

Sefton Advanced Motorists

Issue: 271

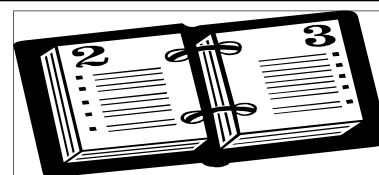
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Forthcoming Attractions



Monday, 19th March; Gladys Armstrong will be presenting "Fun and Frustrations of Family History".

Monday, 16th April: a Southport resident, Rachael Kilpatrick, will be telling us about the Work of a Forensic Scientist. (postponed from January)

Monday, 14th May; New Associates Meeting marking the start of another course.

Monday, 21st May; Sefton Advanced Motorists **Annual General Meeting.** Our newly elected Divisional Council Member (DCM) **Bob Rowles** will be coming along and also taking the opportunity of speaking.

Please make a note of these events in your diary and try to come along and support our guest speakers who give up their free time to come and speak to us. All meetings are at the Royal Clifton Hotel, Southport, unless otherwise stated, and start at 8 pm.



Chairman Writes

Hello again,

Advance notice of an event in August. We have booked the I.A.M. Mobile Display Unit into Woodvale Show this summer, so we will be looking for volunteers to man it during the first weekend in August. More details nearer the time.

As they say on Wogan's breakfast show "Is it ME" or is the standard of Motorway driving getting worse than ever. The amount of centre lane hogs, people swerving across lanes, and a determination not to use lane one, seems to have reached epidemic proportions, yet if the figures produced are right more of us spend longer driving on motorways than ever before. You would think this would improve the driving standards. Perhaps people are getting indifferent to motorways where as before they approached them with trepidation. So, is the answer to improve the driving on Motorways to scare the hell out of them with some graphic advertising as they do for Drink Driving? I don't know; or could they make an advanced driving test compulsory? (Only a Thought!!!!!!!)

As March roles on Spring gets nearer and the better weather is close so it's time to talk motorcycling.

The recent advertising for "Think Bike" makes you sit up and think when the add is showing and as a motorcyclist I am grateful for it. But does it do any good?

Personally I am not convinced. The money involved is huge. Could it be better spent elsewhere? On Motorcycle Safety of course.

Will a motorist think next time they pull up at a junction I remember that add last night. I must look again and check? Some of course will look again, but I put it to you that that will be the better driver anyway; not the ones the add was aimed at.

The ones the add works on will have forgotten it by next week and they will need to run the add for ever.

The best contribution anyone could make to motorcycle safety would be to improve the overall driving standard of the everyday driver and rider. Not an easy task but, again, my thoughts from the first paragraph apply. Raise the standard of training for all.

Alan Filson

**News Release
From Sefton Advanced Motorists**

Launch of Spring “Skill for Life” Programme

Sefton Advanced motorists will soon be launching their Spring “Skill for Life “ Programme. To launch their Spring programme Sefton Advanced Motorists will be holding a number of Information and driving assessment sessions. Held in local car parks throughout Sefton during April, drivers will be able to come along in their own car and talk to the experts to learn more about the Programme. But, more importantly, go out with an advanced driving Observer in their own car for a short assessment of their driving skills.

The “Skill for Life” Programme includes theory and on road coaching by IAM qualified advanced driving observers and works towards taking the Advanced Driving Test. The Programme usually takes about three months.

With the right preparation advanced driving is not as difficult as many people suppose and is within the reach of most drivers. But, as with any form of further education and skills training, it's up to the individual to get the most from the Programme.

Drivers who have qualified as full IAM members have been shown to be 70 per cent less likely to be involved in collisions and less likely to incur penalty points for bad driving.

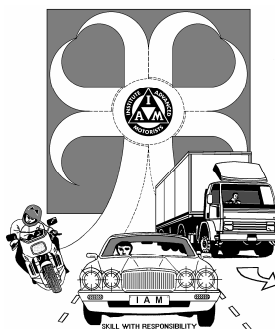
So, if you care about your driving skills and are interested in joining one of these sessions in April then please call any of the numbers listed below.

Alan Filson 01704 570874

Dave Paton 01704 879950

Ray Woods 01704 538595

Ends



**Further details from
Publicity Officer
Dave Roscoe 0151 707 9137
dave.w.roscoe@talk21.com**

Driving tip for February 2007.

Tailgating.

Drivers who “tailgate” – drive too close to the car in front – are a menace. They probably don’t realise how intimidating their habit is. The most benign interpretation is that they are simply trying to indicate to the driver in front that they want to get past. That’s all very well, if the person in front has somewhere to go – but that isn’t always possible. Other lanes may be busy too, and it isn’t always an option to remove yourself instantly from the path of the tailgater.

Yet statistics tell us the single most common crash in the UK is the classic rear end shunt. So what can we do to avoid it?

The easiest thing to do is remove ourselves from the problem. Aim to change lanes on the motorway or dual carriageway, but only when it is safe to do so. Clearly indicate your intention to pull over. That way you can let the tailgater get past you, even if he or she is driving too fast for the conditions and/or breaking the speed limit.

Don’t be tempted to impose the speed limit on somebody who is clearly hell bent on breaking it.

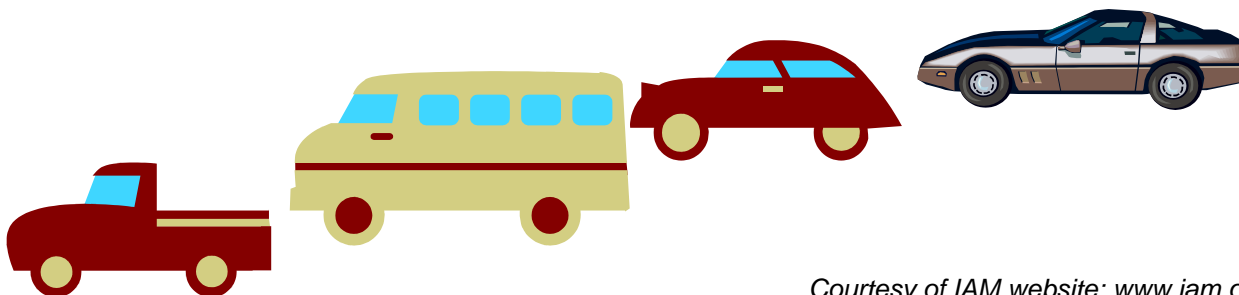
And if you choose not to let the tailgater past, there is a danger that he will try to “undertake” you, posing an additional risk for other road users.

We are often asked what can you do if you’re being tailgated in a 30 mph zone on a single carriageway?

Pulling over here may not be practical either. But do not be intimidated into speeding up just because somebody is right on your back bumper. Instead, create an additional stopping distance between you and the vehicle in front so that you when you do brake, you can do so smoothly.

Think of yourself as adding a little “buffer” zone for the tailgater, whether he appreciates it or not.

When the time comes to brake, you can do so gently, giving a clear signal of your intention via your stop lights. The more time your stop lights are on, the more time the tailgater has to register that and pull back.



Courtesy of IAM website; www.iam.org.uk

Bells v. Horns

There is a book on a shelf at home that I inherited from my late parents, and to which I turn from time to time for relaxation, curiosity and sometimes (like know) for reference. It is the Lancashire Village Book published in 1990 and compiled from notes and illustrations sent in to the Lancashire Federation of Women's Institutes.



The entry for Halsall includes reference to the parish church of St Cuthbert described as one of the oldest and most beautiful in the Liverpool Diocese, dating back to the 12th century. However, not all residents of this Lancashire village appreciate everything about the church as you may have noticed in the local press recently. A minority of the 2,000, or so, occupants of the village apparently object to the sound of the bells. Are they bats? Surely, the sound of church bells is one of the essential ingredients of English village life!

Well, battle lines have been drawn because there is now a sign by the church urging motorists to sound their horns to show their solidarity with the supporters of the bells and who dearly want to retain them. I can see a distinctly uncivil war breaking out, for not only will the peace of Halsall be "shattered" by the tolling of the bells but they may be drowned out by the blaring of car horns hooting their approval of the status quo!!

I pass through Halsall often when I drive to my work in Liverpool and whilst my heart shouts at me to press the horn button my head (and IAM training) tells me to keep quiet.

Some members may remember something else about noise in the metropolis of Halsall and involved a bridge over the Leeds and Liverpool Canal. Did you know that the first sod to be cut in its construction this side of the Pennines was at Halsall Hill? No, neither did I, but I digress. Well, about ten years ago, soon after I joined Sefton Group, our then chairman became involved in a debate over the consideration of sounding car horns on the approach to the humped back bridges crossing the canal. Residents objected to motorists disturbing the peace and quiet of the village!!

Does this mean that there is going to be a third faction entering the battle of Halsall; i.e those objecting to those urging the sounding of car horns to object against the objectors to the sounding of the church bells?

So, when is it appropriate to sound your horn in Halsall, then? I turn to my bookshelf again and bring down another good reference, Roadcraft. Page 26 says "sound your horn whenever you think another road user could benefit. The purpose of the horn is to inform others that you are approaching and give them time to react. It gives no right to proceed, and should never be used as a rebuke." Chapter 6 of Roadcraft, concerning Driver's Signals, gives some examples of circumstances where it could be beneficial to use the horn. E.g. where the view is very limited such as a blind bend or hump back bridge (no mention of parish churches, though).

Well, that seems to clear the matter up, then. Unless I could find an old fire engine with one of those very noisy bells!

IAM and AA Motoring Trust combine to form new road safety organisation

The IAM Motoring Trust is a new, independent road safety organisation that will be the research and advocacy arm of the Institute of Advanced Motorists (IAM). The IAM Motoring Trust is taking forward the work of the AA Motoring Trust, which ceased operating on 31 December 2006. As part of the IAM charity, the IAM Motoring Trust will be funding an ambitious five-year programme of safety and transport policy research aimed at protecting and promoting the interests of all road users.

The IAM Motoring Trust intends to contribute vigorously to the national transport policy debate and to be a genuinely independent voice for responsible motoring, motorcycling and the safety needs of all road users. Contact details for the IAM Motoring Trust team are:

Bert Morris – Director	T: 020 8996 9771
Neil Greig – Assistant Director and Head of Transport Policy	T: 020 8996 9722
Kevin Delaney – Head of Road Safety	T: 020 8996 9774
Tim Shallcross – Head of Technical Policy and Advice and Head of Policy, Wales	T: 020 8996 9773
Peter Rodger – IAM Chief Examiner and Adviser, Driving Behaviour	T: 020 8996 9620
Barry Walsh – Media Relations, IAM Motoring Trust	T: 020 8996 9776
Vince Yearley – Head of Media, IAM	T: 020 8996 9625

The IAM's remit to the IAM Motoring Trust is to:

- ***undertake a programme of transport and road safety research***
- ***promote practical evidence-based policies that will improve the safety of all road users***
- ***be an effective advocate for safer roads, safer drivers and safer vehicles***
- ***encourage responsible motoring and motorcycling through training and education***

The UK has an impressive road safety record, thanks to the individual and collective efforts of central and local government, research bodies, motor manufacturers, and road safety groups such as the IAM. However, there is much more to do, as around 10 people die and 100 are seriously injured daily on our roads. The IAM Motoring Trust's focus is on helping to achieve and go beyond the Government's 2010 casualty-reduction target - 40 per cent reduction in deaths and serious injuries, and the more ambitious target of 50 per cent fewer child casualties.

The IAM Motoring Trust's research programme will be steered by a Research Advisory Board of experienced road safety researchers, academics, and practitioners that will ensure that the focus stays on turning research into practical road safety action.

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GROUP No. 5143

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