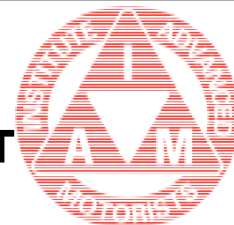


THE RESPONSIBLE MOTORIST



INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

<i>Events and Meetings</i>	2
<i>Contributions to your Newsletter.</i>	2
<i>From the Chief Observer</i>	3
<i>An Essay by a Truck Driver</i>	4
<i>Group Videos</i>	5
<i>Driving Attitudes</i>	5
<i>The Advanced Driving Test</i>	6
<i>From the Editor</i>	7
<i>Membership</i>	7
<i>Committee Listings</i>	7
<i>Venue for Group Meetings</i>	8
<i>New Associates and Test Passes.</i>	8
Special points of interest:	
<i>Observed Runs / Rides & Pre-tests.</i>	
<i>Events & Meetings for you to attend.</i>	
<i>Associate responsibilities.</i>	
<i>Membership requirements.</i>	

CHAIRMAN'S COMMENT

I am sorry to have to say yet again in Chairman's Comments of my grave concerns for our Group and its future. Following a recent Committee meeting we feel without an influx of some new members and some additional help from our current members then the Group should be wound up at the next AGM.

I know we are in hard times but the Group relies on the contribution of their time which is Members give. Without undermining the excellent work carried out by those presently active members of our Group we need two things urgently. It has been the same old faces who have not only said they would help as Observers, or at events or with Committee work who continue to turn up and do the most excellent things on behalf of the Group. We need just a few more, however regrettably this just isn't happening, for example Tony has three roles of Secretary, Newsletter Editor and Membership Secretary which we shouldn't allow to continue just as an example and there are others who also have multiple roles as well.

Please don't just sit there as you read this ask yourself what the Group has done for you in getting you through your Test and what it would mean if we ceased to exist.

If this bothers you please pick up the phone and call me or drop me an email or come to the next Group night and let me know that you care and volunteer some of your time. Everybody who has joined the Committee has brought fresh ideas which have almost always been embraced and adopted and we need more.

Another urgent need the Group has is for some new Associate members, For all of you who have taken and passed the IAM test can I ask of you please within the next few weeks talk to people who you know family, friends, work colleagues or anyone who would benefit from IAM membership. Tell them about the good things it has meant and means to you. If they are over 25 the cheaper Car and home insurance benefits are perhaps some of the most worthwhile we get as IAM members.

If the cost of the skill for life package is a problem please talk to me, there are ways of paying it in three or 4 payments. For those of you who know somebody doing the Gold Duke of Edinburgh award the IAM test is accepted as a skill which can be accepted towards this Award.

I will keep you updated with the next and may be final Newsletter of our Group early next year. To lose the Group which as done so much good would be a travesty for all concerned but we cannot continue as we are.

Until next time Save driving!

Paul

HELP US TO HELP YOUR GROUP!

Do you think that your group could do better? Improve? Be more exciting? Do more driving orientated things? Currently you have of 7 members doing 11 functions within the Group Committee that could have up to 15 persons contributing towards a better Group. If you want benefit from a better group and do more to improve road safety, why not take an active role rather than a passive one? Give something tangible back against what you have received by passing your test. Your newsletters name 'The Responsible Motorist' is in fact you and the responsibilities that you have for yourself, passengers, family, and to other road users through a continuing and improving driving standard and road safety in general as you drive each day. Join your committee. Interested? Join your committee. Contact any Committee Member and come to the next committee meeting! Yes, Paul is saying other similar things!



Group 3081



EVENTS & MEETINGS

11th November

8pm—"Talk by Mike Jones—Vehicle & Operator Support Agency" All about foreign truck drivers, clearing the mess on our highways, etc.

December—No meeting.

13th January

8pm—"An evening with Mark Wakelam—IAM local Examiner". Turn the table and ask him the questions!

10th February

8pm—"Talk by John Price from TTC" All about rehabilitation of drunk drivers. How big is a 'measure'?

10th March

8pm—"Talk by the Air Ambulance" - Shift patterns mean as yet they do not know who is coming.

14th April

8pm—"Talk by Doug McDougall from the Dudley Road Safety Partnership" - Road safety in the community, schools, safety around lorries and buses, etc.

12th May - Wednesday

8pm - "A.G.M. 2010"

All full & associate members - are requested to attend this meeting. Your commitment to Road safety

and your Group is required!

- **Associate Evenings**
- **Observer Evenings**

Note: These applicable meetings must be attended—dates and times will be given to you in good time.

Please note

All dates are 'the 2nd Wednesday in the month' - unless otherwise stated. There are no meetings in August and December. Do read the dates carefully.

Our venue — see the map on the last page.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO YOUR NEWSLETTER

You will or should be aware by now that I keep banging on about getting the membership to contribute something to go into your newsletter.

Currently outside of your committee only one person articles and does so on a fairly regular basis! Stand up, **Ann Palmer!** While not all are immediately used we do collect them until we get say a page full.

Got something on driving that really gets you going? Want to share a driving event, holiday, etc. with us? Just passed your advanced test? Share the experience with us! At one time it was common practice to put thank you letters in your newsletter appreciating the efforts and time put in by your observer!

Your newsletter would be better for a more varied content. Why not give it that variation?

"Skill for Life?"

OBSERVED AND PRE-TEST RUNS

Full and Associate Members—please note - that a valid Group Membership card must be produced upon request. Failure to do so or that the card is invalid, that particular activity will not take place

Do remember - *When you have taken a 'pre-test' drive* - and have been recommended to apply for the advanced test, please send your completed test application form to me as soon as possible. This recommendation will come from you having demonstrated the standard that we expect of you to pass - however - it will still depend on your driving on the actual day of your IAM test with an IAM Examiner. *Within 2-3 weeks* - an Examiner will contact you with a date and time for your actual test.

After taking your test - please let your Observer and Chief Observer know of the result as soon as possible. This allows us to say well done — and to free your Observer for any waiting Associate.

Observers— tell your Chief Observer when your Associate passes—as I would much rather be told twice than not at all!

Geoff Davis—Chief Observer



FROM YOUR CHIEF OBSERVER

Checking Road Signs

Whilst out driving there is an ever increasing array of road signs to look for and respond to where applicable – those Giving Orders, Warning signs, Signs giving positive instruction, Direction signs, Information signs, Road works signs, Road markings - in fact, a whole variety of signs. It's important to react accordingly to each sign – they must be there for a reason! For instance at Trescott Ford on the Bridgnorth Road, near to Wolverhampton there are four signposts [2 either side the ford] each with four signs: a sign saying Trescott Ford, then FORD in a red triangle, then a square sign stating Deep Ford Check depth gauge before crossing, finally, on another square sign, Warning, Many vehicles are recovered every year. At the edge of the water there is a Depth Gauge which should give an idea of how safe it is to cross. Water at about 2 feet deep is probably enough to stop most cars, if taken too quickly a wave of water is scooped up and can swamp the engine.

After a period of heavy rain, I was driving along Bridgnorth Road. As I approached the ford, I noticed a car was stuck in the middle. I parked and went to see if there was anything I could do to help. The 'accident' had only just happened as the driver was still in his car. I stood on the footbridge, the driver then passed one or two things to me, he then struggled to get out through the open drivers' window, onto the car roof and inched his way to the railings of the footbridge. He had already called for assistance. After spending a few moments looking at the water which was about 2½ feet deep rushing past his car, the night was lit up by the blue lights of a fire engine. The police were also quickly on the scene then an RAC recovery vehicle arrived. After a while, it was decided to leave the car where it was as the water was flowing too strongly. The police closed the road with their blue and white tape and then placed Road Closed signs each side of the ford.

After heavy rain water levels can rise to 3½ to 4 feet deep. Rarely does it get much deeper as excess water is spread across the fields.

The driver had attempted to go through the ford. The strong current had lifted the car off the ground and turned it towards the footbridge. The engine had been swamped and had stopped running. By not reading the warning signs this motorist had caused problems. Firstly he lost his car in the strong currents and it would probably be written off; in the short term, he needed to complete his journey so he called a friend to meet him at the ford. The police arrived along with the fire crew and an RAC recovery vehicle. This caused an expense which would need to be picked-up by someone – it might have been the drivers' motor insurance policy.

The driver said he usually uses this route when travelling to Wombourne - a distance of about 5 miles from the ford. Had he not noticed the level of water / the signs / the depth gauge? I think this driver must have been on auto-pilot. Just because he had crossed the ford many times, doesn't necessarily mean that it can be crossed every time: sometimes the water gets too deep to cross.

This is an extreme example of not reading road signs and taking the appropriate action.

Till next time - Be vigilant-take care-drive safely!

Geoff Davis, Chief Observer

OBSERVERS AND ASSOCIATES - PLEASE NOTE: Do read the Events and Meetings sections as there are evenings that you need to attend.

ASSOCIATE RESPONSIBILITIES

Keep in touch with your Observer—it is your responsibility to do so.

If you cannot keep an appointment—tell your observer. Observers work on a voluntary basis and have lives of their own to fit around their observing. It is only courteous to let them know.

If you do not keep in touch with your observer—it will be assumed that you no longer wish to continue and your observer will be assigned to another associate. Our observers and their time are a scarce commodity so we have to make best use of them.

Successful pre-test runs—still means that you

continue your observed runs right up to the actual test. Do not go off the boil!

• **When you pass your test**—let us know via your observer so that all the group can celebrate your success.

*“Skill for Life
Could that also be for
‘Skills are for a life?’”*



An Essay from a Truck Driver

For most of the last nineteen years I have worked as Truck Driver. I have spent my time driving all over the UK driving articulated lorries collecting and delivering a multitude of different cargoes. Sixteen of those years were spent virtually living in my truck as I used to leave home on a Sunday and not get back until Friday. It's a pretty solitary life as you spend a lot of time on your own but I wouldn't say it's a lonely life. It's only lonely if you let it be, but having said that, it's not the kind of life for everyone. You have to be used to, and happy with, your own company.

A lot of work was from docks all over the UK namely Felixstowe, Tilbury, Southampton, Liverpool, Hull, Thamesport and Teesport. It's interesting work but carrying import/export containers can bring its own challenges. You do a lot of sitting around, sometimes for hours on end. This can be waiting on the docks to be loaded or waiting for ships to dock, or waiting for customs to come and check your load. It can also be at a customers' address loading or unloading. Container drivers get a lot of sleep, and it's good for catching up on your reading! I used to drive, on average, about two and a half thousand miles each week.

I have spoken to a lot of people over the years and comments vary from those who are surprised by a woman doing a 'mans' job, to those who are just amazed that women can actually handle a truck. Sometimes it has been the guys I have worked with that took more handling than the lorry! You certainly have to be broad minded and not be upset by rude or sexist jokes! Having said that though, I have made some good friends over the years and met some nice people. You may guess I enjoyed my job, you'd be right!

At times the job could be very wearing, being up very early and driving all day for someone on the other end of the phone to not be satisfied with the way the day has gone. They seem to forget that driving from one side of the country does take a few hours and there can be traffic problems. The fact that 'it's only a couple of inches on the map!' isn't very funny at times! Thank heavens for drivers' hours regulations, otherwise I don't think we would ever get to stop and eat or sleep.

The job does have the occasional perk too. Getting up at silly o'clock may be a pain but you get to see some amazing sunrises and often you're still on the road to see the beautiful sunset at the other end of the day! I've seen some wonderful scenery and been to some well known places. I was once sitting at the traffic lights outside the Houses of Parliament when Big Ben struck midday. It was funny watching all the tourists taking photos. I got my picture and got paid for being there! I loaded at Glydebourne Opera House on a couple of occasions and also loaded equipment from Knebworth following an open air weekend charity event. I've carried shoes, waste paper and clothes, cheese, bottled water, steel, wood, fresh animal skins, meat, empty coca cola tins, beer and spirits to name just a few.

The last three years I spent being self employed hiring myself out as a driver to companies who needed my services. I worked permanent nights and was again been driving all over the UK. This work was mainly collecting and delivering to regional distribution centres for large supermarket chains such as Asda, Sainsburys and Tecso. It may seem like easy work but unfortunately you are completely at the mercy of the people who run these massive RDCs. They can keep you waiting for as long as they like and then want you to break the law to leave their premises. I have witnessed the police being called on several occasions just to back up the drivers when the office personnel have tried to force them to break the drivers' hours laws.

Then of course there are the many stupid things that you see other drivers do, especially car drivers on motorways.... but I'll save that for another day..!

Carol Wuudhead

*"Skills are for a Life
.... Yours, your
families and*



GROUP VIDEOS

Are available on loan for all associates, members and observers to use.

These are good reminders and an introduction to advanced driving / riding for all.

They can be got from your Group Secretary on any Meeting night and returned by the next meeting.

- System of car control.
- Old Highway Code.
- New Highway Code.
- Positive driving.
- Chris Johnson Fund.
- Safe Motorway Driving.
- Roadcraft.
- Horse sense for Motorists.
- Aggressive & bad driving.
- Sharing the road with Emergency Vehicles.
- You only live once.
- Driveability.
- Drive without fear.
- 3 Simple life savers.
- Skid Pan.
- Top Rider.

IAM Fact Sheet 19/001

DRIVING ATTITUDES

One of the most dangerous things most of us do each day is driving a motor vehicle. It is something we all take for granted. Many drivers involved in a crash or so-called "accident" do not accept that they have contributed to it. If you think that you have nothing to learn from an accident or even a near miss that you were involved in, your style of driving will not change. The IAM recommends this checklist to help you approach driving with the right "attitude".

- If another motorist "carves you up" in a line of traffic, do not retaliate or try to punish the other driver. This may escalate the situation or lead to an accident.
- To maintain the right attitude for good driving, try to improve your powers of observation. This demands considerable thought and practice but will usually keep you out of potentially dangerous situations. Observation skills give you an "early warning" of any situations developing which might require action from you.
- Try to accept that all road users are vulnerable. Be tolerant and considerate to all other road users, even if they have appeared to be aggressive towards you. A little courtesy can be catchy!
- The majority of road accidents are caused by human error. If we all treat the motor car as a convenient and enjoyable means of transport instead of an extension of our egos, we can reduce accidents on our roads. No journey is so urgent as to justify an accident.
- Develop a sensible driving plan and endeavour to avoid a very tight driving schedule, with business and domestic commitments. Try to avoid driving under pressure or stress. Do not take a chance at the red lights, exceed speed limits, or cut corners. Allow an extra five minutes for each journey.
- Tiredness plays a very important part in causing an aggressive attitude towards other road users and frustrations encountered by traffic hold-ups and road works. Take regular breaks to combat driver fatigue.
- Always expect slow reactions and poor observation from other road users. Often accidents can be avoided if one driver allows for another's mistakes.
- A common "trigger" for aggression and frustration is driving too close to another vehicle. Keep your distance and use the two-second rule whenever possible.
- Remember there is no such thing as a perfect driver; we are only as good as our last journey.

"...and those of the general public



IAM NEWS RELEASES / FACT SHEETS

THE ADVANCED DRIVING TEST

What the Examiner expects

The Test takes about 90 minutes, over all types of roads and using your own car. The four essential qualities are **Concentration, Observation, Anticipation and Planning**. The Examiner is the holder of a Police Advanced Driving Certificate. A full understanding of what is expected can be found in the IAM publication "Pass Your Advanced Driving Test" or "Pass Your Advanced Motorcycling Test" as appropriate. A number of important points are mentioned here:

THE PRINCIPLES OF ADVANCED DRIVING

- Do you concentrate properly and avoid distractions?
- Can you read the road and anticipate potential hazards in good time?
- Are hazards dealt with in a planned and systematic way?
- Do you use your mirrors before changing your speed or position and do you always give a signal to other road users if they will benefit or appreciate one?
- Can you drive with reasonable restraint, but not indecision?
- Is your judgement of speed and distance accurate?
- Do you drive with courtesy and consideration for other road users, including pedestrians?
- Are you always in the right place on the road, travelling at the right speed with the right gear engaged and able to stop safely in the distance you can see to be clear?

HANDLING SKILLS

- Are steering actions safe, smooth and accurate, and do you pass the wheel through your hands?
- Are gears smoothly and correctly selected?
- Do you make full use of automatic transmission, if your car is fitted with it?
- Is your braking smooth and progressive?
- Do you use "acceleration sense"?

ADVANCED DRIVING SKILLS ON THE ROAD

- Do you keep up a reasonable pace and maintain good progress if conditions permit?
- Do you anticipate and react correctly to the situations developing ahead?
- Are the correct road position chosen and signals given in good time for the next manoeuvre?
- Are all signals, signs and road markings observed, obeyed and approached correctly?
- Are overtaking manoeuvres carried out smoothly, decisively and safely?
- Do you drive with proper restraint and proper sensitivity of control when the roads are slippery or visibility is reduced?
- Are manoeuvres such as parking, reversing, carried out smoothly and competently with effective all-round observations?

Advanced Drivers are expected to control the risks, despite the incorrect actions of others. Every journey can have its unexpected moments.

However, even successful candidates have made minor mistakes, which did not prevent them from passing the Advanced Driving Test.

*"Skills are for a Life
.... through your
driving ... so*



FROM THE EDITOR

HELP REQUIRED!!

Please search your diaries for blank spaces and for things that are of low priority that can be deleted or put back. Your group needs help in order to keep going. Why not give something back against all that you have gained from becoming an advanced driver? How? Easy, become a committee member or an observer. **Well? Well - why not? Eh? Me? Yes, you!!**

Requirements for current Group and IAM membership.

Please keep a close eye on the status of both of these! Do ensure that you complete the Group form with each Group annual renewal - and/or - change in detail and send them together with the correct monies in a timely fashion to our Membership Secretary. Also the IAM form from London HQ which you send back to

them.

Group renewal date is **April 1st** each year!

Current memberships are a mandatory requirement for all observers.

Timely renewals—are a must. Those not renewing will cease to be a group member, associate, observer, etc.

Please complete your membership renewal forms—with all relevant detail so that we can maintain our group files.

What is missing from your Newsletter?

To a great degree — contributions from you! We get little or nothing from you. Your newsletter does not appear like magic! (Doesn't this fellow ever shut up? No!). Do send your letters, articles, etc. to me preferably on a disc or as an attached file on an e-mail in an MS Office pro-

gram format but hard copy will do if you do not have a computer. My contact details are in the column to the right..

Should your input not be part of the next issue rest assured that it does go on file and will be used.

CLOSING DATE FOR YOUR NEXT ISSUE: - 23rd Jan. 2010

Tony Robson - Editor.

Committee & Trustees

- **President**
Bill Goodreds
- **Vice Presidents**
Joe Brooks
Judith Rowley
- **Chairman**
Paul Williamson
chairman@wolesiam.org
07969.487549
- **Secretary**
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secretary@wolesiam.org
07966.131778
- **Treasurer**
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- **Membership Sec.**
(see Group Secretary)
- **Chief Observer**
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01902.763478
- **Newsletter Editor**
(see Group Secretary)
- **Minutes Secretary**
Roy Richards
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01902.670753
- **Associate Controller**
(see Chief Observer)
- **Test Administrator**
(see - Associate Ctrlr.)
- **Events Coordinator**
Carol Woodhead
carol@carolwoodhead.or.angehome.co.uk
07966 185843
- **Publicity Officer**
Derek Wheeler
01902.758833
- **Additional Trustees**
(Vacant)

MEMBERSHIP

Data Protection

(Data Protection Act 1984) Details are kept on file for all of our Members, Associates, Region and IAM HQ contacts in order that we may print address labels and perform other necessary administration tasks. If you object to any of this information being kept on file please inform the Group Membership Secretary in writing. Such information held will only be used by the Group and will not be passed on to other bodies or organisations.

Group Membership Fees

Associate Membership
£139 ('Skill for Life')

Associate Membership Renewal - £12

Full Membership (effective each 1st April) - £12

Family / Joint Membership
(2 Full members at the same address—effective

each 1st April) - £18

Cheques - please forward them (payable to 'W.A.M.' with your Group Membership number on the back) together with your completed form to:

Tony Robson
133 Elston Hall Lane
Bushbury
Wolverhampton
WV10 9HD

Associate Membership

Upon joining usually as part of the IAM 'Skill for Life' program. Within this program you get the cost of your Advanced Test and your 1st years IAM and group memberships (the latter being refunded should you not pass the test).

Literature - is part of this package and comprises 'Passing your Advanced Driving / Motorcycle Test'

and 'The Highway Code'

Guidance - from the group Observer assigned to you up to the day of your advanced test. This also requires a successful pre-test run/ride with a Senior Observer before a recommendation to apply for the IAM Advanced Test can be given.

New Members - are required to complete the Group Membership Form which will be sent to you upon contacting our Group.

Full Members - please note

London Membership - is required in addition to that of your Group.

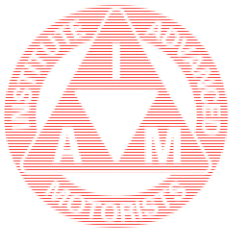
• **If your are a Group Observer** - you must be a fully paid up member of both.



Group 3081

GROUP MAIN CONTACT:
Wolverhampton Advanced Motorists
Group Secretary
Phone: 07966.131778
Email: secretary@wolvesiam.org

'Skill for Life.'



Institute of Advanced Motorists

Registered Charity: 249002

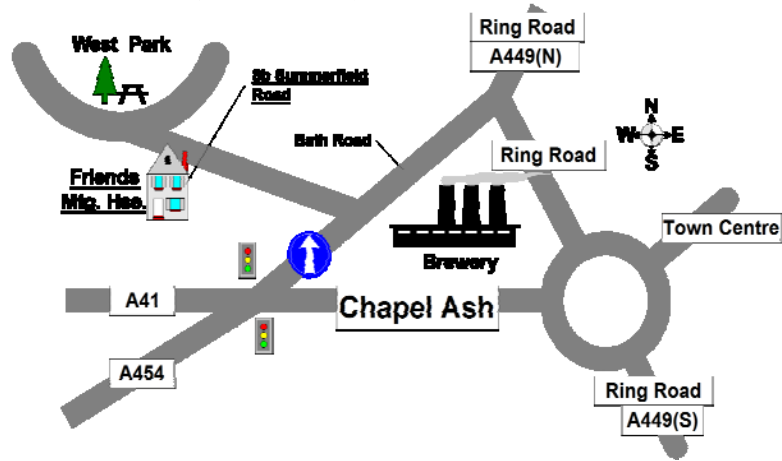
Wolverhampton Advanced Motorists

Group: 3081

Registered Charity: 1053330

Group WebSite:
www.wolvesiam@iam.org

*"...Are you a
'responsible motorist'?
Skill for life, Skills for a
life are our
responsibilities - so use
them 24/7"*



VENUE FOR OUR GROUP MEETINGS

- The Friends Meeting House
8b Summerfield Road
Wolverhampton WV1 4PR

As you get to the gate—follow down the drive towards the back of this property and its car park. The Meeting House is at the very back—a single story building with glass entrance doors. The map shows that Bath Road is a 'one way road' - albeit briefly—when approached from Chapel Ash. You cannot turn right into Bath Road when coming out of town. Taking the Ring Road (northbound) from the Chapel Ash roundabout you need to turn first left into Bath Road then second right into Summerfield Road. For other approaches see your 'A-Z'.

NEW ASSOCIATES

Welcome to:

- (Penn) Pennie Barfiled-Gillis
- (Willenhall) Amy Gardener
- (Halesowen) Gary Ball
- (Dudley) Martin Hogg
- (Bradmore) Steph Turner
- (Claregate) Bobby Nagi
- (Bilston) Chris Smallman
- (Albrighton) Jenny Warner
- (Wolverhampton) Dan Kirk

TEST PASSES

- Jim Thomas (Obs. Tony Robson)
- Clair Kingston (Obs. Roy Richards)
- Mick Esser (Obs. Nigel Packer)
- Ken Lloyd (Obs. Carol Woodhead)
- Martin Hogg (Obs, James Whalen)

- Alison Fulton (Obs. Jeff Tonks)

Well done and congratulations!

Hopefully your next move might be to become an observer yourself to put back in some of what you have received. Added to this you will continue to hone your 'skill for life' by this passing on and guidance.

Disclaimer

Please note: The views expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of the Group, or that of the IAM-London, but are those of the contributors.