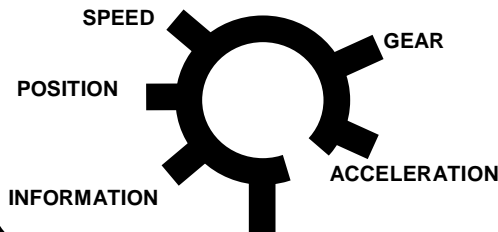


MINI

November 2010

ROUNDABOUT

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

November 18th	Sharing the Road with Horses – Julie Garbutt, British Horse Society
December 9th	Archery - Paul Wilkins (N.B. This is the second Thursday of the month)
January 20th	Sound Design – Archer Endrich
February 17th	Hugh Grainger-Allen, Assistant Chief Driving Examiner, DSA
March 17th	TBC
April 21st	Sandra Brandon, Vehicle and Operator Services Agency (VOSA)

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

DriveTech Ltd. Castle Combe

We are looking at the following events as a possibility for 2011:

- Karting (Private event £72pp, Public event £40pp)
- 4x4 training (Private event £130pp, Public event £110pp)
- Skid Pan (£80pp)

We have had very little response regarding these events. 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. We would particularly like your thoughts on the Karting and 4x4: would you prefer a private event where we have sole use of the facilities, or a public event where we join other members of the public? If we do not receive any further responses we will not book any of these events.

Worst Driver Award

3rd place goes to...



More number plates...

Thanks to Pete, Paul and Angela for these:

C2 ABO

C7 ABO

P1ERS

D0D6Y

LE55 TAX

Owned by the same family as C2 ABO

Seen on a Vauxhall Vectra, so perhaps not *the* Piers!

Seen on a Porche!

Seen on a Bentley or Rolls Royce

Skill for Life discount

For a limited time only, the *Skill for Life* product is available with a 10% discount, now costing £125 instead of £139. You can take advantage of this by going to www.iam.org.uk/gift or calling 020 8996 9600. You must purchase the 'gift' option to obtain the discount but you can still buy this for yourself, or as a gift for someone else. Perhaps you know the ideal person who would appreciate taking the *Skill for Life* course? This offer is only available between now and Christmas so act quickly to obtain the discounted rate. The price will go back up to £139 after Christmas.

Archery Taster Session – 16th October

A good time was had by all at the Archery Taster Session in Batheaston. Not a single person missed the target all afternoon! The success of this event has led Paul Wilkins to look at running another taster session in spring 2011. There have also been some requests from those who attended in October for beginner's lessons, which will also be set up in the spring for anyone who is interested. Paul will be speaking about Archery and Bath Archers at our December social evening so if you would like more information on this please come along.



Committee News

If you have any comments on the Committee's News then please contact Luke Pickett in the first instance, at roundabout.editor@m-a-m.org.uk.

Important Announcement

Our Chairman, Paul Wilkins, will be stepping down from his position at the next AGM in May 2011, after 5 years' service in this role. Also, due to circumstances beyond his control, our Treasurer, Graham Bennett, has made the difficult decision to step down with immediate effect. Therefore we are currently looking for a new:

Chairman with effect from 19th May 2011

Treasurer with immediate effect

If we cannot fill these positions by the AGM on 19th May 2011 **the Group WILL fold**: it is a legal requirement that we have both of these Officers in place for the Group to be able to function. If you think you would be able to help out in either of these roles please contact Luke Pickett in the first instance, at roundabout.editor@m-a-m.org.uk, or speak to a Committee Member at a Group Social Evening. Graham would particularly like someone to take over the Treasurer's role as a matter of urgency. Thank you.

Library

Pat will be bringing the Group's Scrapbook and Puzzle to the November Social Evening, so maybe someone would like to loan them over the Christmas period whilst munching away on a mince pie!

On the Library table at the November Social Evening will also be eight donated items. Before Pat adds and catalogues them to the Library, she would appreciate your opinions. Please can you take time to come to the Library table to look at these items? Thanks

All items loaned in November will be due on 17th February.

The library is available at all Group Social Evenings unless otherwise advised. Items are free to take home and are loaned for a month at a time. Extensions are available and you can take as many items as you like. A Library Catalogue is available on our website. If you would like to reserve a particular item please contact Pat at librarian@m-a-m.org.uk.

Membership

We currently have 61 full members and 6 associates. We have had no new associates join us this month. Angela is chasing various companies to try and get more members but there is nothing better than word of mouth – tell your family and friends about us! Remember we are offering a FREE Observed run for all new potential members. Contact Angela at membership.officer@m-a-m.org.uk or on 07780 743555 to take advantage.

Publicity

Luke Pickett gave a presentation to the Wessex MG Club on 25th October. This went down very well and we are waiting to see if we attract any new members out of this.

If you are able to distribute any leaflets or posters for us please contact Luke Pickett at roundabout.editor@m-a-m.org.uk

Observers

We currently have 12 Observers, of whom 5 are Senior Observers. If you would like to know more about becoming an Observer please contact David Major at chief.car.observer@m-a-m.org.uk

Social Evenings

With a membership pushing 70 strong, it is disappointing that we only get a core of around 15 people attending our Social Evenings. Please make an effort to attend these events if you can. Guests are always welcome. Helen Pickett works hard to provide speakers for the evening. If you would prefer to see alternative speakers, Helen is always willing to hear your suggestions. Email her at events.coordinator@m-a-m.org.uk

Action needed to protect road safety in face of cuts

The IAM says that spending cuts to transport and police budgets could have a disproportionate effect on road safety, and urges all public bodies involved in reducing deaths on our roads to continue to make road safety their top priority.

Neil Greig, the IAM's Policy and Research Director, said: "It was great to see a downward trend in road deaths in recent DfT figures, and therefore it's hard to accept anything that might threaten progress achieved so far. Budget cuts may be necessary but their cumulative effect on some of the main partners in road safety, such as the emergency services and local highway authorities, may make it more difficult to sustain past successes. It would be an awful legacy if budget cuts slowed or reversed the trend to less death and injury on the road. The important task now is to compensate for these cuts. Public bodies have more freedom than ever on where to spend their resources and I urge them not to forget the long-term benefits from investing in better education, as well as training programmes and safer infrastructure. As the UK's largest independent road safety charity we believe that the third sector has much to offer and we will be seeking new partnerships to maintain the momentum for safer roads in the UK."

Autumn driving: don't 'leaf' anything to chance, says IAM

The IAM has called for drivers to take extra care in the riskier driving conditions of autumn.

IAM Chief Examiner Peter Rodger said: "Autumn may be a beautiful time for a drive out to the country, but it carries its own risks. Hitting a patch of wet leaves can be as dangerous as running into standing water, when lower grip can reduce braking and steering. Piles of leaves could be obscuring a pot hole, and with road surface conditions in a poor state after last winter, this is a distinct possibility."

The change in the seasons can also take its toll on your car. Mr Rodger offers some simple tips on maintaining your car during this period:

- Clear out plenum chambers - the tray-like area under the bonnet, below the windscreen - as they can fill up with water when they get blocked with leaves. This water can seep into the car's electrics, causing expensive and potentially dangerous damage
- In cold weather, clear windscreens of condensation or ice before setting off. Always give yourself extra time, to ensure visibility is at an optimum before starting your journey
- Make sure your wiper blades are in good condition. If they squeak as they wipe, they probably need replacing, and always make sure they are turned off before starting the ignition to save the blades and the risk of a blown motor fuse when the first frost hits
- Autumn can also take its toll on car batteries, but some basic maintenance can help to prolong their life. Keep the top of the battery clean and dry and make sure the terminals are tight and free from corrosion. And ensure that the battery itself is mounted securely in its tray. If a battery is more than three-years old, check it now; you might save yourself many a frustrating start to a morning

Mr Rodger continued: "This is also a time of greater activity in the animal world; it's mating season for deer, and smaller animals will be on the hunt to gather food for the winter hibernation period. If you live in an area where wildlife roam, take extra care, and remember that deer tend to move in groups; if one runs out look for others doing the same and reduce your speed in readiness."

Prepare your car for cold-snap

The IAM is offering drivers tips on preparing their cars for winter, [as cold weather beings to set in].

Peter Rodger, IAM Chief Examiner said: “Now is the time to give your car a health-check before winter conditions take their toll. Bad weather can strike quickly, and more severely than you expect, so it’s really important to get your car ready to face the elements before they deteriorate.”

Mr Rodger suggests some easy tips to prepare your car for winter:

1. In a British winter you are more likely to encounter wind and rain so make sure your windscreen wipers are in good condition and you clean the inside of the windscreen regularly
2. Do a proper winter check of your vehicle particularly the tyres, top up your washer fluid and make sure your old ice scraper and cans of de-icer are up to the job
3. The legal minimum for tyre tread in the UK is 1.6mm, but for optimum safety start looking for replacements if the depth is below 3mm. Tyres with less than 1mm of tread depth have one third the braking friction of one at the bare legal min of 1.6mm, and below 3mm the tyres skid resistance begins to decline rapidly
4. Check all lights. While someone observes the lights around the car, switch on each light one-by-one: headlights, sidelights, fog lights, indicators, brake lights, reversing lights, hazard warning lights and number plate lights. If alone, park by a reflective surface such as a garage door, illuminate all lights in sequence and look for the reflections
5. Pack an emergency kit in the boot. The IAM recommends a warm coat and a high visibility jacket, some food and water, a good pair of boots, de-icer and scraper, a torch, a spade and a mobile phone with a well-charged battery. It’s also a good idea to programme your breakdown provider’s emergency number, and your own customer reference number into your phone

Mr Rodger continued: “A survey [by the RAC] has found that ten out of 11 rural councils still have not managed to complete all the necessary road repairs after last winter’s severe weather, and it is likely that budget cuts will make things worse. If this problem is reflected across the country, having a well-maintained car, with particular attention to your tyres, is going to be of massive importance.”



Get a grip, says IAM

The IAM urges drivers to ensure their tyres are in good condition, rather than wait until surface water, frost or snow turns the road under their wheels into a skid pan.

As tyres have only the area of the sole of a shoe in touch with the road at any one time, it's a safety 'no-brainer' to keep them in top condition, and extra care is needed at this time of the year when sudden heavy showers can profoundly affect tyre performance. More roads will also be worn out due to cut-backs on resurfacing, and this combination with worn out tyres is potentially lethal.

Peter Rodger, IAM Chief Examiner, said: "Under-inflation causes excessive tyre-wear, with every ten per cent under the recommended optimum decreasing tyre life by ten percent.

"Vehicles of drivers found to be at fault in high-speed accidents were found to be six times more likely to have worn tyres than those of the other drivers involved*. Keeping your tyres maintained is an important part of car-care, not only for safety but also for fuel-economy; under-inflated tyres will increase fuel consumption."

Mr Rodger gives some simple tips on checking the condition of your tyres:

- Check the general state of the tyre for cuts and bumps on the tyre wall and uneven wear
- Check that your tyres are correctly inflated (ideally when they're cold) – you can find the recommended pressure listed in the car's handbook, or on the manufacturers plate, fitted in many cars
- The legal minimum for tyre tread in the UK is 1.6mm, but for optimum safety you are advised to start looking for replacements if the depth is below 3mm. Tyres with less than 1mm of tread depth have one third the braking friction of one at the bare legal min of 1.6mm, and below 3mm the tyres skid resistance begins to decline rapidly

Just because tyres are legal, they still may not be at an optimum for braking safely in all conditions. When there is a 2mm film of water on the road, even 2mm of tread may give no better stopping friction than a bald tyre. Have a quick look over your car once a week to notice any changes, and get your tyres checked by an expert if you are unsure.



Watch out, there's a biker about!

The IAM supports TfL's advertising campaign aimed at improving drivers' awareness of motorcyclists in bus lanes during the extended 18-month trial.

The hard-hitting radio advert reminds drivers that motorcyclists are harder to spot than buses and asks drivers to look out for them, particularly when turning across bus lanes. DfT 2009 figures show once again that 'Failed to look properly' is the most common explanation for all accidents reported to police, accounting for 38 per cent, and this problem is especially bad for smaller vehicles.

Dr Graham Hole, Cognitive Psychologist at the University of Sussex said: "Research shows that drivers are less likely to notice vehicles in positions where they don't expect to see them. Motorcycles in bus lanes will be a prime candidate for this problem.

"Publically promoting the trial will help this problem a lot by increasing drivers' awareness, and as drivers get used to this new arrangement checking their nearside - left-hand - mirrors will hopefully become the rule rather than the exception."

The new advert is part of a package of measures TfL and the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) have introduced to tackle an increase in the rate of motorcyclist-car collisions that were identified by the previous Motorcycles in Bus Lanes Trial.

Peter Rodger, IAM Chief Examiner said: "We would like to emphasise Dr Hole's comments. It will take time for motorists to get used to looking for motorcyclists in bus lanes. Motorcyclists using bus lanes are advised to assess individual vehicles in the ordinary lane - on their right - as they approach junctions on the left, to make sure that they are not going to turn left across their path, as well as taking the usual care with vehicles emerging from side roads.

"In time drivers will get more used to looking for both pedal and motorcycles in bus lanes, and sharing the road at junctions."

To increase confidence and awareness on the roads, the IAM offers training courses for motorcyclists of all levels of experience, and with any size of bike.



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

CONTACT US

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www.m-a-m.org.uk

or:

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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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