

SEPTEMBER 2012

ISSUE 9/12



CHALLENGE
CHESTERFIELD ADVANCED MOTORISTS
GROUP NEWSLETTER



2011 Inter-Group Challenge

facebook



iam.chesterfield@gmail.com

GROUP CONTACT: BOB STONE 01246 568894

GROUP WEB SITE: www.chesterfield-iam.org.uk

REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER 1017471

COMMITTEE MEMBERS AND CONTACTS

PRESIDENT	MIKE DICKERSON	01246 292144
CHAIRMAN	BILL HARRINGTON	01246 412696
HON. SECRETARY	BOB STONE	01246 568894
TREASURER	JEFF SNAPE	01246 567058
GUIDANCE OFFICER	RAY PARKER	01246 206959
OBSERVER TRAINING OFFICER	BILL HARRINGTON	01246412696
ACTING PRO	JAN CRESWELL	07895 038538
WEB MASTER	CHRIS LAKE	-
SOCIAL SECRETARY	SUE WHEATCROFT	01246 274785
MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY	MAYNARD STEPHENS	01246 235074
ASSOCIATE LIAISON PERSON (ALP)	JAN CRESWELL	07895 038538

E-Mail Contacts

OBSERVER TRAINING OFFICER	williamh@30bentsc.fsnet.co.uk
HON.SECRETARY	robstone@aol.com
GUIDANCE OFFICER	rayparker744@btinternet.com
ACTING PRO	Jaygee.176@gmail.com
GROUP	iamchesterfield@gmail.com
ALP	jaygee.176@gmail.com
EDITOR	ymstone@aol.com

DATA PROTECTION ACT

PLEASE NOTE - Details that members have supplied to the group are held a database for Groups use. If you object to your details being held this way, please inform the Secretary in writing.



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ASSOCIATE MEMBERS –

PLEASE attend the forthcoming Sunday &/or Saturday guidance sessions at the **SAINSBURYS CAR PARK** as listed in 'What's On'.

If this causes any difficulty, please contact **Ray Parker** on **01246 206959** so that other arrangements can be made. New joiners are welcome to come along at anytime during the morning for a free assessment drive, or you can phone Ray to arrange a drive at any suitable time.

It is a fundamental part of your on-going training that you attend at least one, if not both of the guidance sessions each month. So please try to attend.

WE THANK THE MANAGEMENT OF SAINSBURY'S SUPERMARKET FOR ALLOWING US TO USE THEIR CAR PARK FOR OUR GUIDANCE SESSIONS

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TEST PASS

CONGRATULATIONS TO MICHELLE BAKER WHO PASSED HER TEST ON 5 AUGUST. HER OBSERVER WAS BOB STONE.

Thoughts, Reports and Retorts



From the Chairman.

What a change in the weather since I last wrote, yes we did have a fine clear sunny spell of warmth, but this was then followed by the torrential downpours which created havoc throughout the country and particularly in Sheffield and then latterly in Chesterfield.

As I write this it is Bank Holiday Monday and you will recall the A 617 was closed for a period due to flood damage and repairs were necessary to the carriageway before it could be reopened and since it is a trunk road a “proper job” will no doubt have been made, but what about some of the minor roads which could well have suffered similar damage and may well have only been “patched up” and we all know patches don’t last very long so drive with caution and consideration particularly near the verges. Another weather feature is also regarding the rain and wet atmosphere. Have you noticed with an early morning start or a late drive home at night how the temperature has dropped and subsequently the inside windows are tending to mist up with condensation? If so, make sure they are clear before moving off and you have good vision and particularly at night when oncoming vehicle headlights can cause dazzle and reflection on your windscreen. On this score have you noticed and experienced the number of badly adjusted lights since the nights are beginning to draw in, how do they get through the MOT test? And if they are new vehicles how do they get through their PDI ? Have you checked yours? You may be an offender and unaware of it. Drive up to the garage

door or a suitable wall or vertical surface and measure their heights.

As you may well have read in your current issue of “Advanced Driving” the motorcyclists partaking in the” Around British Isles Bike Ride” also had some very bad weather and they were exposed to it with only their protective clothing to shield them from the elements, but they did it and raised a considerable sum for the Air Ambulance Services around the country. We congratulate them on their success and proffered our support during the event by having collections at Renishaw and Ashover local car events. Along with other fund raising activities which are reported elsewhere a considerable sum was raised and in continuation of that support we have nominated the local Air Ambulance unit as our group charity. As you will have read they do a great job and statistics show that some 40% of call outs are to roadside incidents. Our remit is road safety and we are greatly encouraged when someone comes along to join us in that goal, but the coin has another side and we need to support the services who pick up the pieces when the inevitable happens and the driver or rider comes to a sticky end and the injured learn their lesson the hard way.

As the AD article says about the Air Ambulance service, which is dependent upon donations, and I quote “as an organisation dedicated to raise the standards of driving and riding on the UK’s roads, the IAM is keen to recognise its (the AAS) work”. Please support this worthy cause whenever you can and help save lives. May I wish you the very best of road safety in your own driving.

Bill Harrington.

Caravan dedication.....and more. From the President.

Quite an emotional half hour at Ashover Show on July 29th when we dedicated the caravan to the memory of Alan Morgan, our PO for many years. It was good to see Julie and her extended family. I hope they found it uplifting – I am sure they did. Even the weather was beautiful (in the morning!) which added to the occasion. Have a look at the plaque next time you are in the caravan, positioned on the inner door – very prominent, a bit like Alan was!

The event was very well attended and we had many enquires at the caravan throughout the day – let us hope we see many more associates joining the group.

A bit like public transport, some things come thick and fast... more news concerning fuel consumption figures and what interesting reading it makes. According to an Italian car magazine, when tested travelling “flat out”, the results were noted.... An Alfa Mito 1.4 turbo managed 12mpg, an Audi 2.0 TDI 143 model turbo -10mpg, VW Golf GTI 200 – 10mpg, Toyota Yaris 1.3 VVTI -17mpg and Mercedes 250 CDI Blue Efficiency -15mpg.

Considering the fact that larger cars with larger engines are like small cars, restricted to a legal 70mph, perhaps at this speed the larger cars are more economical as they are running at not much over half their top speed, and smaller engine cars running at over three quarters their maximum speed. Food for thought.

I know that I am not the only one in the group to log my fuel and work out consumption figures every refill. It gives an accurate figure over the months/years. And any “drop off” that cannot be explained can be used as a possible diagnostic tool.

Just doing mainly short journeys in the winter gives me 4mpg less than in the summer due to ambient temperature, and a long “sedate” journey in the summer gives me at least 5mpg more than a more “robust” trip. (Read between the lines if you will!)

I can also back up my claim to have averaged 45.61mpg over 5 years and just over 60000 miles. The worst mpg was 38.2 and the best 54.35, quite pleasing figures for a 2.0 litre, slightly bigger than average vehicle.....but it is a diesel car. (just nicely run-in at 91000 miles!)

Has anyone else got any figures to share with us?

More next month.... Stay safe and happy, Mike.

From the IAM Website – dated 16 August 2012

Road safety charity the IAM is offering weekly motoring tips from Britain's top advanced driver, Peter Rodger. This week, he is advising on dealing with crash for cash scams.

Crash for cash scams are staged collisions. The one to watch for is when some deliberately drives dangerously to force a crash so they can make an exaggerated insurance claim.

How to avoid them:

- Always look ahead and anticipate hazards
- Keep a safe following distance from the car in front and watch traffic overtaking you so that you are not surprised if it pulls across and brakes in front of you.
- Beware of tailgaters. The car behind you will try to get your attention so you don't concentrate on the driver in front. Pay attention to the vehicles around you and if you feel threatened by a tailgater, pull over somewhere safe to let them past.
- Keep an eye out for local news – criminal gangs doing this tend to use the same locations a lot. Local news can suggest where it is.

If you are involved in one, remember:

- If you're suspicious, don't ask them directly about it at the scene.
- Try to take photos of the damage – discreetly if possible, get a description of the driver and count the number of people in the other vehicle. Take photos discreetly, if possible.
- If you need the emergency services, call 999.
- Stay calm. You'll need to swap details with other drivers.

IAM chief examiner Peter Rodger said: "Crash for cash scams are costing the insurance industry millions of pounds.

Collisions are stressful and emotionally draining but it's important to be prepared in case you are involved in one."

“Despite high profile sentencing for these scams in the past, they’re still happening. Make sure you follow this advice to ensure you know what to do if you’re ever involved in one.”

To help drivers stay safe and enjoy their driving this summer, the IAM has a new website, drivingadvice.org.uk, with traffic updates, weather forecasts, and driving tips, including: driving abroad, cycling, and loading the car for a long journey.

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Advert received via David Stringer

Ultimate Off-Road Driving Day, --£99 (real value £247)-
Middlesbrough:

<http://www.travelzoo.com/uk/local-deals/North-Yorkshire/Other/23955>

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Imperial War Museum Duxford

Well I was asked if I had organised a trip to an air show this year, and I have not. But I would like to go to Duxford, I did go a few years ago but it was winter and spoiled by bad weather. So I would like to plan for a trip down sometime soon.

The website is <http://www.iwm.org.uk/visits/iwm-duxford> so go take a look and see what you think. All the prices are on the site and we can get tickets in advance. The total mileage there will be 136 miles and the same back. If there is enough we could think about a minibus or car sharing which I prefer as I don’t like being a passenger, but hey that’s just me. I’m also thinking that October might be a good time to go.

Now it’s over to you to tell me if you’re interested in going. Speaking for myself, yes I’m going. I’ll keep a list and you can tell me at guidance or by phone or even e-mail.

Ray

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Moving Brake Test

Who has done one recently? Who knows what one is? How is it done?

You will at some point be asked about this and may be asked to do one. We do this when we first take our vehicle on the road, here's how.

1. Start to drive and get into second gear and speed up to no more than 20mph
2. Check you have no vehicles following you and there are no pedestrians.
3. Apply your brakes firmly but do not stop.
4. When you feel the brakes are working ok carry on the drive.

It's as easy as that and when done correctly you know your brakes are ok and they do not pull to one side. If you do this with your observer or examiner, tell him what you are doing and when. Talk to your observer about this and he/she will talk you through it. It's vital to know your brakes work well before you get too far into your journey.

Safe driving, Ray

Thursday 20th September 2012 at 7-30pm at Club Chesterfield

The Special Assessment

Presented by Jan Creswell.

Jan has kindly agreed to tell us about what is involved when preparing for and taking the IAM Special assessment. Only a small percentage of IAM members undertake the assessment each year so we are lucky to be able to listen to her first hand experience.

Please come along and enjoy the evening.
Raffle tickets will be on sale, proceeds going towards group funds.

Message from David Stringer:

Hi All

The final Observer Training Day of 2012 will be held at the De Lacy Motor Club, Brotherton, Pontefract, on Saturday 29th September from 9.30 am to about 4 pm. Cost will be £15 per head inclusive of all refreshments and lunch. The day will be suitable for all observers, as the presentation content will be relevant to all and the practical exercises will be tailored to suit observers at particular levels, Senior, Qualified or Trainee.

This day could be of particular interest as it will be the first opportunity to see some flesh on the bones of the forthcoming IMI Accredited Observer Qualification and get the detail of the competences all observers will need to be able to demonstrate in a manner appropriate to their experience and level of qualification.

The IMI scheme is extremely important, because in the not too distant future all observers will have to be qualified in this way and all groups will have to establish the mechanism to do this, which will include appointing suitably qualified National Observers to administer the accreditation of others. Training for this role is in the course of development and will appear next year.

Please let me have details of any of your group observers who wish to attend this day as soon as possible. Places are limited so early reservations are recommended.

Please let Bob Stone know if you wish to attend.

Confused? All signs point to yes

Road signs are proliferating so wildly, drivers may be unable to take in all the information, leading to fines and accidents. And new proposals may make things worse



If you have missed an exit or found yourself in the wrong lane recently, it may not have been your fault: you were perhaps distracted by road signs. Thicketts of signs indicating road restrictions, speed limits, directions and parking information are having the opposite effect to what was intended. Instead of helping drivers to stay safe and within the law, they are overloading them with information and increasing the risk of accidents. And, with new powers to be awarded to councils, the roadside infestation is set to get worse.

It is a far cry from 1965, when the current road signage system became law. Five years previously Herbert Spencer, a graphic designer, had driven from central London to Heathrow, photographing every sign on the way. His findings — that signs were hard to read and confusing and used different symbols for the same message — led to an overhaul of the system.

Jock Kinneir, another designer, and his assistant Margaret Calvert were commissioned by the government to create a set of standard road signs that presented information in a clear way, without any fuss and with as few words as possible.

The pair's designs have stood the test of time: their symbols and fonts, from children crossing the road to a simple exclamation mark, remain unchanged. Recently, though, their good work has been undone as different authorities have tried to change the way we drive.

Around the village of Hook Green, Kent county council has spent £37,844 on 53 road signs that cover less than a mile of road. Within 25 yards of a 50mph sign is one reducing the limit to 30mph. This is followed 25 yards later by a 50mph sign. A hundred yards down the road, a 40mph sign slows you down through the tiny hamlet. It is so tiny, in fact, that within 200 yards 40mph changes back to 50mph.

“Kent county council may welcome drivers to Kent, but I say welcome to la-la land,” says Debbie Rix, a former BBC TV newsreader who moved to the area 25 years ago. “This signage is not only bonkers; it’s downright dangerous.”

The blanket of signs was introduced last year, replacing a national speed limit, which had not required any signs. The council says they conform to government traffic signs guidance.

“The roads are now more dangerous with signs than without,” says Rix. “The signs imply the S-bends are safe to take at 50mph, but they’re not. Also, drivers must surely get flummoxed by the confusion of signs and lose concentration.”

The problem is not limited to the villages of Kent. Calvert suggests that the number of signs now clustered on the roadside makes a mockery of the attempts by her and Kinneir to minimise distraction for drivers.

“There is too much general clutter and an unnecessary proliferation of information,” says Calvert.

“Too much information is just as confusing as too little. There is little evidence so far of any considered attempt to address the problem, despite the Department for Transport’s recent review of the state of Britain’s road traffic signs. It’s a far cry from all the expertise that went into the concept in the late Fifties and early Sixties.”

In London the Olympics have led to the installation of 150 electronic signs that tell drivers when they can use the 30 miles of so-called Zil lanes — designated for Games officials, athletes and journalists — alongside hundreds of other signs that announce the start of the 170-mile Olympic route network that extends beyond the capital and includes Weymouth and Portland in Dorset.

There are also signs advertising the Get Ahead of the Games website, adding to the permanent signage that enforces more than 180 miles of London bus lanes, and those warning drivers about the congestion charge, red routes and the capital’s low-emission zone. Miss one of the warnings and car drivers could face a fine of up to £130, or having their vehicle towed away.

On a single 1,000-yard stretch of the A1203 in east London we found 64 signs in one direction and 60 in the other, not including instructions to drivers painted on the road, or hoardings and banners on the roadside.

“There were too many signs here even before they put up the Olympic ones,” says Richard Wellford, 43, a motorbike courier from Addlestone, Surrey. “I’ve already strayed into the Games lane because I missed the sign and didn’t realise that bikes weren’t allowed in there.

“If I tried to read everything, then I’d always be looking at the side of the road. I’d rather look out for pedestrians and what’s coming up than worry about missing a sign, even though as a result I have been given three or four tickets.”

The big problem is that drivers simply do not have the time to read all the signs and concentrate on the road. The Department for Transport (DfT) has a formula to determine how long in seconds it takes drivers to read and process a particular sign.

The number of words or destinations used is divided by three, and then two is added. A sign with six words, for example, officially takes four seconds to read — the maximum advised by the government. Travelling at 30mph, drivers will have covered more than 58 yards in that time.

Reading all the 252 words on official signs on one side of this stretch of the A1203 would take 86 seconds. On the opposite side, an almost identical 251 words would take 85.6 seconds. This means it would take at least 1,255 yards to read and take in every sign — further than that stretch of road.

The Institute of Advanced Motorists (IAM) says drivers are simply being bombarded with too much information. “You can only absorb so much information at once,” says Peter Rodger, chief examiner at the IAM. “The people putting these signs up need to think whether they need to install a sign that says there is a junction coming up just after a board that shows you the directions through it.

“Motorists want the messages that we really need. If you give motorists too many, they can miss the ones that are important. It’s a cause of distraction or uncertainty while you work out what the road signs mean.”

Several studies have suggested that removing road signs can cut the accident rate. When signs, railings and crossings were removed from Kensington High Street in west London the number of accidents fell by 44% over two years. The “naked streets” theory suggests that drivers pay more attention when they are left to their own devices rather than being mollified by a succession of signs.

Too many signs are also hurting motorists in the wallet. One junction in Kentish Town, north London, is notorious for confusing drivers, with nine signs to take in before they attempt to navigate a junction that is split into three. Traffic is banned from one direction in the morning, and from the other in the afternoon. Camden council has earned £5m in fines over six years but recently lost an appeal after the junction’s signage was ruled “inadequately clear”.

There is no central database for the number of road signs in Britain, but the Highway Electrical Yearbook records the number of illuminated signs in the country from an annual survey of highway authorities. The latest figures, published this year, show that there are 1,056,980.

Two years ago, there were 1,068,897. In August 2010 Eric Pickles, the communities secretary, warned: “Our streets are losing their English character. We are being overrun by scruffy signs, bossy bollards, patchwork paving and railed-off roads wasting taxpayers’ money that could be better spent on fixing potholes or keeping council tax down.”

Pickles and Philip Hammond, then the transport secretary, wrote to every council to reinforce the message. But the DfT says it is not monitoring the number of signs that

are removed or installed because councils do not have to tell the department every time they change a sign.

Living Streets, a charity that campaigns for the removal of unnecessary road signs, says a few councils have reduced road signs, but much more could be done.

The DfT's latest proposals could see a surge in the number of road signs on Britain's streets, however. Earlier this month it began consulting on plans to give councils more freedom in setting local speed limits.

It is likely to mean reduced limits on many A and B-roads that currently have a national speed limit. As the residents of Hook Green have found, this will require a series of 40mph or 50mph signs where there is currently none, according to the Local Government Association.

It says councils will also be able to set up 20mph or 30mph zones in towns. They will be able to remove speed signs, but must replace them with traffic-calming measures, including signs painted on the ground or speed bumps — with warning signs.

Sorry, I don't speak sign language

If British drivers are overwhelmed by road signs, imagine what it must be like for foreign visitors, who not only have to translate them but must contend with driving on the left-hand side of the road,

“There is a lot to take in because there are a lot of signs and the rules are different — I didn't know I had to let people across zebra crossings,” said Renaud Tricon, a 38-year-old Parisian who is a driver for the French Olympic committee. “You don't always have time to read all the signs. Another problem is that many are painted on the ground, so other vehicles can block them from view.” Thibault Roy de Puyfontaine, a French army officer, had similar problems. “For every signpost in Paris, you will see five in London,” he said. “It's not easy driving here at all, on the wrong side of the road and with numerous signs. If you don't read them in time, they are not necessarily repeated, so you have to drive very slowly. “Then sometimes when you need them, there isn't enough information. I drove around the same roads four times because there were no signs that told me where I needed to go. Then I drove through some no-entry notices because that seemed to be the right way.”

Another tourist complained that there were no signs where they are really needed. “I drove the wrong way on a roundabout because I wasn't clear how to use it,” said Espen Moller, 59, a telecommunications director from Aarhus, Denmark. “There were two roundabouts next to each other and it was very confusing. I tried to follow my sat nav as much as possible.”

(Article Published: 5 August 2012 by Times Newspapers)

GEORGE SMITH CHALLENGE 2012 - 2 SEPTEMBER



This years challenge will involve a lot of balls.

Sunday 2nd September starting at 11 am, until we finish! Bring your own picnic, drinks and chairs (and a brolly just in case).

My wife and I have purchased a field on Sheldon Lane in Bakewell , and it will be a nice venue for the Challenge and picnic get together.

The Challenge will involve golf balls, tennis balls and footballs. Buckets, and other targets.

The highest scorer will win.

Directions. Leave Bakewell on the Monyash Road (B5055). After leaving the 30 mph area, there is a crossroads. Left is to Lady Manners School, but you turn right. Follow that road, ignore the first right junction, through the dip and then look out on your left for a gateway. I will make it very obvious! Pull into the field.

There will be caravan and camper van for toilets. I hope to have a means of boiling water to make hot drinks, but if everyone brings their own refreshment you will not be disappointed.

Please bring family and friends, but the trophy can only be won by a Group Member (that includes Associates).

Bill Storey, Matlock Group

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**Deadline for articles for October Newsletter will
be Noon on 27 September. Thanks. Ed**



Future Presentations –

Coming to a Newsletter near you soon!



The aim of this Newsletter is to give all Chesterfield IAM members a chance to air their views, and read interesting articles submitted by others, but we sadly lack articles from other than committee members.

If the magazine is not providing what you want, let us know. And think about writing an article yourself. Motoring related subjects are preferred of course, but you may have seen an interesting snippet in a magazine or newspaper which you might care to share with everyone. You don't have to be a world class journalist to submit an article and the Editor is here to do exactly that – edit - so don't worry about any grammatical or spelling errors, they will be corrected.

Ever heard of geo-caching? Hopefully we may have an article on this in the not too distant future. Any other motoring related hobbies out there? Tell us about them.

Ed



To whom do you report these particular driving violations?



I have a friend who, if she sees a company vehicle being driven by someone using a mobile phone, she memorises the company then telephones them upon getting home to report them.

Yesterday whilst walking our dog, I saw a young woman driving in Brampton, texting whilst driving, which meant she was not looking at the road. There was a baby in the back, albeit strapped into a child seat. I noted the registration number and entered it in the 'notes' section of my own mobile. On getting back home I looked up Derbyshire Constabulary hoping I could e mail them with the details, but alas no. There is a section for reporting 'Crime' but this involved either telephoning 999, which of course was not appropriate, or telephoning 101, which upon reading the blurb didn't seem appropriate either. In a way, this event seemed too petty to me to report at all so I ended up not bothering. And I thought even if I did supply the registration number to the Police, she would just get a ticking off anyway, and could always deny it. But it is officially a 'crime'. I just don't know who to report it to!

IAM research says that using a mobile for whatever purpose whilst driving increases reaction time by 37 – 45%, compared to 15% when above the drink/drive limit.

In London the Met Police have a dedicated website for reporting these violations. Any ideas anyone? Is there a local phone number or website out there dedicated to reporting this particular driving (and potentially dangerous) situation?

Editor.

**CHESTERFIELD IAM INTER-GROUP
CHALLENGE**

22 SEPTEMBER 2012

9 a.m. start

CHESTERFIELD COLLEGE CAR PARK

Infirmary Road, Chesterfield

**All members, associates come along and
give it a go.**

**Contact Ray Parker (01246 206959)
for details.**



How many apps have you got?

(photo courtesy of Jan)



WHATS ON IN THE NEAR FUTURE

Saturday 1st	Guidance	Sainsburys Car Park 9.30 am
Sunday 2nd	Guidance	Sainsburys Car Park 9.30 am
Sunday 2 nd	George Smith Challenge	11 am Bakewell (See advert)
Saturday 8 th	Darley Dale Transport Festival On B5057, DE4 2GL	8 am set up Public 10 am – 5 pm
Sunday 9 th	Ditto	8 am set up
Thursday 20 th	Social Night – Jan Creswell on the Special Assessment	Club Chesterfield 7.30 pm
Tuesday 25 th	Committee Meeting	Chesterfield Library Café, 7.30 pm
Saturday 22 nd	Inter-Group Challenge	9 am. Chesterfield College Car Park
Saturday 29 th	Training Day Brotherton Pontefract	See advert for details

Future Dates - October:

Saturday 6 October 2012

National Conference
University of Warwick

Sunday 7 October

Guidance

Saturday 13 October

Guidance

Thursday 18th October

Social – Chris Tatlow

Tuesday 30 October

Committee Meeting