

EAST KENT GROUP

Newsletter June 2009

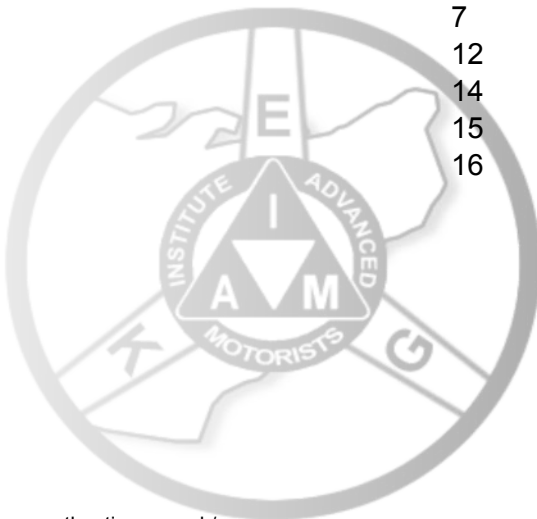
IAM

DRIVING ROAD SAFETY



Contents

Your Committee	2
Editorial 127	3
From the Chair	4
Secretary's Corner	5
Contributions	7
Press Releases	12
About Us	14
Drive-In Centre	15
Membership Updates	16



OFFICERS

Nigel Cooke nigel@eastkentiam.org.uk	CHAIRMAN 55, Leyburne Road, Dover. CT16 1SL	01304 215891
--	--	--------------

Vanessa Norley vanessa@eastkentiam.org.uk	SECRETARY 2 Barn Tye Close, Guston, Dover. CT15 5ND	01304 215168
---	--	--------------

Neil Oliver	TREASURER	01227 369138
--------------------	-----------	--------------

Jane Clarke	MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY	01843 594910
--------------------	----------------------	--------------

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Alan Hollands	CHIEF OBSERVER	01843 224123
----------------------	----------------	--------------

Jane Clarke	DRIVE-IN CO-ORDINATOR	01843 594910
--------------------	-----------------------	--------------

Elizabeth Cooper	ASSOCIATE CO-ORDINATOR	01304 204405
-------------------------	------------------------	--------------

Ian Martin	COMMITTEE MEMBER	
-------------------	------------------	--

Peter Denham	COMMITTEE MEMBER (co-opted Jan 2009)	
---------------------	--------------------------------------	--

Keith Watson	COMMITTEE MEMBER (co-opted Jan 2009)	
---------------------	--------------------------------------	--

Michelle Stone	EDITOR (ex-officio)	
-----------------------	---------------------	--

Richard Meadows	PUBLICITY (ex-officio)	
------------------------	------------------------	--

If you need to contact any of the above, please do so before 10 PM.
Should the person you require not be available, please contact any other member who will deal with your enquiry or pass on your message as soon as possible.

It's been a busy few months, with lots of exciting events going on this year, all because a certain little iconic vehicle turns 50 this year. Just a few weekends ago we were at Silverstone for Mini United's birthday party. It was one of the best mini shows we have been to; very relaxed with bean bags and deck chairs dotted around, lots of things to do, including go-karting or a taxi-ride around the track in a Mini Challenge car. Unfortunately we didn't get one of the limited tickets for that - but we will be prepared next time!

I think the highlight of the day was seeing the Russ Swift stunt display team in action - driving on 2 wheels? No problem. Driving on 2 wheels with 3 passengers and somebody in the boot? Also no problem. J-turns between 2 cars - phenomenal. And the parallel parking just had to be seen to be believed! It made me laugh when Luke, who is now 5, turned to me and said, "I didn't realise they could do that in real life!"

We've been to Brighton for the annual London to Brighton Run, and did eventually get some good weather, but had to suffer through the torrential rain first, huddling under the not-very-waterproof gazbo's. Luke also managed to fall over in the sea

while paddling, in the nanosecond I wasn't looking. It must be a boy thing.

We are now in training for our annual expedition - this year is hippy themed in honour of the 50th birthday - so we will spend the week looking like a ragtag bunch of hippies in flares and all sorts of strange attire. We also have lots of flowers to adorn the mini with, and fantastic flower-powered door plaques, so we will certainly be eye-catching! Hopefully Mini Jock will behave himself although, after his performance at the MOT, nothing is guaranteed!

We are also very hopeful that the weather will be kinder to us this year. After diabolical weather for 2 years running that destroyed our tent we must surely be due some sunshine, mustn't we?

Michelle

Please send me any articles, letters, rants, suggestions or comments, either by e-mail to: michelle@eastkentiam.org.uk, or by snail mail to: Flat 5, 13 Paragon, Ramsgate, Kent, CT11 9JX



First, a statement of the blindingly obvious: "Motoring is changing". Well, yes, of course it is. Changing in many ways. There are those who would like our world to be considerably less car-orientated, for any number of reasons, including environmental, safety, inclinations toward public transport, nostalgia, saving resources and so on. It could be that the car becomes less of a right, more of a privilege, with toughening of driving tests, periodic retests, more age constraints, and greater penalties. And the road environment itself is changing, the layout, greater restrictions of speed, and more traffic.

To many who have been driving a long time, including yours truly, along with all these changes motoring moved gradually from an enjoyment to a necessity. And then to a chore. For me, driving is a necessity, and, making a virtue of necessity as much as I can, an enjoyment. I aim to keep it that way. To this end I try to improve my driving if I can, and try to find enjoyment in getting the mechanics of driving right. It is the easiest thing I can change about my driving environment, and it doesn't cost me anything. It is very satisfying to make the car do exactly what you want, when you want, as safely as you can, and as smoothly as possible, and, of course, according to the System of Car Control. Selfishly, being an Observer helps me keep this up as best I can, and, less selfishly, helps(!) associates pass the IAM test.

Just in case I seem to be getting a little too earnest, I, along with hopefully quite a lot of like-minded souls, will be at the Goods Vehicle Testing Station at Hersden on the A28 outside Canterbury at 6.30pm on 11th June. Here we will manoeuvre, or otherwise, our cars to win the John Smith Trophy. This is a none-too-serious opportunity to get some egg on the face, including mine, so come along and have a laugh.

*See you there
Nigel*

Observers' Day

At Kingston on Sunday 28th June we will be having an Observers' Day. From 9am to 4pm observers are invited to 'drop-in' - meet other observers, go on runs with one another and exchange views on observing practice.

This will be the first time we have held such a day and your attendance and views will be much appreciated.

*Chief Observer
Alan Hollands*

What a great talk we had from Test Examiner Ben Crosswell in March. Ben gave us a good insight into what Examiners expect from Associates on test and answered a number of questions from the floor. He said he would be pleased to come back and talk to us again and I have already had requests from members to ask him back – could be sooner rather than later Ben!

In April, Vic Reynolds very kindly gave us a 'quiz with a difference', it was very successful even if our Chairman was in the winning team! Vic is going to put his brain to another one for us for the future.

May saw Joe Rumble giving us an insight into his car ownership spanning many years and involving some 57 vehicles. He also told us some amusing stories from his career as a Consultant Surgeon.

We are also able to welcome Joe to the Group Committee, co-opted pending our October AGM.

At the April meeting we held a short Extraordinary General Meeting and approved an increase, to £31, to our Associate Membership renewal fee, this brings us in line with the increase to the IAM Skill for Life fee.

There was a disappointing response to the Skid Pan mornings organised for May although those who did partake certainly enjoyed the experience. It is always difficult to know what sort of events members would like, if you have any ideas for driving experiences, speakers, outside visits etc., do please let me know.

Speakers/Events

This month (June 11th) is, of course, our Manoeuvring Evening at the HGV Centre at Hersden. Mr Chairman (Nigel) is organising the hazards this year with a

willing band of helpers and says he will be set up from 6.30pm onwards. Hope as many of you as possible will come along and enjoy a fun evening with the hope of winning the John Smith Challenge Trophy. On July 9th we will be welcoming a representative from Kent Air Ambulance to give us a talk and on August 13th Group Member Steve Green will be telling us a bit about his role as a Paramedic. (Steve is also now a Qualified Group Observer). In September, Group Member Steve Hyde will be telling us of his involvement with the building of the Channel Tunnel Terminal Bridges. I can't remember what the land around Folkestone used to look like before the Chunnel – perhaps Steve will be able to remind us.

Regional Forum May 2009

Group Treasurer, Neil Oliver, and I attended a Regional Forum in May. IAM Chairman, David Kenworthy, opened the proceedings and outlined a few changes that have been made at HO recently, including some cost cutting exercises. The main theme of the day revolved around the issues of retaining existing members and attracting new Associates. Clearly there are some Groups that, perhaps because of their geographical position, are more successful in gaining new members than others. Generally though, many of the exercises undertaken by Groups appear to achieve little and it was agreed that the IAM needs to raise the profile of the Organisation. David confirmed that they have been looking at ways to do this with a view to having a clear indication of the success (or otherwise!) of the exercise. Hopefully, later this year, we will see the results of their deliberations.

Finally, seeing Sheila's article about road signs down under, I was reminded of a couple I rather liked. When travelling on a

very fast straight road in the Northern Territory on the approach to Darwin City, traffic lights can be seen in the far distance (assuming you are observing way ahead as an Advanced Driver should!). At an appropriate place there is a sign warning drivers that the lights will change in 30, 60 or 90 seconds. This gives drivers plenty of time to react and plan. At the time I travelled that road, there was no speed limit so you can imagine what speed some cars were going at. Since then the Australian Government has introduced a 130kph limit on such roads but, I am sure, those signs are still useful. The lights at Lydden spring to mind, I have seen a number of cars unable to stop and fly through on red!

The other sign I liked was in Tasmania on the Freeway (Australian equivalent to our Motorway) which read:- 120kph – it's a limit, not a challenge.

There are plenty of signs throughout Australia which read DRIVE AND SURVIVE, that's what our Skill for Life is all about too.

My next submission will be in September and I hope I'll be able to comment on the wonderful summer. As I write this, it's pouring with rain so it can only get better!

Happy Holidays

Vanessa

Very Important for drivers.....

Unwitting motorists face £1,000 fines as thousands of photo card driving licences expire

Thousands of motorists are at risk of being fined up to £1,000 because they are unwittingly driving without a valid licence. They risk prosecution after failing to spot the extremely small print on their photo

card licence which says it automatically expires after 10 years and has to be renewed - even though drivers are licensed to drive until the age of 70.

The fiasco has come to light a decade after the first batch of photo licences was issued in July 1998, just as they start to expire. Motoring organisations blamed the Government for the fiasco and said 'most' drivers believed their licences were for life.

They said officials had failed to publicise sufficiently the fact that new-style licences - unlike the old paper ones - expire after a set period and have to be renewed.

To rub salt into wounds, drivers will have to pay £17.50 to renew their card - a charge which critics have condemned as a 'stealth tax' and which will earn the Treasury an estimated £437million over 25 years.

Official DVLA figures reveal that while 16,136 expired this summer, so far only 11,566 drivers have renewed, leaving 4,570 outstanding.

With another 300,000 photo card licences due to expire over the coming year, experts fear the number of invalid licences will soar, putting thousands more drivers in breach of the law and at risk of a fine.

At the heart of the confusion is the small print on the tiny credit-card-size photo licence, which is used in conjunction with the paper version.

Just below the driver name on the front of the photo card licence is a series of dates and details - each one numbered. Number 4b features a date in tiny writing, but no explicit explanation as to what it means.

The date's significance is only explained if the driver turns over the card and reads the key on the back which states that '4b' means 'licence valid to'.

Even more confusingly, an adjacent table on the rear of the card sets out how long the driver is registered to hold a licence - that is until his or her 70th birthday.

A total of 25million new-style licences have been issued but - motoring experts say - drivers were never sufficiently warned they would expire after 10 years.

Motorists who fail to renew their licences in time are allowed to continue driving. But the DVLA says they could be charged with 'failing to surrender their licence', an offence carrying a £1,000 fine. AA president, Edmund King said: 'It is not generally known that photo card licences expire: there appears to be a lack of information that people will have to renew these licences.'

'People think they have already paid them for once over and that is it. 'It will come as a surprise to motorists and a shock that they have to pay an extra £17.50.'

The AA called on the Government to use the annual £450million from traffic enforcement fines to offset the renewal charge.

Before photo card licences were introduced, old-style paper licences were valid until the age of 70. 'Many motorists still believe this to be the case with the new ones.'

Driving instructor Tony Carter, of Canterbury, said: 'It's outrageous; everybody thinks their driving licence is for life. 'Why - when you have already paid £50 for your photo card licence - should you

pay the Government an extra £17.50 every 10 years? 'It's another stealth tax. Drivers will be very annoyed.'

Today the DVLA said the date of expiry was carried on the new-style licences, even though the AA says this is 'not clear'. The Agency was unable to say whether motorists were told the licences would expire when they were first issued.

It said it was issuing postal reminders to drivers whose photograph was due to expire, to get the renewal message across. But a spokesman admitted this was the limit of the DVLA's publicity. Experts say many drivers will slip through the net because DVLA records are inaccurate and many motorists have changed address, making it impossible to trace them.

A DVLA spokesman said: 'Previous experience has shown that wide-scale publicity is less effective and can generate enquiries and concerns from those not affected. Instead, DVLA focussed on targeted publicity to ensure that we got the message to the right person at the right time.'

The Driving Standards Agency is allowing L-test candidates with out-of-date photo card licences to sit their driving tests as long as they provide a valid passport. This concession will end in January next year, raising the prospect that some L-test candidates will be turned away.

The DVLA said no one had so far been charged with failing to surrender a licence.

Submitted by Caroline Tracey

A PHYSICIST WRITES . . .

(May 2009)

It is quite a while since I mentioned the System of Car Control: Information, Position, Speed, Gear, Acceleration — the sequence that advanced drivers should be muttering under their breath as they approach any road hazard and then travel through it or past it.

Perhaps I ought to confess that I don't often mutter the sequence myself! When I was preparing for the advanced test, my observer didn't really make a big thing of the System. But whenever I do think about the above check-list (in relation to a hazard I am negotiating) it seems to me that I'm getting the items roughly right and in the right order, automatically. It's a common-sense system.

It's also a list that has usefully supplied topics for some of these columns. But there's one thing I haven't focused on before: Gear, or (better for the purposes of this column) Gears. Why do we need them? An engineer might say that they are for converting the torque and the rotary speed of the engine to values that better suit the driving wheels, the inertial load, the frictional drag, the road speed, the acceleration and the gradient. But I'm a physicist who likes to try to explain things more gently than that!

So: why gears? The question takes me back to my cycling days, not only when I was on a single-gear bicycle climbing the hills of Bristol (as I mentioned last month) but also all the rest of my youth, when I rode machines equipped with a number of gears. I guess you probably did too, so I think the best way of exploring the need for gears in vehicles might be to talk first about bicycles...

Picture yourself bowling along the road, moving much faster forward than your feet are moving up and down, as they push (alternately) on the pedals. You wouldn't want them to be whizzing round like a Catherine wheel, so you've chosen top gear, which sends the bicycle chain around the smallest sprocket on the rear wheel. But here's a curious thing: the force you are generating between the tyre and the road (to drive the bike along) is actually much lower than the force you're applying directly to the pedals. What's the reason?

It lies in a simple law of machines: power input = power output (plus various losses due to friction, which is why on a level road you have to keep pedalling all the time). And power = force \times speed. So in top gear, because the speed of the bike is much higher than that of your feet, the two forces I described will also be very different (the other way round, of course), hence you can't transmit much thrust to the rear wheel.

That's no great problem on the level, but what if you're facing a Bristol hill? Now you need maximum thrust, so you select a low gear. Generally, bottom gear enables your feet to move at least half as quickly as the bicycle, hence (from my equations) the force on the bike will be at least half your push on the pedals. That should easily get you up the hill!

Or you might want to accelerate (on the flat) from a standing start. This again requires a decent thrust between the tyre and the road, and therefore a low gear. Then as you get faster, you move up through the gears so that the rate of pedalling stays within a comfortable range for your legs.

It's within this range too that you can deliver the most power from legs to bicycle,

when you need to: if you were pedalling more quickly you wouldn't be able to apply a useful force, and if instead you were in too high a gear (therefore pedalling slowly), again you would be up against a force limit on the pedals, namely your own weight!

Enough of bikes — I'm hoping that your car's gears won't need much explaining now. The pistons in the engine oscillate much faster than feet on pedals, and there are more of them, but they do the same job. And rather like your legs, the pistons deliver power most efficiently within just a mid-range of engine speed. Different gears match different road speeds to this range, and the job of the driver is to try to choose the right one! And there's something else too which helps you to get more energy from each drop of petrol: pushing the accelerator pedal a good way down (so I learned to my surprise last year, and then reported here).

But all this is assuming you're accelerating, or climbing (or both). If you simply want to cruise above 30 mph, then in order to minimize general engine drag you ought to be in the highest gear, depending on road speed, that doesn't 'labour' the engine. (In a 30 limit, to avoid the attention of speed cameras it's worth staying in 3rd gear even if you may be burning a little more fuel.)

I'm sorry: I've been ignoring drivers of automatics — I trust that these do always automatically select the optimum gear for you? My experience of them is limited to the two Nissan Micras that Mrs S has owned (giving more than 11 years loyalty to each, I might add). The first one had a three-speed box and seemed to travel satisfactorily, if rather sluggishly. Her current Micra has a larger engine, coupled to Continuously Variable Transmission.

CVT works by running a metal belt round two pulleys which 'change gear' by cleverly and smoothly varying their diameters. This is suggestive of a bicycle chain and a set of sprockets! But the driving is certainly nice and lively, especially when you put your foot down: the engine goes straight to high revs and stays there, sounding like a small Intercity 125 moving off, while the car accelerates.

Alas, CVTs have a reputation for being short-lived, and indeed our gearbox gave up last year at 34,000 miles ... what to do? Scrap a well-loved L-reg car? We couldn't! So thank you, 3D Transmissions of Reading, for getting it back on the road (at some cost, admittedly).

Here is one more thought on bicycles: some present-day youths seem to like riding with their knees almost up at chin-level. Have they no notion of efficient pedalling — or should we be commending them for keeping their childhood bikes unscrapped and on the road too?

*Peter Soul
Thames Valley Group of Advanced
Motorists*

A PHYSICIST WRITES . . .
(March 2009)

Only once before, I think, in all these columns (this is the 67th!) have I mentioned a main passion of mine: music. It was a year or so ago, when I was commenting on an instruction in the Highway Code: Never sound your horn aggressively. I said that although I'm something of a pianist, I find it very difficult to get a car horn to sound anything other than furioso. Now why can't the sensitivity and control of the things be improved so that they may be played delicato, or even amoroso, if the occasion

demands? Anyway, I've been thinking recently about the skills involved in playing the piano (I wonder if you can see where this might lead?).

Getting on for sixty years ago, I started learning to play the recorder, and trying to understand musical notation — all those dots and lines (and Italian instructions!) on the page — and generally acquiring 'musicianship'. Later when I began piano lessons, the previous experience greatly helped my eyes, brain and fingers adapt to a very different instrument, cope with playing many notes at once, and absorb what my piano-teacher was saying.

Although you improve by practising individual pieces, a valuable skill is sight-reading: the ability to play music that you haven't previously met. Combined with my memory of compositions (mostly classical) that I've played and worked at before, it means that I can open almost any piece of music and launch into it straight away ... OK, not always at its full speed! But my eyes seem to take everything in, my fingers jump to the keys, and my conscious brain hardly has to help them at all.

When I think more about what's going on, I realize that my gaze is scanning to and fro along the line of music all the time, from the notes that I'm playing right now, up to a point a few seconds ahead. As I near that point, I'm getting a sense of how its notes and chords link up with what I'm already playing, and by the time I reach it the fingers are in position to cope with them. And by then of course, I'm looking further ahead. Curiously, I'm sure there isn't always time for me to focus on all the notes that are printed on the page — so how is it that I (usually) manage to play them all?

But it's not just a matter of hitting the right notes: you have to play them at a suitable speed and with the optimum strength. And both of these things need to be varied musically while you listen closely, aiming for the best result...

What's all this got to do with driving, you may be asking. Well, let me begin again: getting on for sixty years ago, I started riding a bicycle on the road, and trying to understand all those markings and traffic signs, and generally acquiring 'road sense'. Later when I began driving lessons, the previous experience greatly helped my eyes, brain and limbs adapt to a very different mode of transport, cope with the higher speeds (not that much higher, actually, than on my sports bike!) and absorb what my driving-instructor was saying.

Although you improve (up to a point) by revisiting familiar roads, an essential skill is the ability to negotiate highways and byways that you haven't previously met. Combined with my memory of roads that I've travelled before, it means that I can arrive at any stretch of road and follow it accurately and safely straight away ... OK, not always up at the speed limit! But my eyes seem to take everything in, my limbs control the car, and my conscious brain hardly has to help them at all.

When I think more about what's going on, I realize that my gaze is scanning to and fro along the road all the time, from where the car is right now, up to a point quite a few seconds ahead. As I near that point, I'm getting a sense of how its features and hazards link up with where I am already, and by the time I reach it the car is in position to cope with them. And by then of course, I'm looking further ahead. Curiously, I'm sure there isn't always time

for me to focus on all the things that are on or approaching the road — so how is it that I manage to avoid them all?

But it's not just a matter of steering the right course: you have to traverse it at a suitable speed and in the optimum gear. And both of these things need to be varied intelligently while you observe closely, aiming for the best result...

I must say, when I started this column I didn't expect the analogy between playing the piano and driving to be quite so close! And there's more: they both call for excellent coordination, controlled mainly by the subconscious. Key to both activities is maintaining a smooth rhythm without jerky movements or sudden interruptions — especially important when you are having to keep pace with other people, whether musicians or road-users. And both at the piano and in the car, it's easy to relax and go into autopilot mode (do you find, like me, that sometimes you are hardly breathing at all?). This can lead to wrong notes and to accidents.

But if you stay alert and make the most of the skills that you've acquired, you will end the journey (musical or automotive) with a feeling of quiet satisfaction.

Peter Soul

Thames Valley Group of Advanced Motorists

LADIES THIS IS NOT SCAM, JOKE OR ANYTHING REMOTELY FUNNY!

It is for your own safety!!

This warning has been sent by a member of the police force.

Share with your sisters, daughters, nieces, mothers, and female friends. This Incident has been confirmed.

A man came over and offered his services as a painter to a female putting petrol in her car and left his card. She said no ,but accepted his card out of kindness and got in the car. The man then got into a car driven by another gentleman As the lady left the service station, she saw the men following her out of the station at the same time. Almost immediately, she started to feel dizzy and could not catch her breath. She tried to open the window and realized that the odour was on her hand; the same hand which accepted the card from the gentleman at the service station.

She then noticed the men were immediately behind her and she felt she needed to do something at that moment. She drove into the first driveway and began to honk her horn repeatedly to ask for help. The men drove away but the lady still felt pretty bad for several minutes after she could finally catch her breath. Apparently, there was a substance on the card that could have seriously injured her..

This drug is called 'BURUNDANGA' and it is used by people who wish to incapacitate a victim in order to steal from or take advantage of them.

This drug is four times more dangerous than the date rape drug and is transferable on simple cards.

So take heed and make sure you don't accept cards at any given time alone or from someone on the streets. This applies to those making house calls and slipping you a card when they offer their services .

Submitted by Elizabeth Cooper

Infrastructure and training are the answer to UK pedestrian and cycling problem says IAM - 08 May 2009

The IAM (Institute of Advanced Motorists) has welcomed today's report from the National Audit Office as it underlines a focus on children and cyclists as the top priority needed to lift Great Britain up the road safety league table. "The government are already talking about creating the safest roads in the world and the biggest challenge will be to do this for our most vulnerable road users," says Neil Greig, director of policy and research at the IAM.

The IAM believe that long-term investment in separate facilities for cycling and an improved environment for pedestrians is key. Mr Greig added, "Drivers and riders can make mistakes but, when they share the same road space, that mistake is always fatal for the most vulnerable, while the car or lorry driver will more likely emerge physically unscathed. Providing the best possible protection must include more cycle paths and better urban design for the safety all road users."

Research shows that children in deprived areas are most at risk as they spend much more time near busy roads compared to our European counterparts. Town planning and new designs for housing areas will ultimately deliver more safe places to live and play but that will take many years. In the meantime the IAM supports pedestrian and cycling training for children and also provides training for adults wishing to cycle more often. Such training not only increases skills and confidence, but enforces the principles of road safety and promotes awareness of the needs of vulnerable road users. These have always been a key part of the advanced driving test.

Pothole growth prompts road safety advice for drivers and rider - 30 April 2009

According to a report today (30 April 2009) the UK has seen a growth of a third in the number of potholes as a result of a backlog and under funding. Delayed buses, damaged cars or worst still, upended two wheelers are the unintended consequences, warned the IAM (Institute of Advanced Motorists).

Visual defects such as cracking and deterioration will be addressed by a succession of "patch and mend" road works which will do little for congestion or road safety.

IAM Chief Examiner Peter Rodger said that there are things that individual drivers and riders can do to anticipate pot holes, and what should happen afterwards.

" Be particularly conscious of cyclists and motorcyclists trying to get past one and give them a suitably 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. If you do hit a pothole accidentally, make a point of checking not just the outer tyre wall but the inner tyre wall, which may have been damaged as a result," said Mr Rodger. "With a bank holiday weekend just upon us there will be more people out enjoying the open air – and coming across potholes on roads they don't know. Expect them to react late and to change direction sharply and be ready – give everyone room while we all cope with poor road conditions. 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."

The IAM recommends that, spotting a pothole ahead, you should use your

knowledge of the damaged road surface to position yourself in such a way that you can avoid it.

"But check behind and ahead; don't drive too close to an oncoming vehicle to avoid a pothole. Or suddenly pull out to avoid a hole, to discover that there is a motorcyclist trying to get past you when you do so," said Mr Rodger. "Bikers and cyclists need to look well ahead and change direction early, so they have time to deal with the holes, and their movements don't cause surprise."

Wet weather makes potholes even more dangerous, concealing them under normal surface water. If you know that a local road has a pothole developing, even if it is not visible, try to use the a line that avoids it - if it is safe to do so. Finally, always make a point of reporting a pothole to the local authority as an early repair could prevent a future accident.

Ten year road safety blueprint welcomed by IAM - 28 April 2009

Ambitious Government proposals for road safety targets over the next ten years – with important new targets to save lives - have been greeted by the IAM (Institute of Advanced Motorists), the UK's largest independent road safety charity.

"The Department for Transport's new targets are impressive. There is no hint of complacency here and we believe that the declared aspiration - to have the safest roads in the world by 2020 - is excellent," said IAM chief examiner Peter Rodger.

"We can expect a more rigorous examination of what works for road safety, and what doesn't.

"Reducing the number of people killed and seriously injured by 33 per cent will take a formidable effort, but it's good to hear that the will is there," said Mr Rodger.

But earlier suggestions of a blanket 50mph speed limit have been dropped from the proposals, with an emphasis instead on targeting.

"No two rural roads are the same - there are places where it makes no sense to reduce the limit," said Mr Rodger.

And moves to help new drivers tackle the difficulties of rural roads are particularly needed.

"While 20mph zones outside schools may seem a simple fix, there is little evidence that children get run over there. To explore careful use of 20mph limits in primarily residential areas makes a lot more sense," said Mr Rodger.

"Conversely, deaths and serious injury on the UK's rural roads are the top road safety issue facing authorities and road users over the next ten years, as we have argued for some time."

Research by the IAM and EuroRAP (European Road Assessment Programme) in 2007 showed that rural roads can be star-rated for safety and appropriate speed limits applied at the worst locations. Those roads with bends and twists, hidden junctions and poor overtaking opportunities should be the prime candidates for a wholesale review of speed limits.

"A detailed review by local authorities to assess every mile of rural road should not result in a simple application of an arbitrary lower speed limit that conveys no obvious message to the driver," said Mr Rodger.

"Even at 30mph some rural roads can be lethal – while others are perfectly safe at 60mph."

"A joint programme of road improvements, campaigns to raise awareness, more enforcement, encouragement to take extra training and including rural roads in the new driving test will ultimately deliver results."

IAM Website - Press Releases

About Us

How can the Group help me?

The Group offers observed runs to Associates on a one-to-one basis in their own cars. Your driving skills and attitude to all aspects of motoring and road use will be closely monitored by an Observer (a full Group member who has already passed the advanced driving test). Your Observer (who is a volunteer) will give you practical guidance, constructive advice, and support to help you to pass the advanced test.

How much does it cost?

The Skill for Life package which includes Associate Group Membership, the IAM Book "Pass Your Advanced Driving Test", the Advanced Test and the first year's membership of the IAM when you pass, costs just £139. As an Associate member, you will benefit from the Group's activities and have as many observed runs as you need to attain the IAM Test standard, (there is no additional charge for the observed runs). Associate membership is given on the understanding that you will apply for the advanced test within the first 12 months after joining the Group.

How does the Group Operate?

The dates, times, and meeting places for your observed runs are arranged directly with your Observer. The Group itself meets socially at 7:30 p.m. on the second Thursday of each month at the Littlebourne War Memorial Hall, (4 miles east of Canterbury on the A257), OS Grid Reference TR208575.

How do I join the Group?

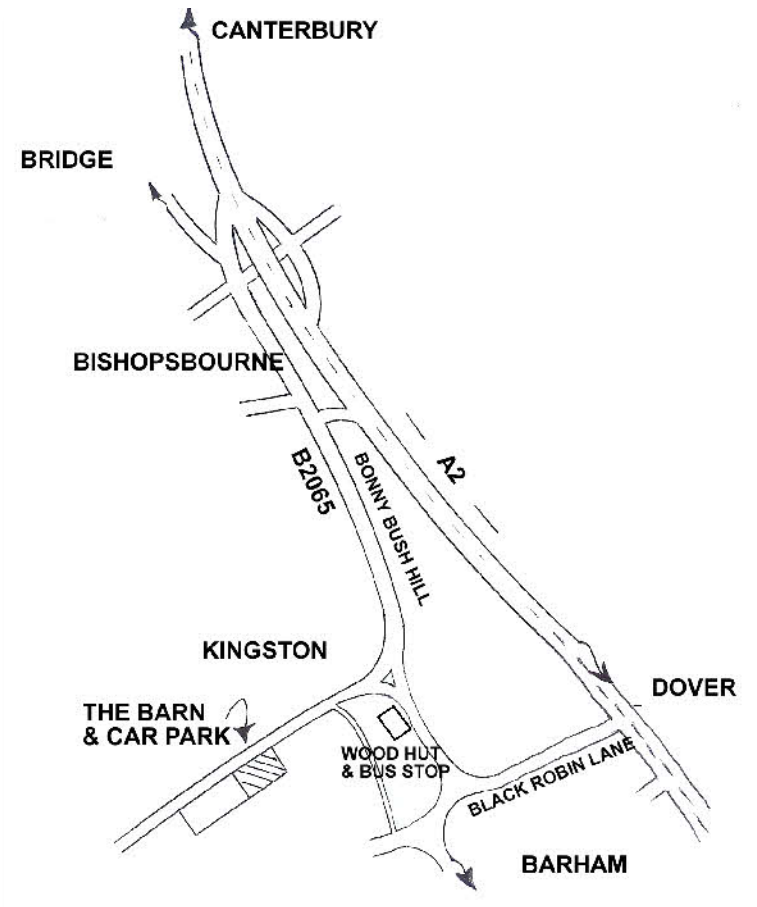
If you contact Mrs Vanessa Norley, 01304 215168, she will be able to give you full details, or visit our website at: <http://www.eastkentiam.org.uk>

The sessions are run the first Sunday of every month, from 10 am – 12 noon.

PLEASE NOTE: There is no session in January.

To find 'The Barn', Kingston:

- Leave the A2 – Canterbury to Dover Road – at the junction signposted "Bishopsbourne Kingston and Barham".
- Take the B2065 signposted "Kingston, Barham and Elham".
- At the bottom of "Bonny Bush Hill" turn right by the bus shelter into "The Street".
- Pass "Church Lane" on the left and The Barn and adjoining car park are within 200m on the left.



New Associates since the last update

Graham Joiner
 Virginia Sullivan-Lewis
 Joan Riley
 Christopher Blackburn
 Constantia Georgiou
 John Mercer
 Dennis Townsend
 Valerie Pendle
 Stephen Miller

New Members

Asoka Jayawardena
 Jonathan Dowdell

Events Data

Littlebourne War Memorial Hall
 - Second Thursday - 19.30pm

11th June - Manoeuvring Evening,
 Hersden HGV Centre (6.30pm onwards)

9th July - Kent Air Ambulance

13th August - Steve Green – Paramedic

10th September - Steve Hyde – Building
 the Channel Tunnel Terminal Bridges

8th October - AGM – Speaker TBA

12th November - TBA

10th December - Professor Cyril Isenberg
 – A Journey Through the Solar System

Test Passes

Period:

25.02.09 - 02.04.09

Associate	Date	Observer
Thomas Grant	25.02.2009	Jane Clarke
Lyndon Brand	26.02.2009	David Paine
Jamie Baker	26.02.2009	Eric Gowler
Stephen Hyde	24.03.2009	Vanessa Norley
Harry Debling	24.03.2009	Ron Sims
Jonathan Wells	01.04.2009	Alan Hollands
Jane Martin	01.04.2009	Trevor Cobb
Alma Miller	02.04.2009	Richard Hazell

If you haven't been mentioned in the Test Passes and you think you should be, please contact Elizabeth. Thank you.

Final Copy Date for September Submission - 13 August 2009

Any views contained within this publication are not necessarily the views of the Editor, EKG or the IAM.
 The Editor claims no liability for correctness of information, printing or typesetting errors.