



Sussex Advanced Drivers – Newsletter

June 2025

A Word from the Editor (Margret Preece)

Thank you all for renewing your membership recently, it is people like you who help us train more advanced drivers and with that – hopefully – make our roads a safer place. Thanks in a big part to our website we have a steady trickle of new people joining the Group, though sadly not all will stay once they have passed the Advanced Driving Test.

It would be really good if existing members talked to friends, neighbours, colleagues etc and told them about the benefits of advanced driving. Even in today's heavy traffic they will feel more in control and therefore enjoy their driving more. And our experienced and highly trained tutors will guide them to achieve that.

On the social side we have meetings in Scaynes Hill with a speaker, monthly get-togethers at Starbucks Hickstead (just off A2300) where we all go driving with different tutors etc, and there is the odd special event like cross country driving or go-karting.

All members and associates are invited to these events, the more the merrier.

All this needs organizing and people to help; I have been part of this for many years now and can only recommend it, it is your chance to give something back without it being too arduous. As always we need volunteers to come on the committee to see what it is all about and to help with advice. Fresh opinions are always very welcome.

Will you come and join us?

For now all the best and happy driving.

Margret
(also Membership Secretary)

And next year we will need a new chairman – any volunteers?

From our Chairman. (Paul Purdy)

Welcome to our June newsletter, I can't believe we are six months into the year already.

Duncan is arranging another Tutor Day at Hickstead this month, so keep an eye on the web page for the time and date. Don't forget this is open to all members and associates, anyone who would like to update their own skills. Maybe some of you might be interested in becoming a tutor yourself. We look forward to seeing you there. It's also a good opportunity to have a cup of tea and a natter.

Kevin has arranged a go-karting event which would be a good excuse to test your IPSCA skills. Don't forget the over shoulder checks though.

I have just got back from a holiday in Italy. It appears you don't need a highway code there, just a loud horn. I've got to hand it to the coach drivers, they did a brilliant job of anticipation and giving space, very entertaining.

Enjoy your driving and keep safe

Driving in a Foreign Country. (Duncan Hauser)

Many of us have taken our cars across the channel or hired a car while on holiday or working in another country, and, if we have fully incorporated the principles of advanced driving as our normal style, it is clear that all the effort is worth it, and will apply wherever we are. For example, the essence of the system of car control is to create space and time for us to choose a safe decision – even if the environment is unfamiliar.

I recently hired a car in Crete. The first adjustment that I needed to make was to understand the laws governing the roads there. The speed limits are different from ours (partly because they are in Km per hour), and they are sometimes applied differently. The hire car I was driving had a display which indicated the speed limit in force for the stretch of road that I was on, BUT, it often changed without the presence of a sign by the side of the road. The safe limit within their "National Speed Limit" of 90 Km per hour is fairly obvious, though, and it is possible to judge the general rules by observing the flow of traffic.

And this is a critical observation, because it is not common to find a detailed set of rules (as opposed to laws) such as The Highway Code here. The tourist cars were often obvious because they would studiously adhere to the rules familiar to them. Overtaking is a common event outside of any urban environment (local drivers are very cautious in towns, with parking, pedestrians and animals creating natural traffic calming features), so many local road users will allow faster vehicles past by crossing the solid line on the nearside. Most of the roads are wide enough to accommodate this and always, the practice is used with consideration of an uninterrupted view.

There are many little rules in different cultures, so you may hear horns tooting at you in some places, but if you observe the local habits, it can make your driving easier. Consideration of other road users is an asset and will enhance observation; picking out those unpredictable behaviours that are best avoided. Wherever you drive, become familiar with the car and the environment, apply the “best practice” as laid out in “Roadcraft”, and, most of all, enjoy yourself.

Older Drivers Forum. (Graham Lawrence and Margret Preece)

Last month one of our members (Graham Lawrence) drew my attention to the Older Drivers Forum; their motto is

‘Keeping Older Drivers on the Road Safely, for Longer’.

Graham says:

‘Following recent coverage on BBC news I looked up the Older Drivers Forum and joined their mailing list. The Forum’s Chair, Rob Heard, who was interviewed on the news, is a driving consultant and I think is IAM-qualified.

I thought that the Forum’s articles and work generally may be of interest for our group newsletter, just as you feature other organisations concerned with driving. The BBC news coverage concerned eyesight tests for older drivers may be a good example of an issue that’s of interest to members.’

Following Graham’s suggestion I subscribed to their newsletter, they have interesting articles, videos and zoom sessions. (www.olderdriversforum.com)

‘Keeping Older Drivers on the Road Safely, Longer’ – Eyesight

I very much agree with that, we are all getting older but being able to drive helps us maintain our independence. One very important aspect is eyesight (read a numberplate from a distance of 20 metres etc).

The Older Drivers Forum raises a concern – in the UK your eyesight is tested when you pass the basic driving test and not again until you are 70 (when you declare yourself that your eyesight is good; and after that every 3 years at licence renewal).

It makes me think back to a tale a retired police officer told me: when on duty he stopped a car because its course was rather wavy; he asked the driver to get out and read a number plate at 20 meters – no good, at 10 meters – no good, at 5 meters – no good. The driver needed to stand in front of it to be able to read the number plate. It transpired that his wife who did not have a driving licence would sit next to him and tell him about traffic ahead and what to do. Needless to say, he lost his licence, it was just fortunate that he did not kill or injure anybody.

Just recently there have been traffic accidents where the driver’s eyesight was inadequate, and several people were killed. To make it worse, apparently the drivers knew that their sight was failing How can they live with that knowledge?

Can't Leave it Alone. (Graham Feest Newsletter)

A new study has revealed that the majority of drivers in the UK are unable to drive without touching their mobile device when behind the wheel.

The report from IMS, a global authority in telematics and connected motor insurance technology, has highlighted the problem of mobile phones being used while driving. In fact, nine out of ten drivers struggle to complete a journey without being distracted by their phones. This is despite the risk of £200 fines, six penalty points, and the increasing use of advanced roadside cameras to detect mobile phone use by drivers.

There have been a series of new artificial intelligence cameras being used to catch drivers illegally using their mobile phones. The research shows that only 10% of motorists manage to drive from start to finish without interacting with their device. The data is based on survey results from 500,000 drivers over the past year, originally shared exclusively with This is Money.

Government data suggested that last year, mobile phone use was a contributing factor in 23 road fatalities. However, official statistics also show that 'distraction or impairment' was the third most common cause of fatal crashes, playing a role in 34.9% of deadly incidents.

It is also reported that the number of young drivers illegally using phones behind the wheel is increasing rapidly

Car Features Wish List. (RAC)

I recently bought a car to replace my old Skoda and I was amazed at the technology now available. And then I found this article to show me what else I could have had:

These days, cars come with kit that make every part of driving easier – from helping you reverse safely to warming your hands up on a winter's morning. Here's our guide to the car tech you don't want to miss out on.

Built-in car massage seats

What are built-in car massage seats?

Adding that extra touch of indulgence to your everyday commute, car seats with built-in massage features use pulsing motions in the seat for a touch of relaxation.

Why do I need built-in car massage seats?

Sure, you could argue that no-one needs massage seats in their car, but have you tried one yet?

If you spend a lot of time on the road, be it criss-crossing the UK or even venturing further afield, you'll definitely appreciate the extra support and relaxation offered by a seat that gives your sore back some relief.

Some massage seats are so advanced you can even choose from a variety of massage styles – just remember to keep your focus solely on the road if you're behind the wheel, regardless how relaxing the treatment you're getting is!

Car head-up display

What is a car head-up display?

Turn on a head-up display (HUD) and you'll feel part-gamer part-fighter pilot as essential information like speed limits and fuel levels are beamed up onto the windscreen.

Why do I need an automotive head-up display?

The display can show your speed, fuel level and even what you can expect from the road ahead, letting you prepare in advance, improving the safety of yourself and other road users.

Switching on the HUD can significantly reduce the distance you have to look to check on your speed, fuel level or navigation, which can also help you avoid any distractions and keep your eyes on the road for longer.

Who knows? In the near future, augmented reality elements might be shown on the HUD, highlighting your route ahead, or drawing your attention to potential hazards.

Cooled seats

What are cooled seats?

Cooled seats (also known as air-conditioned seats) are exactly what you'd expect – car seats that keep you cool by either having aircon elements or small fans installed within them to keep the air around you moving.

Why do I need cooled seats?

If you're the type of driver who runs hot – especially in the summer months – cooled seats could help you keep your calm behind the wheel, supplementing your aircon system with focused air directed through your seat.

As well as being a welcome relief on those sticky days, some also argue cooled seats are more efficient than traditional aircon systems as they cool the occupants down directly, instead of trying to cool the entire cabin.

Car autopilot

What is car autopilot?

Think switching on autopilot is only something you can do if you're flying a plane? Think again. A semi-autonomous autopilot feature is now a cutting-edge tech option on land-friendly vehicles, too.

Why do I need autopilot?

Autopilot systems – like the one available in certain Tesla models – use multiple ultrasonic sensors around the car to constantly monitor its surroundings, reportedly making motorway driving much safer.

The name is slightly misleading, as legally drivers must retain control at all times. For now, it's more of an advanced cruise control – however, should the law change these cars are equipped to provide autonomous driving.

Blind-spot monitoring

What is blind-spot monitoring?

Blind-spot monitoring systems let you know if there's anything in your blind spots – such as other vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians – to keep you and other road users safe.

Why do I need blind-spot monitoring?

They're called blind-spots for a reason, and failing to spot something or someone when manoeuvring can be extremely dangerous. Monitoring the side and back of your car, this system alerts you with sounds, lights or vibrations if anything gets too close.

As helpful as they are, blind-spot monitoring systems shouldn't stop you from taking your normal safety procedures when making manoeuvres on the roads – so look at it as an extra layer of safety, rather than something to rely on.

Heated steering wheel

What is a heated steering wheel?

A heated steering wheel is exactly what it sounds like – a system that warms up your steering wheel when it gets too cold to grip.

Why do I need a heated steering wheel?

If you've ever got into your car on a frosty winter morning and tried to drive away, you'll know just how cold your steering wheel can get when the temperature outside drops below zero.

A heated steering wheel takes away the need for gloves or the danger of getting frostbite on the M60 by warming up your steering wheel until it's a comfortable temperature to use safely.

Hands-free boot opening

What is hands-free boot opening?

Unsurprisingly, a hands-free boot opening device (sometimes referred to as a hands-free tailgate) uses sensors to let you open the boot without using your hands.

Why do I need hands-free boot opening?

If you've ever struggled up to your car with boxes or shopping bags, you'll know just how frustrating it can be to try and open your boot. This system takes that stress away by letting you open it hands-free.

The system works by your car sensing the proximity of your car key fob, meaning you can then open it by simply waving your foot underneath the rear bumper (or using another sensor), which pops open your boot.

Automatic parking assist

What is automatic parking assist?

Ever wanted to make parking a little easier? Through a system of well-placed sensors located around your car, automatic parking assist alerts drivers to anything they may hit or scrape against while trying to park up.

Why do I need automatic parking assist?

Parking can be stressful, whether it's on the street outside your home or down the local supermarket car park, but automatic parking assist makes things easier by alerting you with sounds or lights when you're getting too close for comfort.

More advanced models take things a step further, and are even able to steer you in and out of a tight space – both bay and parallel parking – but remember the system isn't fool-proof so you'll need to maintain control throughout the move.

Parking cameras

What are parking cameras?

Parking cameras – also known as reversing cameras – are essentially video cameras that beam a live stream of the view from the back of your vehicle directly onto a screen on your dashboard.

Why do I need parking cameras?

Parking can be a hassle at the best of times but trying to work out what's behind you when reversing into a space can be downright tricky. A parking camera takes a lot of the stress out of it by showing you what's back there.

Some cameras will simply show you a view from the back, while others use a series of cameras to display your vehicle from above, giving you a full, 360-degree shot of your car – and anything you might need to avoid on the road.

Adaptive cruise control

What is adaptive cruise control?

Adaptive cruise control (ACC – also called autonomous cruise control) is an intelligent form of traditional cruise control that allows vehicles to speed up and slow down automatically in response to the conditions of the road ahead.

Why do I need adaptive cruise control?

If you seem to spend your entire life sitting in slow-moving traffic, ACC could make things a whole lot easier as it lets you set your desired speed and a distance you wish to maintain between you and the car in front.

By using either a laser or radar system, the ACC keeps you safe by constantly scanning the road ahead, slowing down when the car in front slows or alerting you to apply the brakes, which overrides the ACC system.

What feature is a must for your next new car? Are there any bits of exciting tech we didn't mention? Let us know in the comments below.

We don't Seem very Keen on Using ADAS. (Graham Feest Newsletter)

A third (33%) of drivers never use potentially lifesaving in-vehicle assistance aids when they are behind the wheel according to research by IAM RoadSmart.

The findings were based on a survey of 2,008 drivers for the 2024 Road Safety Report.

Out of six of the most prominent driving assistance aids in modern vehicles – including collision warnings and cruise control – and among those whose vehicles have these technologies, only a quarter (25%) say they regularly or often use them.

In contrast, one in five (19%) rarely use these aids or have used them only once. A third (33%) say they never use the technology. Just over a fifth of drivers (22%) state their vehicle does not have the technologies, but this varies depending on individual assistance features. Speed warnings on the dashboard is the most frequently enabled aid with 28% regularly using this followed by cruise control with 27% often using this technology. However, cruise control (as well as adaptive cruise control) also has the highest proportion of people never using them (34%) despite the vehicle having this system. Just 23% of drivers regularly use collision warning assistance, with more drivers (25%) saying their vehicle does not have it installed.

There are significant differences in frequency of use depending on age and gender. Drivers aged 17- 34 are around twice as likely to use driver assistance systems compared to someone aged 70 or over, while their use is also higher among male drivers.

Nicholas Lyes, IAM RoadSmart director of policy and standards, said: "It's ironic that so many rely on technology on a day-to-day basis, yet within their vehicles drivers at best seem ambivalent about using technology systems that could save their lives if these were engaged.

Part of the issue is likely to be a lack of understanding of how each of these systems can benefit them and indeed how to activate them.

Many might switch off certain systems because the alarm might be irritating or because they don't like the feel of the steering wheel auto-correcting to keep the vehicle in a lane.

Cars v Cyclists. (Graham Feest Newsletter)

According to a new survey of 2,000 UK motorists by Scrap Car Comparison, most drivers remain unaware of basic Highway Code rules around cyclists with widespread misunderstanding still putting vulnerable road users at risk more than three years after key changes were introduced. The poll found that the majority incorrectly believe cyclists must ride single file, keep close to the kerb, and use cycle lanes. One in three respondents said cyclists should not have equal rights on the road.

The Highway Code was updated in January 2022 to strengthen protections for vulnerable road users, including cyclists. Among the most significant changes were the introduction of a new road user hierarchy and guidance for cyclists to ride in the centre of the lane in certain situations, such as on quiet roads or near junctions, and to maintain a safe distance from the kerb even on busier roads. The updates also clarify that cyclists are not obliged to use cycle lanes and may ride two abreast when appropriate. However the findings showed more than three-quarters (77%) incorrectly believed cyclists must use a cycle lane if one is available, and 65% wrongly thought cyclists must keep as far left as possible. Over half believed cyclists should always ride in single file, and just 34% correctly recognised that cyclists are allowed to take up a full lane.

Misconceptions about cycling behaviour also fuel wider negativity: 74% of drivers admitted to feeling at least some frustration when driving near cyclists, with the figure rising to 81% among 17 to 24- year-olds. Even among those who identify as both drivers and cyclists, 64% said they felt frustrated when encountering other cyclists while driving. Nervousness is also common, with three-quarters of drivers reporting they sometimes or often feel nervous around people on bikes – particularly women (81%) and younger drivers (88%). Despite most drivers (96%) claiming they give cyclists the recommended 1.5m passing distance, nearly half (47%) admitted to experiencing a near miss involving a cyclist.

The survey also asked drivers whether they believe cyclists have equal rights to use the road. While 60% agreed, 33% disagreed – highlighting the persistence of a belief that cyclists are less entitled to road space than drivers, despite Highway Code guidance stating otherwise.

Parking Apps – One for All Plans. (RAC)

You should soon be able to pay for parking across the UK using just one app under new Government plans. The initiative is designed to end "the scramble" to download multiple apps for use at different car parks.

The new system will work in private and council car parks

Once fully rolled out, the new 'National Parking Platform' will mean you can use a single app to book parking at lots of different car parks. This shared technology will underpin a number of new and existing apps – so you'll be able to just pick whichever app you prefer.

The system is being developed and run by parking trade body the British Parking Association (BPA), though parking payment apps JustPark, PayByPhone and RingGo have all been involved in the process.

The platform will work for all motorists, not just car users, and you'll be able to use it in both private AND council-run car parks – provided operators sign up to it. The Government describes it as a "one app fits all parking platform" that aims to reduce confusion and the risk of getting penalty charge notices from councils or 'fines' from private parking firms that come from having to use differing apps that may be cumbersome to use.

But it's very early days and it needs to be rolled out more widely

Following trials, the new system is now being used by 10 local authorities and is handling over half a million transactions a month, according to the Government. It adds that the scheme will be rolled out to more local authorities "imminently" – though neither the Government nor the BPA could give us firm dates.

According to motoring body the RAC, the availability of the platform and getting as many parking operators as possible to sign up to it are "key" to the scheme making life easier for drivers.

RAC senior policy officer Rod Dennis said: "Ten local authorities taking part is a good start, but drivers wherever they are in the country should be allowed to use whatever mobile app they want."

There are also no guarantees that all apps under the scheme will be free to download, with the BPA telling us that app providers are "responsible for the download conditions of their apps".

Government UK Wallet. (Graham Feest Newsletter)

The UK is continuing with its preparations for a significant shift in how driving credentials are managed with the upcoming rollout of the Gov.UK. Wallet which will include driving licences being available on smart phones.

The system with advanced smartphone security features, such as biometric authentication (e.g. facial recognition), to ensure that digital documents remain secure—even if the physical device is lost or stolen and the move overall is believed to offer significant benefits, particularly for fleet operators and businesses that rely on large numbers of drivers.

A recent survey by TTC found that 84% of UK drivers are open to using a digital driving licence although whilst 23% of respondents said they would happily rely solely on a digital licence 61% preferred a digital and physical copy. Meanwhile, 16% opposed any form of digitisation, expressing a clear preference for the traditional plastic card. These figures suggest that while support for digital transformation exists, many drivers are not ready to go entirely paperless—and would like to retain physical documentation.

Aligning Speeds with Road Design and Human Tolerance of Crash Forces. (Graham Feest Newsletter)

The Road Safety Foundation (RSF) has published a new report entitled 'Determining Safe Speeds' working with experts in in-depth collision investigation research from Loughborough University, TRL, Autoliv and Lösningar.

The report identifies the speeds that would be required to prevent most deaths and serious injuries. These speeds are evidence-based given the laws of physics and the fragility of the human body. The report does not make recommendations about speed limit setting; it simply reports this evidence-base from in-depth collision investigation studies.

In this report RSF has established the speeds which would be required to prevent most road deaths and serious injuries on Britain's roads. The report does not say that all speeds or speed limits should be set to these speeds, rather that infrastructure needs to be improved or speeds reduced to ensure travelled speeds are better aligned with human tolerances to crash forces.

Based on the latest publicly available research, the evidence-based maximum operating speeds on British roads if most deaths and life-changing injuries are to be avoided are as follows:

10mph where there is a particular prevalence of pedestrians and/or bicyclists and/or motorcyclists, or where there is a heightened vulnerability of pedestrians to impact and injury (e.g. around schools, around hospitals, and in the vicinity of major sports or social/cultural events)

20mph in other locations where pedestrians and/or bicyclists and/or motorcyclists mix with cars

20mph where cars and HGVs mix and where head-on collisions are possible (i.e. single carriageways) or side impacts are possible (e.g. at T-junctions and crossroads)

30mph where head-on collisions and side impacts are possible only between cars.

Higher travelled speeds may be acceptable on roads which have fully segregated facilities for any pedestrians or bicyclists and a physical median between opposing directions of flow (including, for example, no T-junctions or crossroads). On these roads (i.e. some dual carriageways including motorways), the priority is to provide adequate roadside infrastructure measures to ensure that road users are suitably protected if they run off the road.

Speeds on British roads are much higher than road infrastructure safely caters for.

If the number of road deaths and serious injuries is to be reduced substantially, road authorities therefore need to bring operating speeds down, improve infrastructure provision, or, ideally, both.

What is clear is that the gap between today's speeds and speeds where most people would not be seriously injured or killed is substantial. If we cannot improve road infrastructure or reduce travelled speeds, we must recognise and reflect on how much risk we are tolerating.

A copy of the Report can be found at <https://www.grahamfeest.com/resources/latest-uploads/>

This is your committee

(Please don't hesitate to contact any of us if you have a query).

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Group Secretary's notes:

All meetings are held at:

Scaynes Hill Millennium Hall, Lewis Road, Scaynes Hill, Haywards Heath, RH17 7PG

To ensure you are kept informed of news and extra activities arranged for the Group, please could all members and associate members let us know of any changes to their contact details so that we can update the Group's database.

Edward Redman (Group Secretary - secretary.sussexadvanceddrivers@outlook.com) or
Margret Preece (Membership Secretary – margretp@clara.co.uk)

Future Events

All Speaker events start at 7.30pm with light refreshments, for a prompt 8pm start

28 June	10.30	Meet-up at Starbucks Hickstead	RH17 5NZ
12 July	10-2pm	Rustington Street Fayre	
16 July	19.30-21.30	Docbike at Scaynes Hill (Speaker)	RH17 7PG

Sussex RoSPA

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