

NEWSLETTER

Winter 2008/9



GUILDFORD & DISTRICT GROUP OF ADVANCED MOTORISTS

Registered Charity No. 1051069

www.guildford-iam.org.uk



Data Protection Act

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We do not pass your details on to anyone else.

Editor's Notes

Please note that the views and comments herein are published without prejudice, being those of the writers and not necessarily those of the Group or the IAM.

Copy date for the April edition is Friday 20 March 2009

KEY DATES

Observed Sunday Runs 2009

18 January
15 February
15 March
19 April
17 May
21 June
19 July
16 August
20 September
18 October
15 November
13 December (this is the second Sunday)

Committee Meetings - Ripley Small Hall

Wednesday 7 January
Thursday 5 March
Wednesday 6 May
Thursday 2 July
Thursday 3 September
Wednesday 4 November

Observers' Meeting - Ripley Large Hall (2009 Dates)

Saturday 14th February 2009 9am- 12.30pm

AGM and Open Meeting - Ripley Large Hall

Saturday 19th September 2009 8.30am- 12.30pm

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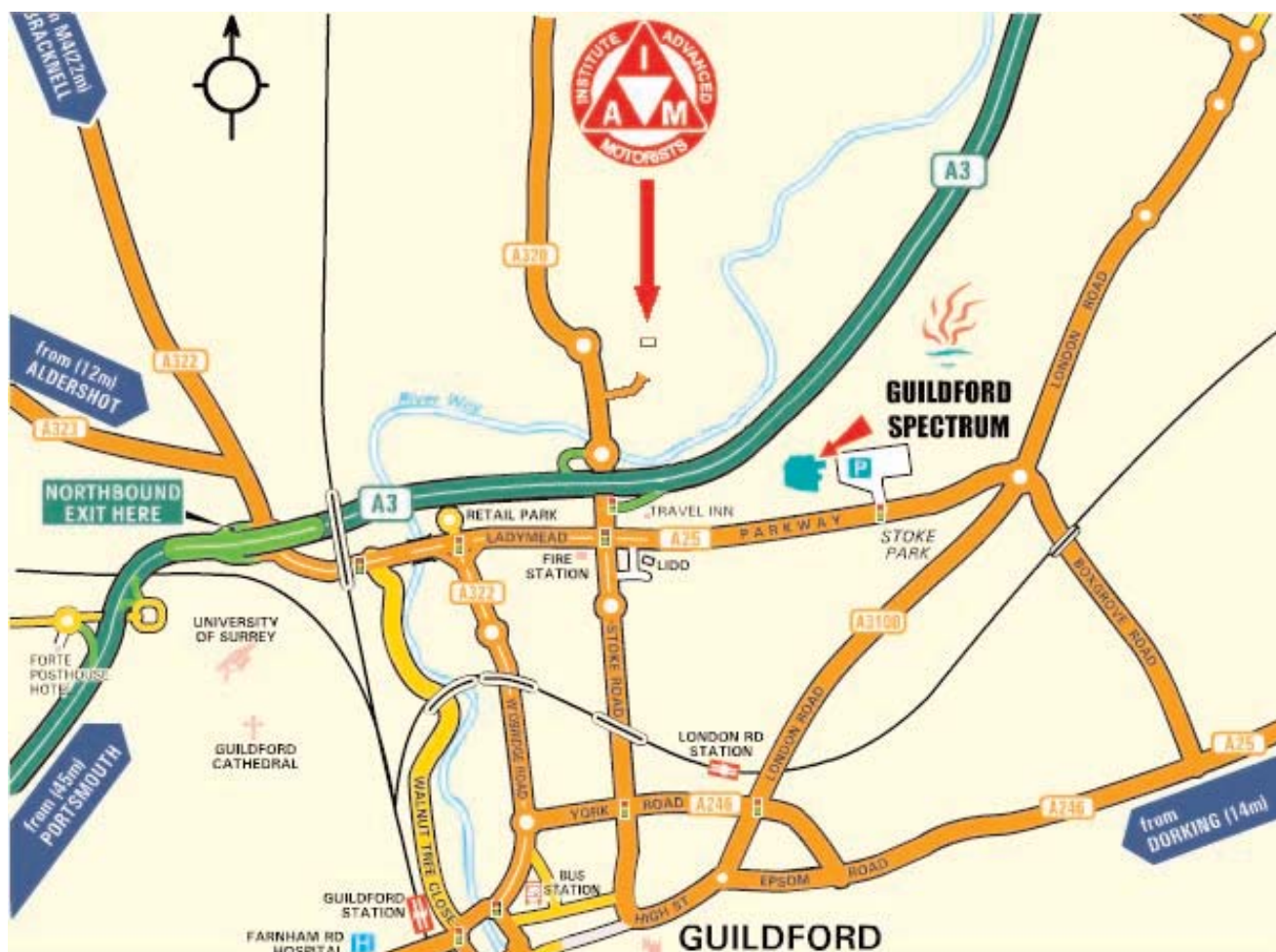
All information correct at the time of going to print.

Observed Runs

Third Sunday of each month at 9.15am, 10.30am and 11.30am

Guildford Borough Council, Woking Road Dept, Guildford.
Telephone 01483 564 814 on Sunday from 9am to 1pm

Appointments for Observed runs -
contact the Chairman on 07817 490 446 or 01252 519 355



Associate Membership £99

Entitles the Associate to 6 Observed Runs in their own vehicle during the 12 months following the date of their first appointment, and includes:

- + the cost of the IAM Advanced Test
- + the first year's membership of the Institute from the date of the first run
- + copy of 'Advanced Driving' manual
- + copy of the Highway Code

Full Group Membership (whilst a Member of the Institute) £5 per annum

DON'T FORGET! Associates aged 25 years and under enjoy a discount of:

£10 off the Associate fee

£10 off the IAM fee

- that's all the benefits of IAM training for only £79!

Help a younger driver be a safer driver - pass on our details!

Welcome

Welcome to the Winter 2008/9 edition of the Guildford and District IAM Group's newsletter.

We hope you all enjoyed a peaceful Christmas and are looking forward to taking on 2009 and all it has to offer.

If you know someone who's stuck for a new year's resolution, why not suggest they become an even better driver by taking the Advanced test? By the end of 2009 we can then hope to have reduced the numbers of incidents on our roads which would be fantastic.

Also please note the updated details of the proposed visit to Thatcham - it was incorrectly published at 28th November but the event is planned for February or March 2009. Apologies for any confusion caused. Please contact Terry Moody (details in the article later) if you are interested.

To continue to bring you a newsletter that is informative and relevant, please send your letters, comments, feedback, articles and pictures to the Editor.

The next edition of the newsletter will be mid-March so plenty of time to write a few lines or even bullet points on a subject of interest to you and, therefore, probably also of interest to fellow Members and Associates.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Louisa Wright-Wastell
Editor



Your Letters

Dear Paul

Many thanks for your letter of 20th Oct inviting me for an additional run tomorrow the 16th Nov at 9.30am but I am pleased to tell you that I won't be there because I passed the test this morning!

I'd like to say thank you to all your people who have given me good advice over this past year and I have taken on board all that I have been taught and I intend to carry on the good work.

Kind regards

JB

Well done - we hope to see many more people pass their tests over the coming year! Ed.

Chairman's Report - December 2008

Firstly, as you will be reading this in January let me say that I hope you all had a very enjoyable and relaxing festive season. Your committee wishes you well for the new year and hope that your driving journeys will be stress free.

At the time of writing I am looking forward to my skiing and in particular the precautions I need to take with the car. This year I changed car insurance to the IAM insurance broker - Surety. I have always been sceptical about the benefits as when I tried the previous IAM broker I found them to be more expensive. However the offer from Surety was £20 cheaper than the best quote I could get elsewhere AND the cover was better. One nice thing was that although it automatically gives me third party European cover, if Surety are informed prior to travelling this would be upgraded to fully comprehensive at no extra cost - a further saving of £25 for each trip. So if you have not tried them, give them a call, you never know what you might gain. Another benefit of your membership of the IAM.

When travelling in France it is worth remembering that the French Authorities now require the driver to have a fluorescent vest in the car which you have to put on before getting out of your car at an incident. The police are checking for this and in order to save yourself some hassle I suggest that you have the vest draped over the back of the driver's seat in full view. You also need a first aid kit, warning triangle and spare light bulbs. Go without any of these and the 'spot fines' can be hefty.

We are entering a period when driving conditions can be hazardous. With the sun being low in the sky it can blind those driving into it. If it is behind you or you are driving through a tunnel of trees remember that drivers approaching you may not see you that easily - help them by putting on your lights. Beware of driving through puddles. Do you know what is under the water? It might be nothing but a 6-inch pothole at speed will do a lot of damage to your tyres or even cause you to lose control. You cannot avoid all puddles but take care and test your brakes if you have driven through a particularly deep puddle.

In this part of the country we are not used to driving in snow and ice. It is not that difficult but it does require you to be a smoother driver and to stay in a higher gear than usual. Saving fuel and making progress come secondary to safety. This year we will again be organising the popular Skid Control Courses (details later in the newsletter). Even if you have done one before it is worth refreshing your skills. Courses are open to families and friends of Group members so don't delay - get your name on the list.

Finally, The IAM is always looking for additional benefits for members and the latest is a 10% discount if you purchase gift vouchers at Halfords. So if you need something, why not buy some vouchers and then use the vouchers instead of cash to make your purchase?

Happy motoring

Paul Wallace-Stock
Chairman

A Big Thank You

Willing supporter recognised

As you are all aware voluntary organisations such as ours rely heavily, on the efforts of its members, which is willingly and freely given. Occasionally someone comes along who offers active support to the group even though not an IAM member. Such a person is Christine Wallace-Stock.



Christine stepped into the breach over 8 years ago when we needed someone to help on the front desk at the Sunday morning runs. She has hardly missed a monthly run in all of that time and presents a cheery and welcoming face to all our Associates and Observers. Not satisfied with this she can also be seen behind the counter at our meetings at Ripley Village Hall dispensing tea/coffee and biscuits to all those attending.

At a recent Committee meeting it was decided that Christine was an idea candidate to be elected to become an Honorary Member of the Guildford and District Group in recognition of her support and commitment to the group over the years. The picture shows Christine being presented with her certificate by the chairman, Paul Wallace-Stock (She told me off later that evening).



**GUILDFORD & DISTRICT GROUP
of The Institute of Advanced Motorists**

This is to certify that

Christine Wallace-Stock

who for many years has given freely of her time in helping the Group has been elected a

Honorary Member

of the
Guildford and District Group of Advanced Motorists.



Chairman Paul Wallace-Stock Treasurer Gerry Raleigh Secretary Stella Croom-Johnson

Dated: 6th November 2008

Skid Control Courses

*Guildford and District
Group of Advanced
Motorists*

IAM
DRIVING ROAD SAFETY

SKID CONTROL COURSES



**Ever tried a skid control course?
It could save you embarrassment or a life!**

Courses are at Goodwood race track on various dates throughout the coming year. A 3-hour course covers an initial briefing on the causes of and coping with skids. Most of the time is spent in a provided car developing your skills or observing others. Courses are discounted and cost:

£45 for Members/Associates of the group
£50 for non members (Family and friends)

Interested? Contact Paul Wallace-Stock on
Tel: 01252 519355 or E-mail: Chairman@guildford-iam.org.uk

End of the Road for Speed Cameras?

HAVE SPEED CAMERAS REACHED THE END OF THE ROAD?

As most of our readers will probably know, speed cameras were first introduced in 1992 when the Metropolitan Police set up the first camera in central London. But after 16 years it seems that their usefulness in reducing accidents is being increasingly called into question. Many towns and councils across the country are considering scrapping their fixed speed cameras, and some, like Swindon, have already done so. Swindon Borough Council has become the first to get rid of the dreaded yellow boxes after one of its councillors objected to central Government receiving all the money from fines while Swindon council tax payers were having to fork out £320,000 a year for the cameras' upkeep.

A spokesman for Swindon Council cites the fact that 70 people were killed in the borough during 2007-2008 as proof that cameras are not making the roads any safer. He goes on to suggest that the money would be better spent on other safety measures such as training for motorists, better street-lighting, and reducing speed limits in known accident black-spots.

The leader of Portsmouth City Council said recently that speed cameras could well be scrapped there too. He said, "We pay £380,000 a year of public money for the maintenance and upkeep of just six fixed cameras. That is not good value for money. It costs £40,000 to put an extra police officer on the street. We could get an awful lot of police officers for £380,000."

Finally, the Transport Chief on Walsall Council has also gone on record as being opposed to speed cameras. He feels that all 47 fixed cameras should be scrapped. "It's about establishing respect with the motorist," he said. "These cameras have little impact on speeding and naturally they are viewed by drivers as traps to siphon off money for the Government. And in most cases the motorist has no idea he has been caught for at least a fortnight. Who is that helping? "

David Sparks of the Local Government Association - which represents all councils across England and Wales - confirmed that other councils were investigating scrapping their fixed speed cameras because of the cost and moving towards electronic speed warning signs.

I suspect that most IAM members would be unlikely to shed any tears if the dreaded yellow boxes were to disappear entirely from our roads. But I must say that the electronic signs can also be very annoying. There is one on the Downside Bridge road near Cobham which flashes at me even when I approach it at 30 mph as I slow down for a bend, notwithstanding the fact that the actual speed limit on that stretch is 40 mph. And these signs can be very distracting - especially at night.



What do other members think?

Terry Moody
Senior Observer

Open Meeting

SATURDAY 14th FEBRUARY 2009

A meeting of the Guildford Group of Advanced Motorists will be held on Saturday 14th February 2009 in Ripley Village Hall starting at 9 a.m. all are welcome.

There will be talk given by Chris Gilbert, a former Police Sergeant who was attached to the Hendon Police Driving School as an instructor for 22 years and appears on the 'Road Craft' video you may have seen whilst attending Observed Runs. Chris has also produced an excellent DVD on driving commentary, taking it from first principles up to the standard expected of a Class 1, police response driver. It is excellent viewing for any advanced motorists.

The talk will cover many aspects of advanced driving and will be of benefit to any member of the group from Senior Observer to Associate. There will be an opportunity to ask those driving questions you have always wanted to ask.

PLEASE PUT THIS DATE IN YOUR DIARY

A Date for Your Diary - Visit to Thatcham

We should like to correct the item which appeared in the Autumn newsletter regarding a proposed visit to the Motor Insurers' Research and Repair Centre at Thatcham in Berkshire.

The date for this visit was incorrectly shown as 28th November 2008 when - in fact - no date had yet been allocated.

The Research Centre operates guided tours on weekdays only, and several IAM groups have already been to visit. Tours start with a presentation and video, followed by visits to the workshop, crash and sled laboratories, and the training facilities. The whole tour lasts about two-and-a-half hours and would start at 2.00 pm sharp. Light refreshments are included in the admission price of £15 per head. Depending on the logistics involved, we might be able to arrange for two or three people to travel in the same car.

If there is sufficient interest among Observers and Associates, then I will go ahead and arrange a visit to take place perhaps in February or March 2009. If you would like to come, please get in touch to confirm your interest as soon as possible.

To make such a visit worthwhile we really need at least eight people to take part, although ten would be better. At the time of preparing this item I have four people who are interested.

This should be an interesting tour for both Observers and Associates alike. Places will be allocated on a "first come, first served" basis.

Terry Moody
Senior Observer

Speeding Deterrent!

How do you think this would work on our roads?



And here's how it's done!



Many thanks to Vee Baker for finding these great pictures!

Winter Driving Tips - Driving in the Dark

Don't be dim this winter!

Being able to see the road ahead to avoid danger and stop safely in an emergency is a necessity for all drivers, especially when driving in the hours of darkness.

With winter looming, the IAM (Institute of Advanced Motorists) offers the following tips on how to check and use vehicle lights in preparation for the short and dark days to come.

Check the lights

- Regularly check that all lights work. While someone observes the lights around the car, switch on each light one-by-one: headlights, sidelights, fog lights, indicators, brake lights, reverse lights, hazard warning lights and number plate lights
- If alone, park by a reflective surface such as a garage door, illuminate all lights in sequence and look for the reflections

Use the lights

- When away from street lighting, visibility is limited to the range of the head lights. This varies greatly between dipped and full-beam; slow down when driving on dipped head lights
- Lights give motorists an early warning of each other's presence. Look for approaching lights when driving around corners, adjust the position of the vehicle accordingly and dip your own headlights to avoid dazzling other motorists
- If oncoming drivers forget to dip their lights, slow down and give your eyes time to adjust to avoid blindness. Never stay on full-beam to retaliate
- It is difficult to judge approaching speed in the dark so take extra care when making a manoeuvre and always allow traffic to pass when waiting to pull out at a junction
- The weather will also dictate when to use headlights and fog lights. Use fog lights sparingly; switch them on only when visibility is below 100 metres. Leaving them on after fog has disappeared is an offence and a danger to other motorists
- A general good rule of thumb is to switch on dipped headlights during heavy rain and poor light
- Never use lights to dazzle or cause discomfort to other road users – this is against the law

Use these tips to stay safe and help others be safer on the roads this winter.

Car Stuff on the Internet

A quick search on the internet can throw up all sorts of interesting things

I had a quick search and found these sites which may be of interest.

If you have found any sites of particular interest, why not email them in to editor@guildford-iam.org.uk?

You Tube

www.cars.com - American site reviewing the newest cars.

Futuristic Japanese Cars (from Diagonaluk) from Japan's motorshow in December

- plus lots more fun car stuff including expensive sports car... wrecks!

General

www.iam.org.uk and www.guildford-iam.org.uk for the latest news and updates from IAM!

www.ukpoc.co.uk - free to join member site for owners of the Ford Probe

www.hoc.org.uk - subscription club for Honda owners in the UK established 1961

www.skoda-owners-club.org - subscription club for Skoda owners, with events and news

Typing in any car make + owners club brings a whole list of clubs out there!

www.thatcham.org/ - information about the motor insurance repair research centre

www.brooklandsmuseum.com - the Guildford Group organises visits here - watch for dates

www.topgear.com/uk/ - irreverent news, reviews, blogs, games and other fun stuff

Events

www.limo-show.com/ - the UK's Customer and Limo motor shows come to Farnborough, April

www.goodwood.co.uk - one of the world's biggest and most diverse celebrations of history of motor sport and car culture 3-5 July

Plus lots more besides - happy searching!

Top Tips for Going Frost Free this Winter

Weather conditions have recently turned frosty, leaving motorists searching for their ice scrapers. The IAM has issued a pre-winter checklist for drivers seeking to avoid a frosty welcome:

-Prepare the vehicle for winter early.

In autumn have the anti freeze checked, replace damaged wiper blades, stock up on de-icer, add a frost inhibitor to the screen wash and buy a window scraper and two cloths: one to clear condensation and dirt from the inside windows and one to clean lights and exterior windows

-Check that the windscreen wipers are switched off when leaving the vehicle the night before to avoid damaging the wiper motor and blades when the engine is started the next day

-Use external temperature gauges, if the vehicle has them.

An indicated temperature of 3°C means that extremely slippery conditions are possible

-Remember that ice on the windscreen could mean ice on the carriageway at some points, especially side roads

-Observe other road users reactions to conditions ahead as a pre-warning of what is to come

Stopping distances will increase in frosty or wet weather.

Stay focused, look further ahead than usual and allow for the extra time needed to stop by increasing the gap ahead.

Where the road surface is likely to be slippery, stay in the highest gear possible to minimise the risk of wheel spin. Consider setting off in second gear, releasing the clutch and accelerating very gently.

If the vehicles front end begins to lose grip, a front wheel skid will begin.

Reduce acceleration, consider disengaging the clutch and steer smoothly.

If the vehicle goes into a rear wheel skid, lift off the accelerator, consider de-clutching and steer into the skid.

Always ensure windows, lights and mirrors are clear of dirt and ice before setting off.



Risk of ice

Member Information

We Welcome...

George Copeman
Tom Hedges

Jane Day
Sitika Lynch

Philip Day
Sean Lynch

Anthony Gurr
Andrew Wainright

Simon Wilkinson

Recent Test Passes

Our information has come through too late for the print deadline - but we will publish all those who passed their tests from November in the next edition.

Observed Run Stats

Month	Numbers Booked in Advance	Cancelled	Failed to Attend	Runs Conducted
November	44	12	4	28
December	44	11	4	29

Do try and make your booked run so that we can help more drivers!

STOP PRESS - URGENT NOTE REGARDING PHOTO DRIVING LICENCES!

If you have one of the new driving licences with a photograph, please be aware that they only last for 10 years.

The first ones were issued in 1999 and therefore expire in 2009.

Check your licence expiry date!

Do you have a friend or relative that would benefit from our advice and guidance?



**If so, please put them in touch with
Chris Hughes
Contact details on the inside back page**

**Please pass on or recycle this newsletter
once you're done with it!**