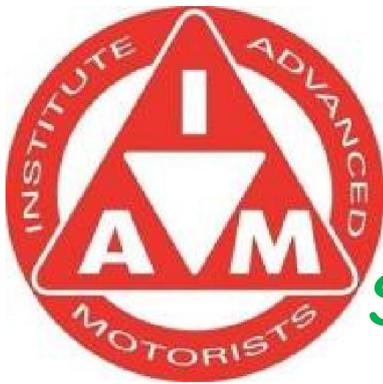
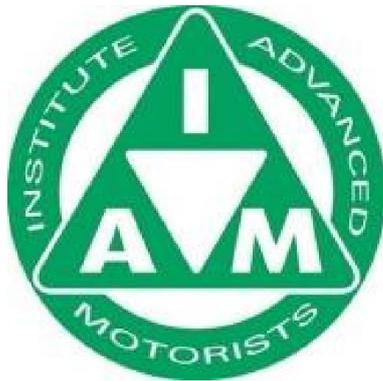


# Warrington Group of Advanced Motorists



September / October 2015  
Newsletter





## CHAIRMAN'S CORNER

This year has literally flown by and I can't believe that in a couple of months we'll be holding our AGM. It's true what they say - as you get older time goes quicker!!

Please give due regard to the notification of the AGM in this Newsletter. This is your major chance to hear what the Group has been doing over the past 12 months and to make your contribution either verbally and/or by nominating or voting for the Group's Officers.

I am well aware that committees have the reputation for designing camels or some other hilarious activity but if we did not have one, the Group's activities would be in a sorry state in no time. We do have to have a core of competent members who are dedicated to formulate and drive the Group forward. This year, we've got by without a Vice Chairman and full-time Newsletter Editor, and these are posts we really ought to look to get filled if at all possible. If there is anyone out there, who feels that they can spare some extra time (not that much - I promise!) and would like to contribute to the general welfare of the Group, please let any Committee Member know and we'll let you know what's involved and see if you'd like to fill the void.

Finally, here's your brainer teaser, and as always, you'll find the solution later in this newsletter:-

You must cut a birthday cake into exactly eight pieces, but you're only allowed to make three straight cuts, and you can't move pieces of the cake as you cut. How can you do it?

Keep safe

Andrew Bloomer

## SINCERE CONGRATULATIONS TO FLAGGER

Big thank you to Craig Richie aka Flagger presenting Gordon Blackshaw with a cheque after completing his Lands End to John O Grotes sponsored bike ride on his twenty odd year old Yamaha. Craig raised £1000 and split it between the Shannon Bradshaw Trust and Jacko. Jacko's half will go towards helping under 30 year old motorcyclists pass their advanced motorcycle test. Well done Flag and thanks to everyone who supported him.



## WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS AND CONGRATULATIONS

Hi there

### GROUP Membership Renewal Time

Yes folks it's the time of year again; attached to this month's newsletter is the group membership renewal form. It is the sheet on the back. Please remember that this is the group membership, which is separate from your IAM membership, which is annual from your test date and is paid direct to IAM HQ.

If you are resigning from the IAM nationally but would still like to be a member of (and keep in touch with) the Warrington group we do have a membership category of newsletter member, this is for non IAM members and still only costs five pounds.

Welcome to new members Debbie Catlow & Nigel Healey to the Car section. Craig Molyneux, David Razak & Christopher Wood to the Motorcycle section; should you have any questions or queries please ask and we will endeavour to resolve them.

WELCOME

Congratulations to Ian Massey on passing the Car test and to Alan Savage and Neill Brettell 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.

TTFN

Ian Bell (Membership secretary)

## THANK YOU

Many thanks to Mike Lyne for all the help in passing the test for the IAM. Also thanks to Chris Rogers and Steve Segar for their help and advice.

Regards

Ian Massey

## NEWSLETTER PRINTING ISSUES

Unbelievable as it may seem but a certain grey-haired petite lady (often seen hanging around in front of the caravan on a Sunday morning) has reached the age of retirement! Normally this would be a joyous occasion but this particular silver lining has a very dark cloud - particularly for those of you still receiving paper versions of the newsletter.

As many of you know Barbara Mealey has provided years of stellar service in printing and reproducing our newsletters, utilising the equipment at her school. However, in July 2015 she bade a tearful farewell to her colleagues and pupils and started a life of unadulterated relaxation and sedation and providing her poor unfortunate husband with a list of jobs as long as his arm (no change there then)!

Not for poor Robbie but I am afraid it is a change for us as we no longer have reproduction facilities and so this may very well be the last printed newsletter we will be able to produce.

For the last couple of years we have been preparing for this situation and requesting as many members as possible take their newsletter electronically and Ian Bell and Peter Fawcett have worked diligently ensuring the emails on record are up to date and working properly.

So the time has come to finally pull the plug on the printed copy and so we request one final time for those of you who have received this on paper to forward a valid email address for the attention of Peter at [peter.fawcett@warram.org.uk](mailto:peter.fawcett@warram.org.uk)

Thank you for your understanding in this matter

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## FUNNIES

### IDIOT SIGHTING No 1

When my husband and I arrived at our local Ford dealer to pick up our car, we were told the keys had been locked in it.

We went to the Service Department and found a mechanic working feverishly to unlock the driver's door.

As I watched from the passenger side, I instinctively tried the door-handle and discovered that it was unlocked.

'Hey,' I announced to the fitter/mechanic, 'it's open!'

His reply: 'I know. I already did that side.'

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

Almost every week I welcome into my home a complete stranger, make sure he (and rarely, a her) is fed and watered and then I drive the person into Warrington, Manchester or wherever to set them on their way. It's not an act of Christian or altruistic charity but common courtesy for someone who may well have just driven more than 200 miles to drop off a car from a manufacturer for my appraisal. Sadly, I am so often told by these drivers that they accorded nothing remotely like a welcome when they visit other journalists. Sometimes, they tell me, they can deliver a car to a home in some remote area and then have to walk five miles or more to the nearest train or bus station - and without any refreshment. But kindness is always rewarded in some fashion.

When journalists were on strike for seven weeks during the Winter of Discontent in 1978-9 things were tough for people like me with a wife and four children to support. Freddie Pinner, BMW's driver of the day, delivered a car to me, realised how things were a few weeks before Christmas and handed me £5 for each of the children's stockings. I didn't want to accept but he insisted - it was a "thank you" for the help I had been to him over the years, he said.

Drivers do sometimes "pull a fast one" of course. Two guys who delivered an Austin Allegro to me around that time asked if I could run them "into Cheshire" to collect a car. "No problem" I said - and on the way discovered they were bound for Wrexham. Nowadays, few manufacturers allow their drivers to contact a journalist by phone for that reason - but obviously that causes problems should the driver become gridlocked on a motorway somewhere. I recently took delivery of a car at midnight and had to run the harassed driver to the nearest hotel. On another occasion a driver, frustrated by delays all day, arrived with a car during the evening and faced a journey back to Nuneaton - and I was able to take him right to his front door because I was travelling south for a car launch.

It is always as well to check a car for any damage before taking charge of it; should it have been delivered before the crack of dawn and the keys dropped through the letterbox this is especially important. You don't want to be blamed for something you haven't done. A scuff on an alloy can be corrected a couple of times but then it becomes a matter of a new wheel. A colleague at one of the Liverpool newspapers once hit a kerb during a test drive and was presented with a bill for £900. When a Volkswagen Golf was collected from me on one occasion, the driver took out a gauge and measured the tyre treads. Rather stunned, I said I had only borrowed the car for a week. "You would be surprised what some people can do to tyres in seven days" was his reply.

Some of the delivery drivers go out of their way to make sure you know everything about the car they have delivered. The best of them is Adrian who is with Suzuki - he can relate so much about the car he has delivered in less than 10 minutes that one really doesn't need to drive the car afterwards!

## CHAIRMAN'S CORNER: SOLUTION



Use the first two cuts to cut an 'X' in the top of the cake. Now you have four pieces. Make the third cut horizontal, which will divide the four pieces into eight. Think of a two by two by two Rubik's cube. There are four pieces on the top tier and four more just underneath it.

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## SAFE FILTERING THROUGH CONGESTED TRAFFIC

This week's tips from the IAM's head of riding standards Peter Rodger are looking at how motorcyclists can filter through congested traffic safely. Filtering through stationary or slow-moving traffic is not illegal - but motorcyclists must make sure they overtake without putting other road-users at risk.

1. Make sure you concentrate on everything around you and use your peripheral vision to monitor changes in traffic before overtaking. If you see something moving unexpectedly in your peripheral vision, slow down if necessary and only overtake when it is safe to do so.
2. Hazards are more likely to be concealed behind parked vehicles - anticipate these risks by looking as far ahead as possible and travel at a safe speed. The earlier you identify a hazard the quicker you can react to the situation and think about your manoeuvre.
3. Avoid overtaking when you are approaching a set of traffic lights. If you do, the driver you are overtaking will be forced to apply their brakes suddenly and may react angrily. The same applies for overtaking a long vehicle - you probably won't be able to get in front of it before the lights change red so hold back and wait.
4. Look out for any tall vehicles such as lorries and buses that may obstruct road signs. If you're taking an unfamiliar route and need to follow the signs don't simply overtake because you can. Stay back until you can see the sign and position yourself in the correct lane as instructed.
5. You should not filter through traffic at speeds above 15-20mph as vehicles above this speed can change direction quickly with little or no warning, forcing you to swerve and lose control.
6. As a rule of thumb you should not filter through traffic which is moving at more than 20mph. If you do filter, don't ride more than 10-15mph above the speed of the traffic around you.

7. Make sure there is enough space available for you to overtake, allowing for sufficient distance between you and the vehicle ahead of you. Avoid overtaking if you're riding through a single carriageway road with oncoming traffic as there will be little or no space to manoeuvre.

8. Look out for any road signs that allow motorcyclists to use a bus lane. Although stretches of a bus lane maybe empty this is not an opportunity for you to speed up. Beware of any junctions and side roads that allow vehicles to make a turn using the bus lane. Give yourself enough time to react by riding at a safe speed and by increasing the distance between you and other traffic at all times.

9. Always be courteous to other road users, don't tailgate and don't get impatient or aggressive simply because you want to get to your destination. Be patient and filter through traffic bearing in mind other road users' safety.

Peter said: "Riders need to be aware that drivers can't react as fast as you can on a light and nimble bike. Allow for the fact a car is less manoeuvrable and don't weave in and out of traffic. The more unpredictable your moves are, the greater chance there is of a collision".

## FUNNIES

### IDIOT SIGHTING No 2

My daughter went to a local Kentucky Fried Chicken and ordered a taco. She asked the person behind the counter for 'minimal lettuce.' He said he was sorry, but they only had iceberg lettuce.

STAY ALERT! They walk among us AND THEY BREED!

## NOVEMBER / DECEMBER NEWSLETTER

Contributions to November / December newsletter are more than welcome. Please send them to: [newsletter@warram.org.uk](mailto:newsletter@warram.org.uk) or pass them to any committee member. The deadline for November / December newsletter is Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> October 2015.



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## 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.



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## AVOID BEING A TARGET OF THE SCAMMERS

Driving tips from the IAM's head of driving standards Peter Rodger are looking at how motorists can avoid intentionally staged road accidents that force insurance companies to pay out high claims. Here are Peter's top tips to help you stay clear of these scams.

1. If you're travelling through busy urban roads stay extra alert and use your mirrors to keep an eye on what is going on around you. If you spot a hazard early, a motorist driving erratically, or a surge of oncoming traffic make sure you slow right down and stay back until you can pass them safely.
2. To help anticipate a hazard ahead, always maintain a safe following distance from the car in front of you on roads, junctions and pedestrian crossings. As a rule of thumb you should maintain at least a two second gap behind any vehicle. This will give you more time to react and slow down if necessary, especially when the driver in front of you brakes suddenly.
3. Be extra cautious of motorists tailgating behind you - the car might be trying to get your attention intentionally so you look at them. Whatever you do, focus on the road ahead and ignore any gestures another driver makes. If you feel threatened, pull over where it is safe and legal to do so and let them past first.
4. If you don't think it is safe to continue with your journey simply don't proceed. Use your judgement to make progress only when you feel it is safe to do so. Even if you think a driver is flashing their headlights to give you way, think again - they may be flashing their headlights to distract you.
5. Avoid getting into arguments with the driver behind you - this will only aggravate them and increase the chances of them crashing their car into yours. Road rage is one the reasons road accidents occur - simply don't react to another driver's bad behaviour.
6. If you have been involved in a collision and don't think it's your fault you should call the police. And if there is a suspected injury call the emergency services. Don't take the matter into your own hands.
7. Make sure you collect all the driver's details and take as many photographs as possible, including any images of passengers that were in their car. If the photograph indicates there are fewer passengers in the car you can reduce the potential of any fraudulent injury claims being made.
8. While witnesses may be able to offer a statement, a dashboard camera can be helpful in the event of an accident to help understand how the collision happened and who was involved. You may consider installing this in your car to help protect you against accusations and insurance fraud.

Peter said: "Being the victim of an intentional accident can be a very frightening thing, but you should be aware these incidents are very rare considering the number of car journeys made every day. But you can do a lot to prevent this happening to you. Always be alert of what's going on around you, and avoid the distraction techniques we have talked about - and your journey will be drama free."

## ROAD RAGE AND THE LAW

Driving can be frustrating at times. But when could a display of road rage land motorists in trouble with the law? Lawyer Jeanette Miller takes a look.

I rarely get het up behind the wheel. However, today on my journey into work, it was as though every traffic light went against me and every lane I chose to use was the slowest to move. I made a conscious decision not to let it get to me but then once I had passed the worst of a bottleneck of traffic I got stuck behind a very hesitant motorist. I found myself getting inexplicably annoyed and cursing the unsuspecting motorist - although no-one could hear me. I am not alone in experiencing a "moment of madness", and lawmakers have devised numerous ways to guard against drivers' irrational behaviour towards other road users. Many traits of road rage are not offences in themselves but would be a clear breach of the Highway Code.

The Road Traffic Act 1988 says that while a breach of the Highway Code is not in itself an offence, prosecutors can hold any failure to observe the code against you in court.

Typically, a breach of the Highway Code is often pursued as a prosecution for careless driving or driving without due care and attention. These are punishable by between three and nine penalty points and a maximum fine of £5,000.

Common road rage offences:

**Tailgating (Highway Code Rule 126)** - This rule says you should leave enough space between you and the vehicle in front so that you can pull up safely if it suddenly slows down or stops. The safe rule is never to get closer than the overall stopping distance.

**Flashing headlights (Highway Code Rule 110)** - Only flash your headlights to let other road users know that you are there. Do not flash your headlights to convey any other message or intimidate other road users.

**Using the horn (Highway Code Rule 112)** - Sound your horn only while your vehicle is moving and you need to warn other road users of your presence. Never sound your horn aggressively. You **MUST NOT** use your horn while stationary on the road or when driving in a built-up area between the hours of 11.30pm and 7am, except when another road user poses a danger.

If a person uses threatening behaviour towards another road user they could face a Section 4 or 5 Public Order offence. Typically, these offences would involve an allegation of threatening or abusive words or behaviour in a public place with intention to cause another person to believe violence will be used.

If like me you find yourself getting irritable and impatient behind the wheel, here are my top tips to reduce your frustration.

Put on some calming classical music

Take a break from your journey

Phone a friend (on your hands-free kit of course!), and

Try to distract yourself by thinking of something funny.

(ACK: Jeanette Miller (law specialist @ Geoffrey Miller Solicitors) and 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.



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**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!

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**DATES FOR YOUR DIARY**

Sundays at 10:15: 6 <sup>th</sup> , 13 <sup>th</sup> , 20 <sup>th</sup> , 27 <sup>th</sup> September 4 <sup>th</sup> , 11 <sup>th</sup> , 18 <sup>th</sup> , 25 <sup>th</sup> October	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 27 <sup>th</sup> September and 25 <sup>th</sup> October 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 4 <sup>th</sup> November at 20:00	Committee Meeting	St Johns Church Hall, Stockton Heath
Sunday 15 <sup>th</sup> October	Newsletter deadline	

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

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**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.