

Dorset IAM RoadSmart



May Newsletter - 2020 (edition 61)

How long till I can get a hair cut?

We are approximately two months into the lockdown, and due to my own poor planning, I didn't get my hair cut while we had the chance! Given that I live alone, there isn't much I can do anything about it until the rules change. Thankfully as I'm now pretty much working at home all the time it isn't too bad, although I do notice that it feels much warmer when I am I am out running as my head can't cool down as well!

Last Wednesday I was due to work on Portland, down at the Bill for a quick (10 minute!) job. I had initially planned to cycle there, to comply with Boris preferences that we walk or cycle, then use a car, and finally public transport as a last resort.

However, rather sadly for the second time in the same number of weeks someone who appears to have just about enough of a brain to enable them to breath but little else has been out sprinkling the Rodwell Trail with drawing pins. Numerous pictures should on social media showing bikes numerous drawing pins in the wheels. One bike had 5 on the rear and 3 in the front. Not only are fixing the punctures time consuming (and potentially costly), it could easily make key-workers later for work. Obviously the trail is shared path, and used by many, especially for those walking dogs. I can't imagine that a drawing pin in the paw of a dog is going to please the dog very much either.

When the lock down first started, I found most people I would meet when out taking my then, once daily exercise would be polite and acknowledge you. However move on to now, and it sadens me that the level of manners has dropped back to what it used to be pre-lockdown.

When we used to go for long training runs on Sunday mornings, I used to always say a cheery 'good morning' to all those we passed. I'd think that only a 1/3 of people would respond, we used to play of game of

guessing if they would respond or not! Used to help the miles tick away. It was nice to see the Government recently announce a '£2 billion package to create new era for cycling and walking', which is proposing alternative ways to travel, such as walking and cycling, and could relieve the pressure on public transport.

If and how this actually is turned in reality is anyone's guess. Councils have historically spent a lot of money creating short or impractical cycle lanes in many places which simply aren't practical for the masses to use. Such construction often drags on for weeks at a time which only adds to the anger of many car drivers who believe that the roads are them and them alone. You know the sorts of people; the ones who like to go off on rants about how cyclists don't pay road tax (kind of hard since this was abolished in 1937), don't have insurance (many do, as bikes can cost more than learner drivers first cars). The most favourite argument is "use the cycle lane", however shared cycle lanes with pedestrians are really only suitable for bikes travelling at slow speed - such as those on a family outing. Cyclists who are commuting or out for a longer rider (60-100 miles) don't want to be limited to <10mph. There needs to be some give and take, as with everything in the world. Every cyclist on the road means potentially one less vehicle at rushhour, thus keeping the roads clearer. Also most cyclists will own a car, so they are already insuring, MOTing, and taxing the vehicle, plus paying for fuel - which we all know as a large duty is applied to it.

We are all together, lets try and share nicely, it can't be that hard, can it? Hopefully we can all enjoy a safe and trouble free bank holiday weekend without too many tourists ignoring the Council warnings to avoid Dorset.

Stay at Home, Protect the NHS, save lives.
#stayhomesavelives

Matt Ames
Newsletter Editor

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Diesels, DPFs and the lock-down - the IAM RoadSmart response

Following on from Reg's letter which we published in last Month's newsletter, Richard Gladman who is Head of Driving and Riding Standards at IAM RoadSmart has replied, which thankfully (for me) backs up many of the points I made.

If anyone else has any questions please don't hesitate to email us. In the meantime, on to Richard's reply - please do note that the Government guidelines on what travel we are permitted to do has changed slightly.

All of the information Reg puts across is true in certain circumstances, ideally, a run on the motorway will help the DPF system to re-generate and burn off the deposits in the system. Of course, lockdown prevents this as it is not a necessary journey and whilst the restrictions are in place why take the risk. However, if we look at it logically, we should be out only when necessary, this restriction alone should limit the number of vehicles doing 'numerous' short runs without the ability for the system to purge itself.

There are also 2 types of this re-gen action on modern cars, the passive one that will happen at speed without any forcing of the issue as the exhaust will naturally be hot due to the nature of the run, there is also an active system where the car will sense the filter becoming clogged and increase fuel flow to make the exhaust hotter and force the re-gen. If the system senses it is having problems it will display a warning light, this is where Reg's laps between the roundabouts may help, 10 mins at 40 mph should start the re-gen, (important not to switch off when it starts although once it has begun it will complete as long as the engine is running).

If this does not do the trick it may be that a forced re-gen is required and this will need to be done by a garage with the required equipment activating this via

the OBD port and the engine management system (I had to get it done on a Skoda Octavia vRS once as I clearly was not driving it quickly enough).

The most important thing is for no-one to panic, if we are sticking to the lockdown it is likely that no problems will occur, if the car is doing short journeys every day we should question ourselves why? If the re-gen does need to be done it is the heat in the exhaust system that triggers it (with a lot of computer trickery assisting) so a short run in a 40 mph speed limit should be sufficient.

The important thing is if the warning light comes on, try the extended route to the shops to achieve the re-gen or contact your dealer, the light is a warning of future problems so if it has illuminated short journeys at this point will make it worse.

Richard Gladman
Head of Driving & Riding Standards

IAM RoadSmart on Twitter...

Our survey results on e-scooters show that while there are still safety questions to be answered, there is growing acceptance of them as a mode of transport with 2/3rds supportive of their wider use. Planned trials could be a great opportunity for change.



<https://www.iamroadsmart.com/media-and-policy/newsroom/news-details/2020/05/22/e-scooters-trials-signal-a-once-in-a-lifetime-opportunity-to-change-transport-infrastructure-says-iam-roadsmart>

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