

Dorset IAM RoadSmart



March Newsletter - 2021 (edition 71)

Time to remember how to share...

As the UK surges ahead with its vaccination program, it makes me realise that the super quiet roads we had towards the start of the first lockdown are now going to be a dim and distant memory.

For many of us, our cars will have sat pretty much dormant for the last year. We, as drivers have been spending a significantly reduced minimal amount of time behind the wheel to hone our skills. I know that many drivers out there will be thinking "I've not forgotten how to drive" and that is true – I am sure the basics like clutch control and smooth braking will still be there when you jump into the driver's seat. However, what about our observational skills which have had a good long rest. That sixth sense when you can tell a car is about to cut you up on a round-about by its slight off positioning, or steering angle. These skills which help to make us safer, more advanced drivers than the general UK motoring public, and potentially what enables us to prevent an accident from occurring. The chances are unless you work for the NHS (or our other valued essential companies) or a delivery company you will have most likely seen a reduction in your motoring miles.

Back to the title of this editorial, if the program remains on track - thanks also to all the wonderful volunteers who are helping to keep everything on track (and no thanks to the idiots in Bristol), companies will soon be encouraging staff to return to the office. My employer is looking at what they term to be a hybrid solution – some days in the office and some days at home. I'm not really sure how this would work in reality, as I think they are also hoping to couple it with a reduction of general desks, thus implying a return to the hot desking rage from a few years ago. There are many benefits to working from home, such as the very obvious environmental and time savings. However, I think there is no denying that there is less opportunity to social interaction with colleagues when at home. Currently we are all in the same boat, but if some

staff return to the office, and others don't we might see an imbalance in 'having your voice heard' when it comes to meetings. Those sitting around a table in a meeting will take precedence over those who have VC or dialed in, so I am sure there are many more challenges for us to all overcome. It will be interesting to see how it all pans out in the long run – the days of managers wanting to see their staff sitting in the office because they don't trust them should now have been proved to be a myth. It certainly is handy for the mid-week deliveries, for which I am sure the delivery drivers appreciate, even if it means less weekend overtime for them! Watch out for the surge of early morning commuters soon.

I, for once find myself not sure what to write, so maybe a slightly different topic – no bikes or cycling stories, but instead one of DIY. I am sure that many of us started with the greatest of intentions. A perfect opportunity to carry out some DIY at home and do those jobs we might have been putting off. For me normally I use running or cycling as an excuse! Over the winter months I'd felt a cool draft blowing over my desk which I'd traced to be a gap under the window sill in my office. With some 'forced leave' to use from work, I took the opportunity to move my desk.



I'd thought it would be a quick job, just fill the gap and move on. However, nothing is ever as quick as it should be. Some of the plaster was quite loose, and couple of large cracks were showing. On opening up

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the cracks to aid filling them it became obvious that this was going to be a much longer job. Out with the plaster to mix up some up and fill the holes and cracks over the next couple of days. After that the walls got a fresh lick of paint. I should be pleased that my house is constructed from a real materials and not a modern plasterboard disaster!

Until then, safe motoring,

Matt Ames
Newsletter Editor

Most dangerous roads in Dorset

Towards the end of March, the Dorset Echo ran an article titled the same as this one, which references a website, <https://www.crashmap.co.uk/> which brings together statistics on accidents on the roads across the UK. Obviously, we know that roads themselves are not dangerous, and that the danger comes from those who use them, and quite possibly don't show the respect and consideration they need to. Local weather, road surface, temperature, time of day, lighting, traffic density, in-car distractions and so forth should all be factored into our decision making when driving.

The data on this website which covers the 5-year period between 2015 and 2019 can be filtered to show either collisions, or fatal collisions which can highlight accident blackspots - or potentially locations where lapses of judgment have taken place by lesser experienced drivers. It isn't all a defined science though, as other external conditions could trigger an accident, such as a medical incident - so just remember that if you view this data.

A quick breakdown of the figures indicate there were some 427 reported collisions in Weymouth area, 79 crashes around Portland and 231 collisions around Dorchester. In terms of fatal collisions, the Weymouth and Portland area combined recorded 9, while 7 fatal collisions were reported in the Dorchester area.

90% of motorists want speed cameras to check for vehicle tax, insurance and MOT from the IAM RoadSmart Newsroom

The UK's largest independent road safety charity is urging the police to take notice of UK motorists who are calling for them to better utilise equipment already available for speed detection to ensure vehicles have valid insurance, MOT and Vehicle Excise Duty (often referred to as road tax).

The findings come from new research conducted by IAM RoadSmart, which has revealed that nine-in-ten (90 per cent) motorists, who were surveyed as part of the charity's annual Safety Culture Report, backed the idea that speed cameras should also be used to catch drivers who are flouting these motoring violations.



Estimates suggest that someone is injured every 20 minutes on UK roads by an uninsured driver* and that more than a quarter of motorists don't even know when their vehicle's next MOT is due, while there's around 630,000 unlicensed vehicles in the UK.

Neil Greig, IAM RoadSmart Director of Policy & Research, said: "These results paint a very clear picture. Law-abiding motorists are in favour of the police using existing equipment to help make our roads safer by catching motorists who think the rules don't apply to them.

Dorset IAM RoadSmart



March Newsletter - 2021 (edition 71)

“Of course, the primary purpose of catching speeding motorists is paramount but it should not be overlooked the suffering that drivers of vehicles which are uninsured, unlicensed and without a valid MOT can cause other road users.”

Meanwhile, further findings from the in-depth research of motorist attitudes by IAM RoadSmart discovered that an overwhelming majority, (82 per cent), also supported using cameras to automatically fine drivers who run red lights in urban areas.

The research also found that 80 per cent of motorists were in favour of using cameras to automatically fine drivers who drive more than 10mph over the speed limit on residential streets.

Neil added: “There is no excuse for speeding, driving uninsured, unlicensed or without a valid MOT. If speed camera partnerships are issuing speeding tickets they should also follow up on a wider range of offences and this is backed by the vast majority of drivers. Getting law breakers off our roads could significantly help reduce the number of casualties caused by motorists with no regard for their motoring responsibilities.”

*Figures provided by MIB and Dft.

Life in the fast lane... Pensioners have more penalty points than young drivers says IAM RoadSmart from the IAM RoadSmart Newsroom

There are more than 304,000 pensioners (over 65s) currently driving on UK roads with penalty points on their licence, nearly 25 times the number of young teenage drivers – of which there are just over 12,000 with penalty points.

The findings, which came from a Freedom of Information (FOI) request to the DVLA by the UK's largest

independent road safety charity – IAM RoadSmart – also revealed that the oldest person driving with points on their licence was 102 while there are more than 3,000 over the age of 90 currently driving with penalty points.

Overall, there are more drivers in their 30s with penalty points than any other age range (575,029), closely followed by those in their 40s (572,238) and then by those in their 50s (568,511). The highest single age with the greatest number of people with points was 49 (63,248).

Additional findings from the FOI discovered that there is up to 8,800 people still driving with more than 12 points – the amount at which you are disqualified – while the highest number of penalty points currently held by one individual is 68.

Neil Greig, IAM RoadSmart Director of Policy & Research, said: “The findings from our Freedom of Information request are surprising. Speeding and other motoring misdemeanours are often associated with younger drivers but the findings clearly show there is a large number of older drivers also flouting the rules.

“Regardless of age, the message we need to get through is that road safety is paramount and we urge drivers of all ages to stick to the speed limits and ensure their vehicles are in a roadworthy condition.

“We also urge government to urgently revisit the issue of drivers with more than 12 points who still have not had their licences revoked. IAM RoadSmart has been raising this issue for almost a decade now and the problem still persists. It's not by chance that certain drivers amass 12 or more points and they need to be removed from the public roads. By letting them keep their licence it undermines the simple “four strikes and you're out” message and this urgently needs to be addressed.”

Some of the IAM RoadSmart courses which are available
full details at <https://www.iamroadsmart.com/courses>



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£149.00

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£399.00

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