

MINI ROUNDABOUT

October 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

October 16 th	Archery Taster Session, Batheaston, 1:30pm (see page 2)
October 21 st	Life as a Coach Driver – Jon Shobbrook from Beeline Coaches
November 18 th	Sharing the Road with Horses – Julie Garbutt, British Horse Society
December 9 th	Archery - Paul Wilkins (N.B. This is the second Thursday of the month)
January 20 th	Sound Design – Archer Endrich
February 17 th	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

CONGRATULATIONS

on passing the Advanced Driving Test

Associate
Alan Horner

Observer
Angela Summers

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 16th October

Bath Archers, London Road West, Batheaston, BA1 7DD, 1:30pm

Please note the change of date for the archery taster session, now booked for the afternoon of Saturday 16th October. All members and non-members age 10 upwards welcome. Cost: £15 per head for around two to three 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.

[Ed: For those who receive *Mini-Roundabout* via post, this notice will be irrelevant, so why not let us have your email address? Send it to roundabout.editor@m-a-m.org.uk]

Future Events

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

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

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. 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?

Worst Driver Award

4th place goes to...



Committee News

I am introducing a new section to *Mini-Roundabout*, which will aim to provide members with up-to-date information regarding what is going on behind the scenes at Melksham Advanced Motorists. Depending on the relevant news this page may, or may not, appear every month. If you have any comments on the Committee's News then please contact myself in the first instance, at roundabout.editor@m-a-m.org.uk. Many thanks.

Luke Pickett

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. We would like to thank Paul and Graham for their contribution to the Group. 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.

Membership

We currently have 62 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.

Observers

We currently have 12 Observers, of whom 5 are Senior Observers. David Major is busy attending various training sessions in the area, together with IAM Staff Examiner, Andy Paulton. The aim is to ensure that all Observers in the area are Observing to the same standard. David reports that training events are going very well.

Library

If you should have the book *Illustrated History of Automobiles* please could you let me know, either at a Group Social Evening, by phone (number on date label in book) or by email at librarian@m-a-m.org.uk? There is not a problem with this book, I'm just checking something! Thanks. Pat

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. 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.

Publicity

Luke Pickett will be giving a presentation to the Wessex MG Club on 25th October. Hopefully we might get some new members out of this.

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. Sometimes it is less than this. Numbers seem to be on the decline too. Please make an effort to attend these events if you can. Guests are always welcome

Independent driving is a welcome step forward, says IAM

The IAM supports the DSA ending publication of driving test routes in favour of 'independent driving' from October 4th.

Peter Rodger, IAM Chief Examiner, said: "Making the test more true to life is a definite step forward - the more realistic the examination process the better. All new drivers have to learn that multi tasking - controlling the car, looking out for hazards and planning ahead while navigating - is an integral part of day-to-day driving.

"Driving instructors will no doubt learn the routes over time, and use them when teaching, but there is at least some reflection of reality in that most of us drive familiar routes most of the time."

After a positive start, the IAM feel that the next step in the refinement of the driving test should be dealing with the ever-present threat of rural roads. Mr Rodger continues: "Our own research has shown that two-thirds of fatal accidents in England happen on rural roads, and this figure rises to three-quarters for Scotland and Wales.

"At present rural roads are not a compulsory element of the test, and we feel that considering the size of the problem it is an area that should be the next focus for continuous improvement. Speeds are higher on rural roads and they are often narrower and unlit at night, so a very different experience for those who have only ever travelled in an urban environment."

The IAM commends the DSA for making such positive moves so far, but encourages the road safety community as a whole to focus on improving the experience of young drivers, either through the basic test, or in the form of post-test training.

Cross border enforcement must be fair, says IAM

The IAM welcomes increased cross border enforcement as it will give drivers travelling abroad the motivation to drive carefully and research the rules applicable to the country they are in: drink-drive laws in particular can vary widely.

Neil Greig, Director of Policy and Research said: "However our major concern would be that any process developed is fair. Legislation for harmonising driving disqualifications is well ahead of a much needed convention laying down basic legal rights in a foreign court – for example, the right to have an English speaking lawyer, and there are concerns across Europe that many foreign visitors don't get a fair trial and many are forced to plead guilty simply because the court procedures make that the easiest option."

"With [recent] figures suggesting 25,000 tourists die on the roads across the world every year* getting different legal systems to talk to each other can make a very useful contribution to reducing avoidable deaths."

* FIA Foundation

Drivers are speeding involuntarily, says IAM poll

An IAM poll has found that the majority of drivers want to comply with the speed limit, but find it difficult.

Nearly 90 per cent of the 3,000 respondents to the online poll said they aim to comply with the speed limit but 60 per cent admitted that they found it difficult to keep within the limit.

Neil Greig, IAM Director of Policy and Research said: "It's good to know most people want to stay within the law when it comes to speeding, but too many seem to find it challenging. The results suggest that people are aware of the limit and don't want to break it, but temptation and pressure from other traffic may push them to go faster."

The most popular factor leading respondents to speed was disagreement with imposed limits on certain roads (57 per cent of respondents who admit to speeding), while police presence was the most effective deterrent, with 40 per cent of speeders claiming to be put off. Only ten per cent cited safety cameras as the biggest deterrent.

"There is a discrepancy between drivers' perception of the correct speed and the posted limits imposed by authorities. Further training helps improve driver perception and teaches motorists about appropriate speeds, but the government should also ensure the current review of speed limits results in roads visually fitting their limit - if we can get the limits right it is clear that many more drivers will stick to them," added Mr Greig.

"The poll confirms the view of road safety professionals: it's vital that imminent public spending cuts don't compromise high profile road policing."

The poll also found that seven per cent of respondents "don't even think about" whether they are breaking the limit, while conscience deters 17 per cent from speeding.

The 3,052 respondents to the poll (18 August – 18 September) were made up of IAM members, non-members and associate members

When asked on what type of road they [would] be most likely to speed, 58 per cent of respondents said they would be most likely [to] speed on motorways, 20 per cent on rural roads, 4 per cent in towns, and 18 per cent would not speed regardless of the road.

[Ed: Following our September Group Social Evening lead by Rodney Hart, do you have any views on speed limits that you would like to share? If so, contact Luke at roundabout.editor@m-a-m.org.uk]

IAM supports plan to scrap M4 bus lane

Neil Greig, IAM Director of Policy and Research said: "The IAM has today welcomed the trial suspension of the infamous M4 bus lane. With road capacity at a premium an 'empty' lane on such a busy motorway was always going to be deeply unpopular. The key failing of the M4 bus lane was always that there were no obvious links to the bus services available. Drivers did not know where to park-and-ride so just had to sit in the queues.

"However, no bus lanes should be removed without a full review of their congestion busting potential or the overall safety of drivers on the route. The M4 bus lane has worked well from a safety perspective so its replacement must be closely monitored in the months ahead."

Regular review is essential - if more people are held up in the queues than benefit from faster bus journeys, bus lanes should be considered for removal or more properly integrated alternatives provided. Bus - based park-and-ride schemes linked to a network of bus lanes can work if they are easy to access and deliver a real benefit in time and cost savings.

Autumn, a dangerous time for moped riders, says IAM

The IAM is warning young riders to take extra care at this time of year, with research* showing that autumn sees the largest proportion of casualties involving teenage moped riders.

Peter Rodger, IAM's Chief Examiner said: "While autumn is the worst time for moped rider casualties, it doesn't seem this is down to deterioration in weather conditions. Two-thirds of KSI (killed or seriously injured) incidents happen in daylight and when it is dry and fine."

It is possible that the peak at this time is related to the fact that 16-year-olds may be going on to college, or finishing school and buying a moped to get to and from work. This means a rise in new and inexperienced riders out on the road in September. 57 per cent of those injured on small motorcycles are under the age of 18*¹.

"Two-thirds of teenage moped casualties occur at or near a junction, and nearly all involve another vehicle. The case of the 'driver looked – but – failed – to – see' accident is all too common, but by making themselves more conspicuous to other road users, and by developing their riding through further training, teenage moped riders could greatly improve their chances on the roads."

The IAM offers the following tips on how to be more visible to other traffic:

- Wear high-visibility gear. A solid colour, as opposed to broken up shapes makes you much more visible as a human
- If filtering, ride in the middle of the available space - don't hide next to traffic
- If they're not automatic, make sure you have your headlights on
- Don't follow too close to the vehicle in front - it hides you from other traffic
- Ride two-thirds of the way into the lane - it's where a driver would sit, so it's where other drivers will look

To improve confidence on the roads, as well as help young riders to gain a greater sense of awareness as to where the threats come from, further training could prove incredibly valuable.

A new product aimed at increasing the confidence and experience of riders of scooters, mopeds and motorcycles under 125cc has this month been introduced by the IAM. *Road Rider Plus* is available from Friday 1 October. The three hour module is aimed at riders who have gained their CBT, but haven't yet got as far as their test. *Road Rider Plus* will give a clear indication of skills and abilities, together with recommendations for any areas that require a little more attention and fine-tuning.

To book a *Road Rider Plus* session call 0845 126 8600 or click www.iam.org.uk/rfp

* IAM report: 16 - the dangerous age for moped riders

*¹ Reported Road Casualties Great Britain 2009: Annual Report

New driver restrictions 'would save lives'

[Article Source: bbc.co.uk]

Newly qualified young drivers should be banned from night-time motoring and carrying passengers of a similar age, Cardiff University researchers say. They said such "graduated driver licensing" for those aged 17-19 could save more than 200 lives and result in 1,700 fewer serious injuries each year. Similar schemes already exist in New Zealand, Australia and parts of the US. But motoring organisations say the limits - which could last up to two years - would be difficult to enforce.

Meanwhile, the Tune into Traffic campaign group has highlighted the dangers of listening to music on MP3 players and iPods while driving and walking. The research will be presented at the World Safety Conference, which will hear from other experts on how road safety could be improved. While road deaths have now fallen to an all-time low, 2,222 people still died on the roads last year. Experts at the London conference will argue this figure can be reduced even lower with more restrictions and greater awareness of risks.

The Cardiff University study was compiled after analysing road accident data from 2000 to 2007. Research suggests one in five new drivers crashes within the first six months. The Cardiff team says that by targeting them with graduated driver licensing, many accidents might be avoided. Cutting the UK's accident rate would also save the economy £890m, the team estimates. Dr Sarah Jones, who led the research, said: "Graduated driver licensing works in other countries and there's no good reason why it wouldn't work here." She said restrictions on new drivers could be in force for as long as two years and could also include a total ban on alcohol. She said a debate would have to be had over whether to limit the restrictions just to young drivers or all new drivers.

But the head of road safety at the AA, Andrew Howard, suggested while there would be benefits to graduated driver licensing, they could be outweighed by the disadvantages. He said it could penalise those who work at night and need to drive, while police may struggle to crack down on those who flout the rules. "It would give totally the wrong signals to introduce new laws aimed at young people and then not enforce them - many would feel that all motoring laws could be broken," he added. A spokeswoman for the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents also cast doubt over whether the scheme could be properly enforced. She said she wanted to see more evidence about how it would work in the UK, adding that improving education and awareness with further training for new drivers might be more beneficial.

University of London experts will also put the case for more 20mph zones, arguing it could help reduce injuries - particularly in deprived areas. Their research will show that those in deprived areas are twice as likely to be killed or injured than those in affluent areas.

The Department for Transport said most new drivers wanted to be responsible, but a small minority put themselves and others at risk. It said a new independent driving element would be added to the current test, allowing candidates to demonstrate their ability to be safe in more realistic situations. A spokesman said: "We are considering what other steps we can take to improve safety for new drivers. In doing so, we need to ensure we do not unfairly penalise responsible young people who rely on driving to get to work or college."

Tune into Traffic will stress the dangers of listening to music while driving and walking. Tune into Traffic's Manpreet Darroch, who has helped produce an advert warning about the risks of being distracted by music, said: "This is of particular importance as the usage of iPods and MP3 players has significantly increased and young people's lives are being destroyed unnecessarily."

Get on your bike to beat the strike, with the IAM

The IAM are encouraging commuters in the city to turn to cycling as an alternative to taking public transport.

Travel chaos reigned supreme on 4 October 2010 with only the Waterloo & City line running a 'good service' at lunchtime. These problems are causing commuters to look for other options. With heavy traffic and the subsequent congestion charges still in place, taking the car is not going to be a viable option for most.

On the day of the last strikes, 7 September 2010, thousands of extra cycle hire members used the scheme to get around, making a record 24,500 journeys between them. This represents a 32 per cent increase on a normal day's usage.

Duncan Pickering, the IAM's Cycling Development Manager said: "On days like today cycling is going to be the most efficient way to get around the city. This is now a viable option since the launch of the Barclays' Cycle Hire Scheme where bicycles are readily available, but not everybody will feel confident taking on London's busy roads.

"To gain confidence in cycling around London in the event of future disruptions to the travel network, enrolling for training now will mean you are prepared. Not only this but cycling can ease your moral conscience by being kinder to the environment, and has the obvious benefits to your own health and fitness."

The IAM provides cycle training to all standards of cyclists, from beginners setting out on the roads for the first time to those wishing to make their commute more enjoyable. *How to be a better cyclist*, the IAM's comprehensive guide to becoming a better, safer and more confident cyclist, is ideal if you don't have time for your employees to be out on the road for training.

For more information please visit the website at: www.iam.org.uk/cycling

"School run" parents get a seasonal reminder

The IAM is asking drivers to take extra care when making the daily commute or school run, in light of International Walk to School Month. Neil Greig, IAM Director of Policy and Research said: "Hopefully more children and parents will be out-and-about in response to October's International Walk to School Month, but this means that drivers need to take extra care. Children won't always be paying attention and you should allow more space to compensate for this fact. It's also good to leave the house earlier so you're not in a hurry. Don't let the fact you're running late compromise your concentration and with that, the safety of other road users. With increasingly darker evenings and mornings, and worsening weather conditions, visibility will be poorer, and pedestrians will be rushing to their destinations."

Parents should make the most of this month to ensure their children know how to use the roads safely. A 12-year-old is three times more likely to be killed or maimed while walking to school than a 10-year-old, reflecting the increased independence of children travelling to secondary school. By making the most of teaching them how to get to school safely while they are younger, they will be better prepared when it comes to having to do the journey on their own.

Mr Greig continues: "Currently 43 per cent of children are driven to school by car, despite the fact that the majority of primary school pupils live within a mile and a half of their school. Any initiative that gets children out of the car and walking is good for their health, the environment, and for decreasing congestion, but it has to be done safely."

UK tops the EU road safety league

With 2009 fatality figures showing the UK to be the safest country in Europe, the IAM encourage[s] the whole of the continent to sustain the efforts made so far, in celebration of the 3rd European Road Safety Day.

Neil Greig, IAM Director of Policy and Research said: “On European Road Safety Day it is lovely to be sitting in the position we’re in. However, the main objective now is to keep up the progress we have already made, and continue this strong trend in the reduction of road deaths.

“We fully support the European Commission’s Road Safety Action Plan, and are excited by the challenge of helping to halve road deaths in the by EU by 2020. We especially applaud the target to promote continuous post-licence training for non-professional drivers, something we started, and have championed in the UK for over 50 years.”

In January 2010, the IAM released their report ‘Older Drivers - Safe or Unsafe?’ which highlights the need identified by the European Commission to maintain older people’s aptitude for driving, as a result of an ageing European population. Mr Greig continues: “Our report found that in the next 20 years, the number of male drivers over 70 will double, and that of female drivers treble. Post-licence training needs to be encouraged across the board, from increasing the experience of new drivers, to keeping older drivers independent and on the road.”

IAM Drive & Survive voted ‘Driver Training Company of the Year’

IAM Drive & Survive – one of the UK’s leading driver training companies - has won the prestigious ‘Driver Training Company of the Year’, presented at the GreenFleet Awards 2010 on 7th October.

The event, held at the Emirates Stadium, celebrates those manufacturers and fleet managers who have whole-heartedly taken on the challenge to combat climate change with pioneering ways to reduce the carbon output of their fleet.

The ‘Driver Training Company of the Year’ award is presented to the Driver Training organisation that has been successful in promoting and diversifying its green driving instruction courses, and has incorporated fuel economy training modules into other driver awareness programmes it offers.

Simon Elstow, IAM Drive & Survive Head of Training and Field Operations said: “We are really excited to have received this award. As a company we are proud of our eco-friendly credentials, which are always underlined by our dedication to road safety.

“Our *ecolution* product has been proven to improve fuel consumption by up to 25% and subsequently leads to significant vehicle emission reductions. Not only this but driving with our easy methods in mind can help reduce driver stress levels, improve driver attitude, increase the safety of both drivers and passengers, and ultimately increase fleet operational efficiency.”

Everybody hates being snarled up in traffic, with recent research findings suggesting higher levels of stress in drivers than those who commute by public transport. Eco-driver training includes techniques such as maintaining momentum, backing-off from queues of traffic earlier, and looking ahead to plan your strategy.

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

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.