



# Newsletter ~ October 2020

**St Helens Group of Advanced Motorists**  
*Working to make our roads safer every day...*

## Chair's update

Hello everyone and welcome to the October edition of the Newsletter.

Firstly, I'd like to say that I hope you're all keeping safe and well. These are strange times but I hope everyone is doing everything they can to keep themselves safe.

On that point and given the latest guidance received from the Government, it has been decided

that SHGAM will once again pause its observed runs. We can only apologise for the inconvenience this may cause people, but we feel that it is the safest approach in light of the current guidance.

Please also note that in light of current circumstances it has so far been impossible for us to hold an AGM. Therefore the Committee has decided that we will be holding a virtual AGM via Videoconference on

Thursday 12th November. If you would wish to participate in this, please email [editor@shgam.org.uk](mailto:editor@shgam.org.uk). Details of how to participate will then be sent to those who email in advance. That's all from me. As I said earlier, please stay safe and hopefully we'll get back to a state of normality very soon.

Here's to your continued safe driving!

**Tom Field, Group Chair**



St. Helens Group website

[www.shgam.org.uk](http://www.shgam.org.uk)

### Contacts:

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## [The sound of sirens - tips on how to help the emergency services](#)

We can be driving to a destination, minding our own business when out of nowhere there's the sound of sirens. We tend to have to locate which direction the sound and vehicle is coming from before we navigate ourselves into a position on the road where we can move out of the way for emergency services vehicles.

Here are some tips to remind drivers and riders how to reduce the risks we face in these situations, aid the emergency services, and make the road a safer place for us all.

### Where to stop

It's important to stay calm when you hear sirens and see blue lights. You will need to find somewhere safe so you can pull over to the left and stop. If in a congested area, try to stay out of bus lanes and avoid mounting on kerbs, pavements and at traffic islands. Don't make any sudden or unexpected moves.

Slow down, move over You may find there can be breakdowns, collisions and lots of congestion on all types of roads. These situations can be very distressing and potentially dangerous – for both emergency services vehicles as well as for occupants of stranded vehicles. When manoeuvring in these situations its vital to help those involved by slowing down, moving over and passing to the right-hand side of the road.

### Traffic lights

Emergency services vehicles can find ways to navigate around you at traffic lights. You may need to pull over to the left a little if they are passing through a congested queue. However, if you are first in the queue at a red light, it's important to stay where you are, do not pass the stop line, unless you have been advised to do so by a police officer.

### Motorways and dual carriageways

When driving on motorways and dual carriageways, pull over to the left while avoiding using the hard shoulder and allow any emergency vehicles to pass in the outside lane. Ideally get ready to do this if you are stopped in a queue behind an incident before the blue lights appear in your rear-view mirror. In slow or stationary traffic, if an emergency vehicle cannot get through, their positioning of the vehicle as it approaches you will signal whether you should move left or right. Once the emergency vehicle has passed by you, stay vigilant and don't not move until other vehicles following the emergency vehicle have also passed.

### Motorway incidents

Highways Traffic Officer and emergency services vehicles are likely to stop in motorway and dual

<p><b>More Information</b> (click links)</p> <p><a href="#">SHGAM News</a></p> <p><a href="#">IAM News Releases</a></p> <p><a href="#">SHGAM Driving Tips</a></p> <p><a href="#">IAM RoadSmart Advice</a></p>
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carriageway lanes, when attending to or approaching an incident. They can be protecting other vehicles involved or removing debris which can be blocking the road. When driving, keep an eye out for the overhead red X gantry sign or other instructions which are displayed. These signs aid in smoothing the flow of traffic, help drivers predict there could be an incident ahead and clear the lanes.

**Richard Gladman, head of driving and riding standards, IAM RoadSmart**



## Associate Coordinator's Corner

Congratulations to Phil Ireland on his recent Test Pass. Welcome to Joshua Robinson who has recently joined the Group and welcome back to Anthony Jones, Michael Egan, and Maria Kolokotroni who have returned from the previous Course. I would also like to welcome Parkash Singha Ghai who has joined the Group but has delayed starting the actual Course.

I would now like to thank those Observers who are available to observe at this particularly difficult time. They include Andrew Apple-

ton, Andrew Farrimond, Mark Farnworth, Phil Sharples, Chris Bradley, and more recently Anita Clift.

Despite the difficulties I hope our Associates are enjoying the Course and I wish you every success. If your Test Drive can be described as safe, systematic, and smooth then you will pass. By now you will be aware that the biggest single cause of Test failure is breaking the speed limit. No one on Test will deliberately break the speed limit but it is so easy to miss the sign when you are on roads that you

have never been on. It is almost certain that the Examiner will find such roads.

Whenever you are asked to turn on to a new road ask yourself "Is there a speed limit change?". It is really all down to observation and concentration. To finish on a good note :- our pass rate since the Group began in 1985 is just over 90%.

**Alan Prescott**  
**Associate Co-ordinator**

## Notice Board

### Welcome

Parkash Singha Ghai  
Joshua Robinson  
who have joined as  
Associate members

### AGM

8pm Thursday  
12th November  
online meeting using Zoom

As you know our AGM was scheduled to take place in June but due to the Covid-19 situation the AGM had to be postponed. The AGM will now take place on Thursday 12th November. To keep everyone safe, this will be an online Zoom meeting and will be restricted to AGM matters only - no awards to competition winners, no guest speaker. Only fully paid up members of SHGAM will be able to join the meeting.

If you would like to join this online AGM then please email Mark Farnworth [editor@shgam.org.uk](mailto:editor@shgam.org.uk) before Thursday 29th October. All those who make contact will be sent an email with a link to join the Zoom meeting. It's important to register your interest in joining the Zoom meeting since for security reasons the link for the meeting cannot be in general circulation.

### Congratulations

Philip Ireland  
on passing the  
Advanced Driving Test

### **IAM RoadSmart presentation**

IAMRS has put together an excellent 30 minute PowerPoint presentation for those seeking to learn more about the organisation and about the Advanced Driver Course.

I'd like to deliver this presentation online, using Zoom to community groups in St. Helens and the surrounding area. The purpose is to introduce IAM-RoadSmart and the St. Helens Group, to cover the basics of safe driving and to give suggestions about how people can regain confidence in their driving if they have not been driving as much due to the Covid-19 situation.

I would like members / friends of the Group to provide me with points of contact. Let me know by emailing

[editor@shgam.org.uk](mailto:editor@shgam.org.uk)

Thanks in advance

**Mark Farnworth, Group  
Vice-Chair/Lead National  
Observer**

### **DVLA launches online service to change address on vehicle log book (V5C)**

With the housing market opening up across the UK post lockdown, motorists who need to update the address details on their vehicle log book (V5C) can now do this online in a matter of minutes, DVLA has announced today (18th June). This will slash the amount of time it takes for motorists to receive a new log book from up to 6 weeks to just 5 working days. log book within 5 working days.

Last year DVLA received around 1.4 million paper applications for change of address on a vehicle record. By using [the new service](#) to change the address on the log book the information will be updated instantly and motorists will receive a new log book within 5 working days.

Using this new service, it takes less than 2 minutes for motorists to inform DVLA of their new address. All they need is their vehicle registration number, log book document reference number and their post-code.

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