

# GAM

Guildford Advanced Motorists



## *Newsletter Winter 2020*



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### **COMING UP IN THE NEXT ISSUE ...**

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member survey –  
click on the link here:  
[GAM online Survey](#)

## CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

### **Just when we thought we were getting back to normal.**

I started writing this piece for the newsletter before we learned about Lockdown 2. I had managed to restart my Master's Course for the second time and completed several one-to-one runs with a couple of our Associates. It just felt as though we were creeping back to some sort of new normality and I was getting back into the swing of Advanced Driving coaching. Now we're back to some heavy restrictions and yet more debate about what is necessary or reasonable. I don't want to get into a debate here about whether Advanced Driving coaching represents a significant cause of the acceleration of "R" in our nation or region, but all I would say is that any contact in an enclosed space such as a motor-vehicle is more likely to lead to transfer of the virus than not doing it. It's all a matter of degree. Clearly at GAM we respect the policy passed down from IAM-RS and recognise that many of our Associates and Observers wish to protect themselves as far as practical. I want to thank our Committee & Observer teams for their huge effort putting together GAM COVID procedures, procuring PPE and enabling some limited one-to-one coaching to happen.

Whilst I'm on GAM committee matters, I have some sad but happy news. Sadly, our newsletter editor Val Pascual has resigned from her role for the wonderful reason that she is to be married and is moving out of the area. We wish her well of course and thank her for her recent enthusiasm taking on the editor role. It does mean of course we are now urgently looking for a replacement. Are you interested? A little more broadly, we are always looking for new members to join our committee to refresh the team and ensure that we have a succession plan for officers such as secretary, membership and so on. Please get in touch with me if you would like to discuss what a role on the committee or the GAM officer entails. I look forward to hearing from you.

We are now putting our minds to how we might engage with our Members and Associates with constraints that we believe will run into the new year in some shape or form. We intend to offer some online support coaching, specific reference to available written and video material and Q&A opportunities; but clearly this will be limited as there is no substitute for getting out behind the wheel working with the practical aspects of Advanced Driving. Whatever we do, we need to recognise that the world out there is changing, and the driver is presented with new challenges virtually every day. Certainly, it is quite clear that COVID has increased the number of cyclists out and about and there seems to be a lot of temporary and permanent initiatives around provisions for the cyclist that impact on other road users. There is an article later concerning the 'smart' or 'magic' roundabout concept that has arrived from the Netherlands. We certainly need to be aware of these developments as you never know we might meet one in Guildford or Woking in the near future!



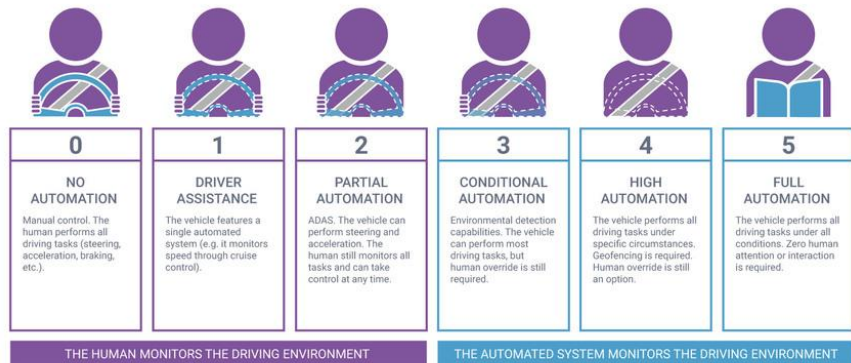
I am indebted to John Holcroft, one of our senior Observers, who identified the following ET (Engineering & Technology, not Extra-Terrestrial) article. *"A new study by the University of Nottingham suggests Drivers may need behavioural training to help them adapt to the forthcoming introduction of driverless cars."*

John suggests that this might be an IAM-RS coaching opportunity. The article focuses on the forthcoming challenge of the driverless car (vehicles with so called Level 3 automation).

I am a little concerned that it seems to express this as a step change just around the corner, rather than part of a technology progression continuum from totally manually controlled vehicles (Level 0), through increasing levels of automation that are likely to lead to ultimately to autonomous vehicles, or as the article

**SYNOPSIS**

**LEVELS OF DRIVING AUTOMATION**



describes them the *driverless car*. The graphic above shows the 6 levels of *Driving Automation* defined by the Society of Automotive Engineers (SAE) and already adopted by the US Department of Transportation. Readers of our GAM newsletter will recognize over the last couple of years that we have frequently reviewed various aspects and challenges associated with increasing sophistication of the cars we drive. These challenges affect our Associates and Observers in slightly different ways. The Associate has the advantage of living with a particular vehicle and therefore has time to be able to learn about, understand and practice how to use the features they have invested in, whereas the Observer needs to be sufficiently aware and sensitive to the features to be able to explain and coach their most effective use in the context of best Advanced Driving practice.

A couple of our GAM Associates have recently given me the opportunity to explore the technology continuum in the real world. You would think at the outset that two petrol/electric hybrid cars, using very similar configuration of internal combustion engine, electric motor, transmission etc. would be very similar vehicles to coach *Advanced Driving* in. I was wrong! One had Level 1 automation and the other Level 2, and each owner/driver had different views about the functionality they wish to use or not. This meant between us, we had quite a lot to get to grips with before embarking upon the driving process itself. A couple of simple examples of the differences were the low ratio transmission hold for hill descents and the use of the parking brake for temporary stops.

Finally, as we approach a Christmas and festive season unlike any in my experience, not quite knowing what acceptable social interaction will be, I decided to focus on what is truly important and wish you a safe and peaceful Christmas with your family and friends, and let's look forward to something approaching normality in 2021.

*Stay safe, keep alert,*

**Gordon Farquharson**, GAM Chairman

## **Editorial Matters**

Welcome to the latest edition of our GAM Newsletter. In this edition we have GAM reports and association information, articles of interest and guidance generated by IAM RoadSmart. This edition has been sent to members as a pdf e-Newsletter which should you wish to print, go to the pdf print dialogue box, and choose the option to print it as an A5 booklet, or A4 double/single sided.

Remember that we want to hear from you ... letters, comments and articles should be sent to [editor@guildford-iam.org.uk](mailto:editor@guildford-iam.org.uk)

Should you know of anyone you feel might be interested in an Advanced Driving Course, please put them in contact with us, [membership@guildford-iam.org.uk](mailto:membership@guildford-iam.org.uk)

## **Editor's small print**

*Please note that the views and comments herein are published without prejudice, being those of the writers and not necessarily those of the Guildford and District Group of Advanced Motorists or IAM RoadSmart.*

*Disclaimer: Driving is never a black and white activity, but full of grey areas, therefore neither GAM or IAM RoadSmart are liable for any consequences you may experience as a result of reading our advice. You are the driver. You should be in control of your vehicle at all times.*

*Data Protection Act Members and Associates are reminded that names, addresses, telephone numbers and membership details are stored on computer files to assist with the management of the group and the distribution of Guildford Group correspondence. We do not pass your details on to anyone else.*

## **Letters to the Editor**

Dear Sir,

Thank you very much for an excellent Autumn 2020 GAM Newsletter; as always, a good read.

I was interested to note a suggestion on page 26 regarding giving the Advanced Driving Course as a Christmas or birthday present: in my nine years of observing I have had three Associates who felt they had to take the Advanced Driving course, rather than wanted to take the course. Two of those had received the course as a birthday present from a loved one (who also happened to be a Class I Police Driver in each case!). They were less than enthusiastic but felt they had to honour the giver.

Have any other Observers experienced this attitude?

Yours faithfully,

I wonder is it somewhat similar to giving 'experience' days to folk ... hmmm ???

**Clive Heavens**

Non-Sunday Run Manager

Dear Editor,

I am often asked "What made you decide to take the IAM Course?"

It was my 70th Birthday challenge to myself. My joy during my retirement has been to care for my grandchildren and I wanted to reassure myself and my two daughters, both of whom had passed their IAM tests, that I was safe driving their very young children in my car.

I had driven accident and points free for nearly 50 years during which time traffic density and speed have increased and the Highway Code definitely contains much I hadn't read before. I was a reasonably confident driver having driven on average 12,000 miles a year.

However, for me to drive critical strangers was absolutely terrifying. Twelve lessons later after much encouragement in spite of being ready to give up on several occasions, time had come for me to be trusted to attempt the test. I really was thrilled to pass, but I didn't put the IAM sticker in my windscreen in case I didn't always live up to the advanced standard!

In view of my age I thought it wise to do a repeat test every 3 years. Earlier this year I was due to re-take my test when lockdown saved me. In October though I was contacted offering me a test date for the following week, giving me no time for a refresher drive. I spent the next few days poring over my IAM book and Highway Code.

The day of my test was a beautiful sunny autumn day and I thoroughly enjoyed my drive, completely forgetting I was being tested. I was so pleased to have passed again and after this proudly stuck my IAM badge on my windscreen. When my new certificate arrived shortly afterwards, enclosed with it was the new style IAM Roadsmart sticker!

I would recommend regular retests to all members and I encourage any young drivers I know to try the IAM Course.

Thanks to all who remember me from my original course for their encouragement.

**Rosemary Henderson** [IAM FELLOW]

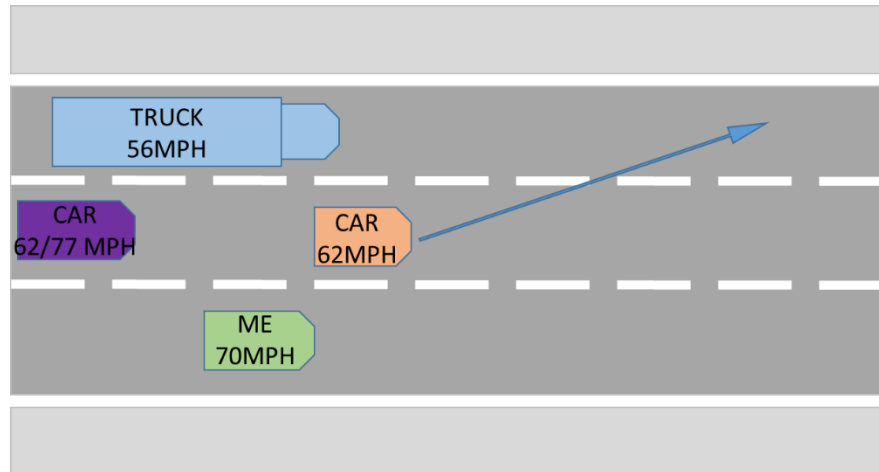
Dear Editor

Along with many other motorists I regularly come across the middle lane hogs whilst travelling the motorways of the UK. This seems to be a phenomenon particular to UK drivers - you would not get away with it in Belgium as I understand there to be strict laws about lane discipline on their motorways, and in Germany you would get a very large and very fast limousine on your back bumper if you stayed out in lane 2 or 3 - they still have unrestricted motorways in some places.

The 'excuses' we hear at home about why drivers do not use all the available motorway lanes are many and varied, some with which I have a small amount of sympathy. For example, HGVs leave quite deep ruts in lane 1 and the effect on a car with a narrower track is sometimes severe and unnerving; and the old chestnut of being 'stuck' behind a truck struggling up a slope is regularly mentioned, but the solution for that is down to good long distance observation both ahead and behind - get in the correct lane in good time!

A more recent issue I have observed is that I sometimes find myself in lane 3 overtaking a couple of other slower vehicles, and as I draw alongside them the forward vehicle returns to lane 1 and the second vehicle alongside me in lane 2 suddenly speeds up. I am left in lane 3 travelling around 70 mph with an 'undertaking' vehicle in lane 2. My only option is to wait until the vehicle in lane 2 is 2 seconds ahead and for me to return to lane 2 behind them. Other vehicles behind us appear to think this manoeuvre is all very suspicious and some try to follow the 'undertaker', creating a very tricky situation.

I have to presume that they all think I am stupid and am insisting on driving in lane 3 at 70mph regardless of who else is around me, but in my defence I started the overtaking manoeuvre when the vehicles I was overtaking were travelling at significantly less than 70mph - as



soon as the slower driver cleared the way, all the others sped up. I am now trying to understand what has caused this situation to develop and one possibility comes to mind.

New cars are getting more and more control devices that will eventually lead us to autonomous vehicles, and one of those already available is a form of cruise control with an automatic 'following distance' setting. So if my lane 2 undertaker has set their cruise control to 77mph for example, and this has set a following distance, they may believe that they can sit in lane 2 all day never going above 77mph and never running into the back of the car in front. They believe they are driving safely, but they are clearly not paying attention.

However, because they had not seen the car in front of them travelling slowly and changed lanes, and their automatic cruise control had slowed them to match the speed of the car in front, as soon as the car in front gets out of the way, the cruise control sees no danger ahead and sends the vehicle alongside me straight back up to 77mph.

Of course, the reason may be a lot simpler – the inattentive driver who got 'stuck' in lane 2 and had to wait for others to clear his way was upset by my forward planning and decided to get past me at any cost.

I sometimes wonder about the abilities of some drivers to read the road ahead and make sensible decisions, but if my theory is correct, the automatic cruise control algorithm cannot yet make the judgments that the human driver can and in this case, creates an illegal (undertaking) and dangerous situation.

Any suggestions as to how to avoid this?

Yours sincerely, **Paul Whitehead** [GAM SECRETARY]

[Let's hear your views! editor@guildford-iam.org.uk](mailto:editor@guildford-iam.org.uk)

## Chief Observer's Message

### PANTO

Being the Christmas Edition, its customary to look back on the year and highlight some of the things that have made an impression on the Group.

Of course, the biggest impact for GAM and the world around us, came from the smallest of things – a virus! The response from GAM was very positive with the group providing a series of Zoom lectures during the National Lockdown, all of which were well received.

Once the restrictions were eased and we worked out how to be 'Covid Safe', we were able to mobilise a small team of Observers to provide 'Observed Runs'. The priority has been to re-start those Associates who were already part way through their course. The numbers were small, but we were making progress until sadly now, as we have entered our Second Lockdown, such activities have been put on hold once more.

So my encouragement is for all the active Associates - if you are able to drive, pretend you have an observer sat next to you, if not in person then spiritually.

We also have a number of Associates who have yet to officially start their Advanced Driving Course - thank you for your patience. Please do bear with us but if you have the books, please do start reading; the more you learn now, the better it will be when we get you out on the road. There are also some excellent resources available through the GAM website.

For the rest of us, practise when you can and try not to let your standards slip. Once we get back to 'normal', then maybe think about doing a 'refresher' run.

So at this stage, I would like to thank everyone who has provided assistance in any way during the year to keep the group moving forward. I would especially like to thank all of our Members who joined in on our on-line sessions over the last six months or so. It has I feel, been a learning experience for all of us and we are still working on ways to keep everyone engaged so if you do have any special requests, questions or ideas, please let us know – we would love to hear from you.

Just recently my thoughts were sent back to maybe 10 years ago when a number of GAM Observers were lucky enough to sit in on 'demo' drives given by some of the instructors / examiners from the Surrey Police Roads Unit. The drives themselves were memorable for a host of reasons, but here are three examples I would like to share with you as I feel they highlight particular areas of Advanced driving.

At the end of one drive, an Observer commented from the back seat that he hadn't realised how smooth the automatic gearbox was in larger (or faster) Ford Mondeos was; this brought a smile to my face as it was a manual gearbox!

After leaving the garage at one point, we drove through local towns, villages and stretches of the Surrey countryside, returning some 40 minutes later. During that time, we stayed within the speed limit, never used a dual carriageway and came to a stop just once for 4-way traffic control at roadworks!

Finally, we were driving along the main road with a good view of a side road joining ahead; just as we approached the junction, a car joining failed to stop at the Give Way. I wanted to press the buttons marked "siren" and "lights" – they were *sooo* close – but it was not to be ... we merely ended up on the wrong side of the road to provide space!

As it was pointed out, had I been using the 'I' (for Information) in IPSGA, I would have seen the situation and planned for that possible eventuality. In my defence, I *HAD* seen the approaching car, but as the driver had looked in our direction, I *ASSUMED* he had seen us and that the threat had reduced. Apparently not so! Beware making assumptions! So in relation to Advanced Driving Technique, these examples do highlight how it is vital to know your gearbox and how best to use it; ensure you are comfortable using that all-important 'acceleration sense' to control the pace of the vehicle; and to take in as much relevant information as possible in order to plan for all outcomes.

The garage was also home to one of the road policing units and our drive was planned to take place after shift change so everyone was in the garage at the same time preparing the cars (think POWDERY, but on steroids). One of the checks is to make sure the lights work - all of them and it was interesting to see that most of the cars had an extra set of lights installed in the cabin, up against the windscreen – four or five white lights that continually sweep left and right working with and are in addition to, the 'normal' blue lights to make the car more noticeable when under 'blues and twos'! I have to admit I was surprised to realise they were necessary but apparently there had been several occasions where marked cars responding to emergencies had been 'hindered' by vehicles not moving over or slowing down, obviously the drivers of the offending vehicles had 'vision issues' (my words ... the original comments were, a bit more expressive!)

Now call me old fashioned, but I would like to think that I would notice a vehicle, that looked like it's escaped from Blackpool Illuminations, as it sneaks up behind - with or without the extra white lights ... never mind the noises it would be making!

However, having recently travelled North on the M1, in the four-lane section around Luton, the traffic was quite dense but still moving at the speed limit. We were happily cruising in lane four, when I noticed, several cars back, some flashing headlights and assumed someone was venting their frustration after being 'cut up'. The next mirror check showed the lights still flashing and confirmed my suspicions - Blackpool Illuminations gaining rapidly! Having moved to lane three, the vehicle in front of us was now exposed to the full 'Blackpool' experience. Why does the first reaction always seem to be 'brake'? Anyway, it found a gap and got out of the way.

However, the vehicle in front of that one, was a different matter altogether. I don't want to stereotype, but it was a small white van ... and it made no effort to move. I know the rear windows had been covered, but the side windows and wing mirrors were fine. To 'help', the police car moved left putting itself directly in view of the left wing mirror and waited ... and waited. Their positioning had also cleared lane three and I think it was the large empty space that appeared that tempted the driver over, rather than his actually being aware of anything else until the police went past!

The moral to this story? Be aware, keep the eyes and head moving and make sure you check your mirror! Remember LSD: LOOK, SEE, DECIDE. LOOK at the situation, SEE what is happening and DECIDE what to do to offer the best outcome. After all, you don't want a passenger saying, "... It's behind you"!

Drive safe and have a good Christmas. **Tim Lyon** Chief Observer

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***For more information, email [training@guildford-iam.org.uk](mailto:training@guildford-iam.org.uk)***



## [From IAM RoadSmart](#)

### **LOOKING AFTER YOUR MENTAL HEALTH POST-LOCKDOWN**

Lockdown has not just had an impact on driving skills, it's created new psychological pressures too – on drivers and riders at home and in business.

Many people have spent the last few months worrying about COVID-19 and how it could affect their life, from their health to their employment.

By spending a lot of time at home, keeping a safe distance from others if we go outdoors, and worrying about the long-term impact it may have on the way we choose to go about our lives – it's safe to say that this global pandemic has impacted each and every one of us.

One area of mental health that is being spoken about more post-lockdown is anxiety. Anxiety can make certain tasks and situations seem like they are too much to take on and we may feel overwhelmed.

Anxiety can cause many different symptoms, whether they are physical, mental or how we behave.

Rebecca Ashton, Head of Policy and Research at IAM RoadSmart, has put together a few simple steps on how to help reduce those anxious episodes.

#### **Take time to breathe**

A calming breathing technique for stress, anxiety and panic takes just a few minutes and can be done anywhere. By taking a deep breath in, filling your lungs, holding it for five seconds and then breathing out will help calm your breathing and heart rate, giving your body a chance to relax.

#### **The art of distraction**

It is all about refocusing your mind and moving it away from the fears that have triggered the anxiety. By listening to some music, being creative, or playing a game can really help to give your mind a chance to tune into something away from that fear that you are feeling.

#### **Start talking**

A problem shared is a problem halved. Talking to someone else will help you to reduce the weight of the issue in your head, and by doing so will give you a better opportunity to share those feelings with someone close to you.

#### **Get moving**

Each time we exercise we release endorphins in our bodies. Any physical activity will help the body to feel better as well as make you feel more positive. Also being outdoors in nature can really help you manage those feelings of anxiety.

**Rebecca said:** "People are relieved to be getting back to a more normal way of life but are understandably, anxious too. What's going to be expected of them, will they be fully aware of all the new rules and regulations, how will others interpret the rules? An open dialogue in this situation is hugely important. Drivers and riders should not hesitate to tell others about any concerns they have.

"The key thing is to talk; mental health is something people often won't talk about but stress is not something you should hide. People should take this seriously and certainly not laugh their concerns off. The worst thing anyone can do is say 'don't be so stupid'."

For those who would like a refresher as they return to driving or riding after an extended period off the road, driver and rider assessments are available. Visit our [courses](#) page for more information.

### **REMEMBER THE BLUE SKIES ARE STILL THERE**

I'm a firm believer that mental health is every bit as important as physical health and when a challenging spell came along recently, I turned to BEN, a charity dedicated to supporting the people of the automotive industry, for support.

On top of the normal stresses of life, I experienced a change of job, an extended period of ill health and a bereavement, all in quick succession. A family dispute was the final straw. I felt overwhelmed by what was happening and I was struggling to cope while trying to present a positive face to the rest of the world.

I realised I needed to ask for help when my physical health was affected by the stress of what was happening. I had trouble sleeping and I wasn't eating properly. I seemed to have a permanent headache and I could often feel my heart racing. I found it difficult to concentrate and my memory was poor. I would be energetic one minute and utterly exhausted the next. Worst of all, I knew I was affecting people around me. So I made a call to BEN and spoke to someone about what was happening in my life. It sounds silly, but just describing the timeline of what happened and when, helped me to see how much I was having to face, as well as continuing to make a contribution to my family, friends and workplace.

The team at BEN were incredibly supportive and enabled me to work with a counsellor who gave me an opportunity to take some time for myself and explore what was happening and how I could return to being more positive and make the most of the good things that were still in my life every day. We usually find it easier to be kind to ourselves when our physical health is affected. We know that rest, fluids and medication help us recover. What's harder is accepting that mental ill health needs a similar approach, but it's true.

After the many months of lockdown we've all experienced, the good mental health habits BEN's support helped me to create are as relevant and important today as they've ever been.

I recognise the physical signs of stress more quickly now and when I do, I try to take five and do something that lifts my mood. For me that might mean reading a book, getting out to exercise or laughing with family and friends. We can't be happy and feel happy all the time, but I have definitely found counting my blessings helps to relieve the symptoms of stress and restore a sense of wellbeing. Even on the darkest days, there are always little rays of sunshine to enjoy.

The great thing about BEN is that there is such a variety of support available, depending on what works best for you and the situation you are in. There are tips and advice on their website: <https://ben.org.uk>, guided digital support programmes and telephone talking therapies as well as counselling.

I am writing about my own experience because I hope it might help others and be a small contribution towards the amazing work being done to break down the stigma surrounding mental health. I have chosen to do so anonymously to protect the privacy of those who were also involved in the events that affected me.

If my words prompt you to reach out for support, from BEN or any of the other incredible organisations that support people's mental health – MIND and Samaritans to name a couple - then I wish you well. Dark clouds gather for us all from time to time. Remember the blue skies are still there and you can see them again.

## DRIVER ASSISTED TECHNOLOGY

Last week a new grading system for assisted driving systems was launched by Thatcham Research and Euro NCAP which is designed to give consumers a clearer understanding of the driver assistance on new vehicles. Assisted driving systems require the driver to remain alert and in control of the car at all times. They are different from automated driving systems where the car drives itself. Automated driving systems are not available yet, although manufacturers claim that we could have them for motorway driving as early as 2021. The different systems have already given us a lexicon of abbreviations and it helps to understand what they are, what they are supposed to do and when they will come into action. Here, Tim Shallcross Head of Technical Policy and Advice for IAM Roadsmart shares some tips with us about assisted driving technology.

- **AEB: Automatic Emergency Braking.** This uses radar and cameras to monitor the road ahead. If the technology detects a risk of running into stationary or slower moving vehicles it gives the driver a warning – usually a loud buzzer and a dashboard light. If the driver doesn't react, the brakes are applied hard to stop the car and avoid a collision or reduce the severity of it. However, sometimes the system will detect a collision risk when there isn't one. For example, if the car is on a bend the radar might identify a parked car as a risk. If you hear the collision warning and the road ahead is clear, you have time to react before the brakes are applied. You simply need to let AEB know that you are alert and not asleep. More or less any driver input will do – a light touch of the brakes or indicating left or right will suffice and the system will go no further.
- **ACC: Adaptive Cruise Control.** This uses radar to maintain a safe distance between your car and the vehicle in front. If that vehicle slows down, it will slow you down. However, it's not an emergency braking system; if the car in front slows down very rapidly, a warning will sound, and you should brake. This will cancel cruise control and you will need to re-engage it. You should also stay aware of what's happening ahead. Trucks may pull into an overtaking lane at the last minute to pass a much slower moving vehicle. If this happens, your ACC will suddenly pick up the slower moving vehicle and brake hard. Keep monitoring the road ahead to avoid getting caught out like this.
- **High beam assist:** This clever system switches to headlight main beam at night when there is no vehicle ahead and dips one or both lights when you are following a car or when one approaches in the opposite direction. However, it relies on detecting headlights or taillights. If you are approaching a side road with a car waiting to pull out, the lights will stay on main beam and you should manually dip them to avoid dazzling the driver.
- **Lane Keeping Assistance:** This monitors the lane markings and warns the driver if the car starts to drift over the line. This is usually haptic feedback through vibration in the steering wheel. However, if the lines are worn out or covered in snow or mud, the system can't detect them and will not operate. Make sure you stay alert and don't get over-tired, especially on long motorway journeys.

Tim says: "Assisted driving systems are becoming much more common and have the potential to improve safety, but they don't cope with all circumstances. It's important to understand what the systems are designed to do, always stay alert and know when to take control yourself."

## From GAM

### REFLECTIONS ON VIRTUAL COACHING SERIES ...

As many of you I hope, are aware, we had a fantastic series of Virtual Coaching Sessions on-line during Lockdown (the first one!) and indeed, beyond, which I for one found both thought provoking and extremely useful. It is well worth taking a look at the series which are on [GAM's U-Tube channel](#) if you missed any or you are feeling that you need a bit of a reminder about any aspect of the Advanced Driving Course.

In looking back over my notes from the sessions, I have just reflected on a few key points or highlights that stood out for me and I thought I would share them with you ...

I had intended to go through the series one by one and extract the gem or two that stuck in my mind from each session and to a certain degree, I hope that is what I have done, but I am well aware there is so much more of value and worth to be extracted from all the sessions so please do refer to them directly too.

One of the most useful aspects for me was using the Competency Sheets as checklists and very good reminders of what we do every time we are in the car. Sadly though, it is often those very familiar practices that quickly become part of our 'automatic pilot system' when driving, with the result that we become less aware of what we are doing and why. So perhaps the first point of note for me was the need to '*consistently evaluate my own performance*' which just underlines the importance of self-evaluation and the recognition that we, as the driver, are responsible at all times to be focused and aware of what is going on around us.

There are of course a whole host of acronyms which are incredibly useful from IPSGA and POWDERY (although I admit, I use a different one!), to TUG, OAP, SLAP, OUR, LSD and more besides I am sure ... but I will pick OAP as a favourite for the moment ... Observation, Anticipation, Planning ... where the Observation part could also be read as 'reading the road' ... as drivers I would suggest we do that quite naturally or are at least, well practised at it, but it did remind me how many seemingly minor observations can in fact tell us a whole host of other things.

I loved the discussion on Limit Points noting in particular how it relates to one's speed and ability to stop in the distance one can see ahead but of course, does also bring in to sharp focus the need to recognise where the balance & weight of the car is at all times.

As with this and all the competencies and aspects considered, I would encourage us to refer back to the books regularly as they are valuable sources of information for us all.

Now I don't know about you, but I found the session on Hazards fascinating as I am not aware that I had ever split them into the different categories of Physical, Moving and Environmental but did find that quite a useful way to think about them as of course, that also relates strongly, to how we see things ... for instance, because of their shape or colour, their reflection or movement.

As a scientist, I have always been amazed at how our brains see and interpret things without us consciously thinking about it but that doesn't mean we should switch off our conscious minds and rely on the sub-conscious instead! And do beware, we also have blind spots (one for each eye!) as well as when driving, that nebulous region just over our shoulder! But of course, it is not only us on the roads with blind spots; every other vehicle / driver has the same challenge and none less than lorries (especially left hand drive ones!) so ... beware ... and remember ... check that blind spot!

Another very useful comment, I think made by Paul Burn, was how it is important to separate out our actions ... for instance, by thinking 'wait' in between Mirror ... Signal ... and ... Manoeuvre as it does give us that little extra bit of time to consciously think and perhaps stops us falling into the 'autopilot' mode!

Oh, and that dreaded, dry steering ... what a reminder that was for it is so easy to find oneself being guilty of doing just that, perhaps because we are trying to rush a little or our mind is on something else as we make that tight manoeuvre ... or maybe I am alone in that ☺!

Well, finally, I am aware I could say so much more but I will leave you with the some key words that I would like to highlight: COMPETENCY, PROFICIENCY, ACCURACY & PRECISION ... undergird of course, by SAFETY and good OBSERVATION ... but no acronym to fit!

## ROUND ABOUT A ROUNDABOUT

### Why the controversy?

Have you driven or cycled in Netherlands or Denmark? If you had, you wouldn't be surprised to see this kind of road layout and an almost complete lack of controversy. These nations are what I describe as 'Flat Earth countries', almost devoid of challenging topography other than low-lying ground and water. They are also characterised by heavy use of bicycles and in urban areas with a clear prioritisation of the cycle and pedestrian over the motorcar. This may be contrasted by the U.K.'s attitude where the pedestrian and cyclist have a lesser prioritisation even following the COVID rush to cycling.

### BEFORE:



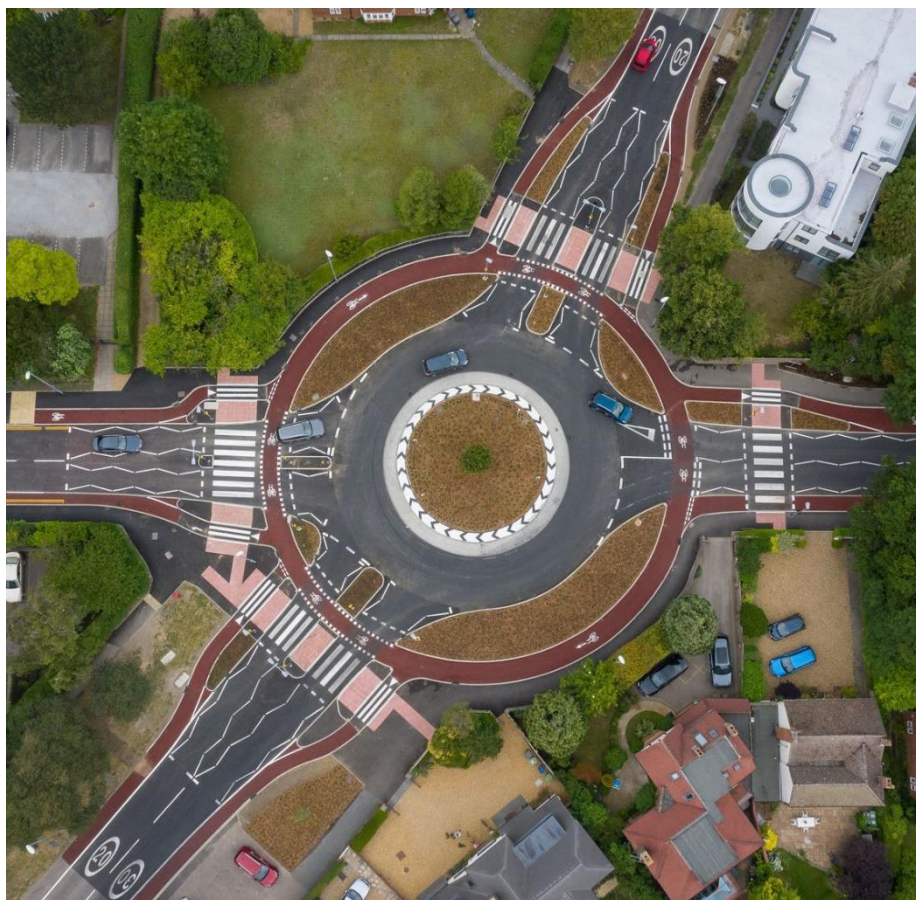
It was therefore of no great surprise that the introduction of a so-called "Dutch style" roundabout to Cambridge was local and national News in July this year.

Looking at the news coverage at the time, it seems to be pretty well split between the high cost, the amount of space taken from the road carriageway and safety concerns triggered by the sheer complexity of the arrangement. Concerns were then exacerbated following a minor road traffic accident when a vehicle hit one of the pedestrian beacons and drove away. The really big news seems to be of cost escalation from £1.4 million to £2.4 at completion.

However, careful review of the reports indicates that the main safety issues were focused on the fact that motorists in the UK do not expect cyclists to have automatic priority, a situation which is quite normal in the Netherlands.

**AFTER:**

Anyway, let's look at some of the principles of the design. Located in Fendon Road, Cambridge, the roundabout includes dedicated cycle paths, which will be entirely separate from the lane used by motorists. It replaced an existing traditional roundabout, and as can be seen by comparing the photographs, the central circle is retained but the roadway, cycle paths and pedestrian crossings are laid out in a very different way and consume



substantially greater area than the original roundabout and its immediate more traditional pedestrian crossing areas. It also features priority crossings for cyclists and pedestrians, meaning motorists have to give way upon entry and exit. Reduced lane widths and entry and exit points further encourage traffic to slow down when using the roundabout.

Are we likely to see these spring up in Surrey? I very much doubt it as for them to work, it does require that cycle lanes are formally provided alongside the vehicle carriageway in both directions and that they can be configured concentrically with the roadway on the roundabout. Our cycle tracks are only very infrequently separated from the roadway and are often shared with the footpath.

It would be great to hear from any GAM members who have driven or cycled such a roundabout in the Netherlands or Cambridge. Write in and let us know what you think.

**Gordon Farquharson** [GAM OBSERVER & CHAIRMAN]

**AUTONOMOUS VEHICLES** ... *the whole idea fascinates me but I will admit, also scares me ... but why, and are my thoughts valid or backed up by evidence either way? I have recently come across a couple of articles written in The Conversation which sparked my interest and I have attempted to provide a summary of their content and some questions or discussions that have been raised.*

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*Coming up in the next issue, I have included an article written by a scientist who has had first-hand experience of testing such vehicles. I do hope you find these articles to be an interesting read and I shall of course, welcome feedback and comment from you for the next issue of this Newsletter too.*

#### **ARE SELF-DRIVING CARS SAFE?**

**Andrew Morris** Professor of Human Factors in Transport Safety, Loughborough University

[Disclosure statement Andrew Morris receives funding from Research England, and the European Commission.]

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Cars are changing – fast. But are innovations such as autonomous and flying cars a bright new dawn, or just a wild pipe dream? And if they become the future’s way of getting from A to B, can we trust them to take us there safely? Here are five key questions answered by an expert.

#### **Are self-driving cars safe?**

At present, the general public doesn’t trust the concept of autonomous vehicles. But is this fair? There are many who believe that driver error is the main reason for more than 90% of all crashes, so would it not be a good idea to replace driver-controlled cars with autonomous ones as surely this could result in far safer road travel?

However interesting this thought is, it is obvious that this will take time and, in the interim, there will be a mix of fully autonomous, partially autonomous and non-autonomous vehicles on the roads which surely has the potential to cause problems.

Hence, we do need to be certain that autonomous vehicles will be safe and reliable as there have already been a handful of cases where autonomous vehicles have killed or seriously injured other road users. It is also important to realise that autonomous vehicles will only be able to operate on certain roads where appropriate infrastructure is in place – for example, road markings and signs – so that the vehicle can “read” the road and know what to do in different situations. Without these, the vehicle will either give up and shut down altogether (leaving its occupants stranded), hand control to the driver (thereby defeating the object of vehicle autonomy), or do something entirely unpredictable and possibly disastrous.

#### **Will cars change shape?**

Vehicles may become multi-purpose spaces in the years ahead, enabling occupants to perform a number of different tasks while being transported from one place to another. That could see such vehicles being used as office spaces, meeting venues or places to relax, all of which will mean that the entire interior space will need to be redesigned to allow these types of activities. In turn, this could mean wider, taller and bigger vehicles, which will have further implications for road design.

## **What about flying cars?**

There is plenty of space above us that is not currently used by aircraft, so the concept of flying cars has some merit as would potentially prevent many of the conventional problems associated with road traffic, especially congestion and could be a very fast form of mobility. However, it would need to be strictly regulated to avoid mid-air collisions, the consequences of which would potentially be much worse than crashes on the ground due to debris falling from the sky. Indeed, every mid-air collision would almost certainly have fatal implications.



Flying vehicles would not be constrained by traffic controls, junctions and roundabouts. One significant consideration would be financial; if all vehicles could fly, theoretically we would need far fewer roads, saving building and maintenance costs.

Perhaps we could imagine dedicated "air corridors" controlled by on-ground traffic controllers who would work in the same way as traditional air traffic controllers but numbers of course, would have to be tightly controlled.

It is hard to see how members of the public could simply purchase a flying car and drive it off the showroom forecourt. Finally, there are environmental issues, as some of the vehicles are likely to be powered by fossil-based fuels in order to achieve the necessary thrust – although the potential for electric-powered vehicles is also being explored.

## **And how about future driving tests?**

As the motorist's task will change from driver to monitor, it is possible to envisage that the whole task will need to be regulated by some form of vehicle controller licence. "Controllers" (as opposed to "drivers") will need to learn far more about the vehicle's capabilities and limitations and will need to know what to do in emergency situations in which they need to assume control. So, the task of controller may require twice as much knowledge as a conventional driver and 'driving' tests will need to evolve to reflect this.

## **Will all cars soon be computer-controlled?**

All new cars are already computer-controlled to some degree. When a modern car has a defect, the normal procedure for finding out what is wrong involves a diagnostic test. This test relies on a computer system that links to the vehicle's computer processor, sensors, and microchips, logging any problems or issues. It can reveal flaws including problems with the exhaust, transmission, oil tank and other systems.

It is only a relatively small step from vehicle diagnostics to vehicle control and computing capability is already present on many vehicles for functionalities such as automatic cruise control, auto-parking, and advanced or autonomous emergency braking systems. The computer systems on future cars are likely to become extremely sophisticated.

As a result, autonomous vehicles are going to be very expensive compared to non-autonomous vehicles for the first few years after introduction. This may impede widespread uptake, as is presently the case with electric vehicles.



## Driverless cars: once they're on the road, human drivers should be banned

**Jonathan Webber** Professor of Philosophy, Cardiff University

[Disclosure statement: Jonathan Webber does not work for, consult, own shares in or receive funding from any company or organisation that would benefit from this article, and has disclosed no relevant affiliations beyond their academic appointment.]

Self-driving cars could revolutionise people's lives. By the end of the next decade, or perhaps even sooner, they could radically transform public spaces and liberate us from the many problems of mass car ownership. They should also be better behaved than human drivers so we would not expect robot drivers to break the speed limit, jump the lights, or park where they shouldn't. They won't drive under the influence of drink or drugs. They'll never get tired or behave aggressively. They won't be distracted by changing the music or sending a text, and they'll never be trying to impress their mates!

Driverless cars could also change the face of public spaces. Private cars are very expensive items that do nothing for 95% of the time. They are economically viable only because paying a taxi driver for all your car journeys would be even more expensive. Once cars don't need human drivers, this cost balance should tip the other way.

Imagine what your town or city could look like with driverless taxis instead of private cars. Most of the space taken up by car parks could be used for homes, offices, cafes, bars, cinemas, hotels, and swimming pools; there would be an end to parked cars lining every street like urban cholesterol; bus journeys would be quicker and there would be wider pavements. With more space and safer roads, active transport would be more attractive. More people would travel around on bikes, skateboards, roller blades, and scooters. Driverless taxis could easily be electric, returning to depots to recharge.

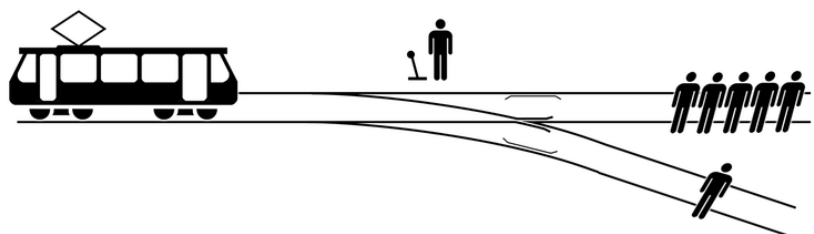
The benefits to public health would be enormous. Our towns and cities would be vastly more pleasant places to be and transport's contribution to climate change would be dramatically reduced.

But ... ensuring all these benefits presents an important ethical challenge.

### Dealing with emergencies

Ethical concern about autonomous vehicles has so far focused on emergencies. Should a car save its passengers at the cost of killing or injuring other people? Should it swerve to avoid someone in the road if this means hitting someone on the pavement? How many people need to be saved to outweigh a bystander's life or limb? Are children more important than adults? And so on.

The problem resembles philosopher Philippa Foot's most famous ethical thought experiment: THE TROLLEY PROBLEM. Imagine you are driving a trolleybus. Its brakes have failed and it's hurtling towards five people who will certainly be killed if it hits them. You can swerve it onto a side track, killing one person who otherwise would not have been affected. The question is, whether you should.



## Would you hit the switch?

*For further discussion on this, please do Google 'The Trolley Problem'.*

Suffice to say that self-driving cars have given this debate a new purpose. We have to teach these vehicles how to handle emergencies – the trolley problem just got real, but in focusing on an existing thought experiment, they have missed the bigger picture.

## The real ethical challenge

Engineers working on driverless cars tell us that the safest response in any emergency is to stop. This will be even safer if the nearby cars all have robot drivers which would be better behaved than human ones, reducing the number of emergencies on the roads.

Given all the potential benefits to public health and quality of life, we should be much better off once robots take over the driving, whatever the authorities decide about emergency situations.

This is what gives rise to the real ethical challenge of self-driving cars. Once robot drivers are safe enough to allow onto the roads in large numbers, should we maximise their benefits by banning their dangerous human counterparts from public roads?

There would be resistance to this, of course. Many people enjoy driving. But many people enjoy smoking, too, and this is banned in public places for the protection of non-smokers.

Rights of access pose a more difficult question. There is a strong case that essential transport infrastructure should be publicly owned; if private cars are not an option, perhaps the cost of using autonomous taxis should be proportionate to ability to pay.

Regardless of how we resolve these practical issues, it seems that the enormous benefits of safe, driverless taxis should lead us to remove any other kind of car from our roads.

## Autonomous cars: five reasons they still aren't on our roads



### John McDermid

[Disclosure statement: John McDermid consults to/has share options in FiveAI who are developing technology for autonomous vehicles (but are not producing vehicles and so do not compete with Tesla). He receives funding from Lloyd's Register Foundation for work on assurance of robotics and autonomous systems; the Foundation is a charity and does not manufacture or sell autonomous vehicles.]

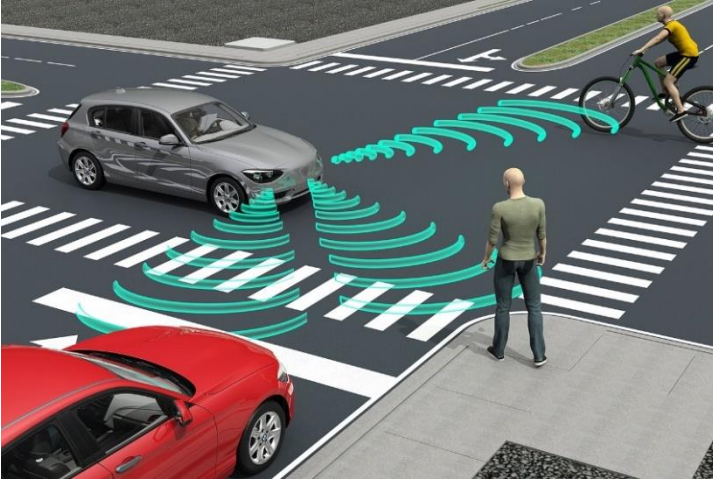
Elon Musk thinks his company Tesla will have fully autonomous cars ready by the end of 2020. "There are no fundamental challenges

remaining," he said recently. "There are many small problems and then there's the challenge of solving all those small problems and putting the whole system together."

While the technology to enable a car to complete a journey without human input (referred to as "level 5 autonomy" – see article on p.3) might be advancing rapidly, producing a vehicle that can do so safely and legally is another matter. There are indeed still fundamental challenges (five of which are discussed briefly below) to the safe introduction of fully autonomous cars, which have to be overcome before we see these vehicles on our roads.

## 1. Sensors

Autonomous cars use a broad set of sensors to “see” the environment around them, helping to detect objects such as pedestrians, other vehicles and road signs. Cameras help the car to view objects. Lidar uses lasers to measure the distance between objects and the vehicle. Radar detects objects and tracks their speed and direction.



These sensors all feed data back to the car’s control system or computer to help it make decisions about where to steer or when to brake. A fully autonomous car needs a set of sensors that accurately detect objects, distance, speed and so on under all conditions and environments, without a human needing to intervene.

Lousy weather, heavy traffic, roads signs with graffiti on them can all negatively impact the accuracy of

sensing capability. To enable truly autonomous cars, these sensors have to work in all weather conditions anywhere on the planet, from Alaska to Zanzibar and in congested cities such as Cairo and Hanoi. Accidents with Tesla’s current (only level 2) “autopilot”, including one in July 2020 hitting parked vehicles, show the company has a big gap to overcome to produce such a global, all-weather capability.

## 2. Machine learning

Most autonomous vehicles will use artificial intelligence and machine learning to process the data that comes from its sensors and to help make the decisions about its next actions. These algorithms will help identify the objects detected by the sensors and classify them, according to the system’s training.

In the future, machines will be able to do this detection and classification more efficiently than a human driver can. But at the moment there is no widely accepted and agreed basis for ensuring that the machine learning algorithms used in the cars are safe. We do not have agreement across the industry, nor across standardisation bodies, on how machine learning should be trained, tested or validated.

## 3. The open road

Once an autonomous car is on the road it will continue to learn. It will drive on new roads, detect objects it hasn’t come across in its training, and be subject to software updates.



How can we ensure that the system continues to be just as safe as its previous version?

#### 4. Regulation

Sufficient standards and regulations for a whole autonomous system do not exist - in any industry. Current standards for the safety of existing vehicles assume the presence of a human driver to take over in an emergency.

For self-driving cars, there are emerging regulations for particular functions, such as for automated lane keeping systems. There is also an international standard for autonomous systems which sets relevant requirements but does not at this stage, solve the problems of sensors, machine learning and operational learning introduced above.

Without recognised regulations and standards, no self-driving car, whether considered to be safe or not, will make it on to the open road.

#### 5. Social acceptability

There have been numerous high-profile accidents involving Tesla's current automated cars, as well as with other automated and autonomous vehicles. Social acceptability is not just an issue for those wishing to buy a self-driving car, but also for others sharing the road with them. The public needs to be involved in decisions about the introduction and adoption of self-driving vehicles as without it we risk the rejection of this technology.

The first three of these challenges must be solved to help us overcome the latter two. There is, of course, a race to be the first company to introduce a fully self-driving car. But without collaboration on how we make the car safe, provide evidence of that safety, and work with regulators and the public to get a "stamp of approval" these cars will remain on the test track for years to come.

Unpalatable as it may be to entrepreneurs such as Musk, the road to getting autonomous vehicles approved is through lengthy collaboration on these hard problems around safety, assurance, regulation and acceptance.



Please do see the Article in the next issue written by Dr J G Pelham from the Cranfield University Safety and Accident Investigation Centre who has first-hand experience of testing such vehicles ... and please, do write in with your own thoughts on this topic, as whether we like it or not, we may well see and indeed, be using such vehicles on our roads (or air space?) as taxis, meeting venues, options for travelling in comfort in the not too distant future ... or could I even dare to suggest that a dog could be seen sitting in the driver's seat!

**REMINDER:** Please take our member survey – click on the link here: [GAM online Survey](#)

**TOPICAL TIPS FOR CLEANING** ... I am sure we have all in our time come across some simple everyday remedies for cleaning silver, removing red wine stains from carpets or descaling the kettle. I was intrigued when I heard some variations on these themes and will include a few below for your interest but I will add, they are not tried and tested by me so I shall leave it up to you as to whether you wish to try them or not but in the meantime, I would love to hear your own 'topical tips' for cleaning using everyday substances that most of us would find in our cupboards ... so for what it is worth, here is my BASIC CLEANING KIT ... followed by a few ideas ....

Bicarbonate of Soda	Newspaper	Microfibre cloth
Toothpaste	Kitchen roll	Lemon juice
Toothbrush	Empty spray bottle(s)	Potatoes
White vinegar	Shaving foam	Salt

- To prevent the glass steaming up, try rubbing the cut end of a potato onto the glass and wipe off or alternatively, use shaving foam (or toothpaste) on the window and then wipe it clean. If the window is greasy, use a solution of bicarbonate of soda to wash it else, clean windows using white vinegar (1:3 ratio with water). I have also heard that you can pour a mixture of vinegar and warm water onto the frozen windscreens which will make the ice melt and it should stay frost free for a few days. Oh, and on those windscreen wipers, try using rubbing alcohol (or that cut potato) to stop them smearing the windscreen or squeaking!
- Try using toothpaste on a sponge to clean your headlights as this will not only remove road grime and insect specs from car headlights but will buff out small scratches. Wipe on and rinse with a damp cloth.
- Toothbrushes are invaluable for removing grime that have found their way into those nooks & crannies in the car, to clear air vents or to clean stubborn stains from the seat fabric, or indeed, to clean out those crevices in your leather seats. Additionally, try using shaving foam to remove fabric stains from car seats while the carpets in the foot wells of cars can be cleaned by sponging on a mixture of water & vinegar.
- Bicarbonate of soda can be sprinkled into the interior of the car or the boot to freshen it up from having pets in there or just to remove stale odours. Leave for about 15 minutes and then Hoover up.
- Mix some washing powder (laundry detergent) together with water to create a paste to clean the grime off the wheels, and again, our trusty friend the toothbrush can be used for this.
- Apparently, wax paper is useful for polishing chrome taps, so I guess if you have chrome in the car, it might work well there too but for polishing those chrome wheel caps, try rubbing on a paste of bicarbonate of soda and water with a soft cloth. Wipe off, rinse and dry.
- Finally, I did like the idea of using cup-cake liners to line cup holders as this makes cleaning them out remarkably easy; and to remove oil stains from your driveway or garage floor, sprinkle baking soda over them and then scrub with a stiff-bristle brush.

## SMART MOTORWAYS ...

I'm sure you have seen these books called a "Dummies Guide" ... not to insult our intelligence, quite the opposite in fact, as they are simple, easy to read and written to educate. Sadly there isn't one for Smart Motorways, so I thought I'd have a go! So here you have it ...

### "MIKE'S DUMMIES GUIDE TO SMART MOTORWAYS"

#### Firstly, what is a Smart one?

Well to confuse you, we now have three different types of motorways, all of which are different levels of Smart! First we have the **Full on Smart Motorway!**

#### This is the new, all singing, all dancing type called '**ALL LANES RUNNING!**'



This is where there is no 'hard shoulder', as it has been converted to use as a full, new extra lane.

You can use all lanes but if there is an incident, accident or breakdown then the lane will be closed off with a large red 'X' on the gantry above.

For breakdown purposes there are also 'breakdown lay-bys spaced at intervals. Of course you may not be able to get to a 'lay-by' in which case it will have to be lane one (the old hard shoulder).

Extensive CCTV cameras monitor our motorways now, so the hope is that any breakdown or accident is identified as soon as possible and action then taken to close off that lane.



It is these large red 'X' that we need to be concerned about. Variable speed limit signs have been with us for years, so we are quite familiar with them, but see a red 'X', get out of that lane immediately, it is illegal to drive in it.

**One important point to note**, which I found out to my cost a number of years back, is these 'variable speeds' are not a suggested speed!

When they first came in, like Smart Motorways, the onus was on us to find out the new rules and regulations ... and these **variable speeds are the limit!** If you go above that speed then you may be caught by the cameras and fined.

The second type is called '**Dynamic Hard Shoulder**' ... this is where there is still a 'hard shoulder' but this can be temporarily opened up as a full lane to traffic as needs demand. So if there is congestion or heavy traffic they may open it up. In which case there should be a speed limit sign above. The extensive overhead gantries now installed over the motorways will indicate if the 'hard shoulder' is open for you to use. That decision will be made by the highways agency who oversee our motorways, monitoring the traffic flow.



Lastly we have '**Controlled** Motorways' ... to you or me that means the old style! Not so 'smart' then! Three or more lanes and a hard shoulder should you break down. Simple!

### Two rules to remember!

1. Never drive in a lane closed by a red 'X'
2. Keep to the speed limits shown on the signs.

Finally, I guess the confusing part of all this is regards use of the 'hard shoulder', when we have 3 variants of use.

### And two more things to remember!

1. A hard shoulder is always identified by a solid, white, unbroken line... if there's no speed limit displayed above it or a red 'X' is displayed, do not use it except in an emergency.
2. A broken white line indicates a normal running lane.



### And that is all folks, my Dummies Guide!

The other concern is regarding breakdowns, as this is where Smart Motorways have come in for very heavy criticism with regards to safety. There has been a lot in the media about the safety of these new Smart Motorways. The concern relates to where the 'old hard



shoulder' is opened as a driving lane. My concern is the lack of education on these for drivers.

I was asked, a while back, to participate at an event where this subject was part of the training programme. Ok, I own up!! It was a speed awareness course... why do they call it that when those of us on it are fully aware of speeding?

Anyway, one of the things they talked about in detail were the use of 'Smart Motorways'.

So I have had some training here and insight but what about those who have not?

### What is your understanding?

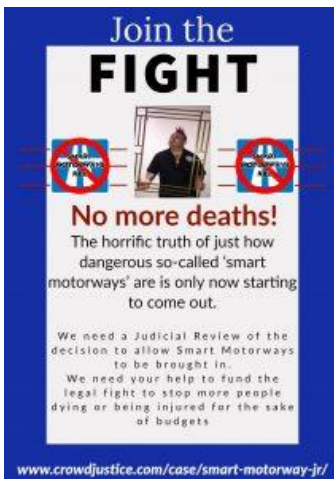
### Do you feel informed and educated to know how these work and what to do?

I think it's an area for real concern, this lack of education. If you want to know more visit <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/how-to-drive-on-a-smart-motorway>

Recently on the M23, which now has no hard shoulder, I watched an Audi crawl along the inside lane with a flat tyre. As he kept driving to reach safety, he was slowly shredding the tyre, ruining the wheel as he continued driving! Total madness!



Smart Motorways, I was told on my course, cost a lot less than trying to add more lanes to existing motorways, besides, there is sometimes no scope to increase extra lanes. The theory is, you use 'controlled lanes' whereby a lane is closed off if someone breaks down. Lanes can be shut off and reopened as necessary for immobile vehicles.



I saw this poster recently. Already there have been accidents, tragically deaths too, where people have broken down on these motorways. 'Cost v Safety' - the debate will go on for some time. One way or another it has to be resolved. This is serious and quite sombre to write about. No one should die as a result of a breakdown ... if you venture out on a smart motorway this weekend, have a safe journey.

**Sudden breakdowns of electric cars pose a hazard' say ministers.'** *There is a potential hazard caused by electric cars on British roads being urgently reviewed by the Government over concerns that the vehicles stop suddenly when they break down and that many cannot be towed.*

*Electric vehicles tend to "stop very suddenly" when they cease to function, rather than coasting like conventional cars, and that they can take longer to be removed from motorways.*

*The Department for Transport is examining 'short-term' measures to ensure electric cars can be removed from roads quickly when they break down. There is serious concern when breaking down on smart motorways in particular.*

*The House of Lords in February debated this issue:*

*"Smart Motorways are supposed to be the future - but the future is electric. Those vehicles stop very suddenly. They also cannot be towed; they have to be put on a low-loader, which is a much more complex and longer process that will put rescue teams in greater danger. So how will these new motorway layouts operate when there are lots of electric vehicles on the road?"*

*"Work is under way to look at short-term measures to make sure we can get electric vehicles off to places of safety as quickly as possible, on whichever road, because that certainly would be a large drawback to the introduction of electric vehicles." The AA issued a warning that the rise of electric vehicles could be incompatible with Smart Motorways, "due to the lack of emergency refuge areas".*

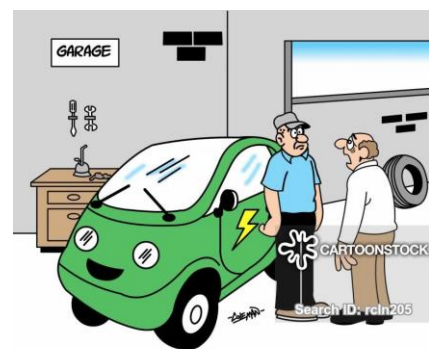
### **LAST COMMENTS ON SMART!**

I thought I had said enough on the subject of Smart Motorways but I came across this article the other day in the Telegraph. I don't like to cause distress but I feel it is so important for our safety that we are aware of the issues with Smart Motorways.

### **FATAL CRASH LORRY DRIVER 'FAILED TO SEE' STOPPED CARS ON SMART MOTORWAY**

Man facing jail term after collision in which two motorists were killed on road lacking hard shoulder. [Daily Telegraph September 29th 2020]

*Two people, died when a lorry collided with their stationary vehicles on the M1 near Sheffield. The men were the 3rd and 4th people to die on the stretch of smart motorway in 10 months. Figures in March showed 38 drivers were killed on Smart Motorways over the past five years. Most were hit by other vehicles after being unable to 'make it' to a refuge area.*



"MY ELECTRIC CAR IS GIVING ME STATIC!"



*The wife of one of the deceased has mounted a prominent campaign against Smart Motorways and the case has become a leading example in the ongoing debate over the safety of these roads in the UK.*

*The stretch of road where they died is classed as an 'all lanes running' motorway, meaning there is no hard shoulder in operation. Seven more Smart Motorways are planned in England with parts of the M6, M25 and M3 to have hard shoulders transformed into an extra lane.*

This following entry has been taken from the HIGHWAYS AGENCY ADVICE SHEET

*In an emergency or breakdown on a motorway if your vehicle is damaged or appears to have problems ...*

- 1. Use an emergency area if you can reach one safely. These are marked with blue signs featuring an orange SOS telephone symbol.*
- 2. If you can leave your vehicle safely, contact Highways England via the roadside free emergency telephone provided in all emergency areas. If you can't get to the emergency telephone but have a mobile phone with you, call us on 0300 123 5000.*
- 3. If you can't get to an emergency area but your vehicle can be driven, move it to the hard shoulder (where available) or as close as possible to the nearside (left hand) verge or other nearside boundary or slip road.*
- 4. If you feel you can exit safely with any occupants, consider exiting your vehicle via the nearside (left hand) door, and wait behind the safety barrier, if there is one and it's safe to do so. Keep clear of your vehicle and moving traffic at all times (for example if your vehicle gets hit, you're out of the way).*
- 5. If it's not possible to exit your vehicle safely, there's no safe place to wait, or you feel your life is in danger, put your hazard warning lights on and stay in your vehicle with your seat belt on. If you have a mobile phone, dial '999' immediately.*
- 6. Our regional control centres use CCTV cameras to monitor and manage our motorways. Once they're aware of your situation (via CCTV or the police), they can set overhead signs and close the lane to help keep traffic away from you.*

*'The control centre can also send a traffic officer or the police to help you, and assist you to rejoin the motorway when appropriate.'*

### **First a special warning to parents!**

Do your kids know what to do if they breakdown? Make sure they do. Breaking down is stressful enough but with the rain teeming down and on a motorway it becomes frightening too. Make sure they have their car covered with full breakdown cover, even changing a tyre can be dangerous, so call out the help you pay for!

### **In conclusion, 3 points I would suggest you check off**

- 1. Make sure your car has its own phone charger left in it at all times. We need the reassurance that our phone won't die!*
- 2. Keep this number handy - Highways breakdown 0300 123 5000*
- 3. Make sure you know if you have breakdown recovery. Keep the details in the glovebox. If not take out now, AA, RAC all much of a muchness cost wise.*

**Mike Field 01483 766634** [mike@fieldscarcentre.co.uk](mailto:mike@fieldscarcentre.co.uk) [www.fields-carcentre.co.uk](http://www.fields-carcentre.co.uk)

## A SHORT HISTORY OF MOTORING – MY FIRST 50 YEARS [PART ONE]

It occurred to me recently that I have had a lot of cars over my lifetime thus far, some quite interesting and some very dull, but all of them worthy workhorses and each with a story to tell. It all started with an Austin A30 (that's an A35 in the picture, larger rear window), the 4 door variant, probably with around 850cc under a grey bonnet, and purchased from a friend for a very small sum, I think as low as £30. It got me to and from work and college, and I realise now that removing the semaphore arms from the 'B' pillar to add flashing indicators would now be regarded as some sort of auto-vandalism.

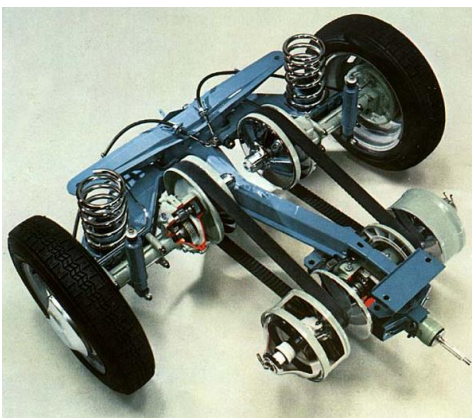


My mother thought the tyres were a bit suspect, so she paid for a full set of new crossplys; on my next long journey I spotted something moving in the passenger footwell and it turned out to be water – the huge tread on those new tyres had splashed water so hard it punched a hole in the rusty subframe and floor pan, and repairs were required. I cannot recall the fate of "5348 H" (I wish I had kept the number plate) but it was replaced by a DAF 33.

DAF were an interesting marque, still well known today for trucks and other commercials, but in the seventies they had a small range of cars with flat twin 746cc engines and continuously variable belt drive transmission (Variomatic). They were quirky, quite quick, and easy to maintain – they would even run with only one belt in the drive train but tended to spin you round in the road if you hit the gas pedal too hard and all the drive was on one wheel. The transmission gave the effect of having a limited slip differential in the rear axle.



My DAF was accompanied by my sister's DAF 32, an earlier model called the Daffodil as I recall, and then my father's DAF 44, a quite roomy saloon in which he learned to drive with me in the front passenger seat – it was our first and only family car as he kept it for many years until he could no longer drive safely. The transmission relied on the continuous variation of the diameters of the forward and



rearward conical pulleys that were 'opened' and 'closed' by vacuum control from the engine manifold and some very strong springs and centrifugal weights – DAF mechanics were known for having the ends of their fingers nipped if they released the spring tension or the vacuum in the wrong sequence. Its party trick was the ability to travel at the same speeds in reverse as forwards – not for the faint hearted. The transmission is still in use today, although a foray into motor sport was somewhat short lived, even with metal belts instead of rubber.

I was fortunate to receive a small legacy from a long lost aunt, around my 22<sup>nd</sup> birthday, and I spent most of it on a Datsun 180B SSS. These 1800cc coupes had been very successful in international rallying, along with their stablemates, the 240Z, and the success rubbed off on forecourt sales. Mine was a daily driver but was pressed into service at the weekends on many night rallies in their heyday of the seventies. With a pair of Weber 40DCOE carburettors, a re-tuned set of manifolds, some huge Cibie lamps and a full roll cage, we set off on many adventures and managed some success whilst surviving relatively unscathed.



The highlight in my old Datsun was probably the Compass Point Marathon, a round Britain rally to get to Lowestoft sea front, Dunnet Head, Acharacle and The Lizard in a specified time whilst competing on different stages on the way. I recall a third place was achieved, and no speeding tickets! At the same time I started a job 'on the road' which got me the use of a car for work, and I remember a muddy brown Hillman Avenger and a couple of other rather anonymous seventies saloons being parked in the driveway for a couple of years.

The ageing 180B was replaced by its little sister, a Datsun 160J, and this served me well for a few years as my next job did not come with a car. It was well received by my new wife who used it alongside the elderly Mini she brought into the household. Five speed manual gearbox and a willing 1600cc engine – all very modern! Some of the dates of when different vehicles arrived start to get a bit muddy here, partly because I started a new job which had a company car, and partly because my 'petrol head' wife wanted to try some different motors. We ran a car for her as well as the company car for many years, reaping the benefit of a new model showroom fresh every 3 years or so.



Penni's Mini was repaired using another scrap Mini that delivered up some parts before being consigned to the metal bin, and was then sold to finance a Toyota Celica. This was a car I could not get on with; it was well built, very eighties Japanese, and quite dull, but she enjoyed it – the thick doors and high waistline made her feel safe.

My company cars were variously a third generation Ford Escort (sky blue rather than the colour shown) and a Ford Orion, the bootied version of the Escort that lasted me another 3 years, followed by a Vauxhall Cavalier.

The Celica meanwhile was traded in for a Vauxhall Cavalier convertible, a quite rare car that caught my eye, and I found one the dealer was having trouble shifting. The convertible was great fun, slowed a little by the immense girders used in the sills to help prevent scuttle shake, but a willing performer and a terrific car to take to the Med for a couple of holidays. The convertible was eventually sold to an enthusiast who already had one – I suspect they are both bean cans by now as the build quality was not that great.





My company car by that time was a Peugeot 205 1.9 GTi. I have no idea how I persuaded the finance director that this was good for the company image, but we had a lot of fun. I took and passed my IAM test in that one in 1992, and it was at its best thrashing up and down the Alpine roads heading to French ski resorts – it took no time at all to get there. We spotted one a while back in an auction and were very

tempted.

Somewhere along the line we had a Mazda MX5 for a couple of years. I think this was more my choice than my wife's – she does not particularly like the low down motoring position, despite having owned an MGB GT as one of her first cars in the seventies.

I think it was then that Subaru came to my attention, again probably because of the rallying pedigree, and we purchased my wife a brand new white Impreza – the full fat turbo 4wd version. It served her well for a few years, getting lots of attention, some of it unwanted, and made a couple of trips to the Santa Pod drag strip in 'run what you bring' sessions – it was not too slow. It was sold to a fellow Subaru enthusiast whilst we waited for its 'grey import' replacement to arrive – a proper Japanese spec Impreza turbo in black, with a big wing and a 'Blitz' exhaust.



Some difficulties with the dealer going bust on us were eventually resolved and the new Impreza was ready to be collected. This one received even more attention, being stolen in broad daylight from outside the office door where my wife worked, but dumped not far away still in one piece. I have been told that on one trip to Europe it managed 146 mph on the autobahn – I was not there to see it! I did see the graph at the rolling road that got very close to 300BHP. [PART TWO COMING UP IN THE NEXT ISSUE ...]

**Paul Whitehead** [GAM SECRETARY]

## **SOME DRIVING DIFFERENCES BETWEEN SURREY AND THE YORKSHIRE DALES**

Where can you set the cruise control at 20 mph and not worry about disrupting traffic?

This article describes some differences between driving in Surrey and the Yorkshire Dales National Park in the second week of May (not 2020 I hasten to add!).

My wife Sue and I started our short holiday with a remarkable journey to the Dales. Leaving Woking after lunch on a Sunday (I was playing bass guitar at Christchurch Woking in the morning service), we joined the M25 from the A320, whereupon I set the cruise control to 70 mph and eco driving mode on. Except for stopping at service stations, I maintained this speed all the way on the M25, M1 and A1 until I turned left onto the A684. I filled up with super unleaded petrol at a garage just off the A1 and calculated that I had used about 30 litres of fuel in 260 miles, working out at 39.4 mpg, which I thought was good for my BMW 435i Luxury car.

For various reasons, the long-booked walking holiday turned into a driving daytrip holiday, starting in the north of the Dales at Askrigg before driving, via Hawes, Oughtershaw, Buckden and Kettlewell (to name but a few hamlets) to Grassington in the south.

The lack of traffic outside the towns was a surprise (and so was the lack of rain). Many of the day trips we took were driven on narrow single-track roads, with occasional passing spaces. The beautiful scenery is a considerable distraction to the driver (especially as we were blessed with good sunshine) and therefore concentrating on the I of IPSGA was a challenge.

There are very few petrol stations in the Dales, so it pays to fill up when the opportunity presents itself. There are quite different hazards within the Dales compared to Surrey's roads, such as endless winding narrow roads with dry stone walls that are sometimes low enough to see the scenery, and sometimes too high to be able to see over (and which restricts the view at bends). You also find horses, sheep in the road, and slow cyclists with panniers to a much greater degree than in Surrey. Outside of the towns, there are very few signposts, traffic lights, roundabouts, road markings, and street lights, and no speed cameras nor DAB signal for the car's radio. A good map and an inbuilt satnav were very useful. Two further contrasts with Surrey were, firstly, that the quality of all the road surfaces was vastly superior (even though the Dales NP receives much more snow than the southern counties); and secondly, there was only one set of roadworks in many miles of driving. O2's mobile 'phone reception was very limited (so do not rely on being able to access e-mail 24/7). I was also surprised by how few farm vehicles we met on the roads.

The position of the car in the narrow roads was mostly dictated by the width of the road being no more than the car plus wing mirrors (and the edges were mostly dry-stone walls, so the car's position mattered!) or a bit wider to include one cyclist in parallel with the car.

There was one funny incident, where I spotted in the distance through a gap in the hedge, a dark saloon car coming towards me on a narrow road with an S-bend between us, starting to my left. I drove into the passing space just before the S-bend and waited. After waiting a much longer time than it would have taken the other car to drive past us, I decided to drive very slowly around the bend (using the horn), to be met by the dark car doing the same. He must have been waiting for me in his passing space, which was just before the start of his side of the S-bend! What followed was an interesting reversing manoeuvre back around the S-bend.

I had a lot of practice at using the limit point of vision to determine my car's speed.

Most drivers I encountered were courteous and let faster vehicles past; however, some drove far too fast and would not have been able to stop in the distance they could see to be clear. The locals clearly know every bend and hump and their expectation (probably based on considerable experience outside term time) is that nothing will be coming the other way!

My average speed was much lower than normal and I set the cruise control at its lowest setting of 20 mph on some stretches of road to improve my concentration on the road and the scenery, the latter was helped by being able to stop safely in the middle of the road many times to admire a specific view; rarely did I have to cut short my stop due to a vehicle approaching me.

Driving a car with an automatic gearbox (but no paddles) was a pleasure as it was one less activity to concentrate on when the objective was to view the scenery as safely as possible.

Much of the driving outside the towns was conducted in Sport mode; this stiffens the suspension as well as sharpening the throttle response. The former helped the car negotiate the bends more smoothly (even if the fuel consumption increased).

Returning to the crowded roads of Surrey made the memory of driving in the Dales even more pleasurable and I hope to revisit the area and also visit the North Yorkshire Moors.



**Clive Heavens** [NSR Manager]

### **MY SATNAV** [sent in by Alison Wright –GAM Member]

*I have a little Satnav, it sits there in my car  
A Satnav is a driver's friend, it tells you where you are.  
I have a little Satnav, I've had it all my life  
It's better than the normal one, my Satnav is my wife.  
It gives me full instructions, especially how to drive  
"Its sixty miles an hour", it says, "You're doing sixty five!"  
It tells me when to stop and start, and when to use the brake  
And tells me that it's never ever, safe to overtake  
It tells me when the light is red, and when it turns to green  
It seems to know instinctively, just when to intervene.  
It lists the vehicles just in front, and all those to the rear  
And taking this into account, it specifies my gear.  
I'm sure no other driver, has so helpful a device  
For when I leave and lock the car, it still gives its advice.  
It fills me up with counselling, each journeys pretty fraught  
So why don't I exchange it, and get a quieter sort?  
Ah well you see, it cleans the house, makes sure I'm properly fed  
It washes all my shirts and things, and keeps me warm in bed!  
Despite all these advantages, and my tendency to scoff  
I only wish that now and then, I could turn the bugger off!*

**Pam Ayres**

### **Suggested website for this issue ...**

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/how-to-drive-on-a-smart-motorway>

### **Does anyone else have any useful websites they could share?**

*Oh, and just for a bit of fun, I came across some interesting acronyms (well, a friend suggested a few ...) so I thought I would see what I could find ... perhaps you could suggest a few more for the next issue ... but ...I am well aware that some are rather less than desirable ... please do keep them clean ... it is only meant to be a bit of fun 😊*

*FORD Fixed Or Repaired Daily  
LOTUS Lots of Trouble, Usually Serious  
BMW Big Male Wallet  
CHRYSLER Company Has Recommended You Start Learning Engine Repair  
VOLVO Very Often Loved, Various Owners  
JEEP Just Eats Every Penny  
BUICK Big Ugly Indestructible Car Kit  
ROLLS Regal, Opulent, Lovely, Luxury Sedan ...  
FERRARI Ferociously Elegant Racer Ravages All Roads Intuitively ...*

## **GAM members, News about ICE Driving in Finland in 2021**

**HOT OFF THE PRESS** ... December 2020 news update from Phil Gardner of the SDSA ... sadly, with the C19 pandemic still with us, it has been decided to draw a line under the courses planned for March 2021 as the ongoing rules, restrictions, uncertainty and difficulty in making this work reliably have proved to be too difficult a mountain to climb.

Thank you to everyone who expressed an interest in joining us - either again or for the first time - but I hope we can offer you all a similarly compelling opportunity to do the same in 2022.

Preparations had made very good headway, incorporating a wide range of different vehicles and driveline setups, each requiring a different range of skills and techniques to master. This has not been a wasted initiative however, as we now have an excellent structure for 2022, when I am far more confident that things will be able to go ahead as planned. I still firmly believe that we have the best value, most driving focussed operation in the Ice Driving industry, powered by the best organisations in the business. 2022 will be a very good year....

Rest assured that this should only be a brief interruption to the SDSA Ice programme and I very much look forward to seeing some of you again in the future.

If you're looking for something nearer home, then Paul can help us arrange a driving experience on the Mercedes Benz World handling track at Brooklands. If you don't know what happens there, have a look at the following YouTube video!

If you're interested in either of these opportunities, or need more information, please contact Paul Burn directly: [paulburn181887@gmail.com](mailto:paulburn181887@gmail.com)

## GAM - IAM RoadSmart 'Fellows' Roll of Honour'



Craig Featherstone

Philip Sivelle

Val Pascual

Rosemary Henderson

Neil Fuller

James Sohl

Matthew Lawes

Ben Bridge

Celia Dunphy

Alan Powley

Paul Whitehead – F1RST

Brian Miller

Brian Mellor

## GAM's Advanced Driving test successes in 2020 so far

(COVID-19 affected)

Graeme Blackmore



Ian Cole

Pass

Ben Cheeseman



Elaine Blackmore



Shane Hackett

Pass

Paul Robinson

Pass

Rosemary Henderson Pass (October)

## GAM - IAM RoadSmart 'Masters' Roll of Honour'



Peter Laub

2013

Mike Hughes

2017 Distinction

Howard Quinnell

2013

Gearoid Conneely

2018 Distinction

Dmitri Savin

2016

John Panting

2018

John Holcroft

2016 Distinction

Shaun Dymond

2019 Distinction

Phil Headen

2016 Distinction

David Nancekievill

2019 Distinction

Ben Bridge

2017 Distinction

Victor Olisa

2019

Graham Ranshaw

2017 Distinction

Peter Laub

2019 Distinction

David Clifton

2020 Distinction

## IMPORTANT GAM DIARY DATES

Look out for events in 2021 – See the the GAM Facebook Page

Committee meetings for 2021 – Thursdays @ 7:30 – venue to be decided.

7 Jan, 4 Mar, 6 May, 1 July, 2 Sept, 4 Nov

AGM – Weds 29 Sept 2021 @ 20:00 - virtual if we have to, but hoping for a venue.



**Observer Meetings 2020/1** Currently these meetings will be held on ZOOM due to COVID-19 restrictions and will start at 1930 hrs

These meetings will provide an important opportunity to get information and guidance, and importantly share experience and best practice with GAM peers.

Please send apologies to Paul Burn, our training officer.

Dates: Dec 3<sup>rd</sup>, then 'even' months in 2021 starting February 4th, April 1st, June 3rd, August 5th, October 7th, December 2<sup>nd</sup>.

## GAM Scorecard

This shows the activity for GAM over the recent weeks / months ... which in light of circumstances, has inevitably been quite low and is reflected in the current scorecard below:



### Group Scorecard for Guildford Adv.Motorists (2062) (GAM)

Date: Thursday, 01 October 2020

New Joiners		
	Group	National Average
Last Month	0	1.2
Same period last year	5	2.2
<i>Based on allocation date to group in DTE</i>		
Enrolments		
	Group	National Average
Enrolled Last Month	0	0.9
Time to enrolment (Days)	0	7.4
Waiting enrolment	0	3.8
<i>Based on enrolment date in DTE. Enrolment is the process by which a group acknowledges allocation of an associate via DTE, and which triggers payment to the group</i>		
Members		
	Group	National Average
Full group members	491	170.6
<i>Based on members linked to group (regardless of membership status)</i>		

Associates		
Training in Progress	65	
Last 12 months average days from enrolment to test ready	293	
<i>Associates with a course linked to the group - shown under OS Test ready lists in DTE</i>		
Observers		
Local Observer Assessor	5	
Trainee Observer	6	
National Observer	14	
Local Observer	9	
<i>Based on links to group and qualifications held in DTE</i>		
Test Statistics		
	Last Month	National Average
First and Pass	0	0.4
Fail	0	0.1
<i>Based on results submitted date and if course associated to group</i>		

Here is a reminder of the link to the [GAM online Survey](#) that was offered at the AGM ... please do respond to this by 31<sup>st</sup> December 2020.

[<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=DQSIkWdsW0yxEjajBLZtrQAAAAAAAAAAAAAAMAAP5dz1ZUQUZXS0dQS1dLWjYQUJBQkNUV1Q1MDdSMC4u>]

## GAM Management Team – Officers and Committee Members

<b>CHAIRMAN</b>	<b>Gordon Farquharson</b>	<a href="mailto:chairman@guildford-iam.org.uk">chairman@guildford-iam.org.uk</a> 07785 265 909
Secretary	Paul Whitehead	<a href="mailto:secretary@guildford-iam.org.uk">secretary@guildford-iam.org.uk</a> 07860 600477
Treasurer	Michael Tilney	<a href="mailto:treasurer@guildford-iam.org.uk">treasurer@guildford-iam.org.uk</a>
Membership Secretary	Neil Fuller	<a href="mailto:memsec@guildford-iam.org.uk">memsec@guildford-iam.org.uk</a>
Chief Observer	Tim Lyon	<a href="mailto:Chief.observer@guildford-iam.org.uk">Chief.observer@guildford-iam.org.uk</a>
Newsletter Editor	Val Pascual	<a href="mailto:editor@guildford-iam.org.uk">editor@guildford-iam.org.uk</a>
Observer Training Officer	Paul Burn	<a href="mailto:Training@guildford-iam.org.uk">Training@guildford-iam.org.uk</a>
Non-Sunday Run Manager	Clive Heavens	<a href="mailto:NSRManager@guildford-iam.org.uk">NSRManager@guildford-iam.org.uk</a>

### Observed Runs “Sunday-Runday” & Non-Sunday-Runs

**SUNDAY Observed Runs (now called ‘Sunday Runday’):** (currently suspended) These are our main training runs. They will normally be conducted on the 3rd Sunday of each month between 9.15am and midday.

**ALTERNATIVE Appointed Observer Runs (NSRs):** (Currently suspended) We can also offer some alternative observed runs on any day subject to agreement with your appointed observers. These maybe helpful if you need additional support or are unable to attend a regular series of Sunday runs. Meeting arrangements will be handled by your nominated Observer(s). Make sure you have his/her contact details. Contact our Chief Observer or Non-Sunday Run Manager Clive Heavens [NSRManager@guildford-iam.org.uk](mailto:NSRManager@guildford-iam.org.uk)

**Appointments for Observed runs** - contact the Associate Co-ordinator:

e-mail [associates@guildford-iam.org.uk](mailto:associates@guildford-iam.org.uk)

***Can’t make your Observed run appointment?*** *We try to match the number of available Observers (all volunteers) with the number of booked Associates, but sometimes we realise things can go wrong. If you cannot attend your booked appointment please let us know. E-mail the Associate Co-ordinator as soon as possible.*

# CONTACT

# GAM

Guildford Advanced Motorists



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**Facebook**

[www.facebook.com/guildfordiam](http://www.facebook.com/guildfordiam)

**GAM updated Website:** [www.guildford-iam.org.uk](http://www.guildford-iam.org.uk)

[website devised and managed by Guildford Advanced Motorists (GAM)]

**GAM On-line coaching YouTube Channel**

[\[https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLAEIIOdg\\_iR8PTrcQGJhXdB\\_RyZ3dXhKL\]](https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLAEIIOdg_iR8PTrcQGJhXdB_RyZ3dXhKL)

**FINALLY ... PLEASE READ ... BREAKING NEWS – GAM NEEDS YOU !**

As mentioned in my Chairman's message ... after a spell as our GAM Newsletter Editor, Val Pascual is moving on to pastures new. GAM needs a replacement. Are you interested?

We have a well-structured procedure, template and some material for the next edition in the Spring. Give me a call to discuss the role and find out what's involved.

**Gordon Farquharson** – GAM Chairman [chairman@guildford-iam.org.uk](mailto:chairman@guildford-iam.org.uk), tel 07785 265 909

