

## MINI ROUNDABOUT

August 2011

### MELKSHAM

SPEED  
GEAR  
POSITION  
ACCELERATION  
INFORMATION

### INSTITUTE OF ADVANCED MOTORISTS MELKSHAM & DISTRICT

[www.m-a-m.org.uk](http://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**

<b>August</b>	No social evening during August
<b>September 15<sup>th</sup></b>	Escorting Abnormal Loads: Ian Brooks, RoadPilots
<b>October 20<sup>th</sup></b>	The AA
<b>November 17<sup>th</sup></b>	Network Rail: Liz Heading, Community Safety Manager
<b>December 8<sup>th</sup></b>	Ben Schofield, Communications Manager, IAM

*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)*

### Publicity

Due to having three test passes last month and a couple of people falling by the wayside we are now left with only one current Associate. We must recruit more now; otherwise we will find ourselves in a very sticky situation in a couple of year's time. The Committee are doing all they can to promote the IAM and the Melksham Group through leaflet and poster distribution, word of mouth, and contacting other local organisations. If you can help with leaflet and/or poster distribution please let Luke Pickett know at [roundabout.editor@m-a-m.org.uk](mailto:roundabout.editor@m-a-m.org.uk), who will happily send you some materials. Word of mouth is traditionally the best method of publicity, so please tell your relatives, friends and colleagues about us. There are a range of products on offer (not just the £139 Skill for Life package) – see page 2 for further details. The benefits of becoming an advanced driver are enormous. To see the latest list of benefits go to [www.iam.org.uk/member\\_benefits](http://www.iam.org.uk/member_benefits).

## IAM Products

The IAM has a number of different products on offer and is continually adding to and improving the following list:



**Skill for Life** is the IAM's most popular membership option, giving you - in one payment - everything you need to pass your Advanced Driving Test and become a full Member of the IAM.

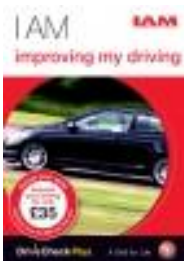
£139

**DriveCheck** is a short Driving Assessment aimed at everyone who is interested in safer driving but who doesn't feel they are (yet) ready to take the IAM Advanced Test. It takes about an hour comprising an initial introduction (document check etc.), followed by a 35-40-minute drive with the Group observer, followed by a feedback session, at which the candidate will be presented with a written feedback form.



£25

**DriveCheckPlus** is a short assessment drive for anyone (aged 26-54) who is interested in safer driving and is also a gentle introduction to some of the techniques and skills of advanced driving. You will spend an enjoyable and educational hour or so driving with an IAM Examiner at a time and location convenient for you. DriveCheck+ comprises of an initial introduction followed by a drive in your own car with the IAM Examiner. At the end you'll benefit from a debrief and personalised assessment report.



£35

**DriveCheck55** is a short Driving Assessment specifically for the older driver (55+) and is carried out by a qualified IAM examiner. It takes about an hour comprising an initial introduction (document check etc.), followed by a 45 minute drive with a qualified examiner, followed by a feedback session, at which the candidate will be presented with a written feedback form.



£35

**Momentum – Young driver assessment** is designed to offer young drivers (17-25) a challenging mix of online and on-road assessments with a focus on the areas in which young drivers can be vulnerable. A personalised assessment is provided at the end of the course and should you want to proceed with *Skill for Life*, your £40 will be refunded, meaning you only pay £99, instead of £139.



£40

There are numerous other packages including cycling, motorcycling, and fast track options, as well as IAM Skills Days. If you are already a member there is also the option of a Members' Driving Assessment with a qualified examiner. This costs £35, but remember that each year we offer a DriveCheck evening where you can do this for free with one of our Observers. For further details on any products please visit [www.iam.org.uk](http://www.iam.org.uk) or call 0845 126 8600.

### **Skittles Night**

Our annual skittles night was held at The White Hart, Atworth on 21<sup>st</sup> July. Although it was a shame to see so few people attending a good evening was had by all – for those who didn't attend you missed some great action on the skittle alley, including a few balls going backwards, as well as some great food. Please make an effort to attend next year if you can. Venue to be announced, but the date will be Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> July 2012.

### **Observers' Meeting**

Our annual Observers' Meeting was held at The Bell on the Common, Broughton Gifford, on 28<sup>th</sup> July. We welcomed our Regional Group Coordinator, Richard Furneaux, who gave a presentation on IAM Customer Service and Standards. Richard told us about the new systems that are in place at IAM Chiswick\* to improve customer service. If you have had to contact IAM Chiswick recently please let us know your thoughts on how your request was dealt with, and we will collate any information to forward on, in order to improve things further. Our Chief Observer, David Major, also gave a brief presentation about observing. If you are interested in improving your driving further please contact David Major at [chief.car.observer@m-a-m.org.uk](mailto:chief.car.observer@m-a-m.org.uk) or on 01985 217050 to discuss the role of an Observer and what you might be able to do next.

[\* IAM Chiswick is the IAM Head Office in London]

## **Fewer pedestrians killed as drivers stop speeding**

Latest road safety figures from the DfT show that compliance with 30mph urban speed limits continues to improve while pedestrian fatality levels are falling.

In 1998, 69 per cent of cars were driven faster than the limit in 30mph zones in free-flow conditions – by 2010 this had dropped to 46 per cent. Those exceeding 40 mph in a 30mph limit has halved since 2003, now down to 16 per cent. At the same time, traffic levels are declining on all types of road – a trend observed from 2006 onwards.

Pedestrian fatalities have also reduced significantly, down 40 per cent since 2005 from 671 to 405. Ninety-six per cent of pedestrian accidents happen on urban roads.

Reducing traffic speeds and risk in towns has been high on the road safety agenda, but rural roads, on which drivers are still most likely to be killed, now require even greater priority to reduce casualties further.

IAM director of policy and research Neil Greig said: "The good news is that drivers are not driving faster on the less crowded roads – and more people are sticking to the limit in urban areas where there are many hazards. A combination of consistent road safety messages, new road layouts and police enforcement appears to be paying road safety dividends for city people.

"However despite this positive effect in urban areas, road safety on rural roads, where the majority of serious accidents and fatalities occur, needs much more attention. In the UK, between two-thirds and three-quarters of fatalities occur on rural roads, yet driving on rural roads still isn't a mandatory part of the basic driving test. Most young drivers get plenty of exposure to urban hazards but often their first experience of a rural road comes after the test when they are on their own. This is unacceptable."

## Potholes give councils a bumpy ride

A third of drivers have had their cars damaged by a pothole, according to the latest poll from road safety charity the IAM.

A further 16 per cent have been involved in, or have seen an accident caused by a road user hitting a pothole. Of the 2600 respondents, 88 per cent voted pothole repair the top priority for local council maintenance.

Only 14 per cent of people think that their council's current performance maintaining local roads is good or very good, with more than half rating it as bad or very bad. When asked what areas of road maintenance were being done well, 50 per cent responded 'none', and half also think that the roads in their area are getting worse.

Overall, Welsh respondents are the happiest with council road maintenance, with 27 per cent rating performance as good. Respondents from the South East are the least happy with local road maintenance, with only ten per cent rating it as good, although Londoners were an exception to this – 18 per cent rated their council as good. Many comments suggested that local government spending cuts are the cause of these problems – respondents weren't just negative about the authorities themselves.

Keeping foliage and grass cut back to preserve visibility, and annual surface dressing of worn out roads, were the second and third most important maintenance factors, at 64 and 58 per cent respectively.

IAM director of policy and research Neil Greig said: "The public is unhappy with the state of their roads, although many realise that spending cuts are the real problem. Eighty per cent of those polled thought that local councils should work more closely together to increase efficiency, and with no loosening of the public purse strings in sight it will take partnerships to ensure the backlog in road maintenance does not continue to stack up."

Surrey motorist David Kellie, 63, said: "Who needs 'sleeping Policemen'? The roads are in such a poor state of repair that most drivers are unable to keep up with speed limits. Those on two wheels are in constant danger of being thrown off whether it be a motorbike or cycle. We are fed up of hearing about cuts as the motorist is charged more at the pumps and through road tax. Where does the money go?"

Region	Satisfaction with local council road maintenance (% of respondents from that region)		
	<i>Good</i>	<i>Bad</i>	<i>Neither good nor bad</i>
South west	11	53	37
South east	10	60	29
London	18	45	36
West Midlands	20	49	31
East Midlands	16	49	36
Wales	27	48	26
North west	11	64	24
North east	16	46	38
Scotland	13	64	23

Northern Ireland and the Republic Of Ireland were not included in the analysis due to low respondent levels.

## **There may be rubble ahead**

In response to the IAM poll identified in 'Potholes give councils a bumpy ride', IAM chief examiner Peter Rodger gives motorists advice on avoiding the risks associated with potholes:

- Leave plenty of room between you and the vehicle in front so that you can see the road surface before you drive or ride on it.
- If you do hit a pothole accidentally, make a point of checking your tyres once you've stopped. Check the inner as well as the outer tyre wall, which may have been damaged as a result
- Avoid suddenly pulling out to avoid a hole – you might discover that there is a motorcyclist trying to get past you, or encounter an oncoming vehicle.
- Bikers and cyclists need to look well ahead and change direction early so they have time to deal with the holes, and so that their movements don't cause surprise to other road users.
- Potholes tend to reappear in the same place again and again as previous repairs fail - remember where you saw one and expect it to be there again.
- Be extra vigilant on roads with lots of lorries and also around bus stops. Extra pressure is put on the road surface wherever heavy vehicles stop, start or turn.

Rodger said: "One in seven road users have seen or personally been involved in an accident caused by a pothole. Not only are they dangerous, but they cost. A recent report by Kwik Fit found that motorists had spent £473 million to repair damage to wheels and tyres caused by potholes in the past year – the problem is best avoided. As well as worrying about yourself and your vehicle, drivers should spare a thought for cyclists and motorcyclists who may be trying to get past a pothole, and give them a wide berth. They are entitled to a wobble and would appreciate not having a motorist attempting to overtake just as they avoid a hole in the road."

## **Sending the right signals**

IAM chief examiner Peter Rodger gives advice on how to use your indicators:

- Always give clear signals when they are required. Not signalling when you need to – approaching a junction or changing lane – is annoying at best and at worst dangerous.
- Signal early. There is no point indicating as you make the manoeuvre. This is a particular problem with changing lanes on motorways where late signals are a major threat to motorcyclists who might be taking advantage of their size to pass a queue of traffic.
- Don't give signals if nobody else is around to see them. This encourages you to check properly if anybody is there.
- Give signals to pedestrians. There might be no traffic around, but if you're planning to turn and there are pedestrians on the pavement, they need to know your intentions.
- Check your lights regularly to make sure they are all working. You can't give clear signals if you have a dead bulb, and driving with one is illegal, so test all your lights at least weekly.
- Never underestimate the power of body language. Other drivers won't always give appropriate signals, but you can tell a lot by their positioning and speed. If they start to slow down for no apparent reason, the chances are they are about to do something.

Rodger said: "Giving signals is a way of talking to other road users so they can plan their actions. Make sure these signals are clear, timely and necessary, to give other people as much notice as possible when you plan to change speed or direction."

## **New study proves worth of supporting road safety charities**

Investing in the work of road safety charities pays high dividends, according to a new report by accountants Baker Tilly. Their study on the social return on investment of road safety charity the IAM reveals that for every £1 invested in its work, the IAM returns £21 to society. A summary of the report is available in this month's copy of the IAM member magazine *Advanced Driving*.

The study has enabled the IAM to understand the social and economic value of its contribution to society — estimated to be £128 million every year. The figure was calculated by examining the effects of the IAM's work in reducing the number and severity of road traffic accidents — plus a reduction in the costs of motoring.

The benefit to society of people taking the IAM advanced driving and riding programmes is £39 million.

The fatality rate in crashes for advanced drivers is 0.9 per cent compared to 1.1 per cent for the wider motoring population. The serious injury rate is 10.75 per cent compared to 11.5 per cent for the wider population. The savings attributed to reducing the number and severity of accidents for IAM advanced drivers and riders is £37.5 million.

Advanced drivers and motorcyclists also achieve greater savings in motoring costs because advanced driving techniques reduce vehicle wear and fuel consumption. Many IAM members also benefit from cheaper insurance.

By training those who drive as part of their work, the IAM's corporate driver training company, IAM Drive & Survive, makes an economic contribution of an estimated £35 million. This is the outcome of training and assessing nearly 20,000 professional drivers. Training includes risk assessments, e-learning and on road training. Corporate training typically raises drivers' skills above those of the average motorist — but not to the same level as the advanced test.

Finally, by campaigning and by directly influencing the government and other decision makers on road safety issues, the IAM's policy, research and communications services provide an estimated £54 million in savings to the economy.

IAM chief executive Simon Best said: "This report demonstrates how independent charities contribute to society. Contributing £128 million to road safety is something to be proud of, especially as so much of our work is carried out by volunteers.

"And we never forget the side of our work that cannot be measured financially: the reduction in anguish for families and friends of loved ones who suffer in accidents because of better standards of road safety."

Report author, Jim Clifford of Baker Tilly said: "This report carefully maps the outcomes of the IAM's important work and demonstrates an enormous contribution to public safety."

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

## **Motoring tax is highway robbery**

Only 38 pence of every pound that motorists pay at the pump is for fuel - 62 per cent is tax in the form of fuel duty and VAT, according to Motoring taxation and public spending, the latest report from road safety charity the IAM.

The report also finds that:

- The percentage of tax paid at the pump rose from 47 per cent in 1980 to 75 per cent in 2000. It has fallen to 62 per cent in 2010 as a result of increases in the price of oil.
- In 2010, the pump price of petrol increased by 27 per cent and that of diesel by 18 per cent. In the first half of this year the pump price of petrol increased by eight per cent and diesel by 12 per cent.
- Motorists paid £28,747 million in tax and duty in 1985-6 compared to £43,885 million in 2007-8 in real terms<sup>1</sup>.
- While motorists are paying more generally, the amount paid per individual car owner has fallen. More cars on the road are spreading the tax burden among more motorists.
- The government spends only about one-third (£12,752 million) of its total tax revenue from road users (£43,885 million) on roads and local public transport.
- Increased spending in the past decade has been mainly on public transport; spending on local roads has also increased substantially but is likely to fall considerably from now on.
- Since 2002, the government has spent more on rail infrastructure than road infrastructure, although rail is used for only seven per cent of all passenger travel. In 2008 the government spent £4,807 million on road infrastructure compared to £5,567 million on rail infrastructure.
- Motorists and businesses spend ten times more on buying and running their vehicles (£42,700 million) than the government spends on roads (£4,807 million).

IAM director of policy and research Neil Greig said: "Using so little of the taxes motorists pay on road upkeep is plainly unfair. Motorists are also paying the price as Britain's potholed and increasingly dangerous roads take their toll, damaging tyres, wheels, steering and suspension.

"Cuts are clearly going to have an impact on transport investment, but as more roads become more potholed and dangerous, spending on infrastructure now will save money in the long-term."

1. Amounts for an earlier year are increased by the inflation factor between that year and 2007-8 also known as 'in real terms'.

[To view the full report click [here](#)]

## 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.