



GAM AGM and Members message October 2025

As last year, this is a combined membership message and my annual Chair's report looking back at the year ending 31st March 2025.

First, the **GAM AGM 2025 is ONLINE, on Monday November 10th**. Do join us for a chance to hear the formal reports and express your views.

You are invited to a Zoom meeting.

When: Monday 10th November, 2025 Login at 19:15 for a 19:30 start.

Please register in advance for this meeting:

Register in advance for this meeting:

https://us02web.zoom.us/join/_epS03TQTU2bqdEJmSqXEA

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.

Our Secretary John Holcroft has sent out the formal calling notice and associated documents. Please make sure you have reviewed the contents.

Some committee matters

A few changes this year, some new blood and a lot of progress, but we have some gaps and need more active support from our membership please.

As I'm sure you're aware the GAM committee's work to do putting in place all the structures for delivering our advanced driving training, dealing with constitutional and charity management activities, and of course looking after the finances. I'm very grateful to my committee colleagues for their support this year and sincerely hope all our full members and associates recognise and thank the committee for the last 12 months of unstinting contribution to our mission.

John Holcroft has done sterling work as secretary, simplifying some of our processes and managing Ripley Village Hall hire. The venue has proved popular with our Observers and the trainees, but as you will see from the accounts is our most significant regular expenditure.

Paul Whitehead has continued with the Membership Secretary role while we still look for a deputy to provide cover and support our succession plan.

John Munn took on the role of Associate Coordinator and *Paul Woods* AOR (Allocated Observer Run) Manager. These last two roles being essential to the organisation of our coaching delivery. Sadly, some of our Associates are poor communicators with frequently changing availability.

Clive Heavens retains his role looking after our website, having relinquished the AOR role.

Sadly, our vice-Chairman *Michael Guest* has tendered his resignation from the committee due to work and school governor commitments. This has been accepted and has delayed my plans to step down as Chairman.

Paul Burn leads our Observer Training, supported by *David Clifton* (Chief Observer) and *Paul Hadlow* (one of our experienced National Observers). As I write we have 4 new Observers in training. They follow a fully documented course culminating in an assessment test as part of the IMI accreditation. We have now got used to doing without the Local Observer entry level.

Michael Tilney looks after the money. Thanks to him for our 2-monthly committee updates and the audited accounts presented to this AGM.

Those attending our Ripley Sunday Runs will be welcomed by *Lesley Pearce* who joined the committee as our Front Desk Manager.

A few members have written to us recently asking where the Newsletter has gone. I explained the reasons in last year's report. It's worth repeating the key points. Three issues coincided that caused us to drop producing 4 Newsletters a year. We couldn't find an editor, we received very little contribution from members, and the cost of printing and postage was escalating. We decided to place important news on our website instead. Coincidentally, saving the cost of production and postage has enabled us to rent our Sunday Run venue in Ripley.

Finally in this section, I appeal for members to come forward to fill the following Committee roles: Chairman, Vice-Chairman, deputy Membership Secretary, and News Editor.

Observers & Observing

Our GAM Observer team is the core of our charity, supporting our motoring and road safety mission. David Clifton, our Chief Observer, leads the team. His leadership includes training sessions, producing coaching guidance, and active involvement in new observer training. We are particularly indebted to those Observers who make themselves available to take coaching runs outside our regular Sunday-Run Day.

Last year I noted our concerns about keeping up with the complexities of vehicle technology. During the year most of our Observers have been exposed to EVs, their drivetrains and associated *Advanced Driver Assistance Systems* (ADAS). This has enabled us to morph the technical evolution into "the System of Car Control (IPSGA)" pretty well.

Our Observers are also the first in line to support the new products being promoted by HQ (IAM RoadSmart). These include "Free tasters", fee paid "Member Refreshers" comprising around 4 runs, and GAM Member check runs. Our demographic of our Associates is interesting, and is clearly dominated currently by young drivers 17-24 and older drivers. Once again, our test results have seen close to 50% F1RST Class passes. Congratulations to the Associates who are now new Members and to the Observers for their great contribution to these successes.

HQ, IAM RoadSmart

Our prime contact with HQ changed during the year. Tony Green is now our "Area Service Delivery manager" (ASDM). Tony visited us in September to meet some of the team. We attended the 2024 Regional forum meeting in Leatherhead to learn a bit about IAM RS's refreshed mission and direction of travel. New course material was planned (now received and in use), and it seems to me there is a big push to reduce costs and increase revenue streams. Sometimes sorting out administrative issues is a bit of a battle.... and whenever I have the chance I try to remind HQ that supporting our volunteer workforce is really the most important part of their job.

Finally, you will have seen notice of potential changes to the Memorandum and Articles of IAM RS. If approved, this may have some effect on our GAM rules. We will wait and see! Please remember that GAM is an independent registered Charity affiliated to IAM RS.

Gordon Farquharson, GAM Chair, October 2025.