



WIGAN ADVANCED MOTORISTS



NEWSLETTER No 299, September 06

A New Team – Back in March we held our Annual General Meeting, this is one of the necessary evils of running the Group and they can get monotonous. While I know everyone looks forward to hearing the chairman giving his monologue on how well the year has gone and where we expect to go next the main event is the selection of the Officers who will be responsible for looking after the Groups interest, together with the committee members (who's job is to keep the Officers in check !). So....who's who ?



Chairman and Group Contact
Gary Whittaker



Honorary Life
Vice-President
Alf Birtle



Vice-chair and Car Co-ordinator
John Bolger

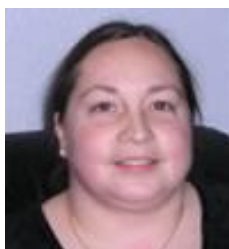


Secretary
Mike Smalley

Wigan Group Committee 06/07
Skill with Responsibility



Motorcycle Co-ordinator
Karen Lawrinson



Treasurer
Catherine Parry



Barry Grundy



Simon Poole

Charmin' Garmin

For this summers Holiday my wife and I had planned a visit to Wales (the country not the animals !). The weekend before setting off I had a rush of blood to the head and bought a sat-nav, the Garmin StreetPilot i3 which was on offer at Maplin Electronic for £129.99. Having used it for the week I can't imagine how I managed without one. Let me explain:



We set off for the hotel we had booked, located in the national park about 6 miles from Fishguard (on the south west tip of Wales), planning to call at Ross-on Wye (for the book shops). We headed down the M6 only to get caught in an backlog of traffic from an over-turned lorry at Junction 15. Having waited 3 hours till the police let us escape to the North bound carriageway through a section of dismantled central reservation Armco I let our little sat nav compute a diversion through mid-Wales. Ok I accept that this may not seem so difficult but the way it took us through the winding unmarked lanes of the National park right to the entrance of the hotel.....

The rest of the week was similar, not having to worry about directions to the particular tourist traps we wanted to find, being able to select local 'attractions' or eating places which were listed and the ability to call up the nearest garage when we were in the wilds of Wales and running short of fuel was brilliant. The unit we bought may not have all the 'bells-and-whistles' which are on more expensive models but it found short-cuts through housing estates with the ease of a local !

From a 'advanced' driving point of view, even with the 'navigation' element switched off, when driving along unknown country roads it was good to have advanced 'sight' of merging roads and be pre-warned of how sharp an approaching bend may become. Also being aware of potential 'black spots', so nice of the local authorities to mark them with cameras, (and even better to be given advanced warning by the sat nav).

Sunday Morning Motorcycle run-out

1st October 2006

This will be the last of our planned '**1st (Sunday) of-the-month ride-outs**', for this year. The destination will be a surprise as before; so for you 'summer bikers' come along for a last airing before putting your machine away for the Winter.

Meeting at 09:30 at the Plough & Harrow, Shevington.

Remember: Four wheels move the body. Two wheels move the soul

Food for thought

New research claims that eating while driving can be as potentially risky as using a hand held mobile phone at the wheel. At first glance, this seems odd. Granted, many drivers are at least aware of the problems associated with mobile phones while driving, even if they continue to ignore them. But surely a natural, everyday act such as eating an apple doesn't need to be potentially risky – or does it?

Brunel University put 26 participants in a simulator on an urban route, once without eating and once while eating from a bag of wrapped sweets or drinking water. The simulator would show a pedestrian suddenly stepping into the road and then measure the drivers' responses. Although participants tended to slow down while unwrapping the sweet or raising the bottle, researchers found that they were still twice as likely to hit the pedestrian.

It is probably using the brain to do something else as well as driving that causes the difficulty: tipping the bottle, trying to see around it and not spilling the contents is a complex set of judgements adding to the driver's workload.

There is of course no legislation specifically preventing eating or drinking while driving. Yet many cars these days come equipped with cup-holders right by the driver's seat, a design presumably to make it easier to drink while driving.

Drinking a hot beverage is far worse, when you think about it. A spill that burns causes pain and could produce an involuntary action by the driver. There have been high profile cases of police prosecutions of drivers sipping from bottles or eating apples.

The IAM advice is to avoid drinking or eating while you are driving as both are needless distractions. On a long journey, it is good to take a break after two hours and you can use that rest to have a drink. The Highway Code also advises against distractions such as eating or drinking.

But as ever, common sense is the key: putting a mint in your mouth before you start driving, for example, is unlikely to cause a potential problem. But leaning over to find a packet of mints buried somewhere in your glove box, then attempting to unwrap them with one hand is quite a different (and a potentially dangerous) scenario.

(Extracted from IAM Driving Tip 33,
for more tips visit , www.iam.org.uk)

Did you know: Torches are tubular metal containers kept in the boot of your car for the purpose of storing dead batteries.

Wigan Advanced Motorists can offer Car, Motorcycle, minibus and commercial vehicle courses.

We meet at ***The Plough and Harrow, Shevington Lane, Shevington*** on a Sunday morning. We congregate in the car park at around 09:30 for Motorbikes and 09:45 for cars.

From the South: Leave the M6 at Junction 26 (M58) and at the Orrell exit turn left. At the traffic lights turn right for Shevington, the pub is a couple of miles on the left.

From the North: Leave the M6 at junction 27(Standish, Wigan) and turn left up a dual carriageway towards Standish. At the end, turn left for Shevington, the pub is a couple of miles on the right.

Car parking is available at the rear of the building and there is also a public car park opposite.

Contact Details: Tel: 07071 226693, E-Mail: wigan5019@hotmail.com
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