

ARE WE THERE YET?



Mid Yorkshire Advanced Motorists Newsletter

February 2018

iam
RoadSmart

Group Number 4178
Registered Charity Number 1053843





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Cover Photo - Clumber Park



Located near Worksop, Clumber Park was the seat of the Pelham-Clintons, Dukes of Newcastle. Following a series of fires, the after effects of the First World War and the Great Depression of the 1920s the house was finally demolished in 1938 leaving the grade 1 listed Church of St Mary (pictured) and walled kitchen garden with its 450ft long glass house.

FORTHCOMING GATHERINGS

Date	Meetings	Location
Sunday 4th February 9:30 am	Sunday Driving Sessions Assessment runs for all Associates & Members. Look for the caravan.	B&Q Car Park, Aspen way, Glasshoughton, Castleford. WF10 4TA
Monday 5th February 8 pm	MYAM Social Evening Street Angels	Carlton Social Club Main Street Carlton WF3 3RW See page 7
Sunday 18th February 10 am	Sunday Driving Sessions Assessment runs for all Associates & Members.	McDonalds car park On the roundabout with Oakwood Lane and Easterly Road LS8 2RB
Sunday 4th March 9:30 am	Sunday Driving Sessions Assessment runs for all Associates & Members. Look for the caravan.	B&Q Car Park, Aspen way, Glasshoughton, Castleford. WF10 4TA
Monday 5th March 8 pm	MYAM Social Evening West Yorkshire 4x4 Volunteers	Carlton Social Club See page 7

Everyone is welcome at these events and they are an ideal opportunity to meet new people socially, find out about what is going on within the Group and listen to an interesting talk on a variety of topics, sharing our skills with other serious drivers and keeping up-to-date on club and driving matters.

Will any Member wishing to have an item, article or picture included in the newsletter please submit it to the editor no later than the 15th of the month, these may be edited to save space. Thank you.

ISSUES OF 'ARE WE THERE YET?' ARE ON THE GROUP WEB SITE

Disclaimer

The items contained in this newsletter are the views of the Members who contribute and not necessarily the views of the Institute of Advanced Motorists (I.A.M.) or MYAM.

DATA PROTECTION ACT

MYAM holds Membership detail records on computer, these are confidential and for club use ONLY. The information is used to run the Group and consists of various details such as class of Membership, date of joining & subscription expiry dates. It is also used for the production of address labels for the distribution of the newsletter and recording training for Observers.

FROM THE EDITOR

I was reminded last month of how much we rely on modern technology following a phone call from our chairman Janice. I had been expecting a “Chairman’s end of year” article but due to a computer problem Janice was unable to transfer it from her tablet.

Almost every aspect of our lives is linked to a computer, how often have you contacted a company to be told the computer is running slow or has crashed. And how often have you been told that you have to order online as they cannot take orders over the phone. This usually means creating an account with yet another b****y password to create and remember. I don’t know how many passwords I have to remember but I have them all written down on paper rather than keeping them on the computer.

Then there is always the danger of the computer crashing and losing all your data. This happened to me about 20 years ago when the dreaded “blue screen of death” appeared after the hard drive failed. I did manage to recover some of the data from the drive but was fortunate that, because the drive had a small capacity, I had a lot of my data on external discs. Since then I have always backed up my data on external drives.

Our cars are full of technology with every system in the car connected by a common bus system. This makes it possible, with suitable programming, to automatically link functions, for example when I put my car into reverse, the radio volume is reduced, the parking sensors and rear camera are switched on and displayed on the radio screen, if the headlights are on the front fog lamps are turned on (don’t ask me why), if the front wipers are on the rear wiper operates, oh it also turns the reversing lights on!

The dangers of all this technology are that various updates and new software is not always compatible with older hardware and older software is not always compatible with the newer hardware often requiring expensive upgrades. It reminds me of a couple of quotes I saw years ago. “A computer system is a collection of mutually incompatible components” and “Debugging software is the process of replacing one error by another”!

In spite of the problems with computer technology, we cannot do without it but I can still accept hand written items for the newsletter.

Don’t forget that the next social meeting on February 5th will be at our new venue, the Carlton Social Club in Carlton near Wakefield. Details of the location are on page 7.

Keith

GROUP MEMBERSHIP NEWS

Welcome to the Group

New Associates

James Harmer, Jason Long, Malcolm Wade, Helen Wyche

Congratulations

On passing the Advanced Test

Alison Barron - Observer David Rockliff

Maura Healy - Observer Bill Jackson

Keith James - Observer John Convery

Frank Milner - Observer Alan Jones

Andy Pearson - Observer Francis Lintott

Neil Scott - Observer Lee Prichard

Riaz Shahid - Observer David Rockliff

Frank and Neil both passed at the end of December bringing the 2017 pass total to 39 out of 40, a 98% pass rate.

Happy Birthday this month goes to

Rosemary Atkins, Mike Bell, Richard Brook, Stephen Callaghan, Janet Darlington, Richard Edge, Sally Emmerson, Stephen Furness, Richard Hawkes, Stephen Kettlewell, Jane Levine, Marcia Martell, Ronald Mooney, David Parry, Terence Paul, Christian Pithers, David Roberts, Stuart Robertshaw, Debbie Rosen, Gary Skyrme, Trevor Smith, Gary Taylor, Paul Taylor, Alan Walker, David Wevill

MYAM Online

MYAM COMMITTEE MINUTES NOW AVAILABLE TO MEMBERS

The Committee has now agreed that in the interests of transparency the minutes from the MYAM Committee meetings will now be available to Members on the Group website once they have been accepted as a true record by the Committee. So please feel free to check them out. They can be found on the Committee Members page under Our Team. The minutes are located at the bottom of the page.



FACEBOOK provides details of events and local news. Go and visit www.facebook.com/midyorkshireiam and like our page. How about inviting a few of your Facebook friends to like our page too. It helps getting our name out there.

WEB SITE As part of the changes at IAM to introduce the new IAM RoadSmart branding, we now have an all new look website and a new website address. If you use the old address you will be redirected to the Local Groups page on the new IAM RoadSmart website. To go to our new page enter:-

www.iamroadsmart.com/groups/midyorkshire

or use the QR code.



On the website you'll find details of our events, courses, the latest news from the group and copies of previous newsletters.



TWITTER We now have our own Twitter account which can be found at twitter.com/MYAM4178.

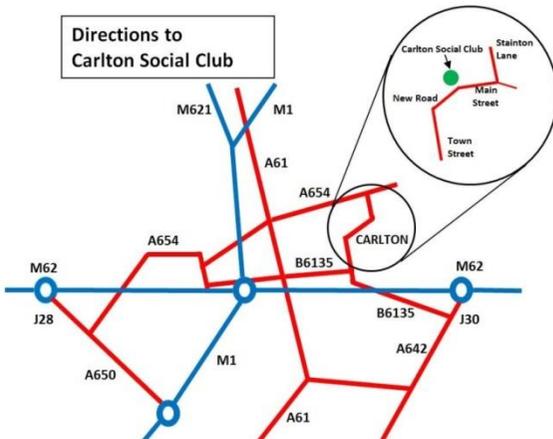
The Group Telephone number is 0113 314 9969

CHANGE OF VENUE FOR SOCIAL MEETINGS

As announced in the December newsletter we are changing the venue for our monthly social meetings to the Carlton Social Club in the village of Carlton near Rothwell.

Directions to the Carlton Social Club

Main Street, Carlton, Wakefield, WF3 3RW



From the M62 West leave at Junction 28 and take the A650 towards Wakefield. At the next set of traffic lights turn left onto the A654 toward Rothwell. Follow the A654, turning left in Thorpe on the Hill. Cross the A61 and continue into Carlton. Turn right into Stainton Lane then turn right into Main Street. The Social Club is on the right immediately after the Unicorn pub.

From the M62 East leave at junction 30 and take the A642 towards Wakefield.

Take the next right, B6135, towards Lofthouse. Follow the B6135 under the M62 onto Ouzlewell Green towards Carlton and Rothwell. Follow the road past Carlton Primary School and the Social Club is on the left just before the Unicorn pub.

There is a car park with overspill parking available on the grass area opposite the club.

A Cautionary Tale

Fraser Nelson, writing in the Daily Telegraph in the closing days of 2017, relates his experience in court when charged with using a mobile phone when driving. Quite what the experience says about the law and legal process I leave you to judge.

The circumstances are simply related. His mobile was in a cradle in the car for use as a satnav. It fell out of the cradle and was sliding around the dashboard. Whilst stationary at traffic lights, he recovered the phone and put it in the door pocket. Sadly, a policeman in a nearby car spotted this, pulled him over and a prosecution ensued. He opted to plead not guilty and appear in court, because the offence was described as 'using a mobile phone'. However the phone was not used for any purpose for which it might be used, he merely held it to move it from one place to another. He still lost his case.

Apparently, there is a detailed list of mobile phone offences which attract 6 points and a £200 fine, but the only way to find out what they are is a court appearance. The list is not published. The police will not tell you. As was suspected, holding a mobile phone is not, of itself, an offence. But if you use it whilst holding it, it is. And simply looking at the screen whilst holding it is enough to constitute use. You cannot so much as read the time. That was enough to secure a conviction in this case; it was alleged he looked at the screen. The test seems to be whether an 'interactive communication' is being performed.

Yet there is a case where use of a mobile to record dictated notes resulted in a not guilty verdict which would seem to contradict this. It leaves you wondering whether it makes a difference that you are communicating with the phone rather than the phone in any way communicating with you. Equally ridiculous is the concept that you could use a satnav whilst holding it, because a satnav is not a mobile phone, whereas using a mobile phone as a satnav in similar manner would be an offence. What about taking a photograph on the mobile when at the wheel? Does that amount to 'interactive communication'? We do not know.

The case itself is trivial. It could be taken to a higher court in pursuit of clarity, but at a cost that would deter any normal individual. Yet surely the obvious answer is to publish the list of what constitutes the offence of using a mobile phone whilst driving. As quoted in the original Daily Telegraph article, Lord Bingham, a former Lord Chief Justice wrote that the law should be 'accessible, intelligible, clear and predictable'. Quite right. Lord Diplock, a Law Lord, is noted as holding the view that 'elementary justice demands that the rules by which the citizen should be bound should be ascertainable by him or his lawyer by reference to publicly available sources'. In my professional training, it was always said that the law should be certain, which is inherent in both those quotes. In this example, it clearly is not.

I doubt anyone disputes that it is dangerous to use a hand held mobile whilst driving, but as the technology outruns the law the very least the authorities should do is make it crystal clear what constitutes illegal use. Indeed more, it should be clear what constitutes 'not maintaining proper

control of the vehicle' which is the only way an idiot using a satnav whilst holding it could be prosecuted.

Personally, I feel uncomfortable even using the hands free facility, which being retired fortunately doesn't happen to me all that often. The only reliable advice that can be given is don't touch the phone in the car. Switch it off. Or stop driving.

In Fraser Nelson's case, maybe his mistake was not avoiding the offence by putting the car in neutral at the traffic lights, applying the handbrake, turning off the engine, and making everyone else wait!

Mallard

I think this is a grey area of the law as the legislation states "It is an offence to use a hand held mobile phone or an "interactive communications device", but there is an exemption for a two way radio which is designed or adapted - for the purpose of transmitting and receiving spoken messages; and operates on any frequency other than 880 MHz to 915 MHz, 925 MHz to 960 MHz, 1710 MHz to 1785 MHz, 1805 MHz to 1880 MHz, 1900 MHz to 1980 MHz or 2110 MHz to 2170 MHz i.e. the mobile phone bands.

This means it is permitted to use CB, Amateur radio, PMR446 walkie talkies and other two way radios while driving but be careful as if an accident can be attributed to using one of these radios you can, I believe, still be prosecuted.

Ed

An Award For Jeffrey

Jeffrey Long has often featured in the newsletter for his charity fund raising exploits. In 2009 he was awarded an MBE for his for voluntary service to the Royal British Legion and last year he was awarded the Times/Sternberg Active Life award, which celebrates outstanding achievement by people over the age of 70.

Congratulations Jeffrey.

Is This A Record?

If you've read last month's newsletter (and if not why not?), you'll see one of the new associates was Frank Milner. Frank joined at our stand in Osset back in November as an associate and was allocated to Alan Jones. After four runs with Alan, Frank was ready for his test and after a final run, which finished at 11am on December 27th, took his test at 1pm with examiner Dudley Martin and was one of the two passes that day. It must be some record to join the group and pass your test within a month, although being an advanced motorcyclist he did have a slight advantage!

A New Experience

Well it's not exactly new but recently I was chauffeur driven into the centre of Bradford and so were the other people on the bus! I was making use of my bus pass and as I had to go into the centre of Bradford I thought why not. It'll avoid the need to find somewhere to park and will be zero cost to me, so off I went to the nearest bus stop, about a 10 minute walk from home. As the busses run every 10 minutes I wouldn't have long to wait but after 15 minutes no bus. Then someone told me the busses were being diverted as there were nearby roadworks which had closed the bus route. So I walked down to the next bus stop, which had a shelter, and waited. Along comes the bus, I get on, present my pass to the reader and off we go to the centre of Bradford.

I don't think it took that much longer than driving but took out the hassle of finding somewhere to park. After I'd finished my business I caught the bus back home. So not too unpleasant an experience as it's been over 45 years since I regularly used the bus to go to school.

However this week I had to go for a screening scan at the local hospital so again I thought I'll use the bus so off I went, this time to the bus stop where I was sure the bus stopped only to find that they'd changed the bus route yet again. It was getting close to my appointment time when I found this out so I rang Caroline who came and picked me up and took me to the hospital.



Not the sort of bus I remember but I couldn't resist this picture from Beamish

When I was at school in Birmingham and had to use the busses every day I, along with my school friends, got used to the bus routes and knew which ones to catch and which ones to avoid as their routes didn't take us near our homes. Quite often myself and one of my friends, who lived just down the road from me, went into the city centre after we'd been swimming on our games afternoon as it was more convenient and fewer changes of bus to get home. Last year on a visit to Birmingham I and another of my old school friends went into the city centre. Now I haven't been to Birmingham city centre for probably the best part of 30 years and it's certainly changed. Major redevelopments have meant the road layout has changed and new shopping centres have been built. Had I gone in on my own I'd probably have got lost.

Will I use the bus again? Yes I will as I hate driving into city centres, it's not too bad if I'm just passing through but if I need to stop and find somewhere to park I'll leave the car at home and take the bus especially as I've now got a bus pass!

Keith

Dear Valued Customer

I'm sure we've all received emails which start like that. Usually they appear to come from our bank saying that some unusual activity has been seen on the account and that we need to confirm our details by logging into our account. Conveniently they provide a link to allow us to do so. Although the link may look genuine should you follow it and enter your details you'll probably find your bank account being drained of your hard earned money.



I've had several of these emails and it's easy for me to know they are not genuine as they often come from a bank I do not have an account with and, more importantly, I do not do internet banking.

I've also had several emails concerning the email account I use for the newsletter, again asking me to log in and confirm details as suspicious activity has been noted. These purport to come from the security section of my ISP. For various reasons, which I won't go into here, I know these are not genuine so I ignore them.

The usual advice is to ignore these emails and delete them. You should not reply to them as this will let the senders know the email account is active.

It's also important to use secure passwords for any online accounts. Many sites have an inbuilt password checker that will indicate how secure it is. Now no password is entirely secure but by following simple steps it can be made more secure by using a mixture of numbers, letters (both upper and lower case) and punctuation marks. A minimum of seven characters is normally required. Also use a different password for each account. This is one of my bugbears as I have to stop and think of a new password each time I have to create a new account. I'd also suggest not storing passwords on your computer. I have a handwritten list of mine in a separate paper document which is fine as long as I can remember where I put it!

If you look at the committee page you'll notice I've removed the hyperlinks which allowed you to contact the committee member by email simply by clicking on their email address. I've also changed the "@" symbol to "(at)". These changes are to help reduce the amount of spam emails the committee gets. Should you need to contact a committee member by email copy the address into the address box of your email program and replace (at) by @. This change has been brought about by a recent spam email requesting a payment of a significant amount of money written in such a way that it could have been genuine. Fortunately quick thinking by Rosie, Janice and Andrew stopped the payment being made. As a result the group rules are being amended to protect the group from any future similar spam emails attacks.

If you think you have been subjected to such on line fraud you should report it to Action Fraud. <https://www.actionfraud.police.uk/fraud-az-vishing>

Ed

Are You A New Van Man (Or Woman)?

Driving a van for the first time requires some thought: although they are the same licence group as a car, there are some real differences which could catch you out. This week's tips give advice to all those planning on driving a van for the first time, from IAM RoadSmart's head of driving and riding standards, Richard Gladman.

Sitting in the driving seat of a van may feel different to start with because the driving position is not the same as a car – but you might get to prefer it. The main difference with most vans is the lack of a rear view mirror, although you will have two good size door mirrors. Make sure you take your time to get your seating position set up correctly before adjusting your mirrors to give you the best view of the road behind.

Finding out where all the controls are and what features your new van has are vital, just looking for the lights while you are moving can take your eyes off the road for a few seconds - at just 30mph you cover the ground at 44 feet per second: so two seconds to find the lights and you have travelled the length of two double-decker buses without looking at the road.

What are the dimensions of the van? Is it a standard or long wheelbase, how tall is it – will it get into car parks with a height restriction? Knowing the width and height of your vehicle will help in stressful situations where you might not know if you will fit!

When you load your van make sure your heavy items are on the lower levels and tied down, not just so they can't move around and damage other goods but also moving items can destabilise your van. If you are carrying any dangerous goods make sure you display the right sticker on the outside of the vehicle and your insurance allows you to carry them.

Remember your brakes are designed for a full load so they might be sharp and over responsive if your van is empty.

The best way to drive a van is calmly; rushing around won't necessarily get you to your destination faster but it will cause you stress and tempt you to take risks and could annoy other road users.

Before you put your foot down, check the speed limit – vans have a different speed limit than cars and you need to be aware of these. Single carriageway roads on a national speed limit sign means 50mph for a van (car-derived vans 60mph) and on a dual carriageway with a national speed limit sign its 60mph – both 10mph slower than for cars. See <https://www.gov.uk/speed-limits>

Remember to position your vehicle carefully so you don't create blind spots for yourself e.g. being at 90 degrees to oncoming traffic when emerging from junctions will give you good vision in both directions, especially important when crossing a dual carriageway, also when turning you might need to position a little wider at junctions to avoid clipping the kerb.

The final tip is to make a difference to road safety – show other road users how a good van driver behaves; be patient and friendly, if someone is hesitant give them time they might not be as experienced as you and remember not everyone has your view from their driving seat.

Richard said: “We are often guilty of stereotyping drivers by the vehicle they drive and van drivers come in for more than their fair share of criticism. With a little bit of preparation and effort you can be remembered as the polite van driver who shared the road space nicely.”

As The Snow Disappears, The Potholes Emerge

The snow has come and gone...for now, and the big melt has revealed lots of fresh damage to road surfaces across the nation. If previous years are anything to go by, thousands of drivers will be considering a claim for damage to their car from driving through a newly formed pothole. If you are one of them, here are some points to bear in mind:

Local authorities spend a lot of time and money defending claims for pothole damage if they think the claim is unreasonable, so make sure your claim is justified. Every case is taken on its own merits, but the best way of assessing whether they will fight the case or pay for the repair without question is to ask yourself (and answer honestly), “would a reasonable driver, driving at a speed appropriate for the conditions, have been able to see the pothole in time to either avoid it, or slow down enough to be able to drive through it without damage to the vehicle?” If the answer is “yes”, then forget the claim and drive more attentively next winter.

If the answer is “no”, then you should write to the local authority responsible for the road and include details of the pothole and the damage, along with the cost of repair. When assembling your evidence, be aware at all times that the pothole is in a road; don't do anything to endanger yourself or others. Describe the exact location, for example, “on the B1066 eastbound, 25 metres west of the junction with High Street, Appleton” is a lot better than “on the road near Appleton.”

Try to get a photograph with the image indicating the scale – a wide shot which includes your foot on the verge will give an idea of the size. If possible, measure the depth as well, since depth is one of the main criteria's determining whether the pothole deserves urgent repair.

Most councils have a website for reporting potholes; check whether yours has already been reported and monitor how long it takes the authority to repair it. A very rough guide is that if

the pothole is under 40mm deep, you are unlikely to win a claim. If it is over 50mm deep, you stand a fair chance of success (this guideline is used by many authorities to classify serious and minor damage and is based on the success of past claims, so it's a good guide).

Finally, get a proper description of the damage from a garage or qualified mechanic, together with the cost of repair and photos on any damaged parts. Keep any parts which are replaced and offer them for inspection if required.

By Tim Shallcross, IAM RoadSmart's head of technical policy and advice

I have no experience of it but the following website <https://www.potholes.co.uk/> has more details of how to claim and allows you to report and search for potholes.

Ed

Chairmans New Year Address

I'm sorry I did not manage to write an article for the last newsletter, but November and December were particularly busy for me.

I had ordered a new wet room (shower room) to be fitted at the end of November/early December, and the fitter hit unforeseen problems. So, a job which should have taken five days actually took ten!!! In fact, on the day of the December social evening and quiz, I had a large hole in the floor of the bathroom, no tiles on the walls, no wash basin, no heater, and the toilet was resting on a pile of old tiles!!! I kept telling myself that everything would be great when the bathroom was finished, and I'd cleared up the inch of dust that covered absolutely everything in the house! In the meantime, I had to get washed at the kitchen sink and go to my friend's house to have a shower. In the end, everything was finished just in time for Yule, and the finished product is wonderful.

So, as I cleaned up the dust and washed down the new bathroom tiles and floor; as I wrote my Yule cards and trimmed my Yule tree; and as I wrapped presents for my dear friends, I thought about all the people I have met on my travels and all the lovely people with whom I work.

Without the support of you the Members, Associates, Observers, and Committee of MYAM, our Group would not be such an enjoyable and successful Group, and I do appreciate the loyalty of the Members and Associates, and the hard work of all the volunteers who give their time and expertise to the Group.

And so, although belatedly, I am sending you all my very best wishes for a happy, healthy, and prosperous year ahead.

Janice

And Finally.....

Often when translating from one language to another the result is not always as expected so here are a few mistranslations for your amusement.

In an East African newspaper: A new swimming pool is rapidly taking shape since the contractors have thrown in the bulk of their workers.

In a Vienna hotel: In case of fire, do your utmost to alarm the hotel porter.

A sign posted in Germany's Black Forest: It is strictly forbidden on our Black Forest camping site that people of different sex, for instance, men and women, live together in one tent unless they are married with each other for that purpose.

In a Zurich hotel: Because of the impropriety of entertaining guests of the opposite sex in the bedroom, it is suggested that the lobby be used for this purpose.

In an advertisement by a Hong Kong dentist: Teeth extracted by the latest Methodists.

In a Rome laundry: Ladies, leave your clothes here and spend the afternoon having a good time.

Advertisement for donkey rides in Thailand: Would you like to ride on your own ass?

In the window of a Swedish furrier: Fur coats made for ladies from their own skin.

On the box of a clockwork toy made in Hong Kong: Guaranteed to work throughout its useful life.

Detour sign in Kyushi, Japan: Stop: Drive Sideways

In a Swiss mountain inn: Special today - no ice cream.

In a Tokyo bar: Special cocktails for the ladies with nuts.

I think the result often gains something from the mistranslation and often wonder whether similar mistranslations occur when translating English into other languages.

This Month's Teaser

When was the BBC's Top Gear programme first broadcast and who were the first presenters?

Your Committee

Chairman	Janice Haigh		Contact via the secretary
Secretary	Andrew Simpson-Laing	01132 299522 07743 306654	andrewasl(at)ntlworld.com
Treasurer	Rosie Bricis	0113 2534528	rbricis(at)live.co.uk
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Speaker Secretary	Position Vacant		
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Chief Observer	David Rushfirth	01924 211510 07966 134045	myam.webmaster(at)outlook.com
Ex officio	Bill Jackson Julie Langham Bob McDermott		

Due to computer hacking and high levels of spamming we have had to remove the hyperlinks to our e-mail addresses and have replaced the @ symbol with (at) so you will need to retype the address in the correct e-mail format, i.e. replace (at) with @, with no spaces.

URGENT REQUEST

We now have a Group Secretary however we also need a Speaker Secretary to organise the social meetings. To find out more contact the Secretary.