

ARE WE THERE YET?

Mid Yorkshire Advanced Motorists Newsletter

March 2020

iam
RoadSmart

Group Number 4178
Registered Charity Number 1053843





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Cover Photo – Windmill at the Avoncroft Building Museum

One of the over 30 restored buildings at the museum near Bromsgrove. It's a typical West Midlands post mill where the entire upper part of the structure pivots on a huge central post to allow the sails to face into the wind to generate maximum power. It's a working mill, milling wheat to produce flour which is available to buy in the shop.

FORTHCOMING GATHERINGS AND EVENTS

Sunday 1st March 9:30am – 12am	Sunday Driving Sessions Assessment runs for all Associates & Members	Sigma Ltd Alpine Court, Castleford, WF10 4TL
Monday 2nd March 8pm	MYAM Social Evening Keith Reyner from West Yorkshire Police Collision Investigation Part 2	Carlton Social Club Main Street Carlton WF3 3RW See page 7
Sunday 15th March 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 5th April 9:30am – 12am	Sunday Driving Sessions Assessment runs for all Associates & Members	Sigma Ltd Alpine Court, Castleford, WF10 4TL
Monday 6th April 8pm	MYAM Social Evening TBA	Carlton Social Club

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.

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Pathfinder Course Yorkshire - Learning to drive for 15-17 year olds

Over 5 days students on the Pathfinder course achieve the essential driving competence, attitudes, and understanding to become safe drivers.

Uniquely, Pathfinder is for students aged between 15-17 and their guardians. You learn in a safe, secure environment, having fun together and building understanding and trust.

The next course dates are the 6th-10th April 2020 running at Driffild Cadet Training Centre, YO25 9LH.

For more details see - under17driver.co.uk or contact Ian Goring (Yorkshire Coordinator) 07988 740274. Bursaries are available for our area, making the cost just £185

FROM THE EDITOR

In this newsletter is a contribution from our well respected member Mallard on so called Smart motorways. The problems with these smart motorways were the subject of a Panorama investigation in January. If you haven't seen the programme please try to see it as it shows these are not performing as they should be. Even the government minister responsible for the expansion of these motorways agrees they are not performing as expected.

The widespread introduction was based on a pilot introduction on the M42 with refuges every 600m which was considered successful. However when introduced elsewhere the refuges were significantly further apart and what do you do if the refuge is already occupied or you break down just after you've passed a refuge? The radar technology to detect stopped vehicles and close lanes is not fitted to most of the motorways and where it is fitted it isn't always working and it can take up to 20 minutes to detect a stopped vehicle and close the lane but a collision can literally occur in seconds. And it can take up to 20 minutes for help to arrive once the stoppage has been detected. The recommendation is to stay in your car and call 999 but not everyone has a mobile phone so what do you do?

We seem to be relying more and more on technology to help solve problems but as we know any form of technology is not 100% reliable and in reality it can only detect problems that the designer has foreseen. A recent example of failed technology was when there were power cuts which halted several trains but when power was restored many of the newer engines could not be restarted and needed a visit from a technician to restart them.

Perhaps we should call a halt to the smart motorways and return to a hard shoulder at least until a full review of the problems has been conducted.

Do you have any comments or experiences of breaking down on a smart motorway? If so let me know.

Keith

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.

GROUP MEMBERSHIP NEWS

Welcome to the Group

New Associates

**Amelia Crow, Charlotte Evans
Andrew Palmer**

Congratulations

On passing the Advanced Test

**Bob Moorhouse- Observer David Stringer
David Wray - Observer Bill Jackson**

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A good friend of mine owns 8 cars, stored in his shed.
He's just been medically diagnosed with carownervirus.

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Spotted by David Rockliff in Boston (Massachusetts)

MYAM Online

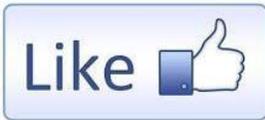


WEB SITE Our website is packed full of information and is the go to place for everything you need to know about our events, courses, meetings and news about us as a Group. How about copies of the newsletter going back a few years.

Need to know who the Committee are or see our Observer team? We are all on there.

See us at www.iamroadsmart.com/groups/midyorkshire

We are adding to the content all the time so keep dropping in to see what we are doing.



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.

The Group Telephone number is 0113 314 9969

Data Protection – Privacy Notice (GDPR)

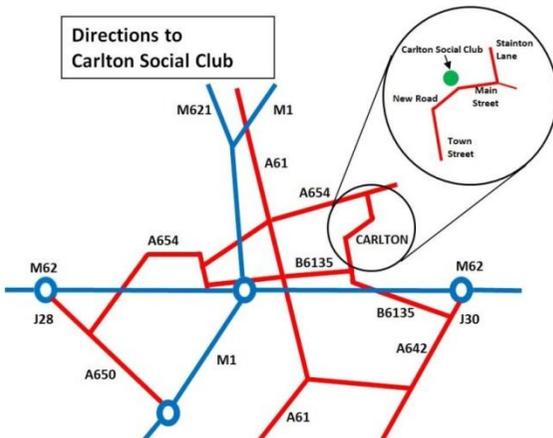
Mid Yorkshire Advanced Motorists (MYAM) is committed to looking after the information that it holds on behalf of its members in a way that complies with the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR).

MYAM has a legitimate interest in keeping sufficient personal information to communicate with its members and other local people with an interest in road safety, and to permit the renewal of subscriptions. A member can ask to see a copy of their personal information, correct any errors and ask for all or part of it to be deleted.

MYAM is affiliated to the Institute of Advanced Motorists (IAM) and will use a member's information to support them if and when they are assessed by IAM. MYAM will also ensure that any data shared with IAM is accurate. We will not share your details with anybody else.

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.

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.

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

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

February Meeting - Collision Investigation

Have you ever wondered why a road is closed for what seems like an age following a collision (they are not called accidents now)? If so our February speaker, Keith Reyner, gave us an insight into the workings of the Collision Investigation Unit.

Based in three centres, Wakefield, Melton and Sheffield they are available 24 hours a day to investigate all fatal and potentially fatal collisions as determined by the ambulance crew on the scene.

Once at the scene of a fatal, or potentially fatal, collision the road has to be closed as it is treated as a crime scene and, unlike any other crime scene, they only have one opportunity to gather evidence. Once the road is reopened evidence such as marks on the road can be quickly destroyed. Keith also mentioned that they have to be careful with the emergency service vehicles as they can inadvertently obliterate evidence as they move around the collision scene.

The unit also works with the Health and Safety Executive in accidents involving vehicles. They will examine the condition of any vehicle to check for any faults that could have been a factor in the cause of the accident. Keith also mentioned that suicides on the roads were also considered as fatal accidents until decided otherwise by the coroner. These also had to be investigated to gather evidence for the coroner.

Their investigations include looking at the state and location of any debris, marks on the road etc using GPS based systems to record the positions. Marks on the road from locked wheels are commonly used but the use of ABS on cars can make their job more difficult but they do have techniques when dealing with such marks. Once the positions of the marks have been recorded they can recreate the collision on a computer to determine what happened.

You may not realise that the various ECUs (Electronic Control Units) in your car can record faults and other data which could be useful for the collision investigation. It's not always easy to access the data but the Unit is working on techniques to use the data in their investigations.

One of the myths, propagated by TV police programmes, is that they can identify the make of a tyre from the marks on the road. This not necessarily true but they can link the marks to a tyre once they have the tyre.

One question that was asked was the use of dashcams. These, he said, can be a very useful aid in the investigation.

Keith showed us pictures of several horrific collisions, describing the investigation in each case. Once the investigation is complete they have to be able to present evidence to the courts. This may result in a prosecution.

Such was the interest in the subject that we have invited Keith back next month to continue his talk.

Smart Motorways

A head of steam has built recently around the issue of smart motorways. It is beginning to emerge that these roads are not as smart as we have been led to believe. I am a fairly regular user of the M42 around Birmingham and I have always found it works well. As far as traffic management is concerned speed limits are lowered when traffic is heavy which evens out flow and largely eliminates stop start progress. In addition, parts of the hard shoulder are opened to running as appropriate in these circumstances, often for traffic leaving the motorway at the next junction. There are frequent refuges (now marked with a vivid yellow road surface) for emergencies which effectively come into use when traffic is heavy and, crucially, moving slower than usual motorway speeds. The motorway was closely monitored when complete and the results indicated it was safer. The accident rate was reduced. There was no clear evidence that the innovation of hard shoulder running and emergency refuges was any more perilous in an emergency than the more usual arrangement of continuous hard shoulder. The government authorised the widespread roll out of the new format across the country.

As the work progressed, it became more obvious to me that the later 'smart' motorways differed from the M42. There are fewer refuges. There is regular continuous use of the former hard shoulder. The signage is different. The changes were obvious and difficult to interpret for those used to the M42. Worse, the changes continued as time progressed and the roll out continued. It became evident that few stretches were the same! As a single example, the gantries across the full width of the M42 carry separate changeable signs for each running lane, including the hard shoulder which may or may not be in use but was always clearly signed. Compare that with the M1 between Leeds and Wakefield and information is carried on large square signs cantilevered out on the left which dictate open and closed lanes with large

arrows. It is nothing like as clear, but possibly cheaper and easier to install. Excuse my cynicism.

Worse, the evidence is building that any breakdown on a smart motorway is a real emergency according to recently published comments. It seems Highways England may have misled Ministers by using the favourable M42 data to build a case for the later installations, which they knew were to be significantly different. The police are also claiming to have been misled. Where that furore will lead remains to be seen, but the Transport Minister is doing his best to sound reassuring.

As drivers we should be acutely aware of the dangers a motorway breakdown can now pose. The first thing to say is follow the long term advice not to venture on the motorway unless your car is in the peak of condition. Check the oil and water levels before you set out and pay particular attention to the tyres. Ensure there are no bulges, especially on the inner face. A blow out could prove fatal. See that the car is properly serviced and get it regularly checked. Should the worst happen on any motorway try to keep the car moving until you can get it into the next refuge, onto the hard shoulder if there is one, or, at the very least, into the left lane. Put the hazards on and stay in the car unless you are in the left lane and can get out of the left side and over the barrier to safety leaving the empty car to it's fate. Do not get out on the right unless you can do it very quickly and safely during a gap in the traffic and do not, under any circumstances, linger on the carriageway. Whether you remain in the car or leave it, do not initially call your rescue service. Dial 999 immediately, and make the circumstances very clear. The police and/or the traffic officers will react as quickly as they can. Once you have done that you can call for rescue assistance. Keep in mind that it apparently takes an average of 17 minutes for your stationary car to be spotted on control room cameras, another three minutes to set motorway signs to warn of the danger and an average of a further 17 minutes for any help to arrive. An immediate 999 call will minimize the time taken for your plight to be recognized and action to begin. Any extended period beside a motorway will seem like an age and is something to be avoided!

At least we are now aware of the perils of breakdown on a smart motorway but remember to look after the car. Prevention of breakdowns and accidents, as far as we are able, is the best policy.

Mallard

Cars Through the Ages

Over the last few months I've been featuring different aspects of the technology fitted to modern cars and as a postscript I thought I'd compare cars from the 1970s to the present day. I'll start with a typical car from 1970 such as the Mk2 Cortina my father bought.

The petrol engine was fueled by a carburettor with a simple contact breaker ignition system with a 4 speed gearbox. Braking was by a combination of disc and drum brakes with no servo. The battery was being charged by a dynamo which could easily cope with demands on the electrical system. There was no radio, the windows were manually controlled and the rear screen had to be demisted with a cloth and the seats were vinyl. Very simple and easily maintained.

By the 1980s emission controls were starting to be introduced but the engine fuelling was still by carburettor with contact breaker ignition but some models had electronic ignition. Servo assisted brakes were more common as were radios with cassette players being fitted to the more up market models. Because of the increasing demands on the electrical system with items such as heated rear windows being fitted an alternator was needed to charge the battery. Cloth seats were fitted which were less "clingy" in summer.

In the 1990s increasing legislation on emissions meant fuel injection and catalytic converters had to be fitted. Radios or radio cassettes were standard on most models with CD players available as an option. ABS was an option and electric windows were being fitted as standard on many models. Air conditioning was also more common mainly on the more up market cars. With all the increasing complexity it was becoming more difficult for the car owner to maintain it himself.

By 2000 many of the features previously found on the up market cars found their way onto many of the more run of the mill cars. These included a radio CD player, air conditioning, electric windows and cruise control. Satellite navigation systems were becoming available, but were not being fitted as standard. ABS became compulsory in 2004 and electronic stability systems were being fitted to some cars.

Ten years on air conditioning was standard on most cars with the more sophisticated climate control available on many models. Sat nav was standard or an option on most cars and many of the systems previously fitted had been updated with additional features such as auto up/down on the windows and adaptive cruise control.

The car of 2020 is a different beast to the car from 50 years ago. It has a cleaner engine, better fuel consumption, more safety features. It's more complex with most systems having a significant amount of electronics but it's more reliable. However with the increasing number of features are drivers becoming distracted from keeping their eyes on the road ahead and relying on the technology to keep them safe?

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Car Brochure Photos

Have you ever wondered where car manufacturers take the photos for their brochures? Perhaps an exotic photoshoot on a far flung tropical island or somewhere closer to home?

Several years ago a friend of mine bought an Austin Allegro as a "fun" car (his first car was an Allegro) and also acquired a copy of the sales brochure which, as you'd expect, had photos of the cars in different locations. So which exotic locations had British Leyland chosen to feature their replacement for the old 1100 model? A building site and a church in Hagley, not far from the factory at Longbridge.

Back in 2012 I was in the area and found the church so tried to recreate the picture but I couldn't find a christening party!



Not a lot had changed around the church. Just think that baby must now be in its forties.

Reading the brochure one of the features of the higher spec models was a handbrake grip. They certainly knew how to impress customers back in the 70s!

Keep on trucking

Driving in front of, or even behind, a large lorry can be daunting. But there's no need to panic as Richard Gladman, IAM RoadSmart's head of riding and driving standards, is here to help with seven top driving tips to keep you at ease.

- When you're driving on a motorway, you'll notice many lorries with overseas number plates. Bear in mind that the driver will be sitting on the left-hand side rather than the right, so you may be difficult to see and the driver may be getting used to his lane position in the UK. Take extra care when passing and allow more space if you can.
- We've all heard the saying: "If you can see their mirrors, then they can see you." However an HGV can have up to five mirrors and the driver can only see one at a time so he may not spot you. Hold back and you will eventually be visible in their mirrors.
- Identify when there is a likelihood of the HGV changing lanes. Is there a slip road coming up with joining traffic and may force you into a lane change? Or if there is an HGV in lane two, are they likely to move back into lane one? Be accommodating by hanging back and allowing them to move into the lane they want.
- At some point we've all experienced heavy spray from an HGV in front of us. You can control this by increasing the distance between yourself and the lorry. The Highway Code suggests at least four seconds in the rain but if needed, make it more. Not only will it prevent your wipers working overtime, it will also improve your vision beyond the HGV.
- An articulated lorry will track sideways in a right-hand bend on the motorway and on a roundabout, so avoid being next to it. A good rule of thumb is to be safely in front of or safely behind, but never beside an HGV when entering a roundabout.
- If you see a queue of traffic in front of you and have an HGV behind you, introduce your brake lights early to pre-warn the driver behind and slow down gradually. This will let the HGV driver extend their braking distance and stop in plenty of time. On a motorway or dual carriageway, hazard lights can be used to show drivers behind you of any issues further in front (Highway Code rule 116).

- Despite being legally limited to 60mph, an HGV can only physically reach a maximum of 56mph on the motorway. So if you do see a HGV in the right-hand lane, give them a helping hand by slowing down and letting them get into the left lane. Allow them to pass more easily if you can.

Richard said: “As any HGV driver will tell you, they sometimes need a bit of extra space to move down the road.

“Visibility can be restricted and no amount of mirrors will allow all of the blind spots to be monitored all of the time. By applying some simple rules and sharing the road space, we can make life easier for all of us. On a roundabout they will need more than one lane so let them have it; a few seconds delay will be worth it if you prevent a crash. Walk a mile in the other man’s shoes and understand what he may need.”

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February Presentations



At our February meeting Janice presented certificates to David Wray (left) and Michael Morris (right). Here we see them with their observers Bill Jackson and George Tickle

And Finally.....

An American tourist was visiting a series of UK cathedrals.....

- He starts at Westminster Abbey, phone on the wall by the door to the vestry says: "Direct line to God - all calls £6/minute".
- Then moves to Salisbury. The similar phone there says: "Direct line to God - all calls £5/minute".
- Then Worcester. Where it is "Direct line to God - all calls £4/minute".
- Ely: "Direct line to God - all calls £3/minute".
- Liverpool: "Direct line to God - all calls £2/minute".
- Lincoln: "Direct line to God - all calls £1/minute".
- Then he reaches York: "Direct line to God - all calls free".

Curious, the tourist asks the Deacon: "Why are calls to God here free? They've been charged everywhere else I've been!"

"Local call." Came the reply.

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This Month's Teaser

Starting with a single letter can you add one letter at a time to make a sequence of seven words?

Last Month's Teaser

Last month I asked. Which is the larger unit, the imperial ton or the metric tonne? It's the Imperial ton which is equivalent to 1.016 metric tonnes.

Your Committee

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GDPR Manager	David Rockliff		

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

David Speight has taken on the role of Speaker Secretary but we still need a minutes secretary for our committee meetings. Please contact any member of the committee if you are interested this position.