

NEWSLETTER

Autumn 2014



Registered Charity No. 1051069

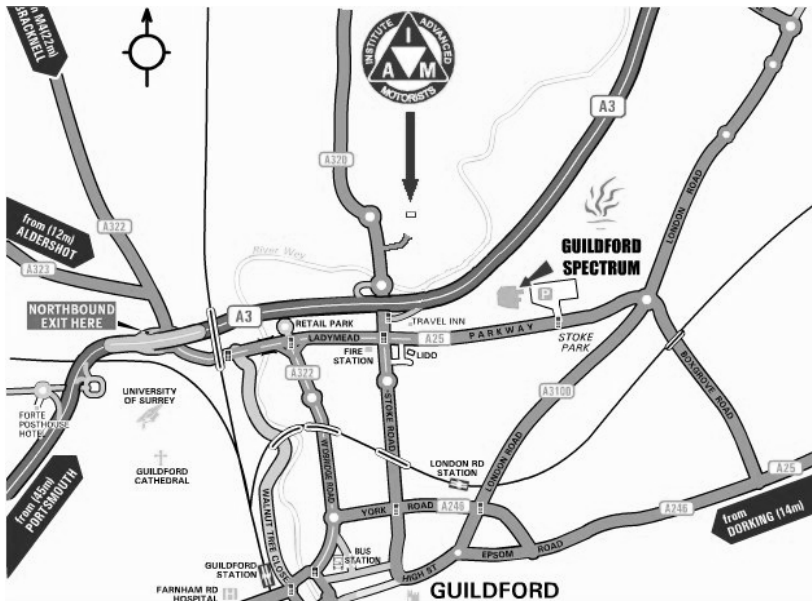
guildford-iam.org.uk

Observed Runs

These will be conducted by appointment on the 3rd Sunday of each month at
9.15am and 10.45am – refresher/taster drives at 12:00
Guildford Borough Council Woking Road Depot, Guildford GU1 1QE

Telephone 07973 217785 or 07791 914031 on scheduled Sundays only
from 9am to 1pm

Appointments for Observed runs - contact the Associate Co-ordinator:
associates@guildford-iam.org.uk 01252 519355



Skill for Life package £139

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
- ✓ RAC membership for one year

Full Group Membership (whilst a Member of the Institute)
£7.50 per individual / £10 for a couple at the same address

From the Chair

Welcome to another edition of the Guildford and District Group of Advanced Motorists newsletter. This newsletter will follow the annual general meeting which was held on Saturday 27th September 2014.

We have seen another busy and involved year with a steady stream of associates coming through the group. The group's average pass rate remains in the high 80% area. This is certainly helped by the great efforts made by our chief observer John Panting and all of our observers who have been training very hard to get national and local observer qualifications.

Thank you to John and all of our observers, very well done.

The additional training puts the group in a very solid position to continue to deliver consistently high quality courses and help progress our associates through to test standard in an efficient and effective manner.

Recently the IAM released the Masters program, which is the most challenging advanced driving/riding programme available in the UK. I have purchased my Masters pack and will be writing about my experiences in future newsletters.

The group will be looking at the options of supporting our observers in progressing through the Masters program to further ensure we have the best observers available to our members and associates.

The Masters program is available to anyone who has passed their advanced test and details can be found on the IAM website.

Looking ahead, a new and updated skid-pan facility is being created at Goodwood and watch out in the next newsletter for an update on new course dates. Many thanks to Chris for organising the skid pan sessions to date.

We hope to be able to provide a winter driving seminar for associates, members, friends and family in the coming months, again details to be found in the upcoming newsletter, on our website and via email.

Commentary is still a very useful and important part of the advanced driving toolbox. We will be holding practical commentary focussed workshop sessions in the near future, again details in the newsletter, website etc.

The group has the option of loaning our associates and members copies of Chris Gilbert's excellent DVD pack on commentary driving. There is no charge for this and please contact the front desk on observed Sundays or drop me an email.

Thank you to the all of the group members, associates, observers and committee members for your support in the past year. I look forward to the coming year and to another year of safer driving for us all.

Steven

Member Information

New Associates

Welcome to:- Jessie Thorp, Oksana Savina, Nick Boxall, Susanne Alden, Lisa Hutton, Craig Featherston, Gearoid Conneely, Harriet Speed, Debbie Miller Ben Fitzgerald, Jeffrey Wilkinson Chris Land, William Blackmur, Peter Wells, and Michael Tilney.

We hope you enjoy your observed runs and wish you luck taking your Advanced Driving test.

Recent Test Passes

Congratulations to:- Robert McKerlie, Susan Couldery, Jennifer Caddy, Elizabeth Crowle, Kate Brazier, John Freeland, Tim Ince, Malcolm Sims, Stephen Ford, Edgar Northey, Shawn Boyer, and Jessie Thorp.

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

IAAM
DRIVING ROAD SAFETY

If so, please put them in touch with Chris Hughes,
firstcontact@guildford-iam.org.uk - 07814 172531

Please pass on this newsletter once you've read it – how about taking it to the garage where you have your car serviced and asking them to support us?

“WORD OF MOUTH” IS OUR BEST ADVERTISEMENT

Secretary's report 2013/14

Another year flies by, and we seem to be keeping pace with a fast changing world around us. Your committee has been working hard to keep abreast of new developments and remain up-to-date with ever changing requirements and initiatives from IAM Head Office in Chiswick.

Associates and tests.

We have had a good year with new Associates joining us at a rate of just over one per week, an improvement over last year and significantly better than other groups around us. We also managed to record over 30 test passes with a significant number of F1rst passes, again much better results than our local colleagues. Our thanks go to all our Observers and staff for a very positive result, and of course to all those successful Associates who performed so well in front of their Examiner. Keep up the good work!

Observers and Training.

It has been difficult this year to keep on top of the changing requirements for Observer Training & Qualification emanating from Chiswick. Earlier in the year we thought we were about to complete the qualification of all our National Observers and embark on qualification of Local Observers. But the process was stalled for a while and it has now been re-launched. John Panting continues to do a great job keeping all our Observers up to standard, maintaining their enthusiasm and commitment. Unfortunately we had a few Observer retirements this year, myself included, for a number of varied reasons, but the core team is still there and the numbers of IMI Qualified observers in our Group continues to grow.

The trickiest part of our process is allocating Observers to Associates for the Sunday runs, a task which is ably performed by Shân Hughes and Hilary Fletcher every month. They have not had an easy time of it this year with several conflicting activities conspiring against them. But eventually all Associates do get out for their observed drives and we are very grateful to everyone for remaining patient whilst we juggle the appointment lists. The key issue, as ever, is matching the number of Associates turn up with the number of available Observers. So all that you do to fulfil your appointments and attend will help Shân and Hilary to achieve 100% success.

IAM Region and Chiswick liaison.

Changes continue to affect our relationship with staff at Chiswick and liaison with other groups in the area. We are now part of a much larger Region and our regional manager, Mark Trimmer, has many activities to juggle and many more groups to visit. But he remains very accessible and interested in our group activities.

There were three Region 2 Forum meetings during the year. These are useful for meeting other group officials and committee members, hearing what plans Chiswick have for our future, and allowing the opportunity to discuss proposals in open forum.

Events.

Although, unfortunately, we had to cancel one session this summer, Skid Pan events remain popular; Chris King does a great job keeping the attendance lists full and making sure everyone knows about the benefits of

these events. We had heard that some people think you cannot learn to deal with a skid in the fine summer weather, but the facility we use at Goodwood functions the same all year round. It is actually more fun to be there in the sunshine watching your fellow participants than hiding from the wind and rain in the winter. So look out for the forthcoming dates and get down to Goodwood for some more practice. The problem with skids is that you should never have one. So the need to perfect your skid avoidance skills probably needs refreshing.

We contributed again this year to the annual 'Young Driver Day' at King's School in Wimbledon with students who had recently passed their test being introduced to advanced driving skills. And we contributed to local newspapers and radio stations with interviews and articles.

Newsletter and web site.

We are very grateful to Martin Evans for taking over the role of Newsletter Editor. There was unfortunately a gap of a few months when we were unable to produce a newsletter for Members. But this has now been resolved and normal service has been resumed. The role is only as Editor; this means that Martin is supposed to receive and manage your contributions, not write the whole thing himself. So any letters, thoughts, photos or anecdotes you may have will be gratefully received!

We also continue to promote our web site and this has been a useful function for attracting a few new members. Tony Ross has been our webmaster for many years, and

despite now living some way away, he continues to provide us with very useful support and we thank him for continuing to keep the web site up-to-date.

Summary.

Another challenging year, with many successes along the way, and we are still here, still teaching new Associates the IAM way, and hopeful of growing in the future. Thanks to all my colleagues on the committee and all our helpers and observers for all their hard work – it is very much appreciated.

My sincere apologies for not attending the AGM to deliver this report in person.

Paul Whitehead
Secretary

NEED A REFRESHER?

Lost some of those finely tuned skills?

Book a refresher drive with our Associate Co-ordinator and get back to 'test standard' with our experienced volunteer Observers.

All it takes is an hour or so of your time and a gallon or so of fuel.

*Call Paul Wallace-Stock on:-
01252 519355 to arrange an appointment for 12:00 on one of our Sunday Runs – it's free for Guildford Group members.*

Don't delay, call today

Your last Tax Disc

The tax disc, which was first introduced in 1921, will cease to exist in paper form from October 1, with a new electronic system being put in its place.

Under new rules announced in the Autumn Statement last year, motorists will now have to register their car online to pay Vehicle Excise Duty, otherwise known as road tax. This can be done via Direct Debit on the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) website, on the phone, or at a Post Office branch.

Those who don't register for the tax, will be caught out by number plate recognition cameras which track each vehicle on the road.

While the move aims to streamline services and, it is claimed, save British businesses millions of pounds a year in administrative costs, motorists are being warned to brush up on the new rules or face possible fines.

The change mostly affects those buying or selling a used car. Anyone who buys a used car will no longer benefit if there are months left on the tax disc, as the vehicle tax will no longer be transferred with the car. This means buyers will have to renew their tax disc straight away, or risk being caught on the road in an untaxed car.

The seller of the vehicle is responsible for informing the DVLA of a change of ownership, otherwise they could face a possible £1,000 fine. This can be done by filling out a V5C form and sending it to the DVLA.



Vehicle sellers will get an automatic refund for any full calendar months left on the vehicle tax.

Paul Watters, head of roads policy at the AA, said: "This is a huge change and vehicle owners and drivers need to be aware of the rules. A driver, not registered owner, can be issued a non-endorsable fixed penalty for driving an untaxed car. An owner can be fined £80 for using an untaxed vehicle (one not registered off the road) and can be charged any back tax."

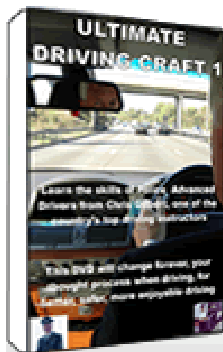
Mr Watters also said it was important that all vehicle owners and motorists did their utmost to establish whether their vehicle was taxed or SORN'd (declared off the road) before driving the car.

Julie Daniels, head of motor at comparethemarket.com, said that the removal of the tax disc, which will in turn eliminate tax dodgers from the road, "should have a positive impact on premiums".

The paper element of the driving licence, which accompanies the credit card size photo-card, is also due to be axed in January 2015.

Chris Gilbert Driving videos – www.driving4tomorrow.com

We have 2 copies of these excellent DVDs and a licence to allow Members to borrow them as training aids. Loans will be on a 'first come, first served' basis **for one month only per person**. These DVDs will be available to borrow at our usual Observed runs, usually on the third Sunday of the month. Bring a deposit of £10 (cash or cheque only) which will be returned to you on safe return of the DVD. Loss or damage will be charged at £30 per DVD, so please look after them! *All material is Copyright © 2009*

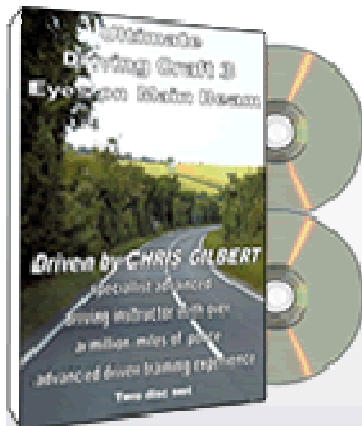
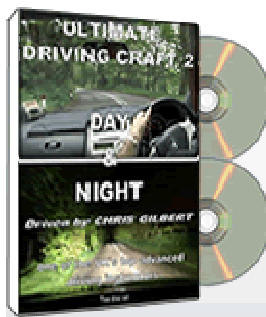


Ultimate Driving Craft 1

How to do commentary driving. Builds in stages from the ground up to police advanced driving level, plus much more. This DVD is loaded with information and advice to improve your driving.

Ultimate Driving Craft 2

This double DVD details, supported by slow motion and graphics, how to achieve the correct speed before entering a bend. This is vital information for all drivers and driving instructors. Includes overtaking, night driving and much more.



Ultimate Driving Craft 3

A double DVD set that features advanced graphics and animation. You will see the highlights of Chris driving one of his favourite fast advanced car course routes through five counties and there is a picture-in-picture view from a second camera of Chris behind the wheel so you will see steering and every single gear change, his application of the system of car control and more importantly, the timing of such.

To drive or not to drive; When to give up.

With an ageing population and a prediction of 10 million UK residents over 70 years of age in a few years' time, many of us will consider driving well into old age but others will give up sooner than may be strictly necessary. So, how do we know when the time is right to give up?

Medical interventions at any age can affect our ability to drive, from simple flu remedies to complex surgical procedures, and these are not necessarily age related. Medical professionals will generally tell you if you should not drive for medical reasons. But as I understand the current rules, to renew your driving licence at 70 you simply make a medically based 'self declaration'.

Re-testing of drivers at any age is routinely proposed and rejected, probably on cost grounds, but the re-testing of older drivers gets more publicity and support. Although no-one can decide at what age this should start and at what frequency it should happen. Telling someone who has lived for all their life in a small village with limited facilities that they can no longer drive to get to the shops, doctor or other services could mark the end of their freedom. So these measures must be well thought through in order not to discriminate. If they fail a test, does that force them to move house?

Watching a TV programme recently, I was struck by the number of older callers who had voluntarily given up driving.

One of the callers said it was because of the bad driving of all those around him. Another was because of her perceived inadequacy of the 'self assessment' process. Everyone on the programme wanted re-testing, mostly at any age and some as frequently as every 5 years, a position I have some sympathy with. Other callers, all over 70, had voluntarily opted for an advanced driving test (and passed) as a way of proving to themselves their competence and skills were still up to the mark.

Since retiring from full time work I have coincidentally also retired from full time driving. My work was not as a professional driver. But in order to get to and from the office and make the sometimes incredibly arduous journeys required by my employer, I spent many hours behind the wheel. 30,000 miles per annum at an average speed of 45mph works out at over 80 work days driving - about one third of a working year. You will of course realise that I was paid to produce results, not drive from Surrey to Yorkshire, so the driving hours were in addition to the working hours!

To suddenly stop doing that amount of driving and not use the car for several days at a time has resulted in me feeling significantly less confident on the road. I am no longer subjected to the 'cut and thrust' of the daily commute or the delights of motorway roadwork. I now choose my journeys and the times I travel with care, having no desire to get stuck in traffic unnecessarily. And I

do not have the resources to allow mileage to rack up with no thought for the cost. So driving now is a necessity carried out after careful planning.

This was the main reason for my decision to stop being an Observer. I was always strongly of the view that you had to be able to drive to the required standard at all times, more so if teaching others the 'IAM way'. So realising that a couple of years of significantly reduced mileage had dramatically reduced my skill and attention levels came as an unwelcome surprise. I still claim to be driving at IAM test standard, but more than ever I need to be able to prove it, so I shall soon be presenting myself for an assessment by one of the current Observers. I commend this to you also.

I also recently changed from 40+ years of driving manual cars to owning my first automatic. That process was not without its errors and re-adjustments, so it probably compounded the issue.

I am impressed by the skills of the software designers who let all eight gears select themselves at generally appropriate times, but the use of the gearbox to control speed on steep downhill sections leaves a lot to be desired, even in 'sport' mode, and the cruise control function allows the car to 'run away' and overspeed on steep

hills. So still some way to go for perfection! I have to be very aware of what is going on 'under the bonnet' at all times.

So, to answer my question 'when to give up', I think it is very much a matter of individual choice, BUT you must continually 'self assess' honestly and seek help with keeping up-to-date. Compulsory re-testing should only be started if it applies to everyone, as younger drivers will often be just as dangerous as older drivers. Voluntary re-testing has to be a very good thing. Getting out on the road regularly is vital to keep skills fresh, and if a lengthy break is enforced, get back on the road as soon as you can, but take it steady at first.

Stick to familiar routes or leave lots more time for route finding. I am no fan of sat nav systems. They give me no confidence whatsoever. But every driver is quite naturally also a navigator and the demands of seeking out unfamiliar locations can detract from the resources needed to drive. So be aware of the extra time needed for unfamiliar journeys.

Keep fit and get your eyes tested regularly. Most drivers probably have less than ideal eyesight, corrected or not. And look after your health – fitter people mean fitter, and probably safer drivers.

Paul Whitehead



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Back to School – Extending the dangers of the Rush Hour

As is the case every year, the risk of an accident becomes significantly greater as the returning school run brings with it a 20 per cent growth in rush hour traffic.

While much has been said about watching out for youngsters on their way to school, the IAM has warned that a greater risk comes on the way home from school. Under 16's are more likely to be distracted by playing with their friends, listening to music or interacting on social media on their phones.

Research by the Department for Transport's THINK! initiative shows that 62% of 11 to 16 year olds admit to being distracted by talking to friends as they cross the road. A similar number had to stop a friend from having an accident by either pulling them back or calling out. 36% of girls and 25% of boys say they get distracted by using their mobile phones.

Neil Greig, IAM Director of Policy and Research said: "Technology has moved on at such a pace, it is clear that youngsters are being distracted by the myriad of portable entertainment devices available to them."

A report commissioned by the Parliamentary Advisory Council for Transport Safety (PACTS), and supported by the IAM, called Stepping Out, looks at trends in pedestrian safety. It found children are more likely to be injured in spring and summer (excluding August) and more likely to be injured as pedestrians on weekdays at morning and afternoon school times. It also found the age at which pedestrians are most at risk is 12 years old.

The research shows that, while there are naturally peaks in casualties between 7 and 9am (15% of child pedestrian casualties being in this two hour period), there is an even greater peak between 3 and 5pm (nearly 23%) suggesting that while children may be driven to school, they often make their own way home in the afternoon, making this a more crucial time for drivers to be aware of young pedestrians.

The IAM also urges drivers to be more vigilant in rural or remote areas, as the findings show that 70% of child casualties occur on sections of road not at or near pedestrian crossings.

Neil Greig added: "It is everyone's responsibility to make sure we don't create another young casualty. A bit of forward thinking and increased awareness will make our roads safer for everyone."

The dangers of speeding

Figures obtained through a Freedom of Information request to Police Scotland reveal the top recorded speeding offences in Scotland in the past 15 months. The top 20 ranged between 114mph and 139mph. The highest figure was a driver recorded at 139mph on a 60mph stretch of the A96 Keith to Huntly Road. The next two were recorded on 70mph limit roads; 129mph on the A90 Dundee to Aberdeen Road at Waterston Road, Angus, and 127mph on the A9 Perth to Inverness Road at Moulinearn, Perth and Kinross.

The IAM offers the following tips to help everyone remain safe during the rush hour.

*Don't endanger your concentration and the safety of other road users by being in a hurry. Leaving the house five minutes earlier changes the nature of how you make the journey.

*Take extra care to compensate for the fact that children won't always be paying attention, especially when approaching the school gate.

*Never stop on the yellow "zig zags" by the school gate, and always ensure you let your passengers out on the pavement side.

*Roads around schools are usually 20 mph so it is essential that you slow down and keep an eye out for children crossing the road and emerging from between parked cars.

*New starters in reception classes are unlikely to be aware of the dangers that the road outside their school presents. Bear this in mind when driving nearby and keep your eyes peeled for children wandering into the road alone.

*If your children are walking to school on their own, make sure they are aware of potential hazards such as crossing busy roads. Encourage them to use the pedestrian crossings, where there is one.

Skid Control Courses



Ever tried a skid control course?

It could save you embarrassment or even your life!

These 3-hour Courses at Goodwood race track cover an initial briefing on the causes of, and coping with, vehicle skids. Most of the time is spent in a specially adapted car, on a prepared track, supervised by experienced, approachable experts. Here you can start developing your skid control skills and observing others.

Courses are discounted and cost: £50 for Members/Associates of the group

£55 for non members (Family and friends)

Interested? Contact Christine King Tel: 01483 537608 Email: skidpan@guildford-iam.org.uk

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Please cut out these 2 postcards and put them in your local newsagent or other free advertising space – we are grateful for your continued support in attracting fellow motorists to the IAM

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The Guildford & District Group of Advanced Motorists

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The Institute of Advanced Motorists

We are offering a free accompanied assessment drive of about 1 hour duration. You will receive a confidential appraisal of your driving from a qualified IAM Observer.

Let's make the roads in your town or village a safer place for all.
It's only with your participation as a driver that we can achieve this aim.
All ages of driver are welcome and will benefit.

Contact: Chris Hughes, 07814 172531 Email: firstcontact@guildford-iam.org.uk

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