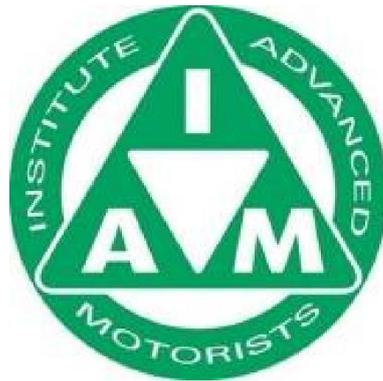


Warrington Group of Advanced Motorists



July / August 2015
Newsletter



CHAIRMAN'S CORNER

As some of you may be aware, I've recently come back from a holiday in Florida where I was required, like most holiday makers, to hire a car and drive on their roads. One of the things I always struggle with when driving on their Interstates (their equivalent of our motorways) is that there is no real lane discipline in force, enabling overtaking to be legally carried out regardless of which lane you are travelling in. As you know, this is entirely different to over here, and it would be interesting to know what their accident rates are compared to ours, because one thing this does lead to is you get no "lane hogs" and you don't get irate impatient drivers in lane 3 or 4 tailgating you in an effort to "bully" out of the way, thus reducing the potential for road-rage.

Another difference, and a very good one in my opinion, is that at traffic lights, unless signage tells you differently, you treat red traffic lights as "give way" signs when you are looking to turn right (for us it would be left) and you always have to give way to pedestrians already crossing in your path. This helps alleviate traffic hold-ups and on our congested roads I can't see any real reason why it couldn't be adopted.

Finally, a quick note about petrol prices - the price of a gallon of petrol was 1.69 (US Dollars) and according to my simple maths this equates to around 28p per litre!! (This is adjusting for the difference between an imperial gallon and a US gallon and a fluctuating exchange rate). The major cause of the difference is of course, Government levied tax where (excluding state taxes) the US levy 18 cents per gallon compared to the UK's 58 pence per litre.

Here's a brain teaser for you. As usual the answer will be shown later in the newsletter.

An ape is trying to climb on a pole that is 60 feet high. Due to the slippery surface, the ape climbs 3 feet in a minute only to slip back 2 feet. How much time do you think the ape will take to reach the top of the pole?

Keep safe



Andrew Bloomer

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS AND CONGRATULATIONS

Hi there

WELCOME

Welcome to new members David Addison, Marie Dobosz, Ian Lavery, Ian Massey, & Paul Nicholls to the Car section. Simon Burgess, Matthew Inett & Stephen Wood to the Motorcycle section; should you have any questions or queries please ask and we will endeavour to resolve them.

Congratulations to Richard Dunning and Peter Sollars on passing the Car test and to Neil Spottiswood and Gary Quormby on passing the Motorcycle test.



When you pass the Test and receive your membership information from head quarters could you please let me know so that the membership records can be updated with your IAM membership number and expiry date.

A special note for our email members please keep your mailbox cleansed as they sometimes bounce back also if you are thinking of changing your email address then please remember to let Peter or myself know

Also attached is the Membership renewal form. It may seem early however the next newsletter is September.

TTFN

Ian Bell (Membership secretary)

FUNNIES

British Humour Is Different: An extract of real adverts placed in UK newspapers

COWS, CALVES: NEVER BRED. Also 1 gay bull for sale.	JOINING NUDIST COLONY! Must sell washer and dryer £100.
FOR SALE BY OWNER. Complete set of Encyclopaedia Britannica, 45 volumes. Excellent condition, £200 or best offer. No longer needed, got married, wife knows everything.	FREE PUPPIES. Mother is a Kennel Club registered German Shepherd. Father is a Super Dog, able to leap tall fences in a single bound.
FREE PUPPIES 1/2 Cocker Spaniel, 1/2 sneaky neighbour's dog.	WEDDING DRESS FOR SALE .. Worn once by mistake. Call Stephanie.

DON'T GO RED IN THE FACE WHEN DEALING WITH BLUE LIGHTS

Recent motoring tips from the IAM's head of driving standards and ex-police driving instructor Peter Rodger which look at how to respond to an emergency vehicle. Here's how you can help an emergency vehicle reach its destination quickly and safely.

1. If you see an emergency vehicle has stopped, slow down and make sure you give them a wide berth as you pass them. Watch out for people rushing about near them in a panic.
2. If there is an emergency vehicle behind you, be prepared to pull over and stop where it is safe to do so - look for where you can let it pass through safely. Avoid blocking junctions or stopping in the middle of the road - indicate to let other road users and the emergency driver know what you are doing.
3. When pulling over avoid stopping on kerbs, pavements, bends and verges as they can hide potential hazards from the emergency driver and put pedestrians using the pavement at risk.
4. If you hear the sound of emergency sirens but can't see where they are work out where there is space to go if it does come your way.
5. There may be more than one emergency vehicle approaching so don't forget to check your mirrors and blind spot before merging back in with traffic.
6. If you are travelling on a one-way street and you are unable to pull over because of congestion, continue driving - don't slow down and make it squeeze past. Don't panic and rush either. Allow the emergency vehicle to overtake you only when there is enough space and when it is safe to do so.
7. Never speed up and outrun an emergency vehicle. If you go through a red light or into a bus lane to make way for an emergency vehicle you are still breaking the law.
8. When travelling on the motorway, emergency vehicles may use the hard shoulder. Avoid blocking it to allow them to pass quickly and easily if they need to.

Peter said: "Emergency drivers are trained to deal with awkward situations, and are allowed to use bus lanes, go through traffic lights, etc. Don't panic in front of them - stay calm and move out of the way so they can get past. Look at their indicators if you are near a junction - the emergency driver will try to let you know where they need to go."

For more information on how road users can help emergency vehicles with their journeys, please watch a short video by GEM Motoring Assist called Blue Light Aware @ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=btRHvQEIkCU>

FORMER PRESIDENT ALAN DOMVILLE CONTINUES HIS REMINISCENCES AS A MOTORING WRITER & LIFELONG GROUP FRIEND.....

The finest piece of newspaper journalism ever written would look pretty ordinary without a little display - and with a little effort even the duller of tomes can be "sold" quite effectively by a page designer.

When I first took responsibility for the motoring pages at the *Guardian* I had completed two years as a sub-editor and had become keenly interested in the art of design even though I couldn't draw for toffee. With the blessing of the then editor I began to revamp both the motoring pages and all of the other features content of the newspaper for which I had responsibility.

There were two problems to surmount: this was the time before computers when pages were created in metal - and when most of the production staff (compositors) were accustomed only to "shovelling" (their word) the lines of type into the page frame, known as the forme, without any fuss.

Using as much guile as I could (free cinema tickets were useful) I was able to obtain the support of two of the comps and we put together pages that were revolutionary. The most memorable was a page featuring a steering wheel and into each segment between the spokes were pictures of cars. Not everyone was impressed, however. The design guru of the day was a chap called Allen Hutt who regularly won the national award for his pages. I decided to copy exactly his winning page for that year and I thought the end result looked terrific.

It attracted only one comment - from a sidelined veteran editor who entered the production department and while gripping his ulcerated stomach he cast his eye over the page. He frowned and said: "b***** h*** Alan. Don't do this anymore - everyone will want to do it."

I hope I offered more encouragement to new recruits later in my career!

When pages were completed they were hammered tightly and then transferred to a trolley and taken away for further processing - but on one occasion the comp pushed his frame a split second before the trolley was in place and most of the type crashed through the gap and down on to the floor. In those days journalists were not allowed by the powerful unions to touch the type but all that went by the board that morning. The overseer gave instructions that everyone around should get on their hands and knees and put everything back together again. We all worked with the stricture that it cost the company £36 for every minute we were late getting the page away and we reckoned the delay cost them more than £2,000.

IAM calls for radical changes to reverse alarming road death figures in Britain

The Institute of Advanced Motorists (IAM) is very concerned at the alarming increase in road deaths in Britain, following the publication of the latest accident statistics from the Department for Transport today.

Figures released this morning (25 June 2015) show that overall casualties have risen for the first time in 18 years.

The IAM urges the government to take radical steps to reverse these worrying figures before they become a trend, in particular that pedestrian protection must not be ignored and moved much further up the agenda, and the decline in numbers of police traffic officers must be reversed.

The figures show there were 1,775 reported road deaths in 2014, an increase of 4% compared with 2013. The number of those killed or seriously injured in Britain increased by 5% to 24,582. There were a total of 194,477 casualties of all severities, an increase of 6%, the first increase in overall casualties since 1997.

Pedestrian fatalities increased by 12 per cent from 398 in 2013 to 446 in 2014, and vehicle traffic levels increased by 2.4 per cent between 2013 and 2014. In addition, the numbers of people killed on roads with a 20mph limit increased by 367%.

Last week, Key Reported Road Casualties Scotland 2014 figures showed a total of 11,240 road casualties reported in 2014 and there were 200 fatalities - 6% more than 2013.

Neil Greig, IAM director of policy and research, said: "These figures are greatly concerning and show the time for action is now. We are clear on what needs to happen. We call again for road safety targets to be reintroduced - they are the only clear way of ensuring reductions are measured and achieved. There also must be a greater focus on driver and rider quality and incentives for companies and individuals to continuously develop their skills. There also needs to be a focus on tackling pedestrian deaths, an area which is often ignored. We believe that car technology and design should now shift from occupant protection to protecting the vulnerable outside cars."

Neil suggested manufacturers should pursue developments like pop-up bonnets, pedestrian airbags and detector systems.

He added: "We also need better pedestrian facilities to segregate traffic and vulnerable users where speeds are high, and campaigns to educate pedestrians themselves as they are most often at fault in crashes."

JULY / AUGUST NEWSLETTER

Contributions to September / October newsletter are more than welcome. Please send them to: newsletter@warram.org.uk or pass them to any committee member. The deadline for September / October newsletter is Sunday 21st August 2015.



QR CODE

The group has set up a QR code - simply scan the image with a smartphone and it will take you to our website.



How to avoid aches and pains when riding (Part One)

Wrists

If you ride a bike for long enough you can fall foul of an affliction known as carpal tunnel syndrome. The 'carpal tunnel' is a bracelet of bones and ligament at the base of your hand and anyone who performs a repetitive task enough times - clutch, brakes, throttle, two-finger salute - with the wrong posture will irritate these tendons and cause swelling and scar tissue. The condition gets worse when combined with cold and vibration, so time spent in the saddle puts you in the high-risk category.

To avoid it you need to look at your riding position says Dr Yew Meng, who has been riding for six years: "Adjust the height of your handlebars, or your rider height, so that your forearm, wrist and brake lever are in a straight line. It's important that your wrists are in a neutral position, not flexed up or down".

Back

The position your back gets into when you're on a bike is somewhere between unnatural and impossible. One of the worst postural habits you can have is to consistently lean forward, twisting occasionally: exactly what you do on the road. "You need to avoid any exaggerated curve in the lower back, a posture that cramps muscles, nerves and disks. This is hard to do on a sports bike" says Dr Yew Meng. "When you ride any bike the muscles that run along the lower spine will get strained and pulled out of shape, most of the time they will hold out, but occasionally they will give up. This is when they will go into spasm".

"Rest or a swift visit to the osteopath is the only answer. When you get home, lie on your back with a pillow under your knees" says Dr Colin Frasier. "This position relaxes key back muscles and puts the least strain on your spine". It also helps to do back strengthening exercises.

Neck and shoulders

"The head is a very heavy organ and if you've got a helmet on top of that your neck has a lot to support" says Dr Weng. About four kgs, in fact. On a bike, the neck tends to get extended at an unnatural angle and its nerves get squeezed and pinched. The jerks and jolts of acceleration and braking don't help either. To compound the problem they are connected through the spinal chord to the shoulders which is why neck problems will often 'refer' the pain to the shoulder area.

The key here is to get back in balance, occasionally. It's essential that you allow your body some posture changes and a chance to relax for a few minutes to ease the tension. That means a few more pit stops on long journeys.

Lungs

Research published last year in medical journal, The Lancet estimates that 20,000 deaths per year are linked to traffic fumes. "This isn't helped by the fact that motorcycle helmets need to have air inlets where your mouth is so all the harmful dust is being channelled directly through to your mouth and nose" says Dr Yew Meng. This means that chronic bronchitis and asthma will be exacerbated when you're on your bike - especially in urban areas. The research also estimated that traffic fumes were responsible for more than 25,000 new cases of chronic bronchitis and more than 500,000 asthma attacks.

"I would always recommend wearing a pollution mask inside your helmet" says Meng, "especially for journeys in congested traffic." Breathing through you nose instead of your mouth will also help filter out some of the harmful airborne particles.

Fingers

Next time you're held up by road works and you ride past the fella with the jack hammer, don't curse him, he's only trying to flatten the road so that you don't end up with the same condition that will soon force him into early retirement. That condition is Raynaud's Syndrome, otherwise known as "white finger" , which refers to a restriction in the blood supply to your extremities - particularly your fingers. It comes from constant vibration and turns the fingers - usually index and middle - white, leaving them numb and with reduced dexterity and grip strength. Regardless of how good the shocks on your bike, you are going to experience a lot of vibration through the handlebars and this could eventually damage the nerves and the blood vessels in your hands and fingers. The condition is usually not severe and attacks only cause minor discomfort, but it can lead to skin ulcers and is progressive if left unchecked. It will become irreversible if you don't cut down the vibration from your handlebars with a dampening material, like Sorbothane, or buy gloves that have a viscoelastic polymer inside.

(Ack: motorcyclenews.com (first published in May 2001))

Motorists may no longer be cut any slack when it comes to the 70mph limit thanks to the roll-out of a new wave of motorway speed cameras.

Drivers on motorways around the UK are facing a much greater risk of being fined for exceeding the 70mph speed limit. This is due to the roll-out of the Smart motorway scheme, in which varying speed limits are enforced at different times of day to help smooth the flow of traffic.

Smart motorways, which so far include parts of the M1, M2, M6 M25 and M42, control traffic using a series of overhead gantries with variable speed-limit signs and speed cameras. However, official figures show that the cameras are not only being used to catch motorists who exceed the lower speed limits as over recent months, thousands of drivers are thought to have been caught - some going only a little over the 70mph limit - by this new wave of cameras.

But critics say that this approach is unfair - firstly because the cameras are painted grey and are harder to spot, but also because motorway driving is relatively safe and travelling a few miles per hour over the 70mph limit is unlikely to create a significantly higher risk of an accident.

Guidance from the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) says that motorway drivers should be given some leeway and only fined or stopped for driving at over 79mph. This policy is not legally binding but is usually followed by most of the country's police forces. Paul Watters at the AA added that the ACPO guidance said drivers should be given the option of attending a speeding-awareness course rather than being fined and having points on their licence unless they were caught going above 86mph.

"Motorways are the safest roads - only about 4% of accidents happen on them" he said. However, Watters added, the safety and effectiveness of smart motorways depended on drivers observing the speed limits. "While we cannot expect the police and Highways Agency to divulge exactly what the strategy is we would like to think that speed enforcement on motorways is safety and not revenue-related. But if everything is safe, the roads are clear and the national speed limit is set, there isn't the same justification to enforce the limit."

Roger Lawson from the Alliance of British Drivers said: "These cameras are not painted yellow: they are basically concealed and are set to trigger fines for anyone who breaks the 70mph speed limit. If there is a particularly dangerous stretch of road, speed cameras can be useful if people see them and slow down, but that is not the case here because drivers don't know the cameras are there."

Government figures show that speeding on the motorways is very widespread: Department for Transport figures published last year show that 47% of drivers go above 70mph in free-flowing conditions. Around 12% of drivers go at 80mph or more, the DfT also found.

Watters said: "These statistics show that speeding is not that serious but some drivers exceed the limit by an even larger margin and put others at risk." Smart motorways were introduced by the Highways Agency in 2013 for use on particularly congested parts of the road network. At times hard shoulders are used as an extra lane, and central lanes can be used by traffic travelling in either direction depending on the time of day.

(Ack: Chris Torney & Confused.com)

FACEBOOK

You can find us on Facebook - just look up Warrington Advanced Motorists. There is also a national IAM Facebook group: Institute of Advanced Motorists.



NEWSLETTER BY EMAIL

To help minimise our costs, why not have the newsletter sent to you by email? It's easy to set up - just send an email to:
 peter.fawcett@warram.org.uk



Please include your name and address in the email to help with the administration side of things. No more waiting for the postman - do it today!

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Sundays at 10:15: 5 th , 12 th , 19 th , 26 th July 2 nd , 9 th , 16 th , 23 ^d 30 th August	Observed Runs (car) Refresher Runs (car)	Near the ALDI car park, Crossfield Street, Warrington, WA1 1UP
On arrangement with your observer	Observed Runs (bikes)	On arrangement with your observer
Sundays 26 th July and 30 th August 10:00 (weather permitting)	End of month run (bikes)	Poplar 2000, Lymm
Every Thursday at 19:00 (weather permitting)	Chippy Run (bikes)	Let's Eat Cafe and Tall Trees filling station layby (off A49 in Lower Whitley)
Wednesday 3 rd August at 20:00	Committee Meeting	St Johns Church Hall, Stockton Heath
Sunday 5 th August	Newsletter deadline	

Further details of all of these events can be found on our website:
www.warram.org.uk or by asking any committee member.

FINISHED READING? PASS IT ON....



Personal recommendations from members are one of the main ways we recruit new associates, so please feel free to pass on this newsletter.