Midlands is the safest region

The most improved road was named as the A40 between Llandovery and Carmarthen.

Improved junctions and markings, along with resurfacing with high friction, anti-skid treatments, saw the number of serious accidents fall from 27 between 2003 and 2005 to seven in the following three years. Foundation director Dr Joanne Hill said such simple, well-planned engineering measures were relatively inexpensive. "Not only can Britain reduce road deaths and serious injuries but, by targeting a relatively small mileage of high-risk roads, we can do so with good economic returns. Too often we pay for emergency services, hospitals and care for the disabled rather than taking easy steps to put road design faults right."

A quarter of the road length in the survey was in Scotland, where one in nine fatal crashes occurred. On average ratings across all the regions, Scotland had the most dangerous motorway and A-road network, with 12% in the higher risk categories. But when it came to the highest risk individual roads, none of the Scottish ones made Britain's top 10.

The study, using figures from 2006 to 2008, divided the road network into "significant sections" of various lengths. It then calculated the risk by dividing the number of fatalities on a given section by the number of kilometres driven on it. The report said the A537 through the Peak District, known as the Cat and Fiddle, had severe bends, steep falls from the carriageway and was edged by dry-stone walls or rock face for almost all its length.

Fatal and serious collisions on the route - popular with tourists, goods vehicles and motorcyclists - rose from 15 in the three years to 2005 to 34 between 2006 and 2008. Most crashes happened at weekends during the summer in dry, daylight conditions. The report also names the highest-risk roads when crashes involving motorcyclists are excluded, with a stretch of the A18 in North East Lincolnshire topping the list. Most of these roads are single-carriageway A-roads, with nine of the 10 in northern England.

Top 10 most dangerous roads

1. A537 Macclesfield to Buxton - Cheshire/Derbyshire; 2. A5012 Pikehall to Matlock - Derbyshire; 3. A621 Baslow to Totley - Derbyshire/South Yorkshire; 4. A625 Calver to Sheffield - South Yorkshire; 5. A54 Congleton to Buxton - Derbyshire; 6. A581 Rufford to Chorley - Lancashire; 7. A5004 Whaley Bridge to Buxton - Derbyshire; 8. A675 Blackburn to Preston - Lancashire; 9. A61 Barnsley to Wakefield - South/West Yorkshire; 10. A285 Chichester to Petworth - West Sussex

[Article Source: bbc.co.uk]

Give drivers the skills to tackle Britain's most dangerous roads

The IAM has welcomed the publication of new crash risk tables for Britain's roads, part of the Road Safety Foundation annual survey.

Neil Greig, IAM Director of Policy and Research said: "Information on high-risk locations will help any driver stay safe on our most dangerous roads. Saving as many lives as possible within potentially limited budgets is going to become very important in the next few years, and the IAM supports using this information to target investment where it will bring most benefit.

"While the IAM supports continued investment in the roads with the highest risk, the long-term answer still lies in driver improvement. The first step should be to equip young drivers with experience of rural 'A' roads by including these in the driving test. Government support of a lifelong learning driver culture would make motorists better able to cope with dangerous roads."

Mr Greig added: "By being alert, processing the environmental information around you, recognising the hazards and taking safe driving seriously, anybody can handle even the most dangerous of Britain's roads."

Car club provision a road safety bonus, says IAM

The IAM has welcomed the announcement that an additional £40,000 in extra funding will be made available to support the development of car clubs.

Neil Greig, IAM Director of Policy and Research, said: "Car club schemes offer many in urban areas access to cars, providing opportunities for those who couldn't otherwise afford or find room for them, and they reduce congestion and free up parking for other residents.

"The environmental and congestion-busting benefits of car clubs are clear, but their frequent car renewal means better road safety as more drivers will be using newer, safer cars with the latest in modern crash protection and collision avoidance features.

"Car clubs, government and individuals should also be aware that this could mean an influx of inexperienced drivers on the roads. Driver training or drive-checks should be offered as part of the package to ensure car club members stay as safe as possible."

If you have any articles/news stories/pictures/personal experiences or anything motoring-related that you think could be published in *Mini-Roundabout*, please contact the editor, Luke Pickett at roundabout.editor@m-a-m.org.uk

Holiday drivers: know the rules, says IAM

The IAM has offered holiday drivers help and guidance to make road trips abroad safer and stress-free.

www.iam.org.uk/drivingabroad is a one-stop online resource covering traffic rules and regulations abroad, and could help motorists avoid unnecessary stress, fines and prosecution.

Peter Rodger, IAM Chief Examiner, said: “Roundabouts, unfamiliar road layouts and foreign signposting can make even the most experienced motorist anxious about driving abroad, but many drivers still leave British shores without a sound understanding of the traffic regulations of the country they’ll be driving in.

“Many countries’ rules and traffic regulations will be similar to UK conventions, but there will be some discrepancies. Rules of the road are often enforced with greater firmness abroad, and ignorance is no excuse – tourist or not, you will be prosecuted.”

The IAM urges drivers to make sure they understand all road signs before setting off, and to obey them at all times. Local rules, such as speed limits and priorities, also have to be observed.

Mr Rodger added: “Most signs will be recognisable to you, and the meaning of unfamiliar signs should still be fairly obvious. Remember the general rule: triangles warn, circles prohibit and rectangles inform.”

If you’re driving your own car abroad:

- Do not drive too far without a break - tiredness can kill. Take a break every two hours and, if possible, change drivers regularly
- Plan your route and make sure you have an up-to-date map, even if using a satnav
- Be aware that overtaking is a difficult and potentially dangerous manoeuvre, and driving a right-hand drive car on the “other” side of the road means you are not in the best position to see ahead. Always remember, the decision to overtake is yours – do not rely on the judgement of the passenger in the front seat
- Make sure that the car you are driving is roadworthy and, if it’s your own car, make sure your headlights have been properly adjusted for the side of the road you’re driving on. You may have to take the car into the dealer for this
- Insurance: most policies now include cover in Europe for a limited time but you should check your policy details and let your insurance company know where and when you will be travelling. Make sure you have breakdown cover, too, so that you know you will be able to get home in the event of a problem

If you’re hiring a car abroad:

- If you are used to an automatic but hiring a manual, be aware that it can be difficult to adapt to changing gear. You will need to get used to using the “wrong” hand while driving on the “other” side of the road
- Check the car very carefully at the depot before signing anything, including the windscreen. If you are not covered for windscreen and tyre damage you may be billed for a new screen. Additional unauthorised payments are one of the biggest causes of complaint with car hire

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.

Disclaimer

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