

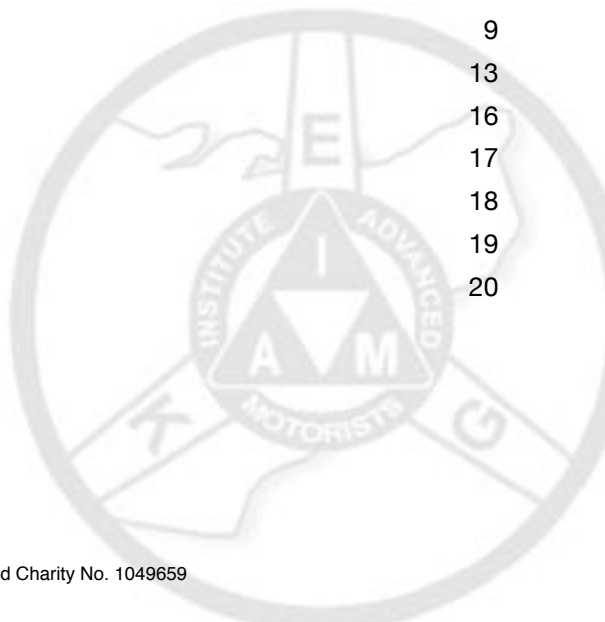
EAST KENT GROUP

Newsletter September 2003



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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.

Thank you.

You will be pleased to hear that both Mum and I have managed to get through this quarter without sustaining any injuries!! Woo Hoo!

Our country-wide journey was completed without mishap, and was such an improvement on last year's voyage of disaster that it even felt like a holiday. We barely even got lost. I very kindly let Mum drive at least two or three hundred of the overall 2500 miles we drove, which I am sure you will agree was very generous of me.

As I write this we, (Mum, Mini and I), are preparing to travel once again to Devon to take part in the North Devon Mini Register's Grand Tour 2003. We expect there to be 300 minis this year, in convoy, from Westward Ho! to Ilfracombe. Once again it is for charity, this time the Children's Hospice South West. Expect more on this in the next newsletter.

There was quite a good turn out for the manoeuvring evening at Hersden in June. Anyone who stood still too long was approached for sponsorship. Hence everyone kept moving away.... The gnats were also present, as evidenced by the numerous bites, but they still aren't as bad as the Scottish midges.

Although a number of people turned up, some didn't want to play, citing all manner of excuses, including that they thought their vehicle too large. I would just like to draw attention to, and congratulate the winner of the evening, Caroline Hill, who won by a clear margin, and was driving easily the largest vehicle there that evening. You'll have to come up with better excuses next year!

I believe that makes it two years in a row, (if not more, I can't be certain), that the event has been won by women. What is it they say about women drivers? I refute it.

We have met the challenge and won! Twice! (Possibly more - but you get the point).

By the time of the next newsletter, I will be an Auntie and Mum a Granny - although she prefers the term Nan - it's less aging apparently. Don't expect any sense out of us - and there's no need to point out that you don't get any anyway, thank you. I look forward to taking on the role of Aunt, being able to hand the baby back when I'm done. So much easier than parenthood I imagine.

Finally, and on a more sombre note, may I extend our best wishes and thoughts to Ray Pittet, Senior Observer, who sadly lost his wife in June. They were due to celebrate their Golden Anniversary in 2004.

Michelle

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

The first bit of the following episode actually happened to me while I was on holiday in the Western Isles at the end of May. I may have used a small degree of artistic licence on the rest of it!

The Clips

"You 'ere for the clips, mate?". The fellow appeared to be addressing me directly. His accent was not readily comprehensible, his apparel not readily commendable, and his dog not readily amenable.

"I beg your pardon?", I regarded him enquiringly, and as politely as possible, with more than half an eye on his canine accomplice. He had obviously done his thinking for the day, and could only muster a variation on a theme:

"The clips, you 'ere for it?". I noted the deletion of the previously included 'mate', sensing a certain lack of conviviality on the horizon, or maybe closer. His dog observed my blank expression, and looked at its' owner. The word count was paired to the bone, if we exclude repetitions:

"The clips, the clips?". Sometimes one cannot comprehend or predict the likely course of a conversation. This was just such a time. There was not much chance of formulating a mollifying reply. I tried to run through the possibilities for further discourse. They included paper clips, bicycle clips, film clips, bulldog clips, and nothing else. There was nothing for it but to parade my ignorance:

"What sort of clips?"

"Eeee-clips", he intoned triumphantly, revelling in his intellectual superiority. No clue manifested itself. Double ignorance on my part, how embarrassing. His previously hostile demeanour was beginning to thaw as he realized I knew little

of clips, or indeed eeee-clips. I had to come clean:

"OK, what's an eeee-clip?" I could swear the dog was laughing.

"Eeee-clips, mate", he corrected, "wiv' an ess". Secure in his superiority, he was beginning to feel more expansive:

"Summingk abaht the sun 'n' the moon. Oany 'appens now an' then." The fog of incomprehension was beginning to lift. Maybe the fellow - or his dog - was an astronomoner. I became a little too forward:

"Ah, now I see. Tell me, my good man, do you have a six-inch reflector?". Too late: the mood changed in an in an instant.

"Iss more'n six inches. An' it don't reflect, well not much anyway, 'ccording to my bird, an' she should know."

"Forgive me, I'm awfully sorry, you just don't seem like a Patrick Moore to me, that's all."

"How jew know my name? You clairvoyant, or summingk?"

I should have spotted the link, of course. The clothing should have given the game away, and the manner of its wearing. Obviously, the fellow had changed his name to match that of his hero, and adopted some of his characteristics . . . and his dog.

It was then that I spotted the monocle . . .

Nigel

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2003

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Annual General Meeting of the East Kent Group of Advanced Motorists will be held in the Lounge of the Littlebourne War Memorial Hall, Littlebourne on Thursday, 9th October, 2003 at 8.00 p.m.

By order of the Group Committee
S. E. Redwood, Group Secretary
1st September, 2003

All Members, Associates and Friends are invited to attend but only fully paid up Members of the I.A.M. and of the Group may make nominations and/or vote. All the current officers, i.e. Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Group Secretary and Treasurer, together with the rest of the Committee members will retire and most are available for re-election, with the exception of the Vice-Chairman and two other committee members. Nominations of Full Members are also invited in writing to the Group Secretary for any of these posts and for new Committee members, as follows:

Name:
Position:
Nominated by:
Seconded by: and
Signature of Nominee.

As you will see from the Notice to the left, we have or are losing three committee members this year: Cynthia Lewsey, our Vice-Chairman who served us for many years, has now emigrated to Spain, whilst Tony Ansell and Steve Tarrant, also long-serving Committee members, have decided to stand down due to pressure of work. All three are due our thanks and appreciation.

During the year Nick Williams agreed to be co-opted onto the Committee and we shall be confirming his appointment at the A.G.M., but this still leaves us two short. I would also mention that for some time now I have felt the need of a Publicity Officer - there have been three instances recently when he/she would have been most useful. Is there anyone out there who could help?

For my own part, I have been persuaded to carry on as Group Secretary for the time being, possibly against my better judgement, but I would be perfectly happy if there is anyone who would like to take on the job, or even part of it, now. At least think about all these positions.

On a lighter point, I am sorry we did not manage our annual Treasure Hunt this year, but we will do our best to rectify this next year. Any volunteers?

Sheila Redwood

MINUTES of the **25th Anniversary** Annual General Meeting held in the Lounge of Littlebourne War Memorial Hall, Littlebourne, Kent on Thursday, 10th October, 2002 at 8.00 p.m.

PRESENT - 46 as per the Register. The Chairman welcomed the Chief Executive of the I.A.M. - Christopher Bullock, the Divisional Council Member - John Mills and his wife Christine, the Regional Co-ordinator - Keith Cooper, also Chris and Enid Ashford and John Biggs of the S.E. Group, and Maureen and Peter Curtis of the Mid-Kent Group. Also present a little later was David Andrews of the East Kent Motor-Cyclists Group. The Chairman welcomed from way back, Kerry Dunlop and Barry Beeching, our auditor, along with our Vice-President, John Smith.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE - Mark Andrews, Tony Ansell, Donald Butcher, John Lover, Ian Maughan, Gary Nichols, Patricia Papa, John Redwood, Richard Veitch. Also from way back - Malcolm Brockman and Dave Bowley, both of whom sent their reminiscences and regards.
2. MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD ON 11th OCTOBER 2001 - Proposed by Cynthia Lewsey and seconded by Fred Henniker, it was resolved that these be approved as a correct record and were signed by the Chairman
3. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES - There were no matters arising.
4. ANNUAL REPORT OF THE GROUP CHAIRMAN - See the December 2002 Newsletter.
5. TREASURER'S REPORT AND ADOPTION OF ACCOUNTS - These were approved, proposed by John Smith, seconded by Pam Head.
6. REPORT OF THE OBSERVER CO-ORDINATOR - See the December 2002 Newsletter.
7. ELECTION OF THE GROUP COMMITTEE FOR THE ENSUING YEAR - Presided over by John Smith, with some assistance by Keith Cooper.
 - a) The following have signified their willingness to continue to serve as members of the Group Committee for the ensuing year:- Adam Ambrose, Tony Ansell, Richard Blackford, Nigel Cooke, Richard Hazell, Cynthia Lewsey, Gary Nichols, Neil Oliver, Sheila Redwood, Carol Stone, and Steve Tarrant.
 - b) The following has agreed to join the Group Committee for the ensuing year: Michelle Stone

They were all elected, proposed by Pam Head, seconded by Elizabeth Cooper and Barry Beeching.

7. APPOINTMENT OF HONORARY AUDITOR - Mr. Barry Beeching has signified his willingness to continue as Hon. Auditor for the ensuing year.
8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS - There was none.

The meeting closed and after a break to cut the anniversary cake, etc., the Chairman introduced the speaker, Mr. Christopher Bullock.

Observer Co-ordinator's Musings

Early this summer, I was requested to speak to two groups about Advanced Driving, as part of the National Training Day. When finalising the details, it was made clear that I was expected to fill two, two hour slots. No problem said I, looking forward to an opportunity to get a word in edgeways, an opportunity rarely granted either at Observer' meetings, training sessions, Committee meetings or, for that matter, at home (ouch!).

Talking for two hours on the System of Car Control at first appeared a simple matter until it suddenly struck me as to how simple a concept the System actually is.

Surely, it is no more than an elaborate version of the Mirror-Signal-Manoeuvre which we all learnt when we first learnt to drive.

There surely cannot be a sentence easier to learn than:

Information-Position-Speed-Gear-Acceleration

It wasn't until I did my Observer Training in the Year dot that the concept sunk in.

Similarly, a high proportion of Associates appear to have great difficulty in remembering the simple phases of the System, let alone put them into practice.

Is this due to lack of application by the Associate, in terms of getting to grips with the System, whether by reading or practice?

Is it due to Observer practices, i.e. not validating the System enough?

Or is it due to the fact that until the IAM sought DSA recognition, we lacked a cohesive approach to the training of Associates and Observers?

Your views would be greatly appreciated and respected.

Please forward your views to the Editor. Perhaps she might be persuaded to start a "Letters" column in the Group's Newsletter. (That requires people actually send me letters! - Ed)

It is gratifying to receive letters of appreciation to individual Observers who give of their own time, and to the group as a whole from Associates who have passed the Test, and it would be even more exciting to hear from Associates, Members and Observers on issues about Driving in general and Advanced Driving in particular.

It would be healthy to have a real dialogue within the membership. The only request I make is that letters address issues rather than personalities.

I look forward to reading your views on the System of Car Control.

Richard Hazell

Announcing the East Kent Group's FIRST Drive-In Centre!

5th October 2003 - 10 am – 12 noon

All Associates and Observers Welcome

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.



Letters to the Editor

This would be the area where any letters I had received would be printed. However, it would appear that not one person had anything to say. About anything. At all. Ho hum.

Contributions

Breaking the Law

I am well known for my reputation for arriving everywhere early. When taking the train, I regularly find that I am at the station in time to catch the preceding train. More unusually, it is not unknown for me to arrive at the airport in time for the preceding flight. Whilst my wife Liz and son find this a difficult feature of my personality to cope with, when driving it does mean that I get less stressed if I find myself at the back of an unexpected traffic jam or if I experience some other unforeseen delay.

I also have a bit of a reputation for being a pedant. Whilst some drivers can recite Roadcraft and the Highway Code from memory, my speciality is for identifying situations where all motorists (including us advanced drivers!) break the law without realising it. Fortunately, Liz is more at ease with my pedantic tendency than my time-keeping rituals, which is just as well since we do spend many hours in the car together.

In passing, I must tell you that Liz has a fascination with maps. Whereas most passengers arriving at their destination after a long distance flight will head straight for the toilets, Liz heads straight for the arrivals hall shop to buy a map of the local area! In my experience, a woman fascinated by maps is a rare beast indeed and I could write an article just about that. Maybe next time!

But that is not the topic for this month, so back to my situations where we break the law without realising it. You should all be familiar with the Highway Code and you'll know that the Code uses the word "MUST", in red, when referring to legal requirements and that to disobey these is a criminal offence. But be honest, just how many of these do you break, even though you are an advanced motorist?

Rule 92 says you must not use your horn while stationary on the road. But, when faced with a driver in front who has not realised the lights have changed to green, how many of us might be tempted to give a short hoot on the horn?

Rule 96 says you must not use hazard warning lights whilst driving unless you are on a motorway or unrestricted dual carriageway and you need to warn other drivers of a hazard or obstruction ahead. So if you're driving on a dual carriageway subject to a plated 60mph or 50mph speed limit, would it stop you from using your hazard lights in such a situation?

Rule 108 refers to the exemption to cross a solid white line to pass specific types of slow moving vehicles, but only if they are travelling at 10mph or less. I frequently find that I need to pass pedal cycles in such situations, but they rarely seem to be travelling at 10mph or less. So should I hold back and cause frustration to those behind? Or should I bend the rule a little and get by when it is safe to do so?

Rule 123 says you must not drive over a pavement except to gain lawful access to property. If an emergency vehicle is trying to pass you, might you be tempted to take to the pavement to get out of its way? (An interesting one this, for rule 29 says that "if an emergency vehicle approaches using flashing blue lights, headlights and/or sirens, keep off the road".

Which to me, implies that pulling in to the nearside is insufficient and we should indeed get off the road on to the pavement. However, rule 194 says "...if necessary, pull to the side of the road and stop." So which is it to be?)

Rule 164 says that you must pass round the central markings of a mini roundabout unless you are driving a large vehicle. This one has received considerable press over the years, and like you, I know of several mini-roundabouts where to do so would be total stupidity and very dangerous.

Rule 223 says you must display parking lights when parked on a road with a speed limit greater than 30mph. If you are parking on a wide 40mph road, do you always remember to use your parking lights?

And finally, my favourite. Rule 266 says you must always obey the flashing red stop lights at level crossings. Next time you are at the front of the queue and the barriers rise, you'll find that the red lights will continue to flash for quite a few seconds. If you do try to wait for the red lights to stop flashing before proceeding, you'll find the road rage behind unimaginable. You'll also find out for yourselves just how many drivers break rule 92!

Keith Cooper
IAM Regional Co-ordinator

Sunday Lunch Run

The other Sunday some of my motorcycling colleagues and I took part in the first Sunday Lunch Run of the year. In the past we have had a starting point and a finishing point, normally a pub where we meet our families for lunch. A leader is elected who has to find a testing route between these points. During the lunch, the route and riding are discussed in a light-hearted, leg-pulling manner. Much humour is evident with family members joining in.

This year, as we were trying to involve some new members, I decided to do a Cinque Ports run on a predetermined route. We left Tesco at Whitfield on a route past Dover Castle and on to Hythe Light Railway Station. From there we travelled on to the Town Hall at Romney. Next was Hastings Sea Life Centre and finally the longest leg to Sandwich Town Hall. We finished our ride at the Crown in Eythorne, where we met our families and had a nice Sunday lunch. The overall route was about 140 miles.

If anyone is interested in doing something similar in a car, I will see if I can get it organised. Maybe a three counties run, say Canterbury Kent, Rye Sussex, Dorking Surrey. Could I tempt you to five countries? England, France, Belgium, Germany and Luxembourg.

Other suggestions welcome. See me on club night.

Barrie Bailey

Brits Top Accident Survey

Italians may be famed for their hot and fiery temperaments, but it's cool-mannered Brits who need to exercise more caution behind the wheel. In a five-country poll by motor insurer Direct Line, motorists were asked to nominate the worst drivers in Europe. Italy topped the table with 36 per cent of the votes, however the title rightly belongs to the UK where there are more accidents per head than any of the other countries questioned. Staid Brits came well down the league table of reputedly bad drivers - a sedate number six - but not so France, whose reputation as the second-worst drivers in Europe is in no way borne out by figures. French drivers have less than half the number of accidents of Brits.

The need for speed was unanimously named as the biggest failing of dangerous motorists (25 per cent), followed closely by erratic driving (18 per cent). At the other end of the spectrum, the title of best driver was awarded to precise and efficient German motorists (27 per cent), undeservedly so as Germans have the second-highest accident rate of the European countries questioned. Long hours behind the wheel may go some way to explaining the UK's high accident rate.

Direct Line's research shows UK drivers spend more time on the road than any other motorists - an average of 8.5 hours a week compared to a European average of 7.5 hours. But it's not through choice. Only 38 per cent of Brits "love" driving - the lowest percentage of the countries questioned - compared to almost two-thirds (63 per cent) of Germans who can't wait to rev their engines. Direct Line motor business manager Steve Treloar said: "We've got a long way to go to improve driving conditions in the UK. I think the finding that we have one of the worst accident rates in Europe is going to come as a surprise to many motorists."

Newspaper source

It's Summer...The Season of Silly Claims

Car Insurance workers have a smashing time - sorting through all the wacky reasons that customers use to explain their accidents and mishaps.

It came out of nowhere...

- I had been driving for over 40 years before I fell asleep at the wheel and hit a crash barrier.
- I thought my garage only had four posts. I hit a fifth one I knew nothing about...
- I hit the lorry which was parked on the other side of the road coming the other way.
- I reversed into my drive late at night and hit a tree I didn't even have.
- The telephone pole was approaching fast. As I swerved to avoid it I hit an oncoming car.

Those poor pedestrians...

- The pedestrian had no idea which way to run, so I hit him.
- I saw a slow-moving, sad-faced old gentleman as he bounced off my bonnet.
- The accident happened as I waved to a man I hit last week.
- The bloke was staggering all over the road. It took me a few tries before I finally hit him.
- The cause of the accident was a little chap with a big mouth.
- I knocked this man over but he admitted it was his fault as it had happened before.
- I was trying to avoid hitting the bumper of the car in front and the only thing to stop this happening was to hit the pedestrian.

It was like this...

- I couldn't have avoided hitting the lamppost as all I could see were pedestrians – and then they moved out of the way.
- As I approached the T-junction a Give Way sign appeared that I had never seen before in my life and I was unable to stop in time.
- As I left work to travel home I drove into a bus that was five minutes early.
- My car was legally parked when I reversed it into the other car.
- An invisible car came out of nowhere, hit my car, then disappeared into thin air.
- A bull was nearby and a fly must have tickled him or something because the next thing he was goring my car.
- As I pulled off, I glanced at my mother-in-law and headed straight over the embankment.

Ouch, that must hurt!...

- I drove straight into the shop window and sustained injuries to my wife.
- I saw the car in front of me but it didn't see me and even though he'd stopped, we crashed.
- I was on the way to my doctor with rear-end trouble when my universal joint gave way, causing me to hit the tree.
- I told the police officer I wasn't hurt, but on removing my hair found out that I had a fractured skull.
- I thought my side window was open but it wasn't when I put my head through it.
- I was knocked out as a result of the accident and taken to hospital where I sustained serious injuries.

Oh Really...

- The accident was due to a bend in the road.
- I remember nothing at all after passing out near the Rose and Crown until I came round and saw PC Taylor.
- The car collided with me without giving any warning whatsoever.

- I had been shopping for plants all day when suddenly a bush appeared out of nowhere which obscured my vision and caused me to crash.
- A cow wandered into my car. I was later informed that the cow was in fact a half-wit.

When all else fails...

- The lady who was heading towards me lost her head and then it happened.
- I consider neither vehicle to blame, but if I had to say who was to blame it was definitely the other idiot.
- I can give no details of the accident as I was not paying any attention at the time.
- I looked for the sign, but the more I looked, the more I couldn't see it.
- The other car collided with mine without notifying me of its intentions.
- I was thrown from my car as it left the road and it was later found by some stray cows.
- If the other driver could only have stopped a few feet behind himself, the accident would not have happened.
- To try to avoid the imminent collision with a pick-up truck, I ran into the smallest car I could see.
- Three women were talking, one stepped to the left, the other to the right, so I had to have an accident with one of them.
- I left my Mini Metro on the 4th floor of the car park and when I returned someone had swapped it for a Range Rover.
- The accident was due to an invisible lorry driven by a maniac.
- There were plenty of onlookers but unfortunately no witnesses.
- I believe if I had lost my head in any way the accident would have been much worse.
- A pedestrian hit me and then disappeared under my car.

- A fly was obscuring my view of the road so I swerved to try to lose it and hit a telegraph pole.
- There was no damage to the car as the signpost will testify.
- The car in front stopped suddenly and I gently mounted the car and caressed the luggage rack.
- The other man changed his mind so I had to run over him.
- Because the car was silver, when it caught the sun it made it seem invisible to my eyes.
- If the other man hadn't narrowly missed me the accident would never have happened.
- I did not fail to stop at the scene of an accident. I had already told the other driver what I thought of him and went home.
- We were both reading the information on a signpost when the truck in front slowed down and caused us to hit him.
- The truck backed up right through my car and into my wife who was in the back seat.
- I hit a bump and my foot jumped on the accelerator with some force.
- One minute the road was empty, suddenly there were two or three cars. I panicked.
- After the accident a complete stranger offered to be a witness in my favour for very little.

Source: The People Newspaper



IAM Hails New Mobile Phone Law As Beginning Of The End For "Phoney Drivers"

Issued: 24th June 2003

Plans to subject drivers to a £30 fine and three penalty points for using a hand-held phone at the wheel of a car were welcomed today (24 June 2003) by the Institute of Advanced Motorists.

IAM Chief Examiner Bryan Lunn said: "The IAM welcomes the introduction of three penalty points plan because not only will it provide a much needed deterrent, it will also make enforcement easier."

But Mr Lunn cautioned that drivers should not interpret this as a 'green light' for making calls from hands-free units while driving. "Mobile phone calls while driving are still a potentially lethal distraction, whether the phone is hand held or hands-free. The concentration is split between the driving and the phone call."

Mr Lunn also said that a programme of enforcement, while welcomed should be combined with a greater education initiative. "The war on 'phoney drivers' has begun. We can all play our part by discouraging anybody making or receiving phone calls while in charge of the vehicle."

Mr Lunn restated the IAM's long standing car phone advice to drivers, pointing out that the IAM is not anti car-phone - but it is anti dangerous driving. "Never use a hand held phone when you are driving. Even if you have a hands-free system, you should avoid using the phone while driving as it distracts you from the main task. If you receive a call while driving, keep your conversation short and tell the caller that you can't talk at the moment. Then find somewhere legal, safe and convenient to return the call," he said.

IAM And Autoglass Work On Young Driver Safety Campaign

Issued: 30 June 2003

The Institute of Advanced Motorists (IAM), working with Autoglass, has prepared a five-step plan to help new drivers gain the experience they will need to drive safely.

The move follows a survey by Autoglass revealing that, once they have passed their L-test, four in five young drivers believe they are a risk to themselves, their passengers and other drivers. Three-quarters say they're a risk to pedestrians and one third admit that their driving is erratic.

Bryan Lunn, IAM Chief Examiner, said: "Learning to drive for real starts with the basic L-test, but it doesn't end there. Gaining experience and looking at driving as a skill for life could prevent the crash that ruins your life or someone else's."

Nigel Doggett, Autoglass managing director, said: "These youngsters have good basic skills, but their lack of experience means they're poor at spotting hazards or managing unfamiliar situations - and that's what makes them a danger to themselves and others."

What they think the next generation of learners should have to do	%
Drive on the motorway	64
Drive in bad weather	56
Deal with dangerous driving situations	55
Drive at night	55
Take refresher tests	41
Log a minimum number of hours	36

The IAM and Autoglass five-step plan for novice drivers recommends:

- Get another, more experienced, driver to take you out at night, in bad weather or with passengers in the car.
- Ask your instructor or another driver to take you on the motorway for the first time.
- Always aim to stay at least two seconds behind the car in front.
- Expect the unexpected, like cars stopping out of the blue at roundabouts or overtaking as you cross a line of traffic.
- After passing your test, make some trips simply to practise your driving and consider joining your local IAM.

Mistakes young drivers admit they've made	%
Gone over the speed limit	51
Rushed out at roundabouts or junctions	40
Not had enough experience to judge situations	39
Driven erratically	34
Cut up another driver	28
Not given enough time for braking	26



Drivers Get School Holiday Reminder As Children Take To Streets

Issued: 24 July 2003

Children playing unsupervised in the street during the summer holidays could present an additional seasonal hazard for inattentive drivers, the Institute of Advanced Motorists warned today.

August is always one of the worst months of the year for child road injuries, with over 3000 children injured or killed (all severities) according to the most recently available figures (RAGB 2001).

“Our road safety specialists have noted a definite rise in child road injuries during school holidays,”

said Bryan Lunn, Chief Examiner at the IAM. “No driver sets out to knock down a child. But inattentive motorists may not realise that familiar side streets are suddenly more hazardous – as children start using them as summer playgrounds for bike riding, football, skateboarding or just running around,” he said. “It’s unusual to see children playing in the street these days but if they are going to do so, the summer holidays tends to be when it happens.”

Mr Lunn was speaking as the IAM reissued its popular fact sheet “Holiday Driving in the UK” which contains valuable advice for motorists as they prepare for the summer. Drivers should be mindful of children playing in the street not only at holiday destinations but also nearer to home.

Holiday Driving in the UK

Motoring holidays should be enjoyable but they can be spoilt if you and your car aren’t properly prepared for the journeys that are involved. By following these simple IAM guidelines, your driving will be easier and safer.

- Modern cars are not infallible so make sure your car is properly roadworthy before you set off on holiday and remember to carry out the POWER check every day:
 - P**etrol
 - O**il
 - W**ater (including screen washers)
 - E**lectrics (lights, indicators, horn etc)
 - R**ubber (including wiper blades)
- Overloading the car is dangerous. If all your luggage doesn’t go in the boot, use a properly fitted roof rack. A loaded roof rack (and even an empty one) will add to the wind resistance and increase your fuel consumption, so keep an eye on the fuel gauge.
- Find somewhere safe, legal and convenient to stop to take a break with some exercise at least every two and a half-hours. Frequent short stops are better than one long stop. Avoid heavy meals and alcohol before or during your journey. It may be worth travelling overnight but not after a day’s work and it’s always a help if you can share the driving with someone else.
- Plan your route before you set off and get someone else do the map reading for you.
- Additional traffic on holiday routes may cause severe congestion in some places. Overestimate how long it’s going to take you and leave enough time to get to where you are going.
- Keep calm. Getting frustrated with the inevitable traffic congestion won’t get you there any quicker. If you can, travel during off-peak times. Always be careful and courteous.
- Keep your car radio tuned into the RDS mode for up to date travel information

*All press releases sourced from
IAM website*

Picture yourself near a gurgling mountain stream. Birds are softly chirping in the crisp cool mountain air. Nothing can bother you here. No one knows this secret place. You are in total seclusion from that place called "the world." The soothing sound of a gentle waterfall fills the air with a cascade of serenity. The water is clear.

You can easily make out the face of the person whose head you're holding under the water. Look. It's the person who caused you all this stress in the first place. What a pleasant surprise. You let them up... just for a quick breath... then splash! ...Back under they go... You allow yourself as many deep breaths as you want. There now... feeling better?

Internet Source

Correlation.....

[a] The Japanese eat very little fat and suffer fewer heart attacks than the British or Americans.

[b] On the other hand, the French eat a lot of fat and also suffer fewer heart attacks than the British or Americans.

[c] Conclusion: Eat what you like. It's speaking English that kills you.

Internet Source

Fertiliser

"...transparent, innit?" said the man with the lager. "Nah." said the other bloke, opening his crisps. "Nah, mate, nah. Depends 'ow much fertiliser you got on it. [Fertiliser was not the exact word, but serves to convey the general idea]. Even if you clean all the fertiliser orf, it still ain't transparent."

"Mine is."

"No it ain't"

" 'Tis. I cleaned it wiv that glass cleaner. Spent ages on it. All nice and shiny now. I ain't doin' it again, just to keep you 'appy."

"Your windscreen ain't transparent!", shouted crispman, crunching his hand down on the packet. Little shards of salt-and-vinegar crisps torpedoed across the bar and mortally wounded a spectating peanut. "Glass ain't transparent, see", he continued, "not entirely. It only lets through 92% of the light, even when you clean it wiv that glass cleaner. Unless you got a newish motor, then it's even less, maybe about 85%"

"New motors got dirty windscreens, then?"

"Could say that, I s'pose. 'Cos they're all tinted now, even on a little square Koreamobile 1.0 L with wheels the size of saucers and an exhaust like a drinking straw."

"So you can't see so well?"

"Progress, mate. It's why they need brighter headlights now, to light up the road the same as before. Plus they've really got safety in mind. They don't want people to drive in fog, so the new lights are more blue, scatters the light much more - hey presto - can't see in fog."

"Maybe they don't have fog in Korea..."

Nigel

Car for sale

1985 Blue Volkswagen Golf, Only 15km, Only first gear and reverse used, Never driven hard, Original tyres, Original brakes, Original fuel and oil, Only one driver, Owner wishing to sell due to employment layoff.



For those interested, here be the results of the Driving Challenge staged at Hersden in June. Congratulations to Caroline Hill who won by quite a clear margin, while also driving the largest vehicle present that evening. Shame on all those people who wouldn't play because they thought their car was too big, (and I think you know who you are).

It was a pleasant evening, and what better excuse to play than a bunch of cones, just asking to be slalomed around? I only took out the one wing mirror, (bringing back fond memories of a motorcycle trip to the South of France a few years back, and filtering through traffic on Nice seafront and taking out the mirror of the local constabulary...ahem. I think that they were more shocked I took the trouble to put the mirror back in position – that is obviously not the French way), unfortunately it wasn't mine, but Gary's, but technically he **was** driving, although blindfolded, but never mind eh?

For those of you who weren't there – see what you missed? Now who doesn't want to drive their car blindfolded? Although now I think about it, seems to me that that is what most road users are doing every day, unless my bike really **is** invisible?

Ed

Driving Test Penalty Points									
Place	Name	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total	Average
1	Caroline Hill	10	5	20	0	12	10	57	9.50
2	Peter Cartwright	20	15	20	0	1.5	10	66.5	11.08
3	Glen Dunn	0	10	20	5	16.5	30	81.5	13.58
4	Harry Venables	0	15	20	40	21	45	141	23.50
5	Don Butcher	30	5	20	40	11.5	50	156.5	26.08
6	Jenny Hart	0	0	20	40	23	75	158	26.33
7	Michelle Stone	10	10	20	50	55	26	171	28.50
8	Gary Nichols	20	10	20	20	50	55	175	29.17
9	John Shaw	30	20	20	60	17.5	30	177.5	29.58
10	Nigel Cooke	20	15	20	60	55	20	190	31.67
11	Elizabeth Cooper	10	0	20	120	16	30	196	32.67
12	John Hazzard	40	15	20	90	9	25	199	33.17
13	Barry Brasier	40	15	20	60	63	15	213	35.50
14	Jan Singer	20	35	20	125	12	35	247	41.17
15	Brian Hodgkins	30	X	20	80	21	20	171	34.20
16	Sheila Gair	30	X	20	125	20	120	315	63.00

Here is a dissertation on physical science for your enlightenment. I don't know where it came from so it must be true!

Today's scientific question is: What in the world is electricity and where does it go after it leaves the toaster?

Here is a simple experiment that will teach you an important electrical lesson: On a cool dry day, scuff your feet along a carpet, then reach your hand into a friend's mouth and touch one of his dental fillings. Did you notice how your friend twitched violently and cried out in pain? This teaches one that electricity can be a very powerful force, but we must never use it to hurt others unless we need to learn an important lesson about electricity.

It also illustrates how an electrical circuit works. When you scuffed your feet, you picked up batches of "electrons", which are very small objects that carpet manufacturers weave into carpet so that they will attract dirt. The electrons travel through your bloodstream and collect in your finger, where they form a spark that leaps to your friend's filling, and then travel down to his feet and back into the carpet, thus completing the circuit.

AMAZING ELECTRONIC FACT: If you scuffed your feet long enough without touching anything, you would build up so many electrons that your finger would explode! But this is nothing to worry about unless you have carpeting.

Although we modern persons tend to take our electric lights, radios, mixers, etc. for granted, hundreds of years ago people did not have any of these things, which is just as well because there was no place to plug them in. Then along came the first Electrical Pioneer, Benjamin Franklin, who flew a kite in a lightning storm

and received a serious electrical shock. This proved that lightning was powered by the same force as carpets, but it also damaged Franklin's brain so severely that he started speaking only in incomprehensible maxims, such as, "A penny saved is a penny earned." Eventually he had to be given a job running the post office.

After Franklin came a herd of Electrical Pioneers whose names have become part of our electrical terminology: Myron Volt, Mary Louise Amp, James Watt, Bob Transformer, etc. These pioneers conducted many important electrical experiments. Among them, Galvani discovered, (this is the truth), that when he attached two different kinds of metal to the leg of a frog, an electrical current developed and the frog's leg kicked, even though it was no longer attached to the frog, which was dead anyway. Galvani's discovery led to enormous advances in the field of amphibian medicine. Today, skilled veterinary surgeons can take a frog that has been seriously injured or killed, implant pieces of metal in its muscles, and watch it hop back into the pond -- almost.

But the greatest Electrical Pioneer of them all was Thomas Edison, who was a brilliant inventor despite the fact that he had little formal education and lived in New Jersey. Edison's first major invention in 1877 was the phonograph, which could soon be found in thousands of American homes, where it basically sat until 1923, when the record was invented. But Edison's greatest achievement came in 1879 when he invented the electric company. Edison's design was a brilliant adaptation of the simple electrical circuit: the electric company sends electricity through a wire to a customer, then immediately gets the electricity back through another wire, then, (this is the brilliant part), sends it right back to the customer again.

This means that an electric company can sell a customer the same batch of electricity thousands of times a day and never get caught, since very few customers take the time to examine their electricity closely. In fact, the last year any new electricity was generated was 1937.

Today, thanks to men like Edison and Franklin, and frogs like Galvani's, we receive almost unlimited benefits from electricity. For example, in the past decade scientists have developed the laser, an electronic appliance so powerful that it can vaporize a bulldozer 2000 yards away, yet so precise that doctors can use it to perform delicate operations to the human eyeball, provided they remember to change the power setting from "Bulldozer" to "Eyeball."

Internet Source



What if... a car pulls out on you?

When a car pulls out on you, what happens next depends less on the driver than you. Your impulses will tell you you're about to hit something, that you've got to stare at it until you've seen where it's going next and that it might be better to lay the bike down now. Dismiss them all.

Brake

Whatever course of action you end up taking, braking buys you time and space while you're deciding. In an average accident scenario, you've got 1.8 seconds to decide what to do - and at 60mph, in that time, you'll have got 150 feet closer to whatever it is you don't want to hit. Braking slows you down faster than laying the bike down.

Look

Not at what the car's doing but through the gap in front of it. Your brain will only allow you to do what it knows will work. If you haven't seen your escape route, and you aren't going to stop in time, you will hit the car.

Aim For The Front

One study found that in 99% of cars-pulling-out-on-bikes accidents, the car driver sees the motorcycle and instinctively goes for the brakes. Result? Room to get past at the front, no room at the back. Even if you freeze and can't quite make it, you'll hit the car's bonnet and roll over it — not the chest-height, specially-reinforced passenger compartment.

How Never To Crash

Don't panic. Practice your emergency braking. It can't be learned quickly in an emergency, and according to almost every study, hardly any of us can do it properly when we need it most.

Ride 87

New Associates since June 2003

Ms Jill Hutcheson
 Mr Domenic De Paolis
 Dr Robert Thompson
 Miss Helen Page
 Miss Lorraine Mackie
 Mr Alistair Robertson
 Miss Susan Fagg
 Mr Anthony Bowler
 Miss Fay Godby
 Mr Richard Davis
 Mr Julian Brazier
 Mrs Jennifer Wood
 Miss Linda Sumner

New Members

Mrs Allanah James

Events Data

Littlebourne WMH - Second Thursday - 19.30pm

September 11 – Colin Carr, Sandwich Boatman. Talking about various water based matters, including Harbourmaster's job.

October 9 – AGM.

Guest Speaker Lester Parsons.

November 13 – Richard Andrews, Technical Specialist Biodiversity, at the Kent Area office of the Environment Agency, talking about "Roads and Wildlife".

December 11 – Christmas Social

Test Passes

Period: 07.06.03 - 06.08.03

Date	Associate	Observer
07.06.03	Harry Venables	Michelle Stone
07.06.03	Philip Plant	Barrie Bailey
14.06.03	Catherine Sturgess	Ted Willey
14.06.03	Jacqui Gaze	Paul Clark
08.07.03	Paul Towns	Paul Taylor
12.07.03	Alan Jeffery	June Thomson
13.07.03	Jon Millah	Trevor Brown
16.07.03	Peter Waldren	Richard Blackford
28.07.03	Gillian Jukes	Alan Norman
06.08.03	Carole Seabrook	Fred Page

Congratulations also to Barrie Bailey who passed his Senior Observer Qualification, and to Paul Johnson who requalified as Senior Observer.

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