



Exeter & Torbay Advanced Motorists

Spring 2021

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The Editor reserves the right to edit articles for publication.

Chairman's Chat

Greetings all.

Well, I think we can definitely see some light at the end of the tunnel, infection rates are steadily dropping, and the covid vaccination programme is progressing to plan. Also, the Sun is shining through the window as I'm typing this – which reminds me, I must clean the windows!

I am attending a Zoom session next week with Amanda Smith – IAMRoadSmart Head of Field Service Delivery – so we will be discussing the way forward with regard a return to on-road activity.

Also, HQ have produced some 'e-learning modules' for our current batch of Associates, which will refresh them for things to come! We are also looking at having a Zoom session with the Associates, and running a DVD presentation, currently sorting out the logistics with regard to this.

For our March meeting – Wednesday, 3rd March, 7.30 pm, via Zoom – our Regional Service Delivery Manager, Shaun Cronin, will be attending to answer any queries and also give a resume of his career, which I think we will find interesting? Do contact me if you have any questions or queries for Shaun so I can give him some warning!

You may note that my 'Skills Report' and 'Test Passes' information is missing from the Newsletter – obviously we have no test passes to report, what Skills News there is above this.

Our Facebook page is now re-activated, after having to be shut down due to a hacking issue. Our website page iam-exeter.org.uk - is still available.

AND FINALLY:

It was drummed into me at a young age that you can be anyone you want to be. Unfortunately, that is now called identity theft.

Always remember – to err is human, but if you can pin their blame on someone else, that shows management potential!

William's grandfather was the man who invented the door knocker. It was such a success he was awarded the No Bell Prize.

You should always be careful to avoid letting technological devices know you are in a hurry!

When my brother was born, my Mum and Dad couldn't agree on a name for him, so they decided to toss a coin. That's why my brother is called Tails.

Update - HQ are looking at having Observer Refreshers from the 12th April, and resuming the ADC from the 17th May – this subject, of course, to the Covid situation not deteriorating again.

Safe Driving

John Tibbs

Wheels are an essential part of any automobile or motorised vehicle for that matter. Did you know that wheels were invented around 3500 B.C in Mesopotamia and surprisingly no one knows how they were invented? However, initially, they were not used for transportation. It took 300 years after the invention of the wheels that someone realized they could be used to serve a larger purpose.

Welcome

We extend a warm welcome to the following Full Members who has joined the Group since the last newsletter

Fenella Davis Torquay
Mark Ferguson Exeter

Claire Chilcott
Membership Secretary

Forthcoming Events

The Group meets on the first Wednesday of every month (except January). Meetings start at 7.30pm.

**Kenn Centre
Exeter Road
Kennford, Exeter
EX6 7UE**

The Kenn Centre is situated off the A38 (Exeter to Plymouth road) in the village of Kennford. The Centre is clearly signposted once you arrive in the village and free parking for 40 cars is available close to the main entrance.

Subject to local coronavirus restrictions

Please keep an eye out for emails or check the Website nearer to the dates of meetings.

3rd March

Meeting via Zoom
Regional Service Delivery Manager,
Shaun Cronin.
(Zoom details have been circulated
via email)

7th April

Zoom meeting (tbc)

5th May

Zoom meeting (tbc)

2nd June

tbc

If you have any suggestions for talks or if you can help with approaching possible speakers please contact us. To keep up to date with news about our monthly meetings and driveouts please see our website. Details on the Contacts Page at the end of the newsletter.

Please do come to the monthly meetings, we hope to have something of interest for you and it is good to keep in touch with other members and to hear what is happening in the driving world. If you know of anything you would like to hear about please let me know. Any problems finding us ring the IAM mobile on 07522480883 for directions.

Meeting Reports

Christmas Social via Zoom 2nd December

Our Christmas social was a bit different last year as we were all confined to our homes. However this did not deter seven teams joining in. I say seven teams, there were four couples and three teams of one person so there may have been more brain power in

some households than others! We had several rounds including general knowledge, history, geography, sport and music. We had a break half way through to have a chat and refresh our drinks and nibbles. Our winning pair scored 37 points and the fewest scored was 28 points so not really much difference. We enjoyed the evening and social contact. Hopefully for our Christmas social this year we will all be able to return to the Kenn centre and more people will join us.

6th Jan meeting

This year we decided to have a Zoom meeting in January due to the circumstances and a wish by the committee to continue to stay in touch with our members and associates. We showed the IAM introduction to advanced driving presentation which although aimed more towards associates (of whom we had hoped would join us) it was a reminder to all of us.

Graham Fry led us through the presentation and there was lively discussion about various aspects of the presentation such as distractions to driving, which has changed so much since most of us started driving. We discussed examples of situations such as a car overtaking a lorry in bad weather and what we would do

Reading the roads and anticipating hazards

- O** **Observation**
Ahead, to the sides
and in your mirrors
- A** **Anticipation**
How will what you
see affect you?
- P** **Planning**
How will you deal with
the worst case scenario?



We also discussed hazardous situations with a hazard spotting photo

What is a hazard?



Once we had pointed out all we thought we got to see what IAM thought

What is a hazard?



Observation is a key part of advanced driving. We were shown a slide and talked about what these photos might give us suggestions of. We were reminded that we need to plan for the hazards we can see and those we can't.

Joining the dots



Joining the dots



Towards the end of the presentation we talked about IPSGA and discussed about the qualities of an advanced driver: About us

- Concentrating
- Avoiding distraction
- Being decisive
- Being restrained
- Reading the road
- Identifying and assessing hazards.

Managing hazards: making you a safer road user

- I** → **Information** – gather and process
- P** → **Position** – position vehicle appropriately
- S** → **Speed** – appropriate to traffic conditions
- G** → **Gear** – select the right gear for chosen speed
- A** → **Acceleration** – apply the appropriate degree of acceleration to leave any hazard safely

Claire Chilcott

Report on Group Meeting of 3rd Feb.

So, on what – in the past, has been the first meet of a New Year, 15 of us gathered for a Zoom meet up. As we were able to meet on Zoom for the first Wednesday of the month in January this year, this was our second meeting of 2021. Those of you who missed it lost a chance to learn about some new ideas around cyclists and horse riders that the government intends to put into the next iteration of the Highway Code, as well as losing out on a very useful Quiz session.

Denis Leworthy (Senior Observer) had spent a good deal of time looking at the proposals for the Highway Code, which had been out for discussion during 2020, and was taken aback to find how many pages it all ran to. Note to others – check how many pages before you hit ‘print’!! Basically, it all seems to come down to courtesy, and the kind of behaviours regarding shared space that we would expect from Advanced Drivers in the first place. The one most likely to be of contention is a suggestion that cyclists – currently advised for safety reasons by cycling clubs* to ride in

pairs are to be recommended to move to single file to allow following motor vehicles to pass *where safe to do so*. Well, 'where safe to do so' is a very subjective decision, so with the best will in the world, this is going to be difficult to enforce or police in any meaningful way. We anticipate no change!!

Graham Fry had put together a really good 20-question quiz, which had us all scratching our heads at different times. No one got 100%, which is either quite bad for an advanced driver group – or quite good for the compiler, depending upon one's perspective!

All in all, this was an enjoyable evening, with the added benefit of not having had to leave home in inclement weather, and the availability of hot drinks all evening, should you require them.

I can highly recommend these evenings to all, because they provide a place to 'touch base' with each other, and with our aim of continually improving our driving. It was deeply disappointing that with one exception all the attendees are already full members of the IAM. The quiz alone – never mind the Highway Code information - would have been (or should have been!) of interest to all our Associate members who will presumably be hoping to pass their Test at some point during 2021.

I look forward to the next meet with hopeful anticipation of another good evening.

*The reason that riding side by side provides a greater margin of safety is that a pair of cyclists thus present a 'shape' about the size of a car, and require following traffic to use similar disciplines when overtaking as they would employ when passing a car. Generally, when cyclists ride in single file, following motorists try to squeeze past without the legally-required distance (1.5 metres at 30mph or 2 metres at higher speeds), often causing the cyclist to veer into gutters, kerbs, potholes or hedges with all the damage to life and limb that such events entail.

Meg Privett

Editor's note – during the evening the issue of headlights was raised. Graham Fry has kindly provided the relevant section information.

As of 1 January 2021 the MOT Inspection manual now reads in section 4.1.4:

Existing halogen headlamp units should not be converted to be used with high intensity discharge (HID) or light emitting diode (LED) bulbs. If such a conversion has been done, you must fail the headlamp.

Round Black Things!

I can well remember many years ago when I was a young police officer one of our dog handlers coming into the station for late turn saying that in the morning he had had to take his car to have four new tyres fitted. Having always been interested in things motoring I casually asked him what brand had be had fitted. His reply was simply the heading at the top of this screed, round black ones!

Unfortunately that seems to be the case with an awful lot of people, when tyres are needed it is usually a distress purchase and the cheapest option is the one that is opted for. If you ever get into a tyre dealers fitting shop the tyres are stacked in racks all round and if you get to read the names then there are some weird and wonderful ones for you to see. The tyres are certainly cheap, will fit the car and will go round when the car is driven and will support it from the road but how well it can do that job remains to be seen. There is an old expression, 'When the going gets tough, the tough get going', and I think that can apply to tyres equally well as it applies to the human race. If you buy cheap tyres don't expect them to perform well in grim circumstances. They may well do the best they can and undoubtedly do, but in the extreme they will be found wanting. When you need to stop in the shortest possible

distance the distance a low quality tyre can stop you in is greater than a tyre of the best quality. In wet weather they may well start to aquaplane sooner than a tyre of top quality. In short a good quality tyre can keep you alive when a cheaper one may not. You don't really want to test your airbags and seatbelts do you?

If when you need to replace tyres and I do mine when they are down to between 2mm and 3mm, the 1.6 mm being far too low and that legally needs to be only the centre three quarters of the tyre tread. The tyres can be bald at the edges and still be legal and whilst this is not good an MOT tester cannot fail the car on it having bald edges. Although I think a few think that they can. I won't ever be in that position to enjoy a 'discussion' with an MOT tester as mine don't get that low. But I digress, what I was intending saying was that when you need tyres go to a website such as Auto Express where annually they test tyres and rate them. You will get a good idea of what is available and will suit you. You will find there are effectively three grades, budget, mid range and premium. Obviously premium will give a good account of themselves but don't discount mid range. A lot of premium tyre manufacturers make a mid range tyre and it is made to a high quality. It is often that the name is not as well known. But the budget ones are best avoided.

I can remember as a young man buying a second hand 1962 Mini, actually named Austin seven, and it had been fitted with a full set of Colway remould cross ply tyres just before I collected it. It was the afternoon of the day I collected it and I was driving it to pick up my girl friend from work and the road was damp. I was approaching a junction and a car pulled out from my right, it was a tiny bit tight as it meant I had to brake for him but it really wasn't a problem. Well it wasn't until the tyres decided that what I was asking them to do, which really was not a lot, was beyond them! The Mini started to skid and then started to complete a full 360 degree spin! I well remember thinking, I've only just bought this and I am about to write it off, when the car came to a gentle stop facing in the correct direction without having come into contact

with anything. I drove on, giving everything on the road a wide berth and also giving myself plenty of time for braking and realising that the tyres were cheap remoulds and had only done about ten miles so hadn't bedded in properly. I determined to get rid of them as soon as I could.

When looking to replace them, money was not exactly tight but close to it so I looked for what I could get. Dunlop were and are a very good make but I found they had a second line tyre branded John Bull so I bought four of them and what a fantastic difference they made to the car. The car was transformed. So as I said earlier a mid range tyre made by a reputable name can be a very good buy.

I could go about winter tyres versus summer tyres and also the increasingly popular cross climate tyre but by the time you read this we will hopefully be heading for warmer times and also, fingers crossed, a time when we can get out and enjoy our pastime of motoring once more.



Stay safe

Dennis Le Worthy

Electric cars are not a new phenomenon. Thomas Davenport is credited with building the first practical electric vehicle — a small locomotive.

Membership

Thank you to all members who have returned their completed renewal form. As you are aware I can only hold your details on our database if I have your permission through a completed form to comply with GDPR.

Those listed below have yet to return a completed form or let me know if they are not renewing. You may have had your standing order go through but unless I receive a complete form by the 30th March 2021 I will be removing your details from our database and this will be the last newsletter you receive from us.

Group Number	Postcode	Group Number	Postcode
122	EX4 9DX	1589	EX8 1QP
177	EX5 5BP	1604	EX4 4EF
206	TQ12 1DJ	1612	EX2 6LH
355	EX16 4NY	1629	EX16 6JU
676	TQ14 8NR	1635	TQ2 7JZ
684	TQ11 ODS	1636	EX24 6HN
714	EX4 4RZ	1637	TQ13 9JD
1285	TQ1 4ER	1641	TQ12 5HD
1368	TQ9 7NJ	1642	EX2 4SJ
1486	TQ5 8QY	1645	TQ3 1LQ
1500	TQ13 9HW	1647	EX9 6EJ
1527	TQ9 6AP	1652	TQ13 9BQ
1554	EX8 4EL	1653	EX6 8SD
1574	TQ4 7NB	1654	TQ13 9AU
1583	EX3 0LA	1660	EX15 3SE
1584	EX14 9H		

Renewal forms were sent out with the last newsletter in December 2020 and again in a reminder email in January 2021. If I do not

hear from you by the end of the month, the group is sorry you will be leaving us.

Renewal forms can be returned via email or post (my address is on the form). I look forward to receiving more forms soon as the group does not want to lose contact with you.

Claire Chilcott

Highways England's smart motorways rollout 'entirely wrong' and drivers don't know how to use them

Highways England's rollout of smart motorways was "entirely wrong" and drivers still don't know how to use them, the Transport Secretary has said. Grant Shapps said he was surprised to learn the Government-owned company in charge of the rollout failed to have the technology in place to spot stranded motorists in live lanes. Mr Shapps also suggested motorists had no idea what to do if they broke down in live lanes as they simply "sprung up" without a major information campaign.

Appearing in front of MPs on the transport committee, the cabinet minister said he had ordered the scrapping of dynamic hard shoulders, where they could be switched to "live lanes" if traffic grew heavy, describing them as "insane" and adding to motorists' confusion.

Mr Shapps comments are the most damning indictment yet on the smart motorway rollout by a serving Government minister, and comes after The Telegraph has revealed how people are dying after failing to reach "emergency refuge areas" and being stranded in the inside live lane before being hit by other vehicles. Pressure to reverse the rollout of smart motorways intensified in January after

a Sheffield coroner called for an urgent review of them after he ruled the lack of a hard shoulder on the M1 contributed to the death of two drivers hit by a lorry after they stopped to exchange details following a minor prang.

Despite the criticisms, Mr Shapps said smart motorways remain too expensive to scrap because the Government would need to purchase land equivalent to “700 Wembley stadiums” to create new hard shoulders. Instead he is now bringing forward the target for “vehicle stop detection” technology to be fitted along all smart routes to next year rather than the initial March 2023 date.

Mr Shapps’s stance drew criticism from the widow of one of the men killed on the M1, Jason Mercer, as she called for smart motorways to be axed to “save lives”. Claire Mercer, 44, told The Telegraph: “Mr Shapps constantly says he has inherited the problem of smart motorways, and regularly tries to distance himself from Highways England. However, he is the ultimate boss and if he doesn’t like it, now is the time to bring back the hard shoulder and save lives.”

Mr Shapps told MPs he had “inherited” the current smart motorway system and commissioned a review of it when he became transport secretary as he was concerned by reports of fatal crashes. He said he was surprised to learn the scheme had been launched without stop detection technology along all stretches and that shortages of kit from the sole supplier meant all smart motorways may not be covered for “many years”.

Mr Shapps said: “It is entirely wrong to build a so-called smart motorway without the technology in place to make it safer. That is not the right approach.” He said he is now focused on making smart motorways safer and last year ordered 18 separate improvements, including building more emergency refuge areas and launching a £5 million driver safety information campaign. “People don’t know, as they were just sprung up, how they are

meant to drive on these things,” he added. “Or what you should do if you break down on one of these things.”

68,000 Drivers caught without MOT after test changes

Figures show that since the test changes implemented in May 2018, police have stopped more than 68,000 vehicles without a valid MOT.

The fine for being caught without an MOT increased, too. The typical charge is around £100, although this can increase to £1,000 if the case goes to court. Drivers can face penalties of £2,500 if they’re caught driving with a ‘dangerous’ MOT classification.

Overall, the Treasury is thought to have made around £6 million in the 18 months since the changes to the test were made. The prosecution figures were obtained by Halfords, via a Freedom of Information request.

Halfords also conducted a survey of 2,000 motorists. It revealed that 22 percent had driven a car out of MOT, either because they’d forgotten, or didn’t know it was time for their test. Seven percent said they didn’t know when their MOT was due at the time of the survey.

“More than 100 motorists per day are caught by police driving without a valid MOT and our research suggests this is just a fraction of the people who are on the road with an expired test,” said Aaron Edwards of Halfords. However, for many this isn’t intentional, with many simply unaware their car’s MOT was due. Around one in five motorists have driven a car without a valid MOT because they had forgotten or didn’t know it was due.”

However, some 15 percent said they knowingly drive around without an MOT. And 36 percent of these said this was because they couldn't afford it, while 33 percent said they didn't have time. Also, 17 percent said it was because they couldn't be bothered, while 23 percent simply thought they could get away with it.

Major mistakes - the most common reasons for instant driving test failure

More than half of all student motorists fail the UK driving test every year and in 2018 only 45.8 per cent of candidates passed the test - the lowest proportion for a decade. Student drivers are not expected to perform perfectly during the test but errors are split into three categories - dangerous, serious and 'driving fault'. While drivers can make up to 15 driving faults, also known as minors, a single dangerous or serious, known as major, fault is an immediate fail and means they'll have to resit the test. Now, figures from the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency have revealed which major fault causes the most failures during the test.

Figures obtained from the agency by Hippo Leasing show that poor observation at junctions was to blame for more failures than any other major fault in 2018, with 167,000 tests failed on it, and it was the most common reason in 92 of the 121 postcode areas. Failing to use their mirrors before manoeuvring was the second most common mistake, with nearly 140,000 drivers being refused a licence on that basis. Learners are allowed up to 15 minor faults on the driving test but a single major fault will result in a fail.

The DVSA classes a dangerous fault as one that involves actual danger to the driver, the examiner, the public or property. A serious fault is something potentially dangerous. In total 531,345 people failed the driving test on a major fault with a combined total

of 1,743,222 major faults, indicating many of them made several serious mistakes during the test.

Failing to observe at junctions was the cause of more than 40 per cent of failures in eight postcode areas, including Outer Hebrides (HS); Hemel Hempstead (HP); Motherwell (ML); Dumfries (DG); Harrogate (HG); Truro (TR); Taunton (TA) and Paisley (PA). Behind that and failing to use their mirrors, errors in turning right at a junction (77,590), losing control of steering (73,715) and ignoring traffic light signals (72,110) were the most common major faults.

The most common serious or dangerous faults:

Rank # - Fault - Total number issued

1. Junctions - observation 167,100
2. Mirrors - change direction 139,883
3. Junctions - turning right 77,590
4. Control - steering 73,715
5. Response to signs - traffic lights 72,110
6. Move off - safely 71,646
7. Positioning - normal driving 71,248
8. Move off - control 69,316
9. Reverse park - Control 65,632
10. Response to signs - road markings 65,502

Worryingly, 577 candidates failed the test before even getting behind the wheel due to not being able to complete the sight test. You must be able to read a car number plate from 20 metres to meet the “standards of vision for driving”. Drivers are given three attempts before being failed but nearly 600 still couldn’t manage.

Tom Preston, managing director of Hippo Leasing commented: “Driving test faults reflect the factors which cause the most accidents on the road. Observation is the most common factor, according to the DfT, so while over 167,000 learners failed their practical test last year for this very reason, it is important

candidates learn from their mistakes to keep themselves and others safe once they're qualified to drive."

The least common serious or dangerous faults

Rank # - Fault - Total number issued

1. Controlled stop - Promptness 0
2. Highway Code 43
3. Reverse left - Control 70
4. Turn in road - Observations 73
5. Turn in road - Control 84
6. Reverse left - Observation 84
7. Control - accelerator 243
8. Control - clutch 498
9. Precautions 529
10. Eyesight 577

Driverless Nissan Leaf completes UK's longest autonomous journey

A driverless Nissan Leaf has completed the longest unaided journey for an autonomous vehicle in the UK as part of a research project.

The 230-mile journey was for HumanDrive, a £13.5 million project jointly funded by the UK government through the Centre for Connected and Autonomous Vehicles (CCAV) and Innovate UK, and nine other consortium partners. The journey from Cranfield, Bedfordshire, to Sunderland was the result of 30 months of work between consortium partners and Nissan engineers.

"Safely completing the longest autonomous drive in Britain is an incredible achievement for Nissan and the HumanDrive consortium, and a huge step towards the rollout of driverless cars

on UK streets," said business minister Nadhim Zahawi. "This project is a shining example of how the automotive industry, working with government, can drive forward technology to benefit people's mobility - while helping to slash carbon emissions."

To complete the task, the test car was fitted with GPS, radar, LIDAR and camera technologies that build up a perception of the world around it. Then, using that perceived world, the system was able to make decisions about how to navigate roads and obstacles on the journey. As well as the landmark journey on roads, the trial also completed a run on a closed test track.

"The UK is fast becoming a leader in intelligent and automated vehicle and traffic management technology, a huge global sector set to create thousands of jobs," said Future of Transport minister, George Freeman. "Our Future of Mobility: Urban Strategy is supporting transport innovation for cleaner, greener and smarter transport, and Nissan's successful HumanDrive project is an exciting example of how the next phase of the UK's transport revolution could look."

Speeding is less socially acceptable than five years ago

The latest annual Safety Culture Report from IAM Roadsmart (formerly the Institute of Advanced Motorists) surveyed 2,000 UK drivers and found that only 43 per cent believe it's acceptable to drive at 80mph on the motorway. This is down from 55 per cent believing it was okay in 2016. In addition, just 23 per cent of respondents thought it was tolerable to drive faster than 80mph on the motorway, whereas 28 per cent accepted this behaviour five years ago. The vast majority of drivers believe it is unacceptable to speed in towns - a fact that has reassuringly remained unchanged over the last five years. Worryingly, though, one in five still thinks it's alright to drive 5mph over the speed limit in a residential area, while one in 10 thinks it is okay to do so in a school zone.

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**Deadline for contributions for the next newsletter:
18th May 2021**