

# e-NEWSLETTER

**iAM**  
RoadSmart

## WESSEX ADVANCED MOTORISTS



[www.wessexam.uk](http://www.wessexam.uk)  
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# WESSEX ADVANCED MOTORISTS

# e-NEWSLETTER

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#### **GENERAL DATA PROTECTION REGULATION**

Members' details, i.e. names, addresses and telephone numbers, are kept on computer to assist group administration. This information will not be passed outside the IAM. WAM may from time to time publish photographs taken at group events in this newsletter and on the website or display them at publicity events. If you do not wish to have your photo taken or published by WAM, please contact the Editor in writing (contact details on the back page).

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# Chairman's Corner



A very Happy New Year to you all and let's all hope that 2021 will bring better times.

The festive season was certainly very different to what we've been accustomed to! For my wife and I, ours was a very quiet house with just the two of us; no children, no grandchildren to enjoy the celebrations with... just us and our three cats and we made the best of it we could. For me it meant having a lazy day in front of a lovely log fire sipping very moreish single malt whisky, occasionally getting up from my chair to feed the fire!

You may be aware that IAM RoadSmart has suspended all driver training until such time as the Government relax some of the restrictions that would enable Groups to resume activities which involve "car sharing"; clearly, observed drives involve car sharing.



**By Andrew Griffiths**





Personally, I won't resume observing at least until I have received the full dose of vaccine required to offer maximum protection and Somerset has been "downgraded" to Tier 1 - that may be quite a while off; I strongly believe that there will be other Observers (ours and other Groups) similarly minded. And who knows when physical members' evenings will resume.

The Committee continues to hold ZOOM meetings every two months to stay connected and to address any business matters there may be. We were joined at last week's meeting by Mark Stevenson, our newest committee member; welcome aboard Mark!

We are already a quarter through our year since the 2020 AGM and with some big changes on the horizon at our 2021 AGM, we need to prepare; I will be standing down as Chairman after "too many" years at the helm. Barry Keenan will be standing down as Events organiser. So there is some succession planning to be done.

These are extremely worrying times, especially now that there is a more aggressive mutation of COVID to contend with. It's reassuring to

know that the number of new vaccines being approved for use by the NHS is increasing but the downside is that it will take time to vaccinate the entire population of the UK with the appropriate number of doses.

In the meantime, I have more or less mothballed my Jaguars; two are tucked away under fleeces in their garage but my Daimler is always outside, facing the elements. All are now plugged in to maintenance chargers to keep the batteries fully charged. I am waiting for a fine mild day so I can wash/wax the Daimler and cover it with a breathable, waterproof 5-layer car cover which I bought and which is still in the large box it arrived in; the Daimler Super Eight is a long wheel-base limo (not a "stretch" limo!) and the cover is bespoke, expensive... and BIG!

You can read lots of top tips on preparing your car(s) for the winter (okay we'll be getting on for spring soon!). Remember your POWDER and Cockpit drills! Here are the very basics;

- Make sure you keep all light lenses clean and that all lights work (including your rear number plate lights).
- Ensure your number plates - front AND rear - are clean and clearly legible.





- Check the condition of your wiper blade rubbers - front, and if fitted, rear.
- Keep the windscreen and all other windows clean. Same goes for the door mirrors.
- Check tyre condition AND pressures; remember that pressure is directly proportional to temperature, in the hot summer, the pressures will read slightly higher and in the cold winter they will read slightly lower. The change in pressure is around 0.2 PSI for every 1°C change. Manufacturers recommended tyre pressures are specified at cold (i.e. the car hasn't been driven, so the tyres (and thus the air inside them) haven't warmed up due to frictional forces etc.). So, whatever the ambient temperature is, your tyres should be inflated to the figure given by manufacture and this of course will involve changes with the seasons.

In the engine bay;

- Check all visible rubber hoses for leaks/dampness.
- Ensure all fluids/oils are at the correct level especially the windscreen washer liquid which needs to have additive that, apart from improving cleaning, prevents it freezing and thereby possibly cracking the bottle; I've seen

this happen on an Associate's car and I had to cancel her drive as the car was now not roadworthy. She had to book her car into a garage to have the bottle replaced (£££££s) as it was buried somewhere in the wing. All for the want of some additive.

Early morning frost on car windscreens is a common sight these days. Before driving the car, ensure that all frost is removed from all glass (de-icer, scraper... NOT a kettle of boiling water!). Use the aircon as this will help remove moisture inside the car thereby clearing misting on the windows.

Okay, it sounds laborious but you will be safe on the roads!

Please follow all restrictions put in place by the UK Government. Stay safe, stay well and please stay put unless you are leaving your property for one of the "allowed" reasons; driving from Bristol to Cheddar Gorge to eat kebabs isn't one of them. Yes you may have read about it in the Somerset news recently and the culprits were caught in the act and fined by Police. It seems that some people just don't get it and are putting others at risk.

My best wishes to you and your families.

Andrew



# THE COMMITTEE



Committee meetings (for committee members ONLY) are held bimonthly at 7:30pm on the first Wednesday of the month at Hatch Beauchamp Village Hall. If, as a group member, you need to raise any issue at committee level, then please feel free to contact any committee member to put your views to the next committee meeting.

Chairman	Andrew Griffiths	<a href="mailto:chair@wessexam.uk">chair@wessexam.uk</a>
Vice Chairman	Mark Stephenson	<a href="mailto:cmms@wessexam.uk">cmms@wessexam.uk</a>
Events Coordinator	Barry Keenan	<a href="mailto:events@wessexam.uk">events@wessexam.uk</a>
Secretary/Membership Secretary	David Walton	<a href="mailto:secretary@wessexam.uk">secretary@wessexam.uk</a>
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Newsletter Editor/Webmaster	David Walton	<a href="mailto:ed@wessexam.uk">ed@wessexam.uk</a>



# GROUP OBSERVERS



Chief Observer, Masters Mentor & LOA	Andrew Griffiths
National Observer & LOA	Barry Keenan
National Observer	Delphine West-King
Local Observer	Brian Dodd
Local Observer	Andrew Hepworth
Local Observer	Isobel Jennings
Local Observer	Ted Parks
Local Observer	Hugh Todd
Local Observer	Guy Tucker
Local Observer	David Walton
Local Observer	Michael Wotton

Group observers must be fully paid up Wessex Group AND National IAM members at ALL times to carry out your vital observer roles.

Always check that your associate has an up to date membership card before departing on any observed drives. Please try to make and maintain contact with your new associates and listen to any concerns or fears they may have. When associates pass their Advanced Driving Test, PLEASE inform the associate coordinator as soon as possible as we have a duty to keep accurate and up to date records. All new associate members are normally teamed up with a conveniently placed observer. If you have any problems please contact our chief observer, Andrew Griffiths.

The following IAM and WAM members are Driving Standards Agency Approved Driving Instructors:

Nick Tapp 07900 900678 [niktapp@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:niktapp@hotmail.co.uk)

Graham Tuffey 07916 137915 [www.passwithgraham.co.uk](http://www.passwithgraham.co.uk)

Members and/or enquirers must establish their own facts and details when contacting a Driving Instructor. If any other IAM and WAM full member driving instructors wish to be on the above list, contact the newsletter editor. (NB: You MUST remain *full* IAM and WAM members at all times.)



# COORDINATOR'S REPORT



What a grim milestone has been reached in the UK. The death toll due to Covid-19 has soared so high that I find it impossible to comprehend.

But as lockdown continues and observed drives are out of the question there is news. IAM RoadSmart has announced that it will be launching a suite of e-learning modules for Associates. These modules called 'Associate CHOICES' are designed to help Associates refresh their knowledge and prepare for a return to on-road training.

More news on CHOICES in the next newsletter.



**by Pauline Wills**



# Events Corner



Well hello and a very belated happy new year!

Before I go any further, I'd just like to express my hope that this wretched Covid virus hasn't caused you or yours any harm. Hopefully, now that we currently have not one, but three vaccines in the public domain, as well as what looks to be the start of a robust vaccination programme, we may be coming to the end of this awful pandemic. Only time and an adherence to the rules will tell, eh?

And talking of rules, under current legislation WAM, like every other organisation out there, is still unable to offer any Group activities. As soon as we're able to start re-implementing either our social events or training, you'll be the first to be informed.

This briefing is in two parts, first my 'Vice-Chair's' report and second my usual 'Events Piece'



**By Barry Keenan, Events  
Co-ordinator**





## So, notes from the Vice Chair

I had the honour to Chair the 2020 AGM held in November. As you will know, this was a virtual event to which all WAM members received an invite and instructions on how to join.

Considering we currently have 89 members and all we had to do to join the meeting was to go to our study, dining room or whatever and log-in, I can't tell you how disappointed I was to see only 16 WAM faces staring back at me through my PC's monitor; and seven of those were committee members, for goodness sakes!

The reason I mention this isn't to berate you (well, not too much!) but to reiterate once again that we're a small group in desperate need for our members to get actively involved in supporting the group. It's either that or we:

- a. stand the chance of becoming insignificant or, even worse,
- b. are in danger of closing down completely.

As you know, WAM is run by a management committee whose sole duty is to run your Group for your benefit. We meet once every two months for just 1½ hours.

For various reasons, at the last AGM both the Chairman (Andrew) and Vice Chair (me) gave notice to stand down at the 2021 AGM. This will leave the Group dangerously short of Group Officers so we desperately need people to come onto the Committee before then to help run the group.



People who will bring with them new thoughts, ideas and expertise. People who will galvanise and refresh the committee thereby leading to a more vibrant and sustainable group. In other words, what we need is **YOU!**

We were very fortunate at November's AGM that Mark Stevenson volunteered to join us. At his first Committee Meeting in January he sat pretty quiet throughout most of the meeting and then hit us with a whole flurry of constructive ideas. It certainly sparked debate and lit a well needed fire under us, believe me. And this is why we need new blood.

This is why we need you!





Having come up with several very useful and really quite simple suggestions, his next move was to organise a coup and get me thrown out of my post of Vice Chair. (Don't be shocked, believe me I was voting for the idea even before he'd finished suggesting it!)

I'm hopeful that at the next AGM, when Andrew steps down, Mark will be prepared to put himself forward to be voted in as our new Chairman. If he does, I for one would be excited to see in what direction he, or whoever else takes on the role, will take us.

As you may have guessed, I am very, very pleased to have Mark on board. He's definitely brought a breath of much needed fresh air to proceedings and is exactly what the Committee, and by extension, WAM needs.



And there's no reason to think that **YOU**, with all of your life's experiences, skills and knowledge won't make a huge difference to the group too. Remember, it's only with your help that

we can give WAM the focus and direction that it needs for the future. Just email David ([secretary@wessexam.uk](mailto:secretary@wessexam.uk)) to enquire. Believe me you'll be made very, very welcome.

]]

Right, party political broadcast over, what events have I got lined up for you? Well as I mentioned earlier, not much at the moment. There are a couple of ideas for a trial member's evening event via 'Zoom' in the pipeline, but that depends on whether you have the interest in it. So, before I try and organise a speaker (I do have one in mind) I'd be grateful if you could drop me a line at [events@wessexam.uk](mailto:events@wessexam.uk) to let me know if this is something you'd like.

If the Zoom 'talk' is a success (depending on numbers attending) I'll see if I can arrange some more. If nothing else, I'll continue to set you a quarterly quiz, but again, some feedback would be nice so that I can gauge interest levels for it.

And talking of the quiz, below are the answers to last November's questions:





## November 2020, Quiz Answers

- |                 |                        |
|-----------------|------------------------|
| 1 1990's        | 11 Hanson              |
| 2 Crimean       | 12 Eton                |
| 3 The Good Wife | 13 The X – Files       |
| 4 Grandmaster   | 14 Oliver Twist        |
| 5 January       | 15 Scotland            |
| 6 a) 2          | 16 Alzheimer's Disease |
| 7 10            | 17 Polymers            |
| 8 Greece        | 18 Mo Farah            |
| 9 Rigoletto     | 19 Philadelphia        |
| 10 Table Tennis | 20 The Army            |

## Barry's February Quiz

1. Which country has the world's longest coastline?
2. The historical novel Wolf Hall which won the Booker Prize in 2009 was written by which author?
3. Which Australian cricketer was known as "The Don"?
4. Abel Makkonen Tesfaye is the stage name of which act who released 'Blinding Lights' in 2020?
5. 'Birds of Prey' starring Margot Robbie is based on which character from the DC Comics universe?
6. Which Liverpool centre half became the first Estonian footballer to score in the Premier League when he scored an injury time winner at Burnley in 2018?
7. Southwark is a borough in which British city?
8. Who did António Guterres replace as United Nations Secretary-General in 2017?
9. Francis Crick and James Watson made which medical discovery in 1953?





10. Which 1985 film directed by Joel Schumacher centres around seven Georgetown graduates?
11. With which Cuban singer did Shawn Mendes team up with on the track "Señorita"?
12. What does the Beaufort scale measure?
13. Which city in South America was founded by the Portuguese in March 1565?
14. Which British-Italian engineer obtained a patent for radio in London in 1897?
15. Which curly haired presenter of Channel 4's 'The Last Leg' and the 'Quickly Kevin' podcast is a well-known Plymouth Argyle fan?
16. What type of clothing is a Glengarry?
17. In the phonetic alphabet what word is used to denote the letter K?
18. Which country legend known for 'Island in the Stream' and 'The Gambler' died in March 2020?
19. Eric Carle wrote a series of children's books about A Very Hungry... what?
20. Which British monarch was the final ruler in The House of Tudor?

As I mentioned earlier with the advent of 'the jab' things are starting to look up the Covid front and with a bit of luck we'll hopefully start getting back to normal. I certainly hope so. In the meantime, thanks for taking the time to read my scribblings. Hopefully we'll be able to meet up again shortly but until then, stay safe and stay well.

*Barry*

Events Co-ordinator

[events@wessexam.uk](mailto:events@wessexam.uk)





# Colours

By Pauline Wills

I enjoy solving jigsaw puzzles. Maybe it is one of those pastimes that you either love or hate. In her later years my aunt always had a jigsaw on the go. When I took my mother to visit they would chat to each other while I sat down at the table and added a few pieces here and there.

At home I have found that I either waste too much time or else get fed up with the dining room table being occupied for too long. However, last year I discovered online jigsaws... and I'm hooked. I found a site that I liked and then a friend recommended her husband's favourite (<http://jigsawplanet.com/>). In the beginning I wasn't sure which I preferred but gradually I began to favour his. I haven't registered on the site as I can find everything I need without doing that. There is so much out there – every subject you can imagine, any number of pieces that you may want to tackle and the pieces come in different shapes too. One advantage is that they all fall the correct way up so that is a bonus.

Lockdown was a strange time and these puzzles were a good form of escape. I am not a traveller but I travelled all over the world last year. In the beginning, as I was getting used to spending a lot of time on my own, I found that I was attracted to Caribbean islands. The beautiful, vibrant yet calming blues and greens of nature and the deserted beaches. It was wonderful imagining myself transported to such idyllic locations. Sometimes I chose other countries... I went to Spain but hated the hot reds and bright oranges and pinks so I won't go there again. Then there were the wonderful lavender fields of France, canals in Italy, harbours in England, hills in Wales. There are animals and cars, historic houses... the list is endless.

As I was clicking away I tried to analyse the strategies that I used. When I am solving a physical puzzle I know that I look at shapes but online I definitely go for colour, even subtle differences give a clue. I found that fact





interesting too. And if you are in the mood there is competition with the top 20 times on display. If I am in the top 10 I feel that I am on form, if not I try again. Of course, there are plenty of people like me who have not registered so the comparisons are not a true indication of my position but they give me an idea. And there are names that I recognise too. They could, of course, belong to anyone but the same ones often crop up and I am curious as to whether they belong to people I know.

One day in November I watched a television programme entitled 'The Disordered Eye'. If you haven't watched it I recommend that you do. It is about artists who have become blind or have some form of visual 'impairment'. It seems incredible that many of them consider that this change has actually improved their work and, even if it were possible, would not choose to revert to their former senses.

I find it amazing that some bodies can learn to adapt so well to new and difficult situations. Sadly, some others cannot.

*Boy aged 4: Dad, I've decided to get married.*

*Dad: Wonderful; do you have a girl in mind?*

*Boy: Yes; Grandma. She said she loves me, I love her too; and she's the best cook and story teller in the whole world.*

*Dad: That's nice, but we have a small problem there.*

*Boy: What problem?*

*Dad: She happens to be my mother. How can you marry my mother?*

*Boy: Why not? You married mine!*



**Avon and Somerset Police**  
**SERVE. PROTECT. RESPECT.**

"I'm better than the average driver so I can handle doing two things at once"

**Test yourself [Here](#)**

There is no excuse for driving while distracted.

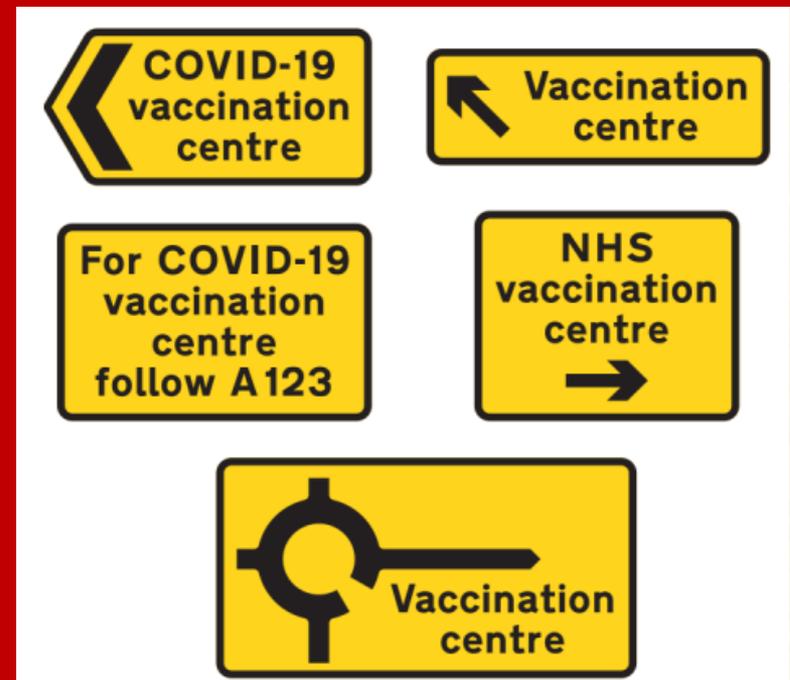
# Temporary Traffic Signs for Vaccination Centres

With thanks to Traffic Safety Roads

The Department for Transport (DfT) has produced temporary signs to guide traffic to vaccination centres. The specific notes for their use alongside the Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions (TSRGD) are as follows

1. "COVID-19" or "NHS" legend can be used on any of the signs or omitted. Once either or none has been chosen, all signs in the local authority area must be the same for consistency purposes. This approach will aid driver recognition of the vaccination centre destination.
2. The "NHS" legend must not be replaced by the NHS logo and must be in transport heavy alphabet.
3. The Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 2016 (TSRGD) prescribe temporary signs in Schedule 13, Part 9.
4. The legend "centre" may be varied as appropriate.

1. These example signs are intended to bring a degree of national consistency and we would suggest these are used if possible. Where road layouts require different signs, the form, arrows and legends may be varied in accordance with the usual provisions of TSRGD.



## Better training is essential to make ADAS a safety benefit and not a potential hazard



Vehicle manufacturers, dealerships, DVSA (Driving and Vehicle Standards Agency) and driving instructors should include a comprehensive lesson for motorists on how to use advanced driver assistance systems (ADAS) so they are a road safety benefit and not a potential hazard, says IAM RoadSmart.

The urgent call has been made by the UK's largest independent road safety charity following the publication of a highly influential report by the Fédération Internationale de l'Automobile (FIA) entitled 'How to maximize the road safety benefits of ADAS'.

Some of the most widely known ADAS – many of which will become mandatory in new vehicles from July 2022 – include adaptive cruise control, autonomous emergency braking systems, lane keeping assist and driver monitoring for drowsiness and distraction recognition.

However, awareness and understanding of these systems is generally low among drivers. The FIA's report finds that most users do not receive any training when first encountering





ADAS but have to rely on information from the user manual, and most alarmingly by applying a 'trial-and-error' method.

Neil Greig, IAM RoadSmart Director of Policy & Research, said: "Advanced driver assistance systems have the potential to improve road safety, but only if used correctly.

"If used incorrectly, not least without a full understanding of what the systems are and are not capable of, they can have the opposite effect, with potentially worrying consequences for all road users.

"IAM RoadSmart therefore believes the time has now come to include a comprehensive lesson from every car dealer supplying vehicles and further, for more about ADAS to be included in the UK driving test. This is crucial as these tools begin to be supplied as standard on an increasing number of vehicles."

Meanwhile, further recommendations from the FIA report, which IAM RoadSmart endorses, include a comprehensive explanation to end-users of the systems' limitations, more consistently accurate functioning of ADAS in practice and the introduction of fail-safe communications to alert users if any of the systems fail, helping to mitigate any potential road safety risk.

Neil added: "There needs to be a much higher emphasis on educating drivers in the best use of technology. Vehicle manufacturers and car dealerships are key, ensuring that when a customer drives off the forecourt they understand and use the various safety systems correctly.

"Until this becomes the norm, IAM RoadSmart is exploring the potential for video tutorials that will plug the current gap."





# Blood Guts and Gore Does Not Work

With thanks to Traffic Safety Roads

A new study has shown and confirmed what many road safety practitioners have always believed that films demonstrating responsible behaviour could lead to young drivers taking fewer risks on the road than if they only saw videos aimed at provoking fear of being involved in crashes and any subsequent outcomes. Alas many of the public don't necessarily see it that way and we still hear voices demanding that we show the horrific consequences of crashes in an effort to stimulate people sitting up and taking notice but in essence that does not really work as those it is aimed at deny the possibility of ever being caught up in such situations. Add to this many see such negative messaging as entertainment rather than the message it was intended to convey.

Dr Yaniv Hanoch, Associate Professor of Risk Management at the University of Southampton said,

*“Governments around the world have adopted a plethora of interventions aimed at*

*encouraging safer driving, the majority of which use fear-based content, such as graphic depictions of sudden car crashes. We are all familiar with the UK Government’s “Think” campaign, especially at this time of year. However, previous research has suggested that such messages can be counterproductive, possibly because the emotive content can trigger defensive reactions and message rejection.”*

In this latest research, led by Dr. Cutello of the University of Antwerp in partnership with the University of Southampton and the University of Warwick, 146 young drivers undertook tests to compare the difference in their attitudes to risky driving.

Half of the group viewed a six-minute video aimed at instilling fear through a crash caused by a reckless driver, distracted by his passengers. The other half saw a video showing a positive scene with a careful driver asking the passengers not to distract him. Both





road safety films were developed specifically for and used by, the Fire and Rescue Services across the United Kingdom. The study also tested whether watching the videos in an immersive setting on a Virtual Reality (VR) headset made a difference than watching the videos on a two-dimensional (2D) TV screen. Each participant took a questionnaire to assess his or her attitude to risk taking on the road before and after the trial. At the end of the trial, they also took a second test, the Vienna Risk-Taking Test-Traffic. In this test, they watched video clips of driving situations that require a driver reaction (for example, considering whether to overtake in icy conditions) and asked to indicate if, and when, they regarded the manoeuvre as too risky.

The findings indicated that the positively framed films significantly decreased risky driving after being seen on a 2D screen and even more so when viewed in VR format. In contrast, the fear film shown in VR failed to

reduce risky driving behaviours, and in fact, increased young drivers' risk taking.

Dr Hanoch and Dr Cutello concluded that, *“By studying driver safety interventions currently used by the Fire and Rescue service across the United Kingdom, this research provides the first examination of the effects of both message content and mode of delivery on risky driving behaviour among young drivers. Our results provide key insights about the role of positive versus fear-framed messages in tackling risky driving among young drivers. On the one hand, they build on previous work showing the effectiveness of positively framed messages in promoting road safety through the portrayal of driving safely and the positive consequences. They also show that allowing the participants to experience what proactive behaviours can lead to and giving them the illusions that the events occurring are authentic through VR can encourage the creation of positive role models and strategies to be safer on the roads.”*





# Uses and Cost of Working Motor Vehicles

Contributed by Pauline Wills

*An extract from 'Motor Vehicles and Motors: their design construction and working by steam oil and electricity' by W. Worby Beaumont, published in 1900*

In order to enable them to tender, each firm was supplied with the following specifications, in accordance with which they were asked to frame their estimates.

## SPECIFICATION FOR THE SUPPLY AND DELIVERY OF THREE MOTOR VANS FOR THE VESTRY OF THE PARISH OF CHELSEA.

1. The motor vans must come under the definition of light locomotives, as defined in the Locomotives on Highways Act, 1896, and must comply with the regulations of the Local Government Board framed under that Act.
2. The vans are to be four-wheeled vehicles, provided with easily removable covers, and are to be of sufficient capacity to carry 6 cubic yards of sand or other material, of a weight not exceeding 4 tons. The extreme width of the vehicles is not to exceed 6 ft. 6 in., they are to be capable of going anywhere

where a horse-drawn vehicle carrying the same load is ordinarily required to go, each vehicle is to be completely under the control of one man, both for driving and steering, and is to be capable of being tipped by one man over a baulk of timber 14 in. x 14 in. and held at any angle.

3. The vans will not be required to go at a greater speed than 6 miles an hour, and must be able to carry a load up an incline of 1 in 20 for 100 yards at a speed of 4 miles an hour.
4. Makers are not restricted to any kind of motive power, but must state which they intend to use, and must be prepared to guarantee that the cost of working, apart from the driver's wages, shall not exceed a certain sum per mile, to be named in the tender.
5. The tare weight of each vehicle must be given, both exclusive of water or fuel and also in full working order.





6. The body is to be of suitable seasoned wood, but the frame may be of iron or steel, and the top side-boards are to be hinged.
7. The inside of the platform is to be not more than 3 ft. 4 in. above the ground level when unloaded.
8. All working parts are to be properly encased.
9. The Surveyor to the Vestry shall be at liberty to inspect the vans at any time when being built at the makers' yard.
10. The vans are to be painted as directed, and lettered Vestry of Chelsea in bold letters, and are to be delivered to the Vestry Wharf, Lots Road, Chelsea; one, within four months of receipt of order, the other two within six months of receipt of order.
11. The vans are to be driven for one week after being delivered, by the makers' drivers, free of expense to the Vestry.
12. Payment will be made on the certificate of the surveyor, as follows: 90 per cent within one month of approval, and the balance within three months from the payment of the first instalment.
13. The makers are to enter into an undertaking to maintain the vans against fair wear and

tear for a period of two years from the date of approval.

14. Tenders are to be delivered in a sealed envelope, endorsed "Tender for Motor Vans," before 4 p.m. on Tuesday, 21<sup>st</sup> November 1899.
15. A drawing or photograph of the vans is to be submitted with the tender.
16. The Vestry do not bind themselves to accept the lowest or any tender.

To comply with the requirements of the Acts the motor vans must be constructed:-

1. To weigh less than 8 tons when unladen, without taking into consideration the weight of water, fuel or accumulators.
2. To emit no smoke or visible vapour.
3. To measure less than 6 ft. 6 in. in width between their extreme projecting points.
4. To have flat tyres to each wheel, and if the weight exceeds 1 ton, the width of the tyre is not to be less than 3 in., and if 2 tons not less than 4 in.
5. To be capable of travelling either forwards or backwards.
6. To have two independent brakes.





# Slobs, Are You?

By Andy Poulton

Many of you may be aware of my 'apparent obsession' with scrupulously clean motor vehicles inside and out, particularly the inside. In my defence may I say this is NOTHING new and has not evolved over the last 40 years or so of my motoring career, or with advanced driving. [I have always been, err, afflicted]

I used to wash/wax the 'filler' and 'Turtle Wax' the rust spots on my first £20 Sports car Banger [a Turner Special now in Haynes Museum sprayed RED. [Do not look at the damaged sorry 'ill-fitting' passengers' door]

The only car care sprays [tools] I had were a can of WD-40 and some primer. [Oh, and gaffer tape. WHY? See at the end of briefing] I used to relish a minor component or a bulb failure [Day or night near or far] so I could then have an excuse to repair or work on my car.

No! It's from my observation of thousands of drivers over the years and a transport and road research laboratory report that:-

**TIDY CAR = TIDY MIND = TIDY DRIVER.**

Use your observations and put the theory to the test on other motorists. Thus, stems my comment when alighting from a car with a filthy interior, 'I had to wipe my feet when I got out'. Mmm, no wonder I am not offered many lifts!

Also, there was a National Observer, Coach driver who when his children were younger, and got into the back of his pristine rare car used to bark '**F-OFF & MPB**'

Don't worry it stood for 'Feet on the floor and mats pulled back.' In other words, do not put your shoes on the upholstery and keep the carpet protecting slip mats in place and do not kick them under the front seats.

Besides, who are all these people queuing at Halfords, Car Quip, Al Stores, and all the independent car accessory shops? What have they been buying, and what have they been doing with it all?





**GO ON SPLASH IT ON ALL OVER, AND DON'T FORGET THE INTERIOR.**

**To quote from HIGHWAY CODE**

*Rules 89 and 97*

**Vehicle Condition:** You MUST ensure your vehicle complies with the full requirements of the Road Vehicles [Construction and Use] Regs and Road Vehicle Lighting Regs.

**Before Setting off:** You should ensure that... [8 requirements check the rules out.]

**To quote from ROADCRAFT**

A vital part of knowing your own limitations as a driver is knowing exactly what the vehicle you are driving can or cannot do. [In depth familiarisation and refers to POWDER checklists.]

*Previous Highway Code and Roadcraft publications/iterations all referred to:-  
Cleanliness of glass, [Windscreen, windows,*

*mirrors,] wipers, washers. [Removal of grit, dirt flies etc] plus number plates, lights.*

Accessory manufacturers now do wet wipes of all types and sorts, to cover these eventualities.

A recent **Turtle Wax** survey showed that some men were complete 'SLOBS' at the wheel and were content to drive around 'in cars resembling dustbins on wheels'. It further reported that women spend an hour each week cleaning the car. They visit car washes more regularly and generally maintain the inside of the vehicle far better than men do. They are also 'put off' going into car accessory shops because of their 'masculine' atmosphere. They buy all their requisites at the supermarket.

*[SO - There you have it; personally I think there is an equal divide. I have seen just as many 'scruffy' cars being driven by women. Okay go on say it, it was their husband's, boyfriend's, partner's, car that they were using/borrowed]*





## Lastly some anecdotal evidence

Moving on to a stop check I did in the Police whilst on traffic in Bath. The old Ford Escort was being driven with three passengers. It was a SHED [slang terminology for an obvious poorly maintained car] The driver had been breath tested and failed. Apart from the car's more obvious defects, faulty brakes, [pulled violently to the left] no handbrake, no petrol cap smashed headlamp[s] to name but a few. The car's front AND rear foot wells were full of tons of rubbish [cans, bottles, 'Music Lover' magazines [err we will leave that one] car components, engine parts, maps, petrol coupons and freebies, etc. It was all slowly rotting away to a depth of 6 to 9 inches [150 to 250mm] and being compressed.

The rear seat must have been very uncomfortable as, yes you guessed it, acted as a lidded rubbish bin rotting away and falling through rusty holes in the floor.

Lastly, I made the ultimate discovery, a full size

five tray cantilever toolbox hidden in the foot well!

Finally, the guy who presented for his Advanced test. TWO old BANANA skins on the dashboard. A large back pack in the passengers foot well and one on the seat. He said 'Oh just shove them over' [He put them in the back in the end with all the old full and empty carrier bags] There was also a rattling bulging glove box lid.

*As I got in, it BURST open and disgorged its contents of 42 [oh yes 42, I counted them all back] car light bulbs, of all types/sorts. You do not need to guess the test outcome!*

**PS as mentioned at the start - essential tools - the MOTTO is:**

**If it moves, and should not, GAFFER tape it.**

**If it does not move, and should, WD40 it.**

*SAFE and CLEAN Driving*

**Andy Poulton**

**IAM RoadSmart Examiner**





# TALELIGHT

## THAT'S TYPICAL

A worried owner slept in his brand new Porsche in his drive to protect it from thieves. He woke the next morning to find his house burgled.

## H'OWLING NOISE FROM THE ENGINE

A farmer heard some strange noises from under the bonnet of his Land rover. When he opened it he found three new Barn Owls living there. He had to leave the vehicle until they had flown the nest.

## CHRISTMAS SPIRIT (1)

Police stopped a man as he drove along the Motorway at 7 mph IN HIS WHEELCHAIR. He was also found to be over the drink drive limit.

## CHRISTMAS SPIRIT (2)

A man went to the Police station to check whether he could still drive after drinking the night before. He was arrested for being Drunk in Charge.

## BLEAK MIDWINTER [could work again]

Prison authorities are going to let inmates earn money by letting them out to dig cars out of snowdrifts.

## TIRED OF THIS PARKING PROBLEM

A pensioner has received £2,000 in compensation after Parking Authorities towed away his car whilst he was asleep inside.

## HIS BUBBLE BURST

A driver crashed after blowing a huge bubble of chewing gum which burst over his face and obscured his vision.

## LATEST GIZMO WITH COMMANDING VOICE

A driver confidently and obediently obeyed his satellite navigation and drove straight into the river at the Ferry Crossing!

## **Examiners Quotes:**

*The first thing you notice in the glove box of your new car is a booklet telling you how to lie about the fuel consumption.*

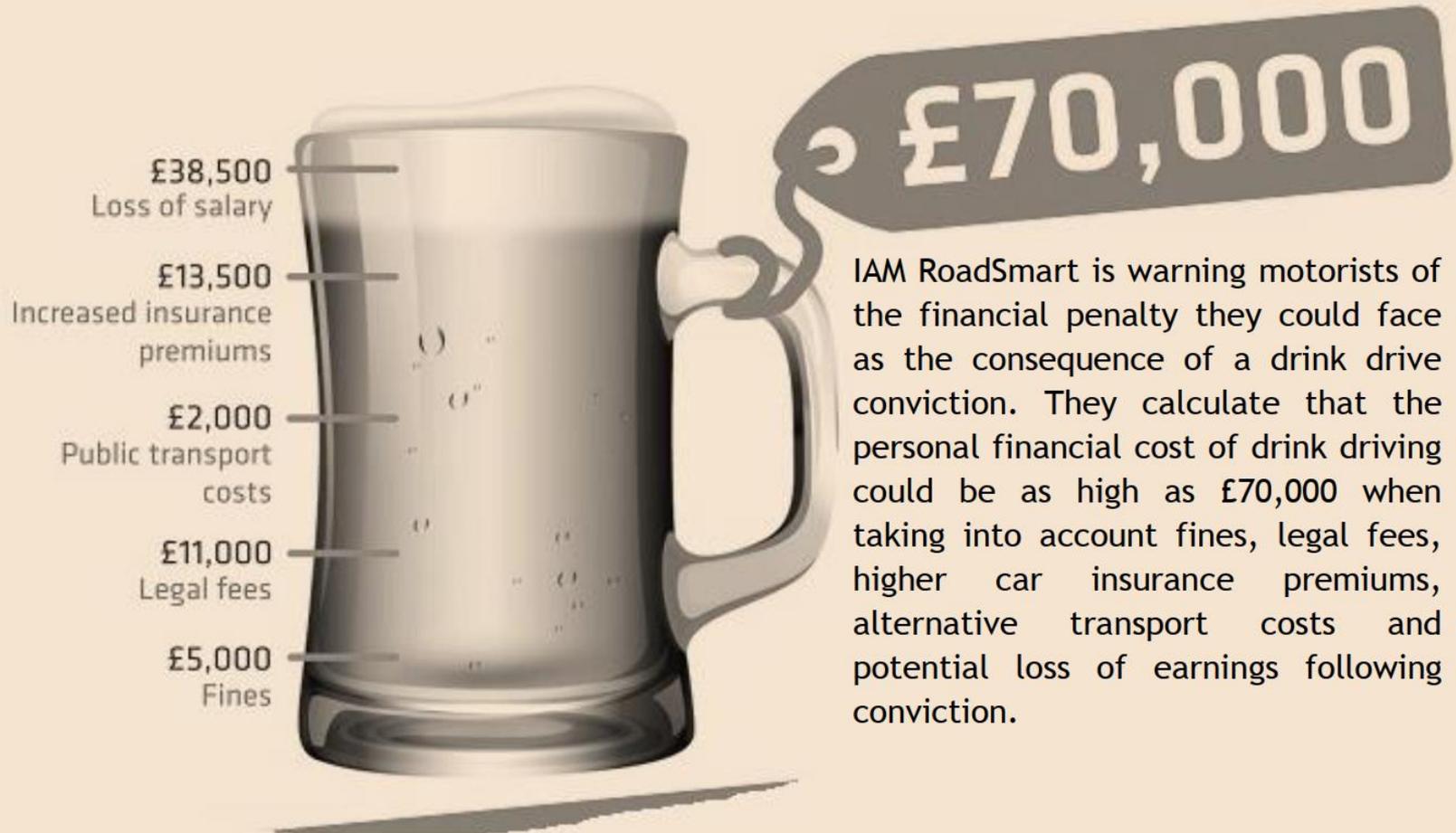
*Men cause a lot of problems on the roads today. Half of them trying to go fast enough to thrill their girlfriends and the other half trying to go slow enough to placate their wives.*

*Nowadays when you go looking for a place to park in Bath/Bristol it's better to take someone along to share the driving.*

*There are lots of nuts rattling around inside cars. But the manufacturers did not put them there.*



## COST OF DRINKING AND DRIVING



IAM RoadSmart is warning motorists of the financial penalty they could face as the consequence of a drink drive conviction. They calculate that the personal financial cost of drink driving could be as high as £70,000 when taking into account fines, legal fees, higher car insurance premiums, alternative transport costs and potential loss of earnings following conviction.





# A sideways look to the rear or, The Case of The Secret Little Drawer

By Nigel Albright

In her book 'The Woman and the Car', published in 1909, Dorothy Levitt comments that she carried a hand mirror to occasionally observe following traffic and at least one professional advanced driving instructor has said that, "*Your rear view mirror should be the most over used part of the car.*" This stimulates a look into the history and associated aspects of this seemingly innocuous piece of equipment.

The comment above tells us that the history of the rear-view mirror should be closely linked with the *desire* to see what is going on behind and that is obviously linked to the amount of view available. The amount of view can be affected by (1) the vehicle design (2) the internal obstructions and (3) whatever window decoration or items a driver decides to place in the sight line. Add to that external accessories, such as spoilers, which can completely obscure the view to the rear. There are various factors

influencing vehicle design and evolution such as customer popularity (or likely customer popularity), styling trends, safety and legal. It's important to understand that manufacturers are generally not going to spend money, however little, adding features unless in some way or another they can be quantified in sales. Customer popularity is significant because its influence, or lack of it, can reflect the level of importance drivers place on the need to see behind and, therefore, what they will tolerate in design. Customer attitudes can unwittingly condone bad vehicle design as in often preferring style over sense. However, occasionally, they can have the right effect – take the 1973 Austin Allegro with a square type steering wheel which was quite quickly changed to a circular one.

The very first noted observation of a rear-view mirror was by Ray Harroun who saw, 'a pole sticking out with a mirror', on a 1904 horse-drawn



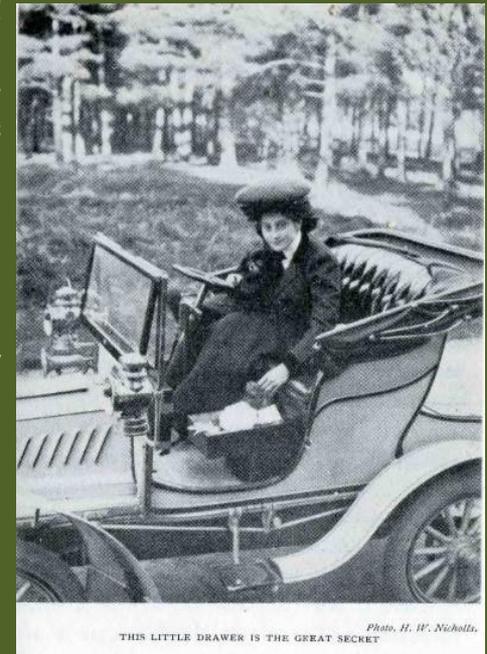


drawn taxi in Chicago. In France a 1906 trade magazine advertised *'mirrors for showing what is coming behind now popular on closed bodied automobiles, and to likely be widely adopted in a short time'*, which, on reflection, was somewhat optimistic. The same year, a Monsieur Henri Cain in France patented a *"Warning mirror for automobiles"*. In the UK The Argus Dash Mirror, *'adjustable to any position to see the road behind'*, appeared in 1908. However, there seems no evidence to show that these products were taken up with any enthusiasm.

Dorothy Levitt was a phenomenon. Not only was she a racing driver but, she also had good advice for driving on the roads, many being just dirt in those days. Levitt wrote her book to encourage other ladies to become *'motoristes'*, at a time when the idea of women having any sense of independence was just on the cusp and the motor car may, of course, have aided this. Apart from giving a clear insight as to just what it took to drive a motor vehicle and, necessarily, simultaneously be your own mechanic, the book had anecdotal advice such as when, and when not, to give tips and remember that *'mail vans'* have the right of

way. There was also sound advice which is still pertinent today as in, *'But do not keep cutting corners...'* and, more significantly, *'Avoid the perilous habit of trying to squeeze through doubtful openings in traffic...'*, which today we think of as keeping a buffer zone or, *'safety bubble'*. The best of drivers are outward thinking to the extent that if many more thought that way much of what is written in the Highway Code might not be necessary. Part of that is the desire to have all round awareness of what is going on. To this end Levitt also has a

pertinent suggestion that, *'This little drawer is the secret of the dainty motoriste.'* She goes on to suggest that amongst other things, *'...some chocolates are very soothing, sometimes!'* The *'little drawer'* existed under the



*Photo. H. W. Nicholls.*  
THIS LITTLE DRAWER IS THE GREAT SECRET





driver's seat where she also kept a suitable 'hand mirror... and it is better to have one with a handle to it'. She continues, 'Just before starting take the glass out of the little drawer and put it into the little flap pocket of your car. You will find it useful to have handy – not for strictly personal use, but to occasionally hold up to see what is behind you'.

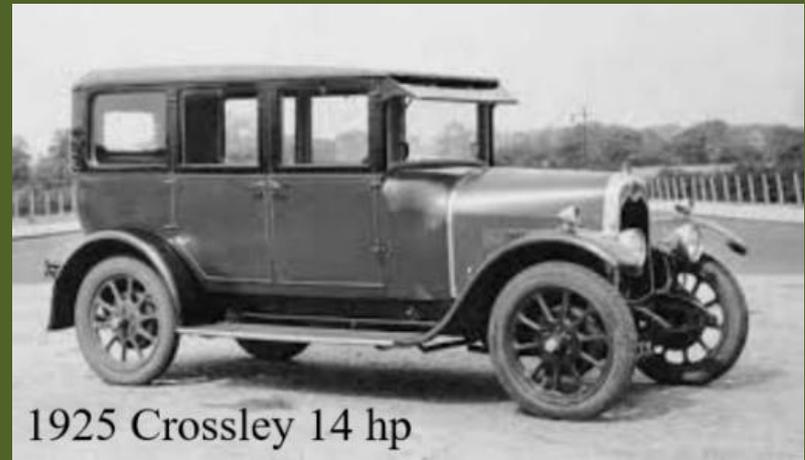
At the first Indy 500 car race in 1911 it was still mandatory for there to be two persons aboard during races; the second being a mechanic, part of the rationale apparently was to be aware



of following competitors. One story goes that Ray Harroun could not find someone to take the second seat but, remembered seeing the

horse-drawn taxi with, 'a pole sticking out with a mirror', so had one fitted to his racing car as a substitute. The other story is that by fitting the mirror his vehicle, being one person lighter, could go faster, which indeed it did and he won the race to the handsome tune of some \$14,000. However, I can't really imagine that a passenger would have been constantly looking over his shoulder to check on the presence of competitors, but those were the rules. That apart, Harroun says the vibration was so great that the mirror was of no real value anyway.

Ten years on, in 1921, Elmer Berger in America patented the first commercial rear view mirror which was marketed as the 'Cop Stopper'; in other words, to help speeding drivers be aware



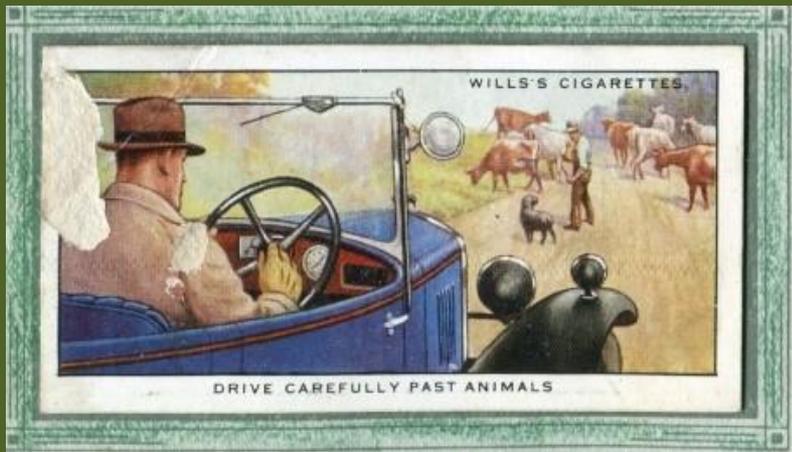
1925 Crossley 14 hp





if they were being followed by a police vehicle. But, in general, the evidence of rear-view mirrors in the period leading to the middle 30s is sparse and the general attitude appears ambivalent or even indifferent. Where mirrors were fitted it seems they were accessories and, almost exclusively just on the off-side. There is no evidence in this time of a central rear-view mirror either being part of a manufactured vehicle, or as an accessory.

Apart from those off-side mirrors fitted to the windscreen side frame, and relatively high up, there are odd pictures of them fitted low down so that it would have been impossible to see anything more than the side of the vehicle and some of the road behind. Sometimes a nearside mirror was also fitted. All this suggests



that where mirrors were fitted the motive was generally to be aware of overtaking vehicles, rather than have an overall awareness of what was happening behind. Also, in the period



leading to the middle 30s I can find no manufacturers' adverts showing vehicles with central rear-view mirrors and it is possible that some may have thought that this affected the clean appearance of the vehicle in the advert, but also you can find pictures of 1920 and into the early 30s of vehicles showing no rear-view mirrors at all. By the end of the 30s all manufactured vehicles had a central rear-view mirror and the change was probably caused by the first Road Traffic Act in 1930 and the first the Motor Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations 1930, rather than a general customer requirement.





The first reference I can find is in the 1930 Road Traffic Act. It is remarkably vague and here I quote the complete section to get that sense of it: Ch.43 p29 Part 1 *Regulations 30.*-  
*(1) 'The Minister may make regulations for any purpose... [In other words, may yet to be created]*

*(h) the appliances to be fitted for signalling the approach of a motor vehicle, or enabling the driver of a motor vehicle to become aware of the approach of another vehicle from the rear, or for intimating any intended change of speed or direction of a motor vehicle and the use of any such appliance, and for securing that they shall be efficient and kept in a proper working order.'*



The first Highway Code in 1930 makes no reference to mirrors. Indeed, in the illustrations on signalling the vehicle has none at all.

Copies of legislative documents can be obtained from The National Archives at Kew,

but they cost, particularly if they are not already digitised. So the closest I have been able to get regarding the Motor Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations 1930 is from a commercial vehicle trade magazine article where:

*13. A rear-view mirror must be provided unless a, person on the trailer has an uninterrupted view to the rear and can communicate with the driver.*

It's not exactly what we are looking for but, it might give a sense of the general attitude of the time. Interestingly, this same condition continues right through to at least the 1986 Act when it had become The Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations.

We know of Lord Cottenham as the originator of System and how eventually this, and his teachings in general, became the core of the first Road Craft (notice it was then two words) when it was first produced in 1955. But lesser known is the fact that from the 1920s, in parallel with car racing, he was actively concerned about the standards of road driving and reducing road accidents. From 1924 he was doing BBC Broadcasts, essentially on the benefits of better driver behaviour for safer





roads. Cottenham was very active in Parliament and promoted the need for drivers to be licenced and have insurance, both ultimately introduced in the 1930 Road Traffic Act. He also wanted vehicles fitted with reflectors, driving mirrors and 'anti-dazzle' devices. He wrote two significant books about road driving; *Motoring Without Fears* (1928) and *The Steering Wheel Papers* (1932). He was a racing driver for the Alvis and Sunbeam in the 1920s but, the significant difference was that most racing or track drivers, when talking about road driving, fall into the trap that most which was learned on the track might in some way be equally applicable to road driving. In essence it is two completely different mindsets and certain aspects, such as following position, lines through bends and setting up for and completing overtakes, are quite different. Even today there is still that 'transfer of logic;' in the minds of the general public, that a good track driver is likely to be an equally good road driver and organisations and journalists continue to play to that. Bear in mind that police drivers had been assessed in 1934 by the famous racing driver, Sir Malcolm Campbell, who was, 'full of praise for their skill ' but, despite the first

police driving school, Hendon, being opened in 1935, standards were not really improving, possibly because it then came under the heading of Transport Division.

xii MOTORING WITHOUT FEARS	
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It was only when Cottenham came along in 1937 that things started to change dramatically and the accident rate in the Met went from 1:8,000 to 1:38,000 in 18 months. The rest, as they say, is history. The origins of the whole of our approach to road driving today from the DVSA upwards, including significant elements in the first Road Traffic Act and Highway Code and probably parts of the original Construction and Use regulations, can probably be laid at Cottenham's door. Even by today's standards he was so far ahead of the game and one of that very rare breed who properly distinguished between track and road techniques which, of course, was ultimately reflected when he created the Advanced Wing at Hendon. Significant in his teachings Cottenham ensured that the mirror was used before changing position, before signalling and also particularly, before braking or turning. That degree of mirror use must have been a complete eye-opener for most of his students and, from the evidence above, contrary to the general trend in members of the public.

The first specific reference about the legal requirement for mirrors can be found (courtesy of your esteemed Editor) in the ROAD

TRAFFIC ACT AMENDMENT ACT, 1936, where, *'Every motor vehicle, other than a motor cycle, shall be equipped with a mirror, so constructed and fitted to the motor vehicle as to give the driver of the motor vehicle a view along the carriage-way of the road behind the vehicle, for at least one hundred yards on a straight road: Provided that this section shall not apply to a motor vehicle when drawing a trailer.'* The amendment does not say that this should be a central mirror, but an offside mirror would generally not have fulfilled this requirement.

The first reference to using mirrors in the Highway Code comes in the 1946 version where para 56 says, *'Make a habit of using your driving mirror so that you know what is behind you, especially when about to move off, turn, overtake, stop or open the door.'* That was some 16 years after the introduction of the first Highway Code, but I suppose one should make allowances for Herr Hitler's intrusion along the way.

Tracking through the legislation all the way to the present would be a long and onerous task with some cost involved, so the best option anyway is probably to follow the evidence trail.





That trail is how important rear view is to the general public and, in parallel with that, the amount of view afforded by vehicle design. The two together will tell the story well enough.

Whilst rear view mirrors had become a mandatory part of vehicle manufacture in the 1930s the obvious limiting factor to rear view via the central mirror was the size or design of the rear window, which were generally relatively small or even divided.



There was often greater use of side mirrors. However, by the 1950s vehicle design was moving towards lower sill lines showing more glass and rear windows affording the fullest view of the traffic conditions behind. This is probably a suitable moment to mention that

there is also a legal requirement to keep windows clean and clear of obstructions to view.



This is mainly directed towards view through the windscreen but, CUR 1986 (Customs and Use Regulations) also says: *'All glass or other transparent material fitted to a motor vehicle shall be maintained in such condition that it does not obscure the vision of the driver while the vehicle is being driven on a road.'* which will obviously include the rear windows. Unfortunately, it does not actually say that obstructions to view must not happen which means that internally and externally you, or manufacturers, are able to add whatever might impinge on the view. However, items dangling from the rear-view mirror, particularly including Hawaiian garlands and the like, fixed to the





windscreen (please remove your sizable navigation aid) or, coming more than 4” up from the dashboard do fall within the regulation and can cause an MOT failure or even prosecution. A driver can receive a £100 spot fine and have three penalty points if it is deemed that a sticker, for example, prevents him or her from having a full view of the road, but that could reach £5,000 and nine penalty points – or even disqualification – if such was considered a contributory factor in a crash.



The openness of view all round, whether consciously or unconsciously, continued in vehicle design through into the 1970s at which point we start to see front headrests in some up-market vehicles. These, of course, do not generally restrict the view through the central mirror, except possibly in some sports cars. In 1965 Ralph Nader published his book, ‘Unsafe

at Any Speed’ about ‘dangerous’ vehicle design and by the middle-late 70s the effects of this were starting to permeate throughout the vehicle manufacturing world. In due course it obviously affected the construction and use regulations both in the UK, and when we were in the European Union, since those would have impacted on us as well.

In my view two factors have affected vehicle design to the detriment of rear view; rear headrests, most particularly those in the middle position which can completely obscure the view to the rear and the desire to protect people from the effect of roll-overs and, therefore, roofs collapsing.



This has resulted in the evolution of discreet anti-roll structures which had two effects on vehicle design; stronger, therefore wider roof support at the rear and the front, also leading to and wider A-frames, the struts at either side of the windscreen - and also lowering of roof lines, which has contributed to smaller rear windows. A third element has been the raising



of sill lines, obviously part of an attempt to enclose and protect the all too vulnerable human contents within a metal box, often significantly reducing glass area, but this might also - if sometimes just from the styling angle - have caused the top of the boot line to be raised, further contributing to the smaller rear window.



The sum total of all of these aspects can be seen in, for example, the Range Rover Vogue where the window aperture is small enough in the first place and what view remains is seriously (or very seriously) compromised by vehicle head rests. In the USA as many as 50 small children are killed by [SUVs](#) every year because the driver cannot see them in their rear-view mirrors. The Chrysler Estate is a typical example of how the roof line tapers from a large windscreen down to a minimal



rear window, giving the car a disproportionate look. Four-wheel drive vehicles with the spare wheel carried outside the back door generally impinge on the view as well. Soft-top convertibles tend to have small rear windows

and in some cases, such as Minis, VW Beetle and particularly the Fiat 500, where the top is folded down it still sits high enough to seriously, if not almost completely obscure the rear view.



There was another trend which may have started with the Volkswagen Scirocco Mk2 in the late 80s, where a cosmetic spoiler was positioned at the bottom of the rear window but, a couple of inches up so that some of the rear window could be seen below it. This may have led to a styling trend in split rear windows, sometimes with incorporated spoiler or cyclops light, such as found in Citroen, Honda, Hyundai and Toyota, to the point where in the Hyundai Veloster the progression from rear window to the roof via the split screen makes it difficult to see where one ends and the other begins which contributes to it looking very stylish. What can be defined as a rear window is very small and you are immediately conscious of rear head-rests and the top of the rear seat so the view from inside is probably pretty horrendous. The long and short of all this is that a chain is only as strong as its weakest link and this can also be the area which is swept by the wiper. Obviously the narrower the height of the window the smaller the wiper and the less area it can sweep, so in bad weather there can be just a small clear area in the centre regardless of the width of the window.



Hyundai Veloster





The picture shows a split rear window only swept in the lower part; the already very limited rear view being further restricted by the dealer's sticker!

We saw, when talking about driving position, *[July bulletin P5 – About Posture. ED]* that it is important to have a minimum angle between the sight-line and the rear view mirror, so that it is possible just to flick the eyes on to it approximately every 5-8 seconds to constantly monitor what is going on behind, and in some traffic conditions it might be every couple of seconds or so. Overall, it seems that no matter what legislation exists in construction and use it has not stopped manufacturers from effectively disregarding the important need to see all that is going on behind.

The logical option is to incorporate the information in a 'video' rear-view mirror, which would obviously utilise the now common 'reversing camera', often discreetly incorporated into the integral design of the vehicle. The 'reversing view' normally shows on the central dash console where the navigation information is also displayed. If the rear view display is in the centre dash console then that would place it too far away from the natural sightline to facilitate easy and frequent use.



There are now video rear-view mirrors and rear dash-cams available as accessories. If manufacturers were sufficiently concerned one would expect to have seen these well in place by now but there appears no sign of that happening, at least not on normal production vehicles. With technology developing a head-up display (HUD) on the windscreen might be an idea. HUDs are being increasingly used to reflect dashboard instrument and navigation



information, but too much information on the windscreen might be distracting to what is happening in the road ahead whereas the rear-view mirror, as a separate entity, does not have the same effect.

Of course, if you are fortunate enough to have the view you can readily reduce it by adding big sale or event notices, promoting your favoured football club, advertising your business, telling others where you have been or what cause you support, stickers reflecting your thoughts on the world and other people or, soft toys et al.



Otherwise, if the vehicle manufacturer has not conveniently added a suitably large spoiler, as per the Mitsubishi Lancer Evo 6, for example, you can add your own to completely block the view.



So, if we look at the overall scheme of things it seems that the general public mostly has little empathy for good use of the rear-view mirror and that regardless of whatever construction and use regulations there may be manufacturers more or less wantonly disregard the value of good view to the rear as well, with some claim to safety, but much in favour of

style. However, at the same time, it is clear they have made no obvious attempt to compensate for this. So, where does the responsibility ultimately lie? Somewhere it has to come down to the learning experience and the formative stages of learning to drive. If people would not tolerate bad vehicle design then manufacturers would have to react





accordingly. Key elements are obviously parents, peer group influence and the professional driving instructor (ADI) input. Of those the parental influence is likely to be the greatest in the long run, partly because at the age of 16 that person will have been aware, and most likely imprinted by osmosis to some extent, from the time they could see over the dashboard, that's 12 years or so, of their parents' road driving attitudes and behaviour. That is a very long imprint time from prime influencers. Remember that most drivers, if spot tested today, would almost certainly fail their standard driving test and yet most prime influencers will be in that group as well as being the very ones considered suitable to supervise learners. Within that it is significant that almost never do you see a supervising driver using a secondary rear-view mirror, in fact I can't remember the last time I saw one on a learner marked vehicle. The use of a secondary rear-view one would clearly re-enforce the value of the necessary and continuous useful information it can give.



Surprisingly, but maybe not, you can, not uncommonly, see learner plates in rear windows, some right in the middle! But maybe not using a mirror might also send a message to the learner that it is not a very important item and, therefore, neither is the information gained from it. To compensate it would obviously be prudent if it was a legal requirement for anyone supervising a learner to use a secondary mirror; a case of action being led by legislation rather than common sense. However, overall this also raises questions as to what extent the DVSA through the ADIs makes a strong enough point about the use and value of mirrors, noting that these are not even listed on either of the DVSA shop outlets. And when you Google 'rear-view mirror' you will find those questioning whether it is a legal requirement, or even the actual need for one.

I rest my case M'lud.



# Eco-driving this is not!

By Andrew Harrison



this type of racing it to be the quickest from a standing start to a finishing line, traditionally  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile away, and that the highest level of this sport, equivalent to circuit racing's Formula 1, is called "Top Fuel", but that was about it. As might be expected this sport is centred in the USA and is run under the auspices of the National Hot Rod Association (NHRA) with similar levels of regulation as seen in F1. There is a British drag racing venue at Santa Pod in Bedfordshire but, as with so many other sports, sadly all events for this year have been suspended.

Whilst idly surfing the internet the other day, (as recently I have been doing quite a lot!) I was drawn into learning something about dragsters and was completely captivated by what I found. I already knew that the idea of

I knew these machines had to be fast but the figures are quite mind-boggling. In the first half second they are already passing our national speed limit and reach well over 300 mph after just 1,000 feet of track, a distance they travel in





under 4 seconds! This subjects the driver to a peak acceleration of over 5 times the force of gravity. These are the fastest accelerating racing cars in the world and such performance calls for some extreme engineering. They lay down between 8,000 and 11,000 bhp from their supercharged 500 cubic inch (8.2 litre) engines which are based on an oddly traditional V8 layout with hemispherical combustion chambers and 2 pushrod-driven valves per cylinder. The fuel line is 2½ inches in diameter and the engine burns its nitromethane fuel at a rate of over a gallon a second! To help withstand such stresses, each unit has to be completely stripped and rebuilt after every run, with new pistons, con rods and also clutch and spark plugs which almost completely burn up by the end of the run, and all this work is completed in around 40 minutes! I think a good introduction to what makes these machines tick is to be found on this YouTube link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-VF0JwxQqcA> If you can bear intervals of loud music and some very American voice-overing, there is a lot of solid information in there as well as some spectacular imagery. For a much more detailed walk through engine design and construction I

recommend the following one, which is over an hour long but is highly informative: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xTsphmCn8mg>

Despite all the precautions, things can still go very wrong and the first part of the following video is a “shining” example of what can happen when an engine lets go. Continue watching the video, if you can stomach it, for some further spectacular mishaps.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tl-xi26m3EU>

If you would prefer just to read about them then good old Wikipedia has a comprehensive article on this subject: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Top\\_Fuel](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Top_Fuel)

However, for a proper idea of the sheer power of these machines you really need to see some video footage of them taking off. At night the flames from their exhaust really light the scene up!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vzVDGS4eyi4>

To save you laboriously typing these links into your search engine, I will be very happy to send you a copy of this document. My Email address is [ap\\_harrison@yahoo.com](mailto:ap_harrison@yahoo.com) *[The links should work in most pdf readers. ED]*

Happy and safe motoring and may you get more miles out of your tyres than these people usually do: two!



# Mayflower 1965

By Mike Wotton

In the summer of 1965, three 19 year old Royal Navy apprentices, myself, Woody and Roy were going on leave from HMS Condor based near Arbroath on the east coast of Scotland to the west-country in Roy's car. It was a 1247cc Triumph Mayflower with the acceleration more akin to that of a battleship.

The following is taken from Wikipedia: *A Mayflower tested at Brooklands racing circuit, by British magazine The Motor in 1950 had a top speed of 62.9 mph (101.2 km/h) and could accelerate from 0–50 mph (80 km/h) in 26.6 seconds. A fuel consumption of 28.3 miles per imperial gallon (10.0 L/100 km; 23.6 mpg US) was recorded. The test car cost £505 including taxes.*



Roy and myself had passed our driving tests the previous year and he agreed that we should share the driving. We set off late morning and after two hours I took over. Soon





afterwards near the town of Cumbernauld and travelling at around 55 mph there was a vibration/rumble accompanied by the smell of burning rubber. We pulled over, stopped and saw that the rear nearside wheel complete with half-shaft had detached itself from the differential and was only prevented from saying goodbye to the car by the tyre rubbing on the wing, hence the smell! A close shave or what. The local garage turned up and removed both door quarter-light windows to allow the steering wheel to be locked centrally with a rope, no steering lock in those days, and towed the car rearwards to the garage. The three of us found a B&B and late the next afternoon found the car had been repaired (well almost but more of that later). The sidewall of the tyre was assessed as OK – cross-plyes were standard in those days and can obviously take more punishment than radials.

Off we went in a south-westerly direction and around 5am the next day and somewhere near Gloucester I found the car a little stuffy,

probably because of the others asleep in the back. I opened the driver's side quarter-light - mistake - that's when it fell off into the road! I stopped and retrieved the offending item, which was barely scratched apart for the lack of glass, which was in bits nearby! Needless to say Roy was not a happy bunny and had a few choice words to say. We continued driving to Crewkerne to drop Woody off at his parents and I caught the train to Plymouth to stay with my parents. Roy would have then driven home to Stroud.

I don't remember how I got back to Arbroath at the end of my leave; did I dare travel back with Roy or go by train? However Roy and I did speak afterwards with no regrets.

Over the years an older and wiser me thought back to what could have happened in the worst-case scenario. So in 1985 while based at RNAS Culdrose in Cornwall I took six lessons, as they were then, with a 19-year-old young lady from the Truro Group and in the June passed my IAM test at the first attempt.





# What to do if you're involved in a collision

## Tips from IAM RoadSmart

If you've been involved in a collision, you'll know how scary it can be. But do you, and your family and friends, know what to do when it happens?

Although many of us are spending a lot less time on the road this year, the chance of a collision still remains. So, Richard Gladman, IAM RoadSmart's head of driving and riding standards, has these helpful tips on the steps to follow if an incident occurs:

- Stop your vehicle as soon as possible, if it is safe to do so. Your hazard lights may have already come on but if not, switch them on to alert other motorists. Failing to stop is an offence. If you can't stop at the scene, you must report the collision to the police as soon as practicable, and in any case within 24 hours.
- Speak to the other driver(s) involved. You need to supply your name and address, the details of the owner of the car and the insurance details if you have them. Make sure you record these details from the other driver(s) as you will need them if you make an insurance claim.
- Take photos of any damage on your car and theirs. Try to get at least one photo which includes the registration number. Shots of the area where the collision happened may also be useful.
- If you're involved in a collision on the motorway and you're uninjured and able to get the vehicle to the hard shoulder or emergency refuge, make sure you move to a safe place like behind the Armco barrier. If you are in a live lane and unable to move, put your hazard lights on and call for help. Knowing which carriageway, you are on (either A or B) will help the emergency services locate you.





- In a residential area, ensure your hazard lights are on and move to a safe place to inspect your vehicle. If you or any other party is injured call an ambulance.
- Remain calm. You may be in shock and it's normal to feel shaken after a collision, but it's important you do not drive away until you feel safe to do so.
- Do not admit liability. Stick to the facts and report these accurately to your insurance company.
- If there are witnesses make sure you speak to them and get their details. They may be able to give a statement to the police or to your insurance company.
- If you have a dashcam, the footage could be useful to the police and your insurance company to help apportion blame. Make sure you save it and don't allow it to overwrite.

### **When should you call the police?**

- If anyone involved is injured, the road is blocked, or the location is such that danger is being caused.
- If the collision involves a large animal or a

dog and the owner is not present.

- If you think the other driver is under the influence of drink or drugs or is guilty of a traffic offence.
- If the driver doesn't stop or refuses to exchange details or leaves the scene.
- If you have suspicions, speak to the police. They may not attend but will record the call and give advice.

If you've been involved in an incident and feel you have lost some confidence on the road, you may benefit from an [Advanced Driver](#) Course or if you want some support with particular aspects of driving, our [Driver Assessment](#) may help.

Richard said: "Being involved in a collision can be stressful. Even a minor bump can disable a car and prove costly. Make sure you get as much information as you can from the other driver and any witnesses.

"Try to stay calm. It is likely that no matter who is to blame, the other party is feeling just as much stress as you are. The main priority is to make sure everyone is safe whilst dealing with the collision."





# Parking and or Leaving Your Car

With thanks to Traffic Safety Roads

The majority of motorists know not to park on double yellow lines or in disabled bays without a blue badge, but what about some of the other things you need to note when parking or leaving your vehicle? LeaseCar.uk has identified a number of lesser-known parking rules which could land drivers in hot water if broken.

- Using the horn while a car is stationary - including whilst parked - is against the law.
- Parking in a cycle lane, or on zig-zags at zebra crossings or outside of a school, isn't allowed.
- Parking to load or unload on double yellow lines is only permitted if the load is of sufficient volume, weight or difficulty - collecting a newspaper from a shop doesn't count.
- The Highway Code says that you can't park anywhere that may restrict access for emergency services, such as leaving a residential road too narrow for a fire engine.
- Cars parked on a road where the speed limit is more than 30mph, any road within 10m of the nearest junction, facing away from the traffic or outside of a designated parking area, should technically have their sidelights on overnight.
- Parking more than 50cm away from the kerb could lead to an on the spot fine being issued.
- When using any designated space, a car is not considered 'in' the space if the wheels are over any lines and could be ticketed.
- Parking on a dropped curb could see a fixed penalty notice applied.
- Putting out cones, bins or other obstacles to reserve a parking space is not permitted, as it could be interpreted as causing an obstruction resulting in a fine.
- All engines should be switched off if leaving a vehicle for some time on a public road - the law states you have to be 'in control' of your vehicle so don't leave it unattended and running.
- Allowing a parked car to build up dirt could leave its registered owner open to prosecution, as having an unreadable number plate is illegal.



# Ghost Markings

With thanks to Traffic Safety Roads



Highways England is leading a major international research project to find a solution to issues around the removal of white lines and of 'ghost markings.' The project has set out to identify the most effective road markings that will also reduce damage to the surface when they are removed or amended.

When white road markings are removed, for example when road layouts change, the original lines can sometimes still appear as faint or 'ghost' markings, particularly in bright sunshine,

which can make the road ahead unclear for drivers, but now huge progress is being made in trials to eradicate the problem.

Seven new products are being tested to check their skid resistance and performance in the dry and wet, as well as five systems for removing white lines, to see if they are more effective in a trial, which will continue until April, but the results so far have been very promising and the safety benefits are already clear.





# Motorway Madness

By Struan Stevenson, columnist with the 'The Herald' (Scotland)

Around 4am on the morning of Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> October last year a fatal accident occurred on the M8 near Harthill in Central Scotland. The accident involved a single vehicle and driver who sadly died at the scene. A further crash took place a few hours later near Eurocentral on the M8, involving a collision between a van and a lorry. One man was rushed to hospital to receive treatment for his injuries. The motorway was closed in both directions for more than 15 hours, causing chaos for drivers. Traffic Scotland confirmed the eastbound carriageway was reopened at about 20:00 hrs, while the westbound carriageway didn't reopen until 21:40 hrs. Many cars were seen doing u-turns on the packed motorway and illegally heading back in the wrong direction on the hard shoulder, to escape the bedlam.

How is it possible that the main artery linking Glasgow and Edinburgh, Scotland's two most important cities, could be closed for the best part of an entire day so that police could

investigate a fatal car crash? The cost to Scotland's economy must have run to millions and the potential for causing further accidents must surely have been obvious. Sadly, such lengthy M-way closures are the rule rather than the exception in the UK.

Of course, the M8 accident will have caused shock and distress to the family of the deceased and they will have been desperate for every possible bit of information about how the accident occurred and how their loved-one died. The police, fire and ambulance crews have to attend the locus. The Police have a duty to find out exactly what happened. Collision investigation teams have to pour over the scene to establish what caused the crash. The roads remain closed while tyre skid marks are photographed, damage to road markings, barriers and signs are examined and debris is carefully scrutinised, measurements taken and wreckage removed. After gathering information, police investigators can deduce





the speed and direction of the vehicle at the time of the accident and a report can then be sent to the Crown Prosecution Service. Such road accidents in the UK are treated like a crime scene. But why must our motorways be closed for so long?

In Europe, fatal accidents on the main motorways are dealt with rapidly. Police use laser scanners to speed up the documenting of crash sites. Cranes arrive quickly on the scene to remove the wrecked vehicles, sometimes simply dumping them on the hard shoulder. Crash barriers and signs are repaired and motorways are routinely re-opened within one hour of a serious crash. Why does that not happen in the UK? Repeated lengthy road closures are costing our economy hundreds of millions of pounds at a time when we can least afford it, following the coronavirus lock down.

According to the RAC road closures caused by accidents account for around a quarter of all congestion annually and cost the UK in excess of £5 billion every year. Of course, it is essential that the police must fully investigate all fatal crashes, but this must always be set against the need to keep traffic flowing.

Improving the way crash investigations are conducted could benefit road users and even victims' families. A balance has to be struck between delivering justice and keeping the country moving. As we emerge from the covid-19 lockdowns and curfews and face one of the worst recessions in our history, the flow of traffic will increase and road closures, for whatever reason, will impact on our economic progress. Part of the problem is that we have some of the busiest roads in Europe and they are getting busier still. The M8 in Scotland is a case in point and rush-hour can often turn the motorway into a virtual standstill car park.

According to the European Commission, across the whole of the EU, motorways and autobahns are still the safest ways to move around. They are much safer than rural roads. 55% of fatalities arising from road accidents occur on rural roads, compared to 8% on motorways. The fatality rate for road accidents per million inhabitants prove that Britain is second only to Sweden in terms of safety. Sweden has 27 deaths per million inhabitants annually, while the UK has 28. The most dangerous country for fatal accidents is Bulgaria with 99 annual fatalities per million





inhabitants. As road safety standards continue to improve, why are road closures still taking longer here than in other European countries? Police in the UK need to examine how other EU nations cope with fatal accidents and implement some of the best ideas.

But there is an even surer way to avoid road closures. We should try to improve our driving skills. We all know that Germany's autobahns are amongst the fastest roads in Europe. On many stretches there are no upper speed limits at all. And yet accidents on the 7,500-mile autobahn network are few and far between. The reason for this is clear. German drivers are subjected to a strict licensing system. They must take a whole series of mandatory driving lessons, including among high-speed traffic on the autobahn. They have to undertake basic first aid training and on top of all that, sit a difficult multi-choice, written exam and a tough road test. The whole package can cost a learner driver £1,400. Police rigorously enforce

the law and German drivers rigorously obey. There is no tailgating or overtaking on the inside. Hefty fines await those who contravene. In addition, unlike in large parts of the UK, the roads in Germany are well maintained. If any irregularity or pothole is discovered during frequent inspections, whole sections of road surface are replaced. The end result is safer roads, better drivers, fewer accidents and less road closures.

Tailgating, lane-hogging, overtaking on the inside, weaving between lanes, excessive speed and using mobile phones, are almost a right-of-passage on Scotland's M8. When accidents occur, drivers rubberneck to peer across the motorway at what's going on, taking their eyes off the road and potentially causing more collisions. If we are calling on the police to up their game by shortening lengthy road closures, we should maybe look in the mirror. There is a lot we can do as drivers to avoid accidents and road closures too.





**Closing date for the summer 2021  
edition of the Wessex Advanced  
Motorists e-Newsletter is 20<sup>th</sup> April.**

**All contributions would be very  
welcome.**

**All items should be sent to  
[ed@wessexam.uk](mailto:ed@wessexam.uk)**