

Newsletter

January 2023

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Chair's letter - January 2023

Nick Room



Dear Friends

Welcome to 2023, and the prospect of another year of safe driving. I don't know about you, but the standards I see on the roads just now are unusually comment worthy in an eyebrow-raising way, at the least, and at the worst, downright appalling. Anything we can do as an organisation at every level to point up better driving and be ambassadors for the charity gets the message out there – which is what we are all about.

This year the Committee are determined to raise the profile of the Group in the Thames Valley, and we have a Communications team poised to deliver what they can to engage across our membership but also to project the ideals and aspirations of TVGAM to a wider public. Those who attended the last session of the year at Knowl Hill will recognise the goodwill we have built with our new ASDM, Katrina Lowe, the IAM at the centre (that evening, in the person of Simon Boyd, but also our work across other levels and departments at the centre), and the relationship we developed with our Police and Crime Commissioner. It pleasing to see some of our younger drivers in attendance, indeed, also to see two representatives from the High Wycombe group present at this session.

The Comms team intend to use all platforms to publicise our messages in 2023 – whether in our Newsletters, through social media, or in operating our new and improved website. We will be developing these tools through the year, so please look at the website for news, give us your opinions on what we might do to improve. The Editorial team are also pleased to receive articles for publication, so don't forget if you find items you think will be of merit and send them to editor@tvgam.org.uk.

The next three member meetings will feature the fire service later this month, West Berks council's views on Road Safety in the region in February, and in March we are delighted to welcome the RHA to deliver a talk about the haulage industry. It may be cold outside, but Knowl Hill Village Hall can be hospitable especially when the tea urn is on, and we hope the weather will not put you off turning out for our guest speakers.

Lastly, it's AGM time again in April and that will soon be upon us (with lighter evenings, hurray!). Do think if you would like to volunteer for any roles that help run the Group. Fresh blood is always good for the Group – nomination forms will be out next time you see a Newsletter from us.

Drive well,

Nick

The New Year meetings program

The New Year brings some interesting visitors to our monthly meetings:

Tuesday 24th January

Our 2023 programme opens with a visit from Andy Ford who is Station Manager Road Safety and Commercial training services at Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue based at Thame.



Tuesday February 28th



February sees the visit of Cheryl Evans as our guest presenter.

Cheryl is a senior road safety officer at West Berkshire Council with over 17 years of experience in ETP around Road Safety. Cheryl has a personal interest in young drivers, powered two wheelers, work related road safety and older drivers and is keen to understand and apply behavioural change principles in relation to achieving the best outcomes relating to her work. She is keen to work cross borders and feels a close partnership relationship is vital to reduce harm on the high-ways.

She is also the Road Safety GB Policy & Management representative and regional secretary for Road Safety GB Southeast Region.

Tuesday 28th March

For our March event, vehicle size matters as we greet Rhys Williams . Rhys is the Area Manager for Berkshire and he will be representing the Road Haulage Association



NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN by order of the Group Committee that the Annual General Meeting of Thames Valley Group of Advanced Motorists will be held at 8.00 p.m. on **Tuesday 25th April 2023** at Knowl Hill Village Hall, RG10 9XB to enable the Trustees of the Group (Registered Charity No.1057212) to present their Annual Report and Accounts for the year ended 31st December 2022 for approval by the Group Full Members and to conduct an election.

Notes

All Group Full Members, Associates and Friends are invited to attend but only Group Full Members may vote.

A Member entitled to vote at the General Meeting may appoint a proxy to vote in his stead. A proxy need not be a Group Full Member.

2022 and all that!



Over forty members and guests joined us for our end of year meeting at Knowl Hill on December 6th and what a line-up of speakers we had.

The meeting kicked off with **Matthew Barber** the Thames Valley Police and Crime Commissioner who headlined the work of the Thames Valley Police and the Community Fund. Matthew presented some of our young drivers who benefitted from a grant of £1000 from the fund by receiving a full reimbursement of the cost of their Advanced Course.



Pictured receiving their special certificates are
Rebecca Woodage and **Ross Lewis**

Others young drivers who received the awards were: **Kieran Cubbage**; **Alice Davidson**; **Maddy Brierley**; **Harley Jones** and **Harry Cave**

Six drivers were awarded their Advanced Test pass certificates by IAM Region 2 ASDM **Katrina Lowe**.



Andrew West, Ross Lewis, and Peter Wills receiving their certificates from Katerina.

Other drivers who were unable to attend on the evening were: **Darren Cubbage; Himanshu Sahni and Paul Gapp.**



To close the evening, **Simon Boyd** IAM Programme Director whetted our appetite with some of the changes and developments in the pipeline for 2023 and beyond. We look forward to being at the forefront of these.

Membership Matters

Alex Beeston - Membership Secretary



A Happy, Healthy and Prosperous New Year to all TVGAM Members

New Members

A warm welcome to a new Member who has recently joined the TVGAM group.

Associate Members:

Denis Roman from Wokingham

We wish you every success with your Advanced Driving Course.

The total of New Members joining TVGAM in 2022 was: 26

Test Passes

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

Associate	Observer
Harry Cave	Tim Hill
Clare Rodway	Nicki Kitching

The total number of Test Passes in 2022 was: 21

The total number of Test Passes in 2023 is: 1

TVGAM Annual Membership fees:

Associates - 1st year is **included** in your course fee.

2nd and subsequent years is **£36.50*** payable to TVGAM depending on Committee approval to continue your course.

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**

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 on your email reminder.

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

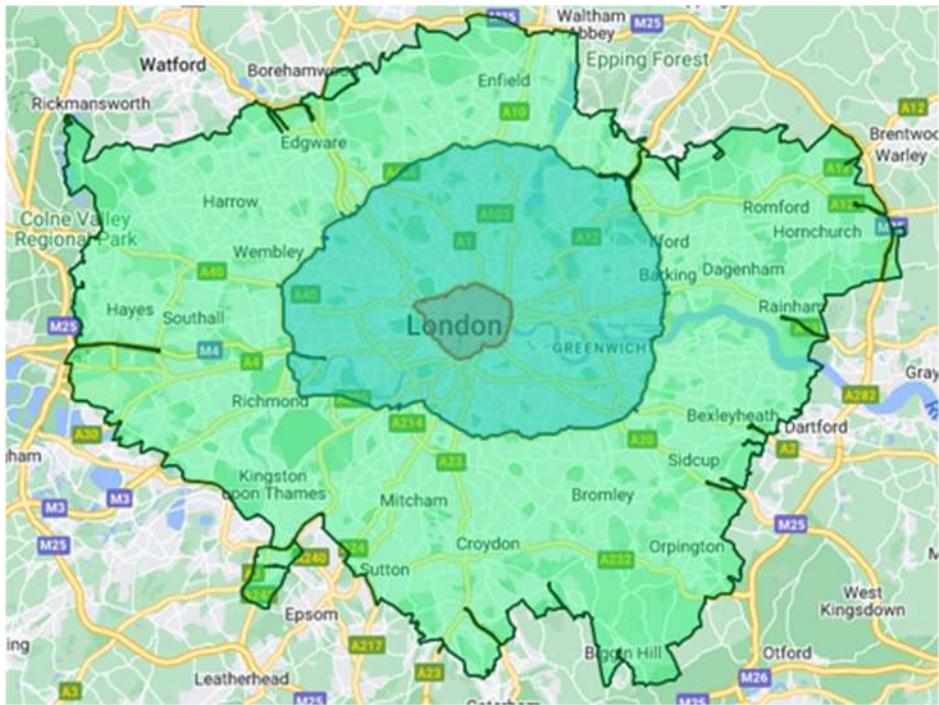
Alex Beeston - Membership Secretary

2023 driving law changes

As we enter the New Year it is worth reviewing the major changes to driving and vehicle law which are either now operating or will become part of the law this year:

1. ULEZ expansion

In late August 2023, Ultra Low Emission Zone is set to undergo its third expansion, and is likely impact thousands more drivers in its wake. At present, ULEZ covers all areas within the North and South Circular roads, but will soon extend to all of the city's 33 boroughs and those whose vehicles do not meet ULEZ emissions standards, will have to pay a £12.50 daily charge to drive inside the zone.



Expanded ULEX zone - from Google maps.

You can use the Transport for London website to check if your vehicle is exempt here: <https://tfl.gov.uk/modes/driving/check-your-vehicle/>

Some of the outer London boroughs oppose this change and may refuse permission for the required CCTV cameras installation on their roads. This could be interesting!

2. Number plates

Rules on the appearance of number plate lettering changed last year – and those rules will stay in place until the latest numbers are announced in March 2023.



The number plates on your vehicle must:

- be made from a reflective material
- display black characters on a white background (front plate)
- display black characters on a yellow background (rear plate)
- not have a background pattern
- be marked to show who supplied the number plate
- be marked with a British Standard number - this is 'BS AU 145e' for plates fitted after 1 September 2021

The characters must not be removable or reflective. If your number plates were fitted after 1 September 2021, they must also be a single shade of black.

Your number plates can also:

- have 3D (raised) characters
- display a green flash, if you have a zero-emission vehicle

UK stickers have replaced the old white oval GB stickers. If you have a GB sticker, cover or remove it before driving outside the UK.

- Do not put the sticker on your numberplate.

3. Fuel duty rates

UK fuel duty rates were slashed by 5p for 12 months to help struggling families manage the soaring price of fuel alongside other rising household costs.

On 23 March 2023, however, this reduction will end, and the Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR) has suggested that fuel duty may increase.

Plans for fuel duty will likely be outlined by the government in chancellor Jeremy Hunt's Spring Budget.



4. Benefit in Kind (BiK) rates

Benefits in Kind (BiK) are goods and services provided to an employee for free or at greatly reduced costs on top of their salary and those furnished with a company car must pay a BiK contribution – which is more commonly referred to as a company car tax.

As it stands, a petrol car which produces 100g/km emissions pays 25 per cent BiK compared with just 13 per cent in 2013.

The government has said rates will remain frozen until April 2025 in the hopes of encouraging employees to opt for electric vehicles.

5. TfL Scrappage scheme

From 30 January 2023, Londoners receiving certain disability and means-tested benefits will be able to apply to TfL's car and motorcycle scrappage scheme. Beneficiaries can receive a grant payment, or a grant payment plus one or two Annual Bus & Tram passes.



A separate van and minibus scrappage scheme will also be available for sole traders, micro-businesses (10 or fewer employees) or charities and there will also be ULEZ support offers for successful scrappage scheme applicants as well as offers for all Londoners to take advantage of, whether eligible for a grant or not.

6. Parking on pavements in Scotland

Scotland's delayed implementation of its ban on pavement parking and dropped kerbs is set to be enforced this year. Though the move was announced in 2019 its implementation was pushed back due to the pandemic.

7. Heavy goods vehicle levy

Heavy goods vehicles weighing over 12 tonnes are charged a levy cost of any damage or wear they inflict on British roads. The levy was suspended for UK-registered HGVs during the pandemic, and extended for another year in August 2022. This suspension will be lifted in August 2023, meaning freight companies will start paying the extra costs again.

8. Excise Duty for electric car owners

Chancellor Jeremy Hunt announced in his autumn statement that zero-emission vehicles will lose their vehicle excise duty (VED) exemption from April 2025. Owners of EVs who currently pay no VED will face an annual charge of up to £165 for cars and £290 for vans. The Treasury said the changes are estimated to raise an extra £1.6 billion by 2027/28.





Name: *Thruxton*
Length: *2.4mi*
Car Days: *Yes*

Skills Days are back for 2023! Using your own vehicle, develop your skills on iconic racing circuits around the UK. Dates are now live, and booking is open! Find out more>

<https://www.iamroadsmart.com/events/skills-days/...>

Monday 24th April – Thruxton – CAR
Monday 25th September – Thruxton – CAR

CAR DAYS

Session duration: Half day

Cost: £175 per person

Vehicle eligibility: See [joining instructions](#)

Morning Sessions: 08:45 – 12:30

Afternoon Sessions: 13:15 – 16:45

What to expect: You'll be coached on a one-to-one basis, having been paired with an instructor who is suitably matched to your own experience and skill level. You'll use your own car throughout the session.

Chief's observations

Des McDermott



Advanced Driving for All

IAM RoadSmart recently announced that last year 2,064 people passed the Advanced Driving Course, including 930 passing with a F1RST. This is a fantastic achievement and a welcome return to normal service after the pandemic and the suspension of on road coaching at key moments in 2020 and 2021.

Being a part of the largest independent road safety charity in Britain has many benefits for IAM RoadSmart members. If you passed your Advanced Driving Course several years ago you can book a refresher session through TVGAM and/or take a member's reassessment through IAM RoadSmart with one of our Examiners. You might also want to consider fellowship membership whereby you will be retested every three years to ensure that your driving is at advanced standard and that you are not experiencing skill fade. In addition, IAM RoadSmart offers the Masters test for those members who want to obtain the highest civilian driving standard in the country.

IAM RoadSmart also offer the opportunity for you to train as an Observer to pass on your advanced driving knowledge and skills to new members who join the organisation. By April 2025, all Observers will be trained and assessed to National Observer standard. In preparation for this change within IAM RoadSmart, TVGAM has put in place a bespoke training package to help our own Observers to prepare for the National Observer Assessment (NOA).

This all represents very good value for money, especially when you compare it to a typical track day that can cost anything between £150 and £500 per day (depending on the track, time of year and other factors). If we did not have charities like IAM RoadSmart, advanced driving would be very expensive and elite. The Advanced Driving Course is not cheap but then again neither is owning and driving a vehicle. I recently spent £300 on a relatively good quality motorbike helmet that will last anywhere between three and five years before it will need to be replaced.

The other main benefit of membership of IAM RoadSmart is access to our publications. I re-read the Autumn/Winter edition of RoadSmart (the magazine that is free to members of IAM RoadSmart). It was packed full of excellent articles from driving down the cost of motoring to the big EV debate and insights into Police escort driving. Driving (and riding) is by far the biggest risk that many of us undertake on a daily basis. Investing in knowledge and skills to keep us safe on the roads is money well spent.

Drive safely

Des McDermott

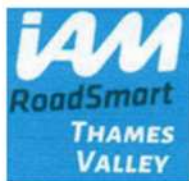
Chief Observer

Articles and pictures

To keep the variety of writing styles, views and stories please could I ask all members of the group to pass on ideas, photos and articles for future issues?

Between us we have immense experience of driving, travelling and learning which often only gets passed on if we chat at a meeting. If any of you feel happy to put pen to paper the newsletter will become the interesting read we would all like.

Please send to: editor@tvgam.org.uk



Make it easy
then
Take it easy



Pay your annual IAM RoadSmart membership by



Simply fill in the Direct Debit mandate form online
in your IAM Dashboard Direct Debit or search

<https://www.iamroadsmart.com/my-dashboard/my-membership/direct-debit>

Your bank needs time to process the Direct Debit mandate to make sure you set it up well in advance of your renewal date

How it works:

IAM RoadSmart will send you a notification a month before the Direct Debit is taken

Your Membership fee will be drawn when it becomes due

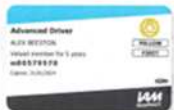
No need to contact IAM RoadSmart to pay your membership fee

The amount will automatically be adjusted if the fee changes

If you notify IAM RoadSmart that you wish to cancel
your Membership the Direct Debit will not be drawn

Thank you for renewing

Your IAM RoadSmart membership card identifies
you as one of the UK's most skilled road users.



Your membership has been automatically
renewed for another year

As you have a Direct Debit set up with us your membership fee of £11.00 will be taken for
early next month. You do not need to do anything further. Thank you for your continuing
support.



Need further information!

Contact:

IAM Support at support@iam.org.uk

or

Alex Beeston at membership@tvgam.org.uk

Next meeting

Tuesday January 24th - First meeting of 2023

Our 2023 programme opens with a visit from Andy Ford who is Station Manager Road Safety and Commercial training services at Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue based at Thame.



KNOWL HILL - Village Hall RG10 9XB at 8.00 p.m.

Venue Map

