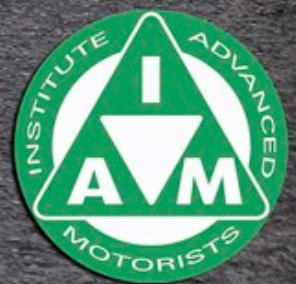


The Road Observer

The Newsletter of the North Down
Advanced Motorists Group



February 2023





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The Newsletter of the North Down Advanced Motorists Group (Group 8199)

Helping to Improve the Standard of Driving on the Roads in Northern Ireland and the advancement of road safety

February 2023

<http://www.amni.org.uk/>

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New Members

This month we welcome new car members Sophie Spiers and Richard Walker. We hope you not only gain from being members of our Group but will also enjoy the friendship and camaraderie of our get-togethers.

Test passes

No test passes this month but good luck and safe driving and riding to any Associates approaching their test.

Congratulations to Stephen Patterson on achieving his car Local Observer qualification.

January cover picture

This was Clifton Street in Belfast looking from Carlisle Circus. The traffic lights are the exits/access to the Westlink. Congratulations, in order of receipt, to Jim O'Brien, Norman Shearer, David McFall, Ralph Magee, Davie Hall, Angela Bell and Ivan McStea (Belfast Group).

Do you know where this month's cover is? No prizes, just the satisfaction of good observation and, of course, a mention in the next Road Observer. Submit your answers to: leslie.ashe.LA@googlemail.com

Dates for your diary

All dates relate to the Groomsport Boathouse at 7.15 pm unless otherwise stated

- 28 February - STAC Session 2
- 7 March - STAC Session 3
- 14 March - Group Night - Visit to Transport Museum warehouse - details issued by email 22/2/23
- 28 March - STAC session 4
- 4 April - STAC session 5
- 11 April - No meeting - Easter Tuesday
- 25 April - STAC session 6
- 2 May - STAC Session 7
- 9 May - Group Night - TBA
- 23 May - STAC session 8
- 30 May - Test preparation and driving practice
- 6 June - Additional driving practice
- 13 June - Group night- Drive/ride for ice-cream at the Rhinka, Islandmagee.

STAC - Short Term Associate Course for drivers. Car Associate Members should ensure that you are familiar with the relevant section of the "Associate Handbook" before each STAC night so that you can get the most benefit from the theory session as well as your observed drive.

Presentation

Ciara Bryans who passed her car test in December was presented with her certificate by David at the February STAC night in the Boathouse. Congratulations again to Ciara.



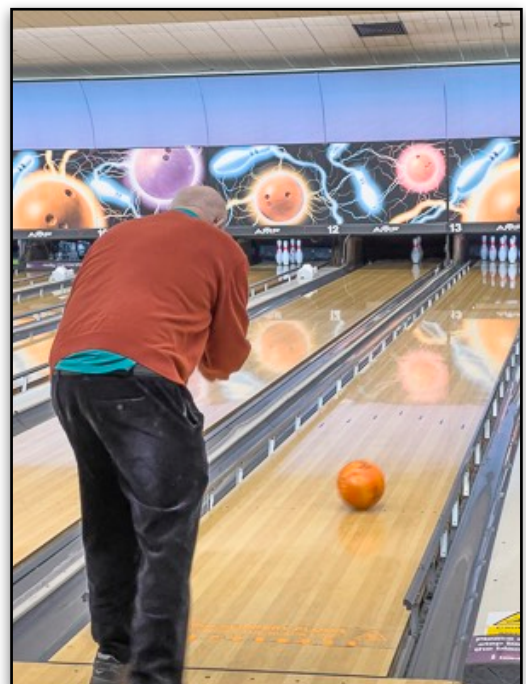
February Group Night

10-pin bowling at the Dundonald Ice Bowl was a new activity for the Group as a social event. We booked 3 lanes and had a total of 17 playing, including a few guests. I hadn't been 10-pin bowling for about 30 years and my main memory was the requirement of having to change into ill-fitting

uncomfortable shoes so as not to damage the floor. This time around as long as you're wearing shoes with flat soles there was no need to change. We quickly formed into 2 teams of 6 and one of 5 and some who are more knowledgeable about the information screens got everyone logged on. A few had never been bowling before were shown how to hold the ball and about the different weights and how to play. However, there was one incident where a ball was released on the backswing!



Competition commenced but it was all very light-hearted and not competitive at all (isn't that right Stephen?).



It was all very entertaining with the highs and the lows very much on display - the vision of John doing a victory jig having achieved a strike and of many others, myself included, looking disappointed after their ball went into the gutter and achieving no score.

It was all fast and furious action for the first game and as we had the lanes for an hour all 3 lanes were able to start, but not finish, a second game.

It was a great night's entertainment and an opportunity for some social engagement on things other than advanced driving. So much so that after the game finished we were hanging around the lanes chatting we had to be asked to move to let others start. We should make this an annual event.

For the record (and no it wasn't at all competitive) (or for bragging rights) here are the scores for the 3 lanes:

RESULTS					
Player	Game 1	Game 2	Scratch	Hdcp	Total
Supreme leader	58	3	61	0	61
Stephanie	96	3	99	0	99
Gina	66	5	71	0	71
Ivan	89	8	97	0	97
Tracey	103	10	113	0	113
Bill	59	10	69	0	69
Team	Game 1	Game 2	Scratch	Hdcp	Total
Team 13	471	39	510	0	510
	0	0			
	471	39			

Do not step onto the b

RESULTS					
Player	Game 1	Game 2	Scratch	Hdcp	Total
Gareth	58	54	112	0	112
Angela	82	9	91	0	91
Leslie	110	12	122	0	122
David	105	24	129	0	129
Stephen	134	19	153	0	153
Julia	73	22	95	0	95
Team	Game 1	Game 2	Scratch	Hdcp	Total
Team 14	562	140	702	0	702
	0	0			
	562	140			

Do not step onto the bowling lane - the lane

RESULTS					
Player	Game 1	Game 2	Scratch	Hdcp	Total
Becky	49	26	75	0	75
John	82	72	154	0	154
Matthew	71	36	107	0	107
Ernie	70	62	132	0	132
Valerie	106	39	145	0	145
Team	Game 1	Game 2	Scratch	Hdcp	Total
Team 15	378	235	613	0	613
	0	0			
	378	235			

Do not step onto the bowling lane - the lan

Seatbelts

Controversy was stirred recently when UK Prime Minister Rishi Sunak appeared in a video, posted on social media, where he was seen in the back seat of a moving vehicle without his seat belt fastened.

Car occupants have been legally required to wear a seat belt in a moving vehicle for 40 years. The seat belt was originally invented in Sweden and first adopted by Volvo. The invention's proven track record of saving lives has led to it becoming as familiar and ubiquitous as the steering wheel.

IAM RoadSmart's policy on seat belt use is straightforward...

Seat belts have saved countless lives – plausibly numbering in the millions – since their introduction. The risk of death or severe injury in a collision increases dramatically for anyone not wearing their seat belt. That's why it's critical for drivers and passengers alike to ensure that their seat belts are fastened.



Credit: State Farm - Flickr

As we all know, nobody is exempt from the danger that is present when driving or travelling as a passenger in a moving vehicle.

The Prime Minister has reportedly been issued a conditional offer of a fixed penalty for the offence. This will cost him £100, which could increase up to £500 if the matter ends up going to court.

What are the statistics on people wearing seat belts?

In 2021, of all car occupant fatalities, 34% of males and 20% of females were not wearing seat belts.

17-29-year-olds were the worst offenders with 40% of fatalities not wearing a seat belt. Of all fatalities that occurred between 6pm and 8am, 47% were not wearing a seat belt.

When we compare these figures to the far smaller portion of car occupants who are observed not wearing seat belts (usually between 10% and 5%), it becomes clear how real the danger is of travelling without a seat belt, in the event of a collision, and is an issue we must all take seriously.

Advanced driving

Many modern cars will sound an alert and/or show a symbol on the dashboard if someone isn't wearing a seatbelt. We, as advanced drivers, include a visual or verbal check that everyone in the vehicle is wearing their seatbelt as part of the starting procedure. This is not only to protect the individuals concerned but to protect you as driver from an unbelted person loose in the vehicle should a collision occur.

Fatal accident in Newtownards

There was a collision between a lorry and a motorcycle on the Bangor Road in Newtownards on 9 February and I was diverted to Bangor via the 6-Road Ends.



Credit: Lewis Clarke

Many people complain about the length of time a road is closed following a fatal collision or where someone is seriously injured. This is not just for the purpose of dealing with casualties (although this can take some time if people have to be cut out from vehicles). Police forensics have to have time to carry out a detailed investigation of the scene of the collision in a safe manner to ascertain, as far as possible, what was the cause. You may be inconvenienced by delays or diversions but that is little compared to the consequences for the people involved in the collision.

Clearly we can't speculate on the cause of the collision which occurred within a 30MPH zone. However, the message for drivers is to be doubly aware of motorcyclists (and cyclists). Remember the slogan "think once, think twice, think bike" For motorcyclists they should do all they can to make sure they are visible - lights, high-viz clothing and road position on the approach to hazards.



Can you see the bike? There is a joint responsibility to avoid a collision - the motorcyclist has to be sure of his or her visibility and the driver has to do more than glance to see if the way is clear.

Passenger's feet on dashboard

This is more of an issue in North America but it sometimes seen here. Below is a link to a video showing a crash test dummy in a collision. Just observe what happens to the dummy's legs.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5uEt79tGgL4>

The views expressed in the "Road Observer" are not necessarily those of the Editor, the North Down Advanced Motorists Group or the Institute of Advanced Motorists