



Leicester Group Of Advanced Motorist Newsletter

Official Provider

March 2020 Edition

Editors Column

Editor: Kevin Hill

Hello and welcome to the March newsletter.

As I am sure you may be aware. I left the group back in April of last year due to family commitments and lack of time available. Now things have settled down I am now in a position to rejoin the group although on a lesser scale. I will be taking up the role of the newsletter and website again so communications can be put back on track.

It is a very troubling time with the Covid 19 outbreak across the world right now, and as I write this newsletter it's a very quiet time on the roads. With Lockdowns looming and many people are in self isolation, The Leicester group along with the whole country have had to cut operations down to a minimum. There will be a message from the CEO later on in this edition.

The outbreak has also affected the AGM which has not gone ahead although there have been appointments made such as the chair's position and a new treasurer.

Due to the AGM being a virtual meeting I would like to confirm the Awards for this year.

The Services to the Group award goes to Fred Palmer. Thank you for your dedicated service to the group and the committee and we wish you well with your retirement from the committee.

The Group Observing Award Goes to Tony Moore this year Again Thank you for your dedication to the group.

Due to Melvyn Smith Resigning from the chairman's role, The Group have appointed a new Chairman. I would like to congratulate Tony Moore (previously group Treasurer) on taking up this role and wish him all the best in his new role.

It just leaves me to say to you all to stay safe, Heed the government's advice and wash your hands for 20 seconds!

If you wish to read previous newsletters, they can now be downloaded from our local website which can be found with this link www.iamroadsmart.com/groups/leicesteram

If anybody has anything to add to the next newsletter please email me on news.leicesteriam@gmail.com

Chairman's Address

Chair's Address, AGM 2020

Firstly, I would like to thank you, the members, for your confidence in me to be your Chair – I hope I am able to live up to that trust. I would like to thank Melvyn Smith, my predecessor, for his years of hard work on the Committee and, more recently, in the Chair. A massive thank you to Fred Palmer, who has been Vice Chair and Events Secretary since I joined the Committee in 2014 and for many years before that; somehow Fred's raffles will never be the same. Thank you for your commitment & enthusiasm, which will be very hard to replace! Also, to Alan for continuing as Secretary to give a steady hand & to Carl for taking on the Treasurer's mantle; lastly to the Committee in general, especially Khalid & Kevin Hill.

For some years, the Group has not been in a good place – with the number of Associates outnumbering, sometimes FAR outnumbering, the number of Observers. This had led to long waits for the Associates to start their training and, not unnaturally, dissatisfaction and complaints, not helped by limited communications. Now, with more Observers under training, and 1 recently qualified - and

Kevin re-joining the Committee as the Communications guru - that picture is beginning to change. Let's hope there can be a similar renaissance on the social side and more members will wish to get involved in our regular Group meetings.

That said, in light of the Coronavirus, the committee has decided to cancel the April Group Night at the Fieldhead Hotel and it will review further Group nights in due course. I am hoping for more driver-related events and plan to instigate a Meet the Observer night – or nights – where you, actually may get some driving done!!

I very much hope that this can be a new dawn for the Group as approach our 7th decade as the advanced driving force in the county although, as for everyone, there is a sticky patch ahead. I hope that you and your loved ones remain healthy and the impact of the virus is not too great on you.

Tony Moore

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New Chair's Introduction

I was born into a Service family and so it is not surprising that I joined the Army not long after leaving school. Whilst under training as a private soldier, I got my first sight of Leicestershire in 1970 from the Garats Hay Barracks, Old Woodhouse. After almost a quarter of a century's service, it was from the same barracks that I retired as a Captain in 1994, having bought a house near Melton Mowbray, where my wife & I still live. Whilst in the Army, much of my time was spent in Germany and Berlin, where I worked as a Russian linguist.

After the Army, I had a couple of jobs near Melton but became the Facilities Manager for the Institution of Occupational Safety & Health (IOSH - the professional body for safety practitioners) in Wigston in 1999. I later become their Safety Manager, so I was both an employee of the firm and a chartered member of the organisation. I retired again in 2012 and, apart from a short part-time contract, have been fully retired since then, devoting time to volunteering for various charities.

On the driving side, I failed my first basic test – the total over-confidence of a 17-year old, but passed 2nd time about six weeks later. Like most young men, I thought my driving then was “better than average” but was lucky to hear of an IAM course near me on one of my few UK

postings in Gloucestershire. I passed my IAM test in February 1984 and my Observer (also a member of RoSPA), guided me to their test which I passed their test (Silver) in the May. I have maintained my RoSPA membership with my last nine 3-yearly refresher tests at Gold Standard. I passed the IAM RoadSmart Masters test in 2016 and have since become a Masters Mentor and opted to become a Fellow in 2017. My initial refresher as a Fellow (2019) was a F1rst, as well as being my 15th advanced driving test.

I joined the Group in 2006 to become an Observer, qualifying the following year with the help of Peter French. When the new system was introduced, I became a National Observer and opted to become a Local Observer Assessor. I joined the Committee in 2014 and took on the Treasurer's role the following year, keeping the books as it is done in the Army. With Melvyn's sudden resignation, it was time for me to try the Chair.

Observer News

In the last year we have managed to recruit more Observers. Currently we have 13 observers after having a sudden influx of volunteers over the New Year period. Although the majority of them are centered around the M1 corridor and mainly around the city.

We are lacking observers in the south of the county so would welcome someone from the Market Harborough area. If you can help please contact me on the email address below and we can discuss this further.

We have whittled waiting members down to five at the present time by the willingness of some observers taking two or even three new associates on.

I hoped to see the waiting list diminished to zero by the early summer but fear that recent virus crisis will extend that time dramatically now.

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Group Night

Group night this month Has been cancelled due to corona virus outbreak. The next Group night will be advertised in this newsletter when it is safe to carry on holding the meetings.

A message from the Treasurer.

Despite the fact we didn't actually hold the AGM, the appointments which would have been proposed have been actioned with the blessing of our Area Manager; that means this will be my last contribution to the Treasurer's column of the Newsletter as I move over to the Chair. Carl Taylor-Beeby will be taking over the accounts very shortly.

Groups Annual Subscriptions – Full Members

In typical Treasurer style, I will finish with an appeal for money!! Group Annual subscription are now due – indeed everyone's subs fall due on 01 April each year, as it has done since we changed the system in 2018. Thank you to those of you who pay in April – thank you also to those have continued to pay on your anniversary but I am sure Carl, the incoming Treasurer, would greatly appreciate things coming in at the correct time. Please ensure to change your diary entry / reminder or, more particularly, Standing Order to reflect payment on 01 April annually. Contact Carl on the dedicated Treasurer email address for the bank details.

Although the system changed, the amount has not, and remains £7.50 per year.

Data Cleanse Exercise

Since the last Newsletter, we have conducted a drastic data cleanse exercise so that anyone who had not paid subscriptions in the last 3 years, that is since December 2016, has been deleted from the membership list. If you know of someone who still wishes to be a member, please forward this message to them.

If you have any queries about the system, or when you last paid, please contact the Treasurer by email. This also

applies if you wish to pay by cheque and send it through the post.

Group Subscriptions – Associate Members

As an Associate member, Group subscriptions for the first year are part of the payment for the Advanced Driving course that you pay to IAM RoadSmart HQ; no payment is therefore due for that year. Once that year is over, however, if you wish to remain a member of the Group, then Group subs are due, in addition to the subs you pay HQ. As mentioned above, the figure is £7.50 per year. Should you have any queries or comments on the above, please contact the Group Treasurer, Carl Taylor-Beeby, on treasurerleicsiam@gmail.com or any member of the committee.

(*) Please contact the Treasurer for the Group's bank account details

(+) Cheques payable to Leicester Group of Advanced Motorists – please contact Treasurer for postal address

Associate News

To all associates out there currently being assessed.

Please be aware that if you have been assessed for a year or more without taking your test, you may have to renew your National IAM membership to carry on with your assessed runs. If you have not managed to complete your course within the year please contact myself to check if you are still valid for insurance purposes. We may be able to extend your membership if there are mitigating circumstances. I should be in contact with any associate that has expired their membership, but if you have not been contacted or think your membership has expired please get in touch.

Richard Bishuty

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A Message from the CEO

Coronavirus (COVID-19) - Group advice

Following the significant change in Government advice about Coronavirus (Covid-19), IAM RoadSmart's senior management team has met and agreed the following advice and guidance for groups, observers and examiners.

We appreciate that all groups are independent charities however the priority must be for IAM RoadSmart to contribute fully to efforts to minimise the spread of the virus nationwide and maintain the health and safety of all staff, members, associates, examiners and customers.

Therefore, with immediate effect, groups are advised to:

- Stop observed runs for associates, unless the observer and associate both agree they wish to go ahead
- Stop all meetings and social gatherings, including AGMs and recruitment activity

In addition, advanced driving and riding tests and assessments are suspended until further notice. All re-qualifications for Local and National Observers, Fellows and Masters are also suspended until further notice.

In light of these recommendations and actions, where an associate's membership expires, we will extend it, at no additional cost, for up to a further six months to enable all associates to complete their coaching and take their test without disadvantage. We will not be providing refunds of course fees.

Groups are required to hold an AGM once every calendar year and within 18 months of the previous AGM. You may wish to consider holding your AGM via video or phone conference call. Proxy and postal voting can also still take place and be used for resolutions.

Additional advice on AGMs is available at gov.uk and from the Charity Commission for England and Wales, the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland and the Scottish Charity Regulator.

IAM RoadSmart staff have been advised today, in line with current government advice, to work from home wherever possible. They will be withdrawing from any external event, exhibition or conference until further notice.

By working from home, we believe we can maintain the service to our members and customers and we will continue to operate our Customer Care phone lines from 8.30am until 6pm, Monday to Friday. You may have to wait a little longer than usual for a response to your call or email but we thank you in advance for your patience and will answer your query as quickly as we can.

Our ASDMs are available by phone and email. Please contact them if you have any questions.

All groups are advised to continue to monitor and follow the Government advice, which you can find on gov.uk and NHS Direct, and on Public Health England, Health Protection Scotland, the Public Health Agency in Northern Ireland and Public Health Wales.

The senior management team is meeting daily by conference call and we will continue to update you regularly, through Inform, as the situation and government advice develops.

Stay safe, stay well.

Mike Quinton, CEO