



WIGAN ADVANCED MOTORISTS

November 2006 Issue 301

Registered Charity No. 518387

Dear all,

Welcome to the November edition of the Group Newsletter.

In this edition I've included information regarding the IAMs latest initiative which is the targeting of young drivers for the 'Skill for Life' advanced driving programme.

Government figures show a 12% rise in 16-19 years drivers/passengers killed in 2004, whilst overall deaths fell by 8%. A very strong message was delivered at the recent IAM National Conference - overall deaths on our roads are dropping, however, the number of young deaths has increased. The IAM, through it's Groups, is actively trying to recruit young drivers onto the advanced driving programme - more on next page.

Gary has asked that all members be reminded that yearly subscriptions will be due shortly - enclosed document with your Newsletter. Also, please consider completing the 'Gift Aid' declaration also provided.



Alf, Gary, and I recently attended the above event held at Alton Towers, Cheshire.

The event was well attended with over 350 IAM members there on the day. The event included presentations by several guest speakers, with a number of awards being presented to individuals, and IAM Groups, for contributions to road safety, these being handed over by the IAM President, Nigel Mansell OBE. Nigel also addressed the conference which was very well received, and during lunch, members were able to meet Nigel and briefly talk about the contributions being made towards road safety by those present.

As mentioned earlier, one of the main themes for the day was the IAMs latest initiative to recruit young drivers onto the 'Skill for Life' programme. Members were presented with current facts and figures with regard to those drivers most likely to be involved in road accidents, as follows:

The AA Motoring Trust

Young men 17 - 20 years between 2am and 5 am - risk is 17 times higher than all male drivers. 225 killed/seriously injured. (At 11 in a team - wipes out the Premier League every two years).

So why all the fuss?

AAMT - 1 in 5 drivers has a crash in their first year of driving

DfT - typical crash is single vehicle, at weekend, DfT- 74% of ALL accidental deaths of 15 -19 years olds are crashes

Crashes often involve evening/overnight, single carriageway, mainly at bends, involving overtaking, right turn or questionable speed incidents

Wigan Advanced Motorists wholeheartedly embraces the IAMs drive towards young driver training – if you know someone that may be interested in the 'Skill for Life' programme, please pass the Group's contact details to them. **It may help to save a life!**

Mother of girl killed by unlicensed thug driver calls for change in law

FOR MARGARET'S SAKE, ACT NOW ON TEENAGE DRIVERS

By Gordon Rayner

A MOTHER whose daughter was killed by a speeding teenager was given hope yesterday that the tragedy might not have been in vain.

A powerful coalition of insurers and motoring organisations backed a raft of

Excity Mail COMMENT
Raising the driving age could cut annual road deaths by as many as 1,000. Think how much suffering would be spared.
SEE PAGE 14

restrictions on young drivers which could save 1,000 lives each year.

The news came after Elizabeth Davidson's recollections of her 20-year-old daughter Margaret, a junior doctor, hurried a judge to leave last week.

Yesterday she read out the full text of her court statement in Brixton's Youth Court, leaving many listeners sobbing.

Mrs Davidson is demanding tougher penalties for young drivers after Margaret's 18-year-old killer was sentenced to only four years.

Drivers aged under 24 kill or seriously injure about 3,000 people each year – almost 50 per cent of the total deaths and injuries, despite accounting for only 10 per cent of drivers. In

Turn to Page 2

My daughter's killer had a lethal weapon, but because that weapon was a car it doesn't seem to count



Junior doctor Margaret Davidson, victim of a speeding teenage yob

Wigan Road Safety Forum

As a member of a road safety group I have recently been invited to join and contribute to the above. This is part of a government drive to reduce all road casualty figures both nationally and regionally.

These reductions will be addressed through the 3 main areas of: Education, Enforcement and Engineering.

One of the Forums first projects is to be a 'Mock Crash' Event: where we will reconstruct a 2 vehicle crash and give a public demonstration of how the emergency services attend and deal with the injured. This will involve vehicles from a local scrap yard and students from Wigan and Leigh College acting as casualties. The enactment will include the use of cutting equipment etc to extract the injured from the vehicles.

The first of these events is to be held in Leigh at the Town Hall Square on Friday 17th November at 12.30.

Our second 'Mock Crash' will involve, due to limited space, a car and a motorbike and will be held in Wigan on Saturday 9th December at Marsden Street, which is at the rear of BHS.

If these events prove to be successful in highlighting the benefits of safer driving they may well be repeated next year.

If any member can offer some help during either of these events to be on hand to give out leaflets and information about our Advanced Driving courses they would be most welcome. Please contact me via the Group Contact number of 07071 226693 if you are able to help in this way.

It is hoped that being visible at these two events we may be able to raise our profile and enroll more members to the IAM.

Gary Whittaker

Mobile phones - and the Law

Did you know?

It's now illegal to use a hand-held mobile phone when you're driving, even when you're stopped at traffic lights or in a queue of traffic. You may be fined £30. This can be increased to a maximum of £1000 (£2,500 for drivers of Lorries, buses and coaches) if the matter goes to court.

This includes making or receiving calls, pictures, and text messaging or accessing the Internet. You must pull over to a safe location. Risk using a hand-held mobile phone when driving and you risk a fine.

You can also be prosecuted for using a hands-free mobile phone if you fail to have proper control of your vehicle.

Drive carelessly or dangerously when using any phone and the penalties can include disqualification, a large fine, and up to two years imprisonment.

If you are an employer, you may also be prosecuted if you require your employees to use a hand-held mobile phone when driving. It is an offence to cause or permit the use of a hand-held mobile phone when driving. It is also an offence to cause or permit a driver not to have proper control of a vehicle.

The only exception to the rule is when you need to call 999.

The [Annual Group Dinner](#) is now likely to take place in early January 2007, venue to be finalised. Details will be included in the December Newsletter - last years event at the Priory Wood, Orrell, was well received and it's looking favourite for our next evening together - now called 'The Mount'.

Are you 'pouring fuel down the drain'?

Motorists are effectively pouring gallons of fuel down the drain through inefficient driving.

Research released by the Energy Saving Trust reveals that over half (54 per cent) of drivers fail to turn the engine off when in stationary traffic, needlessly burning fuel. We also carry excess luggage in the boot and rev the engine when stationary.

Energy Saving Trust's handy eco-driving tips:

- Check your revs – next time you change up a gear, look at your rev counter. If you're driving efficiently, you should be changing up at no more than 2,500rpm in a petrol car and 2,000rpm in a diesel
- How's your speed? – above 60mph, the amount of fuel you use goes up considerably. For example, driving at 70mph instead of 50mph uses up around 25-30 per cent more fuel
- Switch it off – if you're stuck in a traffic jam, at a railway crossing or waiting for someone for more than two minutes, turn your engine off. You'll save money and cut down damage to the environment
- Drive off from cold – modern cars are designed to be driven off straight away. Waiting for the engine to 'warm up' just wastes fuel, not to mention your time and produces harmful CO2 emissions and air pollution
- Check your tyre pressure – not only are under-inflated tyres dangerous, they also increase the amount of fuel you use. Check your tyres at least once a month – the Highway Code recommends a weekly check
- Travel light – accessories such as roof racks, bike carriers and roof boxes significantly affect your car's aerodynamics and reduce your fuel efficiency. For example, driving at 75mph with a roof rack will use around 20 per cent more fuel

What about Older Drivers?

Older drivers have more experience. They're also likely to be more tolerant and confident too, which can mean they're safer on the road than other age groups. But sight, hearing, and judgement may not be as sharp as it once was, and driving is more complex and demanding than it used to be, with more traffic on the roads. So, older drivers need to take even greater care, and adjust driving habits to compensate for any deterioration in your eyesight or judgement. A simple adaptation to your car may help if you have mobility problems.

Medical conditions

You must notify the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) of the onset or worsening of a medical condition that could affect your ability to drive safely, including heart problems, epilepsy and diabetes. If you are on prescribed medication, ask your doctor if it could affect your driving.

Your eyesight

It's illegal to drive if you can't read a number plate from 20.5m (67 feet) away. Have your eyes tested regularly, as changes in your eyesight can happen slowly and without you realising it.

Refresh your skills

Even experienced drivers can slip into bad habits, so it's a good idea to refresh your knowledge from time to time and keep up-to-date with changes in the law.

Why not think about a 'Drive Check-up'?

Contact the Group, meet old and new friends, and bring those driving skills up-to-date.

Wigan Advanced Motorists can offer:

Car, Motorcycle, Minibus, and Commercial Vehicle courses.

We meet at the Plough and Harrow, Shevington each Sunday morning. Congregate in the car park at around 09:30am for Motorcycles and 09:45am for cars.

Please try to arrive on time as we may be out and about by 10:00am.

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 the dual carriageway towards Standish. At the end, turn right 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 on the other side of the road opposite the pub.

Contact details:

Tel: 07071 226693

www.wiganadvancedmotorists.org.uk

Wigan Advanced Motorists Group looks forward to meeting you.