

Dorset IAM RoadSmart



April Newsletter - 2021 (edition 72)

A trip to Birmingham...

Unfortunately, I find myself close to the end of the month and another newsletter to pen. It had been my intention to get a head start on this issue (sure I say that every month!), but I needed to spend a few days in Birmingham dealing with a house clearance. As such I've only just got home, and find myself with very limited time to assemble a newsletter by the end of the month and catch up on missed work. I promise to do better next month!

As mentioned above, I had to spend a few days in Birmingham; so I travelled up on Tuesday, and whilst there is more traffic about, the roads were clear enough. I'm pleased to say that there were no holdups and even the M5 and M42 were clear of roadworks. My selected route was into Bristol, swing a left at Bedminster Triangle and then under the Clifton Suspension Bridge and up the Portway to the M5.

The next few days I was involved with a house clearance, which took significantly more time than I was expecting, but there was enough time to give the car a quick wash. Prior to the commute up north, and the start of the 'summer' I managed to use one lunch break to swap back to my summer tyres - Pilot Sport 4S (for anyone who is interested). I loaded up the wheels into the back of the car and head off the Lodmoor carpark. Essentially, I was after somewhere flat where I could use my trolley jack. Sadly, my drive is a little soft, so a nice smooth tarmac carpark wins when time is off the essence! I'm pleased to report that I was able to swap all four and get back home within an hour. Probably not fast enough to make a career change though!

Before my return to Weymouth on Monday evening, I had to transport a large wooden worktable over to Coventry, so out came the roof rack and some straps. Having ensured the load was secure I hot-footed it Coventry where it was lifted off the car and delivered to its new home – a workshop/garden shed. Back to

Birmingham the car was loaded up for a return trip down south. The motorways seemed busier than on the drive up, but there were still no hold ups and I was back in Weymouth by 2130. I'm sure that car appreciated the trip out, but it looks like I might need to refill the tank again – the last time was in December!

With the return of the lighter evenings, and the allowing of groups of up to six to meet up outside, a few of us from my local running club have started meeting up again. 10 miles run in company is much more fun than 10 solo miles! Last night someone planned a route which took us out by Nottingham on footpaths I never knew existed. Obviously they found us a few bonus hills to climb too, we started by the seafront, but ended up at the foot of the Ridgeway via a less than direct route countryside. However, a speedy return down Dorchester Road and Lodmoor Country Park got back just as darkness was taking hold.



I have also been up to meet up for a few socially distance coffee bike rides. A couple of weeks ago we headed out to Wool, where some of the group then returned to the Weymouth but 4 of us headed out to Arne, before returning via Portland to make it a nice 75 mile loop. Thankfully most of the cycling was carried on almost traffic free roads which is a delight. The following week we had a shorted route, but two of my cycling buddies suffered punctures. The first,

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as it was before a visit to a café resulted in a coffee and sausage roll 'fine' being applied! As you can imagine, we gladly accepted the payment!

I notice that that Dorset Echo is back to reporting daily crashes and temporary road closures. For the last 2 days it seems that a couple of cars have defied the normal laws of gravity and inverted themselves. However, not knowing any future details it would be inappropriate for me to comment, other than to say take care out there. While we can't control people's driving, we can do our best to keep out of their way. Stay alert and keep away from those cars which somehow feel suspicious – wrong speed, poor lane control, little/late/no signalling etc. A final plea – please make sure all the bulbs on your car are working, along with all the other checks we should carry out. I counted far too many cars with failed headlights bulbs between Yeovil and Weymouth the other evening.

Matt Ames
Newsletter Editor

March 2021-2022 Group Membership

If you haven't yet renewed your group membership, then I shall soon be updating our records and removing any lapsed members. As a reminder, the renewal form can be downloaded from the Group's website. Navigate to <https://www.dorsetiam.org.uk/join/> and follow the link at the bottom of the page.

92,000 motorists at imminent risk of losing their licence from the IAM RoadSmart Newsroom

2,000 motorists are at risk of losing their driving licence with just one more motoring offence resulting in a ban, a Freedom of Information request to DVLA* by IAM RoadSmart, the UK's largest independent road safety charity, reveals.

There are some 92,000 drivers currently with 9, 10 or 11 points on their licence who face the real risk of losing their licence with another 3 points pushing them on or over the 12-point ban threshold.



This could be through everyday driving habits, ignorance or judgement errors – such as speeding, overtaking on a double white line, parking in a dangerous place, not stopping at a school crossing, carrying too many passengers or overloading the vehicle.

Many drivers may also be unaware that a lack of basic vehicle maintenance could also land you with points – such as defective tyres, blown headlight or brake light bulbs, cracked light covers, smeary windscreen wipers or worn suspension components.

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Specifically, at present there are 80,484 motorists in the UK with 9 points on their licence, 7,804 with 10 points and 4,313 with 11 points.

Meanwhile, there are nearly 8,800 motorists still driving with 12 points or more on their driving licence, with IAM RoadSmart once again renewing its call for a full review to ensure that drivers with multiple points are always treated in the same way. Until these anomalies are removed confidence in the simple “12 points and you are out” system will continue to be undermined.

Reasons that these drivers can keep their licence include exceptional hardship, such as loss of employment.

Neil Greig, IAM RoadSmart Director of Policy & Research, said: “The number of motorists still driving on UK roads with more than 12 points, or just under the driving ban threshold, is alarming.

“It is also an opportune occasion to educate motorists on some motoring laws that they might be unaware can result in licence points, so that motorists can change their driving habits and carry out regular basic checks of their vehicle to help make the roads safer for all users.”

Further data revealed by IAM RoadSmart’s Freedom of Information request also highlighted the postcode areas with the highest number of drivers with penalty points. These include Birmingham with 74,397, Sheffield with 56,876 and Nottingham with 56,245.

For advice on driving and motorcycle riding best practice, including details of IAM RoadSmart’s training courses on effective speed management and practical tips on vehicle checks, visit www.iamroadsmart.com.

*Freedom of Information request to DVLA by IAM RoadSmart. Data supplied Dec 2020.

Top 10 most common driving offences which result in points:

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Speed limits

SP30 - Exceeding statutory speed limit on a public road - 3 to 6 points

SP50 - Exceeding speed limit on a motorway - 3 to 6 points

Insurance offences

IN10 - Using a vehicle uninsured against third party risks - 6 to 8 points

Construction and use offences

CU80 - Breach of requirements as to control of the vehicle, such as using a mobile phone - 3 to 6 points

Traffic direction and signs

TS10 - Failing to comply with traffic light signals - 3 points

Miscellaneous offences

MS90 - Failure to give information as to identity of driver - 6 points

Licence offences

LC20 - Driving otherwise than in accordance with a licence - 3 to 6 points

Construction and use offences

CU30 - Using a vehicle with defective tyre(s) - 3 points

Careless driving

CD30 - Driving without due care and attention or without reasonable consideration for other road users - 3 to 9 points

CU50 Causing or likely to cause danger by reason of load or passengers - 3

*New drivers should take extra care as they can amass points very quickly in their first two years of driving. This rule came into force on 1st June 1997. Anyone of any age passing their first driving test is ‘on probation’ for two years. A total of six or more penalty points during that time will mean they have to go back to learner status, apply for a new provisional licence and take the test again.

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