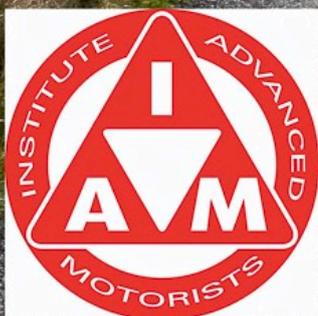
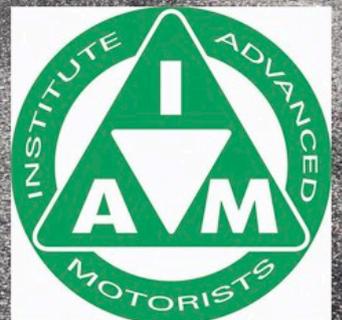


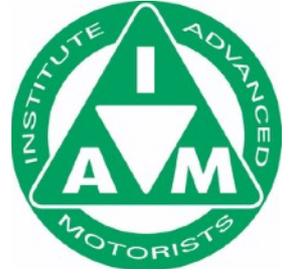
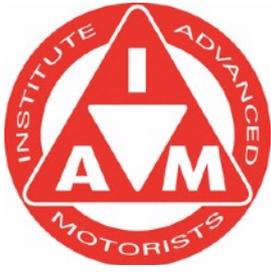
# The Road Observer

The Newsletter of the North Down  
Advanced Motorists Group



Summer 2017





Official Provider

## The Road Observer

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

Summer 2017

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

Vol 20.6

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### New Members

This month we would like to welcome to the Group car member Zoe Glover and motorcyclists David Milliken, Jim O'Brien, Glen Wilson and Michael Wood. We hope you not only gain from being members of our Group but will also enjoy the friendship and camaraderie of our get-togethers.

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### Advanced Tests

**Congratulations this month to two motorcycle members:**

**Ross Cameron**

**who achieved a F1RST pass  
and to**

**Martyn Boyd**

**Good luck and safe driving or riding to any Associates approaching their test.**

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### Cover picture

The May cover picture was correctly identified as Castle Street / Mill Street Comber by John Barry, Angela Bell, Ivan Greenfield and Annie McFarland.

Can you identify the location of the cover picture in this edition? No prizes, just the satisfaction of good observation and, of course, a mention in the Road Observer.

## Dates for your diary

- 8 August - STAC enrolment, demonstration drives
- 5 September - STAC 1- IPSGA
- 12 September - **Group Night - Graham Deane: Advanced Driver Assistant Systems**
- 26 September - STAC 2 - Human Factors
- 3 October - STAC 3 - Core driving skills
- 10 October - **Group Night - AGM Guest Speaker Ken Keir, IAM Chairman**
- 24 October - STAC 4 - Bends and cornering
- 31 October - STAC 5 - Roundabouts and junctions
- 7 November - STAC 6 - Overtaking
- 14 November - **Group Night - Tabletop rally**
- 28 November - STAC 7 - Motorways and dual carriageways
- 5 December - STAC 8 - Manoeuvring
- 12 December - **Group Night - Christmas dinner**

STAC - Short Term Associate Course. Associate Members should ensure that 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.

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## June Group Night

A number of us visited a private car collection and were given a guided tour of all the cars including their history some of which had well-known previous owners. This was a stunning collection and Members' jaws were visibly seen to drop when some of the garage doors were opened.

Unfortunately, given the value of the collection and concerns for the collection's security we cannot provide any more details about the cars or the location of the collection.

Suffice to say if you weren't there you missed a rare treat.

By way of compensation, below is a picture of a collection of Ferraris spotted at a viewpoint in the River Lot area of France a few years ago. They were involved in a driving tour and, not surprising, they could be heard a long time before they appeared.



## Ards half-marathon

Congratulations to Paul and Lynn Sheldon who ran the Ards half-marathon on 30 June raising £1750 for Pancreatic Cancer UK.

This was in memory of Paul's late Father Billy, who sadly died of the disease in March this year. They both completed the run in good times with Lynn winning a prize for first lady in her age group (don't ask).

Paul sends his thanks to all those in North Down Advanced Motorists who so generously donated.

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## Free taster sessions

In the May edition of the Road Observer I drew attention to the free car and bike taster sessions being offered by IAM Roadsmart over the period 1 June to 31 August and that North Down Advanced Motorists was participating in the scheme. To date we have had 5 car applications - one has been completed, two will take place on enrolment night on 8 August and 2 more are in the process of being arranged. One bike session has been completed.

Participation results in a 10% discount if the applicant goes on to purchase an Advanced Driving or Riding Course. While we would encourage applicants to go that extra step and sign up for an advanced course there is absolutely no obligation to do so.



The sessions will be like observed runs and will last around 90 minutes, including briefing / debriefing.

Each participant will receive a concise briefing and an overview of IAM RoadSmart driving/riding principles, followed by an on-road session and ending with a debrief. The tone of the session is a low-pressure introduction on how to make driving/riding enjoyable, stress-free and fun.

The scheme has been extended to 30 September. If you know anyone who might be interested in having a taster session please ask them to get in touch: [leslie.ashe@btinternet.com](mailto:leslie.ashe@btinternet.com). 07790 167555

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## Bike runs

The June bike run saw 16 bikes out for a run to An Cregan on the main Omagh to Cookstown Road. Unfortunately Guy had a malfunction with his bike in Banbridge resulting in an early return home accompanied by one of the other riders. Unfortunately we have no pictures of the event or of Guy's incident.

I would be grateful if bike members on runs could take some pictures for inclusion in future editions of the Road Observer. Many thanks in anticipation!

## Electric cars - the future?



Volvo Cars has committed to putting one million electrified cars on the road by 2025. This milestone will be achieved by offering new fully electric vehicles and a broader range of plug-in hybrids.

**France** will end sales of petrol and diesel vehicles by 2040 as part of an ambitious plan to meet its targets under the Paris climate accord, Emmanuel Macron's government has announced.

**Norway**, which has the highest penetration of electric cars in the world, has set a target of only allowing sales of 100% electric or plug-in hybrid cars by 2025.

**The Netherlands** has mooted a 2025 ban for diesel and petrol cars, and some federal states in **Germany** are keen on a 2030 phase-out. **India**, where scores of cities are blighted by dangerous air pollution, is considering the idea of no longer selling petrol or diesel cars by 2030.

In the **UK** the Government has recently announced a plan to stop all sales of petrol and diesel cars by 2040 as part of the government's intention for almost every car and van on UK roads to be zero emission by 2050.



These are significant commitments but are they realistic? The following is a first look by the Road Observer at some of the issues that will have to be addressed if electric powered cars are to achieve this goal.



Depending on the car you buy and the battery capacity you specify the current range of electric cars is as much as around 230 miles for a Tesla (opposite) or as little as 125 miles for a BMW i3 (above), 124 miles for a Nissan Leaf (next page) (with corresponding differences in the price you pay for the car). Of course these are manufacturers figures and as with petrol and diesel we all know how much fuel consumption in the real world differs from the manufacturers figures.

Charging can take place overnight at home but if you have a long journey ahead you will need to

plan carefully to ensure that your route passes an appropriate charging point (bearing in mind that not all charging points are the same) and include time for charging en-route which may take 30 minutes.

Charging points will have to be established across the country. The existing network of filling stations could provide a model but given that a charge may take 30 minutes many more charging points would be required than there are pumps at present. Charging points could also be provided in car parks and in town and city streets.

To give an idea of the infrastructure required, at the moment there are 160 double headed fast charge points in Northern Ireland. Assuming these are used to full capacity across say a 16 hour day and assuming a 30 minute charge these could charge only 5120 vehicles. Tesla have only 7 charging points in Northern Ireland at present.

Home charging will be the answer for many who are doing shorter journeys. However, many people do not have access to a driveway and have to park in the street. Home charging for these people will require charging points to be installed in the street as cables running across the footpath would be unacceptable.



Assuming that sufficient numbers of charging points are available there are concerns about the increased demand for electricity at the peak time when commuters arrive home from work and plug in to charge for the next day or couple of days. Looking at the bigger picture there are already concerns in GB that the National Grid is approaching capacity and that new generating plants will have to be established to meet the extra demand from electric cars.

Government already receives a large proportion of the cost of petrol and diesel fuels as tax. How will this be replaced if there is no tax on the power required for electric vehicles? Will this require a significant increase in Vehicle Excise Duty (VED) for hybrid vehicles and also electric vehicles being charged VED? Government has already increased VED for certain categories of vehicles because of the loss of revenue from the number of vehicles with low emissions. Or, will this be the opportunity for the Government to introduce road pricing in place of VED?

To enjoy the sort of motoring we can do today cars would need to have a range of at least 300 miles and there would need to be a huge network of charging points all over the country.



However, 2040 is a long way off and it is impossible to say how realistic the targets are. A point to note is that when cars started to appear on our roads, petrol had to be purchased from a chemist's shop in two-gallon cans - the network of filling stations available today probably could not have been envisaged back then.

Similarly it is difficult to predict what the position will be in 20 years time. Battery technology is improving all the time in terms of capacity and charging speed so by the time petrol and diesel cars are no longer sold it may be that all the technical difficulties have been overcome, the necessary infrastructure will be in place and we can continue to enjoy the freedom of the roads that we have today.

On the other hand we may have to alter our expectations. We are living in interesting motoring times.

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**And finally**.....spotted in Keswick. 1933 Rolls Royce 20/25 Tickford Cabriolet. Only one other example of this model exists in the UK.

There was a lovely smell of hot oil around it - will electric cars be able to evoke an emotional response to a piece of engineering?



**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**