

# Newsletter

July 2022

## In this issue ...

- Letter from the Chair
- Next Member's meeting
- Maidenhead and Wokingham Roadshows
- **IMPORTANT - STOP PRESS**
- Chief's Observations
- Awards coming thick and fast
- A bit more about me....
- Dates for your diary
- Contacting your Committee
- Membership *Matters*



## Letter from the Chair

Dear Friends,

### **Your Eyes are so Important**

I begin this letter with thanks to our own TVGAM Observer Tim Hill who spoke at the May meeting about 'floaters', eyesight obviously being so critical to driving. The session was hosted by Will Phaure, our new Vice Chair, and thanks to him too, because I was called away at short notice. Tim's talk was well attended; the one bit of feedback being that there were not enough biscuits for the break! So, if that is all it is quite a nice problem to have. Remedial action noted, and, in fact, corrections put in place for June!

### **Our Thanks to Mick Croome**

Thursday 23rd June saw Mick address some 30 members with his superbly entertaining style in an inspiring talk that was typically Mick – interactive and thought-provoking. Road signs, roundabouts, cyclists...they were all in there, and we heard Mick's opinions on the vagaries of some of our road furniture. Mick also gave an excellent perspective on hazards and bend management – great for building Associate knowledge and in fact, useful for all. If you haven't heard Mick speak, do try to attend the next one should we be fortunate enough to get him back.

### **New Social Media Officer**

I am pleased to announce that Monika Maheshwari has accepted the position of Social Media Officer and she has begun working with us from 13th June. Monika is a volunteer for other organisations and does work for the PTA of her son's school. She is not a member of TVGAM but is interested in our charity. The priority for her has been getting to grips with our social media accounts and becoming involved in publicity for the roadshows.

### **Our forthcoming July Group Meeting**

We are working on being outside for July, having taken steps to ensure the car park is left free for us, as users of the Hall. The Holyport Committee have asked me to pass on their regret that the car park has not been easy for us to use over recent months, so we are the situation at each monthly Group meeting. Which brings me onto the meeting itself – we are proposing to start at 19.30 that evening – outside – and Tim Hill is again taking centre stage with a couple of Skoda Yeti vehicles which will be used to



demonstrate reversing techniques whilst towing. He says you can have a go too! See the publicity piece on 'Going Backwards' in this edition of your newsletter.

Tim drives HGVs for a living and whilst it is true this session in July will be with much smaller vehicles,

Tim will be referring to manoeuvring larger transport in his opening remarks. Also, see page 46 of your summer copy of Roadsmart magazine which arrived just as I was putting the finishing touches to this.

### **Summer Roadshow Update**

By the time you receive this newsletter, we will have had the first two of our five TVGAM/IAAPS/IAM summer roadshows put together by Alex and Will, ably assisted by some of our Observer team as well as several of you who offered to help. I want to thank you all for your participation, and urge any other folk who may want to lend a hand to come forward and contact Alex at [events@tvgam.org.uk](mailto:events@tvgam.org.uk). Your help will be very much appreciated.



Maidenhead Roadshow Day – 25 June 22

### **Events Organiser – Committee vacancy**

We still have a vacancy in the wider Committee for an Events person to take charge of the monthly member's programme and develop a plan for the occasional outside function. This is not onerous but does require a person with empathy for member interests and vision that can be encouraged by the rest of the Committee. If you feel you have a couple of hours a week to devote to putting together this important aspect of keeping TVGAM thriving, please talk to us via [chair@tvgam.org.uk](mailto:chair@tvgam.org.uk).

### **September Group Meeting**

Seasoned TVGAMers will know we have a break in August, so I wish you all a good summer and we will look forward to getting together again in September. We are in discussion with UK Cycling and hope to have a speaker covering the trials and tribulations of moving about using pedal power – and the challenges that throws up for the wider road user.

Enjoy the warmer weather – it never lasts long!

Nick Room

Chair



### Bon Voyage Stuart

News has just reached us that Stuart Haythorn, our IAM Roadsmart Area Service Delivery Manager for Region 2, is standing down after five year's service in the role.

Stuart has been a great friend to TVGAM and we have had an excellent working relationship with him during this time.

In passing out thanks and best wishes to him as he sets off on another part of life's journey, we welcome his replacement, Katrina Lowe, who is receiving handovers as I write this.

Further information will be given in our September newsletter.

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### Next Member's meeting

Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> July 9.30 - Holyport Memorial Hall (note earlier start time)



### Going Backwards!

Observer and Class 1 HGV driver Tim Hill will be occupying some of the car park with a taped off area where he can demonstrate (and you practise) reversing with trailers in a couple of Skoda Yetis.

Come and try your hand at this refresher of an important part of driving skill for this last session before the summer break.

Coffee and tea will be available in the Hall as usual.

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### Maidenhead and Wokingham Roadshows



Thank you to all who volunteered at the Maidenhead and Wokingham roadshows

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### **IMPORTANT - STOP PRESS ANNOUNCEMENT**

Whilst change is often difficult to accept, sometimes circumstances dictate that a shift in direction is necessary and can be beneficial. For some time we have been concerned over the cost of our long term meeting venue Holyport Memorial Hall. The hourly rate rose earlier in the year to £28 per hour costing the group £84 per meeting, but post-covid attendances are averaging around 30 members. We have investigated alternative venues for our monthly meetings and have been able to negotiate a rate of £12 per hour with Knowl Hill Village Hall which you must agree is a substantial saving.

For many years TVGAM have traditionally held Group meetings on the 4th Thursday of the month. Knowl Hill are unable to offer this due to other booking commitments at the moment, but are currently able to offer Tuesday evenings.

Your committee are recommending this change and believe that our valued members will accept and support this switch in good faith. Therefore our final meeting at Holyport will be on July 28th and we will move to Knowl Hill in September, with our first meeting on Tuesday 20th starting at 8 p.m. We look forward to seeing you at both events, but if you are unable to join us we wish you a relaxing summer recess.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me at [chair@tvgam.org.uk](mailto:chair@tvgam.org.uk).

Kind regards,  
Nick Room. Chair.





## **Chief's Observations**

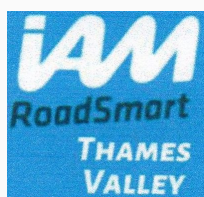
Des McDermott - Chief Observer

### **The importance of advanced driving on familiar and unfamiliar roads**

I was reminded recently of the importance of driving on unfamiliar roads on a trip to Ireland. The trip involved travelling predominantly on rural roads in the midlands and southern counties in Ireland. Social research over the past two decades has suggested that road traffic collisions roads were more common the closer we were to home. The data from several surveys indicates that between half and two thirds of road traffic collisions take place within five miles of our homes. There are multiple factors why this is the case, but a common issue is familiarity. Put simply, we are more likely to switch off or go on auto-pilot mode when we travel on roads that are familiar. Advanced drivers have a range of tools at their disposal to deal with this complacency, including POWDERY checks before we engage in journeys and applying the system of car control (IPSGA) in all situations. We also employ bend assessment techniques to assess the severity of bends and upcoming limit points. Suffice it to say, there are some great phrases that have been employed by motorists that capture the wisdom of road users with many years of driving and riding experience. In fact, one of the first phrases that I was taught as a young biker was slow in and quick out (of bends) or words to that effect.

Advanced driving techniques are invaluable on unfamiliar roads, and it is why we always encourage people new to advanced driving of the importance of driving on unfamiliar roads, whilst remaining focused on roads that we travel on frequently. I really enjoyed travelling on the roads in Ireland, which contrary to popular belief were well maintained and generally quiet. Applying good observations, anticipation and planning was essential, and the application of IPSGA on the long twisty country roads was very effective. I also employed the use of my new Sat Nav just to ensure that I did not get lost and to plot my routes in advance. But possibly, the most important lesson for me was the cultural differences of road users. Irish drivers (on my trip at least) seemed to be in a hurry and the more I travelled into the countryside, the quicker they became. I wondered whether this had anything to do with the fact that many of the road users were simply travelling familiar roads. There were other noticeable cultural differences, such as everything was in metric (kilometres) rather than imperial (miles) and there was no red and amber phase at traffic lights. The lights simply go from red to green and it seems to catch a lot of people out. Having driven on British roads all my life, I have got used to the red and amber sequence as a sort of get ready phase, and had not really given it any thought. Overall, however, the trip to Ireland was a reminder that so much of how we use our roads is culturally determined. The rules of the road, signage and customs are shaped socially. However, having returned home safely, the real benefit of advanced driving is that as a system of car control, it is very effective across all types of roads – whether they are familiar or unfamiliar.

Safe driving  
Des



**Awards have been coming thick and fast at TVGAM**

Congratulations to our recent award winners - we're proud of you and your observers



The Horncastle Garage / Shell Trophy  
Stuart Haythorn presents the Horncastle Trophy  
to 2021 winner Tony Milton



PASS

Kieran Cabbage with observer Nicki Kitching



F1RST PASS

Emily Sole with Chair Nick Room and guest speaker  
Mick Croome



PASS

Laszlo Zsedely with Chair Nick Room and guest  
speaker Mick Croome



PASS

Tim Randall

Other successes

**PASS - Maddy Brierley**

**F1RST PASS - Anthony Mollinger**



### **A little bit more about me: Derek Maynard**

I passed my motorcycle test at 16 and my car test at 18. I also passed my Advanced car test many years ago. More recently, I helped set up the South Essex Car Group, and served on their committee for a few terms, and also became a senior Observer for their Group. I've attended a number of IAM local and national conferences.

I've driven all kinds of vehicles in all kinds of conditions within the UK. You could say I am a bit of an enthusiast: skid pans, racetracks, test tracks....as well as 7.5-ton box trucks.

I moved to Reading to be closer to my family and avoid spending hours on the M25: If I had received £10 every time I made that journey back and forth I would be a rich man now!

I have an interest in classic cars and motorsport. Rally cars are driven on public roads between rally stages so these cars need to be roadworthy, and drivers must of course keep to speed limits...

I'm as familiar with the M23 as I am with the M25 as my parents live near Burgess Hill, and when the annual vintage London to Brighton car run takes place in November it's quite a sight.

Talking of the M23, someone has stolen Handcross Hill...well, it seems that way, as seven or eight years ago the road was widened which must have been for safety reasons given the sharp bends on the hill.

I am proud to say I help run the Reading/Wokingham support group for people who have a speech stammer – a condition that I have. Stammering was recognised as a disability in the 2010 Equality Act, and you might be surprised by the number of folk who have a stammer: to find out more, go to [www.stamma.org](http://www.stamma.org), and [www.stammafest.org.uk](http://www.stammafest.org.uk) for more details.



**Saturday July 23rd**



**Driving Ambitions to Reduce Emissions Roadshow**  
**READING: The Avenue School, Tilehurst, RG30 4BZ**  
**9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.**

**volunteers required please**

### **Thursday July 28th**

**July Group Meeting**  
**"Going Backwards"! – Tim Hill**  
**HOLYPORT - Memorial Village Hall SL6 2NA**

**PLEASE NOTE THIS MEETING STARTS AT - 7:30 p.m.**

### **AUGUST**

**No events scheduled for this month**

### **Saturday September 10th**

**Driving Ambitions to Reduce Emissions Roadshow**  
**WINDSOR – venue tbc**  
**9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.**

**Volunteers required please**

### **Tuesday September 20th**

**September Group Meeting**  
**FULL CYCLE – Robin Tucker, UK Cycling**

**KNOWL HILL - Village Hall RG10 9XB**

### **Saturday September 24th**

**Driving Ambitions to Reduce Emissions Roadshow**  
**BRACKNELL – venue tbc 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.**

**Volunteers required please**



**Contacting your Committee**

All TVGAM Committee members are now using the Microsoft 365 Business portal for Non-Profits at no monthly charge to the Group. One important feature of this change means that all email traffic is directed through MS servers within the TVGAM domain, and replies can be sent from the email addresses below instead of any private accounts that Committee members have set up to administer their TVGAM communication. This makes TVGAM Committee emailing look much more professional.

Committee members are not obliged to retain their personal email for the benefit of the Group, so best practice is to send all email communication to the Committee member you wish to contact by using the following email addresses:

Nick Room, Chair:	chair@ tvgam.org.uk
Will Phaure, Vicechair:	vicechair@tvgam.org.uk
Karen Allen, Group Secretary:	secretary@tvgam.org.uk
Nicki Kitching, Group Treasurer:	treasurer@tvgam.org.uk
Alex Beeston, Membership Secretary:	membership@tvgam.org.uk
Des McDermott, Chief Observer:	chief@tvgam.org.uk
Derek Maynard, Newsletter Editor:	editor@tvgam.org.uk
Monika Maheshwari, Social Media Officer:	media@tvgam.org.uk

Please check your spam box for any emails or replies and set your own email account to treat TVGAM mail as 'not spam' to ensure you do not miss any communication from the Group or between members. The list above will be updated from time to time.

Nick Room – Chair – 19 June 2022

## **MEMBERSHIP MATTERS**

### **New Members**

A warm welcome to 5 new Members who have recently joined the TVGAM group.

### **Associate Members:**

**Rachel Harrison** from Ascot  
**Simon Andrews** from Twyford  
**Andrew West** from Crowthorne  
**Elio Gianfreda-Babb** from Reading  
**Jonathan Winslade** from Windsor

We wish you every success with your Advanced Driving Courses.

**The total number of New Members joining TVGAM in 2022 is: 18.**

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### **Test Passes**

Many congratulations to the following associates who have recently passed their Advanced Driving Tests and to their respective observers.

<b><u>Associate</u></b>	<b><u>Observer</u></b>
<b>Maddy Brierley</b>	<b>Des McDermott</b>
<b>Anthony Mollinger (F1RST)</b>	<b>Andrea Tallis</b>
<b>Emily Sole (F1RST)</b>	<b>Derek Wilson</b>
<b>Laszlo Zsedely</b>	<b>David Hunt</b>
<b>Tim Randall</b>	<b>Steve Smith</b>

**The total number of Test Passes in 2022 is: 8**

### **TVGAM Annual Membership fees:**

**Associates** - 1st year is included in your course fee. 2nd and subsequent years **£31**

**Full and Fellows** - **£12** for all members receiving newsletters and bulletins via email.

**£22** only for members who depend on newsletters and bulletins by mail.

### **Payment methods**

**Bank transfers: Lloyds Bank, Maidenhead**

**Sort Code: 30-95-36 Account No. 07015567**

**Account Name: Thames Valley (Maidenhead) Group of Advanced Motorists** (or at least as much as you are able to enter) **Reference:** Please enter your **Group Member ID (e.g. nn/nnn)**

**Cheques:** Payee: Thames Valley Group of Advanced Motorists (full Group title please)

Please post to my home address which is on your membership renewal reminder email.



**PayPal:** We are planning to introduce PayPal as a payment method via the TVGAM website for members wishing to pay by Credit/Debit Card and will advise you when this is available in due course.

### **IAM Annual Membership fees:**

**Please remember to keep your annual IAM membership subscription up to date especially if you don't pay by direct debit (DD) or standing order (SO). If you pay by card, cheque or any other**

**method, receiving your IAM membership card in the post means it is time to renew.**

Renewals can be done online at <https://www.iamroadsmart.com/renewals> and you can also set up a Direct Debit online at <https://www.iamroadsmart.com/my-dashboard/my-membership/direct-debit> (remember that this can take some time to process before being activated, so make sure it is in place well before your membership expiry date).

*Associate Members are also reminded that if you fail to renew your IAM membership on time, it will disrupt your on-road coaching as you will not be able to continue with your observed drives until it has been renewed.*

#### **Membership Records**

Please help keep the Group records in order by sending any changes of address, email address or contact telephone numbers to: [membership@tvgam.org.uk](mailto:membership@tvgam.org.uk).

**Alex Beeston - Membership Secretary**

