

## MINI ROUNDABOUT

September 2010

### MELKSHAM

SPEED  
GEAR  
ACCELERATION  
INFORMATION  
POSITION

### INSTITUTE OF ADVANCED MOTORISTS MELKSHAM & DISTRICT

[www.m-a-m.org.uk](http://www.m-a-m.org.uk)  
Registered Charity No: 1055930

INSTITUTE OF ADVANCED MOTORISTS  
MELKSHAM & DISTRICT

### 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**

<b>September 16<sup>th</sup></b>	Speed Limits? – Rodney Hart, Retired MAM Senior Observer
<b>October 16<sup>th</sup></b>	Archery Taster Session, Batheaston, 1:30pm
<b>October 21<sup>st</sup></b>	Life as a Coach Driver – Jon Shobbrook from Beeline Coaches
<b>November 18<sup>th</sup></b>	Sharing the Road with Horses – Julie Garbutt, British Horse Society
<b>December 9<sup>th</sup></b>	Archery - Paul Wilkins (N.B. This is the <b>second</b> Thursday of the month)
<b>January 20<sup>th</sup></b>	Sound Design – Archer Endrich
<b>February 17<sup>th</sup></b>	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](mailto:events.coordinator@m-a-m.org.uk)*

## Congratulations

Helen and Luke Pickett are proud to announce the arrival of a baby boy, Alexander James Pickett, born on 8 September 2010, weighing 5lb 6oz.

If you have any important or exciting news you would like to share with our members please contact Luke at [roundabout.editor@m-a-m.org.uk](mailto:roundabout.editor@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](http://www.m-a-m.org.uk)

### **Archery Taster Session – Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> October**

**Bath Archers, Batheaston, 1:30pm**

Please note the change of date for the archery taster session, now booked for the afternoon of Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> 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](mailto: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 9<sup>th</sup> December.

### **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](mailto:events.coordinator@m-a-m.org.uk). We would particularly like your thoughts on the Karting, 4x4 and Skid Pan.

## **Worst Driver Award**

5<sup>th</sup> place goes to...



## **IAM Comment: Motorway lights to be turned off**

Kevin Delaney, Head of Road Safety at the IAM, said: "It's a lot less stressful to drive when the road ahead of you is lit. Modern headlamps are very good, but they do not shine far enough ahead to enable you to stop in time for an unexpected obstacle when travelling at motorway speeds - at 70mph the stopping distance is 315 ft. Motorway lamp posts are very high off the ground, and bringing them closer to the road and using more modern technology will help save energy and reduce light pollution."

## **IAM Comment on the introduction of police drugalyser kits**

Kevin Delaney, IAM Head of Road Safety, said: "This is a positive step as drugalyser kits will simplify the procedure, but they will only be of use with the right number of police on street exercising their powers of detection."

## **IAM Comment on the number of deaths in drink-drive accidents falling to an all-time low last year**

Kevin Delaney, IAM Head of Road Safety, said: "A drop in the figures always makes welcome news, and hopefully this won't lead to complacency in the government, police and the public. Many drunk drivers still go undetected, as they are often only detected after a crash."

## **IAM Comment on child collisions in high risk areas**

Please find below [the] IAM response to research from Road Safety Analysis indicating a link between less affluent areas and higher child KSI rates:

Neil Greig, IAM director of policy and research, said:

"Back to back houses, on-street parking and fewer gardens are some of the features of less affluent areas which could mean children being more exposed to risk. With public spending becoming tighter, area-wide improvements are unlikely to happen as quickly in future, so drivers need to be extra vigilant around any area where children might be playing. Drivers should avoid using local rat runs, but if you have to don't take them for granted, keep your speed low and keep an eye out for pedestrians between parked cars."

## **IAM Comment on wheel clamping restrictions**

Please find below [the] IAM response to news that wheel clampers will be banned from operating on private land:

Neil Greig, IAM director of policy and research, said:

"The IAM has actively sought an end to unfettered wheel clamping for many years. Wheel clamping is a disproportionate penalty in many situations and is universally unpopular among drivers. Current licensing systems do not appear to have had a major impact on the worst excesses of cowboy clampers and the time is now right for a wholesale review of parking controls. Banning wheel clamping in Scotland has not produced any obvious problems. The IAM has been working with the parking industry to improve the self regulation of parking on private land and it is important that the government plays a more active role in improving the whole industry. As well as banning wheel clamping, controls will still be needed on penalty charges, removal of vehicles, the role of private landowners and the use of DVLA information to track offenders."

## **Drivers conflicted over cameras**

An IAM survey [has] found that most people agree with the government's policy to reduce safety camera funding, even though a significant majority are supportive of cameras in principle.

The survey of nearly 1,000 respondents\* found that 44 per cent supported government proposals to cut central funding of camera operations, with 30 per cent unsure or expressing no opinion and only 26 per cent opposed. Conversely, safety cameras received a 70 per cent approval rating overall.

Kevin Delaney IAM Head of Road Safety, said: "A lot of people like the idea of a camera on their street, slowing the traffic and making their area safer, but feel cheated when they confront one on a main road or in a different area. Rather than being purely hypocritical, it suggests drivers are seeing the lifesaving effects of cameras, but resent being caught out by them.

"It is the exact opposite of Nimbyism – everybody wants one in their own back yard, but nowhere else."

The figures show a big difference between the sexes, with 55 per cent of men supporting the switch-off, whereas only 33 per cent of women agreed. Women were 12 per cent more supportive of speed cameras than men overall.

Nearly half of respondents [49 per cent] believed revenue generation through fines was the main motive behind installing safety cameras, with 26 per cent feeling fines were not the motive. 26 per cent were either unsure or expressed no opinion.

Mr Delaney added: "The 11 year study shows that support has declined slightly over time, but that cameras have maintained a good level of approval overall among the motoring public. There are still many people who believe that safety cameras are primarily for raising revenue who need convincing that well placed safety cameras really do deliver fewer deaths and serious injuries."

The survey covers 11 years of data on motoring opinions on the most contentious issue on the roads today.

- \*The survey comprised 992 respondents, 500 male and 492 female, roughly equally spread across age and socio economic groups and across all regions of England, Scotland and Wales.
- Londoners were the most strongly supportive of Government proposals to cease central funding of speed cameras [61 per cent], followed by East Midlands and the North West [59 per cent each].
- Least likely to support the switch-off was the West Midlands [33 per cent] and the South East [31 per cent].
- Responding to the question: "Have you, or someone in your household been convicted of speeding on camera evidence in the past 3 years?" 22 per cent of all respondents answered "Yes", 75 per cent answered "No" and 2 per cent didn't know. There was almost no difference between the sexes.

## Road rage makes us worse drivers

Results from an IAM poll have found that most drivers regularly suffer some form of road rage, and nearly a third admit that anger with other road users makes their own driving worse.

Of the 1,400 respondents to the online poll, 70 per cent stated that they got angry with other road users and 28 per cent felt that getting heated behind the wheel affected their own driving competence.

Tailgating was the behaviour most irritating to drivers, with 28 per cent classing it as the most provocative, while 22 per cent felt that others taking a call while driving was the biggest irritation. Centre lane hogging was also mentioned by 15 per cent and drivers also reported a long list of other irritants including aggressive driving, failing to indicate and bad lane discipline.

IAM director of policy and research, Neil Greig, said: "It is good to see motorists disapproving of bad driving, especially mobile phone use which is on the rise, but it's worrying that so many still get angry when driving. With long commutes and increased congestion making driving particularly stressful, drivers must learn to manage the 'red mist'."

Worryingly, many drivers are ignorant of the law, with the poll finding that 33 per cent of drivers would read or send a text message while waiting in a queue of traffic. Almost 30 per cent would instigate or pick up a phone call, even though research suggests that this is just as distracting as using a hand held phone.

Over a third of drivers found passengers most distracting with more than 60 per cent saying they would be more likely to be distracted with passengers in the car.

The IAM survey revealed that the top distractions were:

- Passengers (30 per cent)
- Billboards and other advertising (24 per cent)
- Watching out for safety cameras (21 per cent)
- Mobile phones (13 per cent)
- In Car Entertainment (Five per cent)
- Sat navs (Four per cent)

Mr Greig added: "It's all about self control – good drivers spot the signs of potential road rage and do everything they can to steer clear of it. If you feel yourself getting provoked by other people driving badly, remember that rising above it is an act of safe driving.

If you feel you're reaching boiling point:

- Pull over and separate yourself from the cause of your anger – usually another driver.
- Never react with a gesture or use your car as a weapon of retaliation.

If you are the subject of road rage:

- Pull over to a safe, public place if you feel threatened
- Apologise for your own mistakes – a cheery wave does a lot to diffuse tension

There were 1,497 respondents to the poll: 1,069 IAM members, 377 non-members and 51 associate members.

## **New IAM/Fiat Partnership**

An exciting new relationship has been forged between the IAM and Fiat Group Automobiles (Fiat), which took effect as of August 2010. This mutually beneficial agreement aims to promote and make readily available specially subsidised Advanced Driving programmes to Fiat customers (both retail and fleet) and other Fiat affinity partners, whilst IAM members can take advantage of exclusive, generous discounts on the entire range of Fiat cars, including the 500, new Punto Evo, and the Alfa Romeo MiTo and new Giulietta. Every Fiat or Alfa car sold to an IAM member generates revenues for the IAM and going forward, the aim is to extend the member benefit across the Fiat Group, including Jeep and Chrysler cars and potentially Ducati motorcycles. Fiat will be working closely with the IAM and activities will include the provision of Fiat cars for IAM track and skills days and numerous joint marketing activities. In addition, Fiat is looking to introduce the IAM to its other affinity partners, including BSM, British Cycling and The Football Association, amongst others.

## **Private toll roads not the answer – M6 motorway report**

Private toll roads are not a cost-effective answer to traffic problems, the government has been warned.

A report by the Campaign for Better Transport said the UK's only private motorway toll, the M6 Toll, had not significantly cut congestion.

Its owners lose tens of millions of pounds a year on the road, near Birmingham, campaigners added.

Midland Expressway, which runs the M6 Toll, was approached by the BBC but would not comment on the report.

The Campaign for Better Transport concluded that the government should not see privately financed schemes as a way out of economic problems.

The group argued that journey times on the M6 were only slightly better than before the toll opened nearly seven years ago, and drivers were put off using the road by the charge of £5 per car.

It estimated the toll road's operator was losing more than £25m a year, discouraging potential investors.

Campaigners used documents from the Highways Agency, the Transport Select Committee and Midland Expressway to compile the report.

Not only had the toll road failed to improve transport in the West Midlands, it concluded, but drivers who paid the toll were not receiving value for money.

In addition it said the Highways Agency was planning to spend £500m on congestion relief that the M6 Toll was supposed to have provided.

The M6 Toll is a 27-mile privately-financed motorway that runs around the north west of Birmingham, between junctions 3a and 12 of the M6.

It opened in December 2003 and was intended to relieve congestion on the busiest section of the M6 by providing an alternative route.

BBC transport correspondent Richard Scott says that with the public finances under pressure and road building under threat, the government is looking at how to improve the transport network in the most cost-effective way.

[Article Source: [bbc.co.uk](http://bbc.co.uk)]

### Book with a Difference

I thought we needed to have a smile on our faces, so I bought the following book: "Ministry of Top Gear - Alternative Highway Code". I must admit I am not a lover of the Top Gear programme on TV, but when sheltering out of the rain in a book shop, I wasted time by looking through this publication. I don't know what people thought of me, because I know that I kept having a smile or a giggle to myself. When reading lines or sentences in this book, you also think of the correct way of doing things! I would like to add, it will not take you very long to read as it's only 115 pages long.

On a more serious note, there is also another book that has been added to the Library collection. This book is an IAM publication entitled "How to be a Better Cyclist - Advanced Cycling - Essential Guide". I am not a fit person, and I like my "Babe's" four wheels, so I have not read this item, just looked at the pictures but think it could be interesting to read.

Are you going to make the Library suitcase lighter by taking something home with you to read? Happy reading.



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](mailto:librarian@m-a-m.org.uk).

### Number Plates

Contributions have been non-existent recently, but thanks to John for this one:

**B16 TOP**

Circus member?

Send your unusual number plates to [roundabout.editor@m-a-m.org.uk](mailto:roundabout.editor@m-a-m.org.uk)

## 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](http://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.