

## CONTENTS

- 1 Contents
- 2 Editorial / Driving Tip - Clocks Going Back
- 3 In Pictures: 'History of Cars' Exhibition / Avoid Being a Victim of....
- 4 Don't Get Caught by the Car Park Scam / You Are What You Eat
- 5 Test Passes / New Associates / 24 Cars Crash Into Stationary....
- 6 A Brief History of The Highway Code
- 7 Continued
- 8 Continued / Electric Cars Set to be Exempt From Company Tax in....
- 9 'Dangerous' Used Tyres Put Lives at Risk, Councils Warn
- 10 Drivers Rate M20 as Worst Motorway in England / Easy Does It!
- 11 Seven in 10 Would Not Feel Safe in a Self-driving Car / Business....
- 12 Group Night Diary
- 13 Want to Drive on the Skid Pan?
- 14 Skid Pan Visit / Old Tyres Used to Resurface Roads / A Cow's Tail
- 15 How to Avoid Dings and Damage to Your Car
- 16 Government Calls for Action to Reduce Tyre and Brake Particulate...
- 17 Word Search ~ Communication
- 18 Do You Carry These Items in Your Car?
- 19 Drivers Could be Hit with Penalty Points if They Fail to Wear Seat....
- 20 Hold Your Horses! How to Pass Horses Safely on the Road
- 21 Continued / Estimated 2.7m UK Drivers Have Crashed While Using ..
- 22 Know Your Fuel / Politics
- 23 Courts Report / Is it Legal to Stop and Help a Motorist on Motorway?
- 24 Group Officials

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## EDITORIAL

With the clocks going back in a couple of weeks it is worth thinking about the consequences of driving in poorer light, especially at each end of the day.

Vision becomes less distinct and it is always worth checking your light bulbs and keeping the lenses on your lights clean as more of your driving will be done in darker driving conditions.

To emphasise this, IAM RoadSmart issued a Driving Tip which I have reproduced below.

*Stay safe and enjoy your driving.*

### DRIVING TIP - CLOCKS GOING BACK

With the clocks going back on Sunday 27th October, now is the ideal time to give your vehicle the “once over” to ensure it is fit for the long nights ahead.



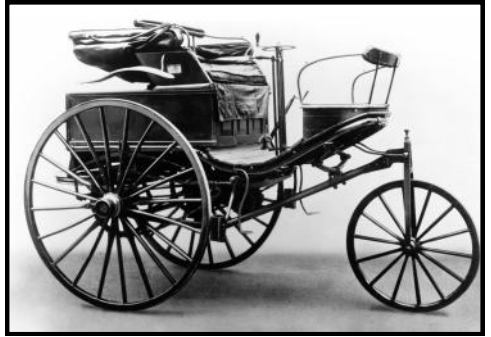
- ◆ Darker days and deteriorating weather conditions start to take their toll on the car's headlights very quickly. Keeping them clean with a wipe over means you will see better and, crucially, you will be seen more easily too.
- ◆ Checking all the bulbs are all still working at the front and rear only takes a moment. You can sometimes do this by using reflections from shop windows, for example, when you are stuck in traffic.
- ◆ If your battery is a bit sluggish starting now, it makes sense to get a new one before the cold mornings start.
- ◆ Making that sure your windscreen is clear – with a non freezing, non smearing bottle top up – is essential. Technically it is an offence not to have your windscreen washer working. Rubber wiper blades themselves should not smear. If they do, try giving the blades a wipe over which might mean that you don't need to replace them.
- ◆ There are products available that help create a water resistant film across the outside of the windscreen, which improves visibility by moving water and dirt.
- ◆ Quite often a film builds up within the screen as well which makes driving at night feels like you are dealing with a series of oncoming blurs.
- ◆ The onset of autumn leaves and winter weather will also mean your tyres need to be up to scratch. Are the pressures correct and are the tyres damaged or worn? The legal requirement is a 1.6mm tread depth but with winter conditions you may feel safer with 3mm.

These pre-winter checks don't take long to do but could mean that you and your car are safer on the road.

**COPY DATE FOR DECEMBER SEGMENT IS**  
**4th NOVEMBER 2019**

## **IN PICTURES: 'HISTORY OF CARS' EXHIBITION CELEBRATES '20TH CENTURY'S MOST IMPORTANT OBJECT'**

A new exhibition celebrating the history of cars will chart the evolution of 'the 20th century's most important object'. 'Cars: Accelerating the Modern World' will document 130 years of motoring history when it opens at London's Victoria & Albert Museum later this year.



Showcasing 15 cars and 250 objects across three main sections, the exhibition examines how the car changed our relationship to speed, how it changed the way we make and sell, and how it altered the landscape around us, from countryside to cityscape.

Brendan Cormier, a senior design curator at the V&A, said it was a particularly timely moment to exhibit cars given their potentially uncertain future.

He said: "We've been talking to a lot of car manufacturers who say they can't imagine what a car might look like in 10 years, even two years is difficult to imagine. We're at this incredible fork in the road."

Cars: Accelerating the Modern World will be at the V&A from 23 November to 19 April 2020.

## **AVOID BEING A VICTIM OF FLASH FOR CASH SCAMS**

Desperate to keep one step ahead of the police and insurance industry, fraudsters and criminals have come up with a new scam, Flash for Cash, a variant on the so-called Crash for Cash sting that has been catching unwary motorists out for years.

Here's what it is and, more importantly, how you can avoid falling prey to it.

Criminals in a car will flash their headlights to let you out of a junction or petrol station forecourt.

When you acknowledge their kindness by joining the main carriageway they will deliberately drive into your car. They will then make a claim on your insurance policy for the damage caused to their car and for the (largely bogus) personal injury they will claim to have suffered.

It's a clever scam because the subsequent insurance claim will come down to one driver's word against another – and even if the insurance claim assessor believes you when you tell them that you were flashed out, isn't a defence: Rule 111 of the Highway Code states:

*"Never assume that flashing headlights is a signal inviting you to proceed. Use your own judgement and proceed carefully."*

So the only way to avoid falling prey is to ignore what may well be another motorist's genuine act of kindness and to only enter the road when the way is clear. Sad, but true.

## **DON'T GET CAUGHT BY THE CAR PARK SCAM**

Police have warned motorists not to respond to notes left on their windscreens that claim their car has been involved in an accident.

While many of us have been driving for years without incident, there are criminals who target unsuspecting motorists.

Most scams are cleverly designed so that they're easy to fall for, and this one is no different. Please read it and share it with your friends because knowledge is power!

Police have warned motorists not to respond to notes left on their windscreens that claim that their car has been involved in an accident.

The note goes on to give a name and a phone number for the driver to call. Those who do call are then pumped for personal information that police believe may be used for criminal purposes.

In a variant of this scam, the telephone number is a premium rate number set up by the fraudsters. Calling it will run up a huge phone bill as the criminals will do everything they can to keep you on the line for as long as possible.

Alternatively, you may have been targeted by a different breed of con-artist - someone who has damaged their own car and is trying to pin the blame on you. If the note you receive accuses you of causing damage to another car in the car park, don't be tempted to check your own car for scratch marks - they may have waited for you to start inspecting your car to snap pictures, which could be used as 'evidence' that you were aware you'd hit another vehicle.

If you return to your car and find a note on the windscreen, get in your car and immediately drive away from the area. Once safely at home, you should report the matter to the police, retaining the note for them to use as evidence. Never call the telephone number that you have been given.

The law around motoring accidents is very clear and you will be well within it if you report an alleged accident to the police; there is no legal obligation on you to call a telephone number left on your car at the scene.

If you do fall victim, then you should contact the police immediately. Explain what has happened and give them any evidence, including the note if you still have it.

## **YOU ARE WHAT YOU EAT**

A doctor was addressing a large audience in Orpington ...

"The material we put into our stomachs is enough to have killed most of us sitting here, years ago.

Red meat is awful. Soft drinks corrode your stomach lining. Chinese food is loaded with MSG.

High fat diets can be disastrous, and none of us realizes the long-term harm caused by the germs in our drinking water. However, there is one thing that's the most dangerous of all and we all have eaten, or will eat it. Can anyone here tell me what food it is that causes the most grief and suffering for years after eating it?"

After several seconds of quiet, a 75-year-old man in the front row raised his hand, and softly said, "Wedding Cake."

## TEST PASSES

Congratulations to the following who have recently passed their IAM Roadsmart test:-

Laura Martin

Michael Walsh

## NEW ASSOCIATES

Welcome to the following new Associates who have recently joined the Group:-

Terry Allen

Rachel Conway

Caroline White

Peter Waterfield

Anna Armstrong

Kira Doherty

## 24 CARS CRASH INTO STATIONARY VEHICLES ON HARD SHOULDER EACH WEEK

Between three and four cars crash into stationary vehicles on the hard shoulder of the UK's major roads each day, according to new figures.

It means that there are 24 cases of vehicles colliding into stationary cars on the hard shoulder each and every week.



Between 2015 and 2017, there were around 750,000 traffic incidents registered on the UK's roads, equating to around 684 per day during the period, according to Green Flag, the breakdown rescue provider behind the research.

Close to 9,000 of these accidents involved a moving car colliding with a stationary vehicle, with 42 per cent of these taking place on the hard shoulder of a motorway or A road. Of these accidents, 19 per cent resulted in death and or serious injuries for those involved.

Damon Jowett, head of service delivery at Green Flag, said: "It's important for people to be aware of the danger of driving on motorways, which are a hotspot for traffic incidents and resulting fatalities.

"Many accidents can be prevented. If there is a vehicle stopped on the hard shoulder, drivers need to slow down and move their vehicle over to the next lane if safe to do so.

"This simple manoeuvre not only helps protect the drivers and passengers in the stationary vehicle, but it also safeguards our roadside workers as they assist them."

London is a hot spot for this type of incident, with 41 per cent of accidents taking place in the capital. It's followed up by other high-risk areas such as the West Midlands, West Yorkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxford.

## **A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE HIGHWAY CODE**

'A code of good manners to be observed by all courteous and considerate persons' April 1931, as was the foreword of the first HIGHWAY CODE by the then transport minister Herbert Morrison.

The Highway Code emerged from legislation that was introduced to curb the appalling death toll in traffic accidents (they were accidents then not incidents) on British roads. In 1931 there were 2.3 million vehicles on the roads and over 7000 people were killed! In 2018 there are 33 million vehicles on the road and there were 1770 road deaths. The fact there are a quarter of the deaths with 14 times the amount of traffic is due to, in no small part, car manufactures making vehicles safer for the drivers, passengers and pedestrians. Well done them!

Many of the innovations in vehicle design have been introduced to comply with government legislation. The appearance of the first motor car on British roads in 1894 prompted immediate concern and government involvement. Until Benz produced a 2 horsepower vehicle the only horse powered vehicles eat grass and provided piles of slippery steaming stuff on the roads (which they still do).

There are no figures for the accidents of horse, riders and members of the public to compare .

Horses were occasionally terrified by steam contraptions of various types until the great petrol engine car was introduced with its relative ease of operation. Steam powered then became a thing of the past.

The Locomotive act of 1865 (the red flag act) limited the speed of powered vehicles to 2mph in cities, towns and villages and 4mph on the open roads. It also required the vehicle to be manned by 3 people and that one of them walk 60 yards ahead to warn the general public.

In 1895 cars of less than 3 tons were exempt from the red flag act and could travel out of town at the giddy speed of 14 mph.

It quickly became apparent that further regulation was needed to control the speed freaks.

Mr Arnold of Kent, in 1896 became the first person to be prosecuted for speeding (in 2017 there were 2.3 million tickets issued, which is the same amount of cars on the road in 1931). Mr Arnold was fined 5 shillings for exceeding the 2 MPH speed limit at a staggering 8mph.

Brighton has always been a place that cars are not liked, in 1899 Mr Jeal was prosecuted for driving at speeds inappropriate for the traffic or conditions. He was fined £3 (1½ times the average professional weekly wage). The police reported he was driving at the shocking speed of 12mph. During his court appearance it was pronounced that no one ever needs to travel through Brighton at more than 4 MPH (very much the same now but parking is worse).

Unfortunately for Mrs Bridget Driscoll she has the accolade of being the first pedestrian to be killed by a car in August 1896. She was run over by a Roger Benz car in Crystal Palace.

*continued*

The inquest into her death, claimed Mrs Driscoll had been startled by the car and froze in fear as the car approached at speeds of at least 4 MPH. The 20 year old driver was accused of modifying the car to allow it to go 8 MPH but this was not proved. Nowadays the loud music would have warned the lady, but 20 year olds haven't changed much in 120 years.

In 1903 the Motor Car Act enforced all vehicles to be registered. They had to display their registration number. The fee for a car was £1 and for a motorcycle 5 shillings.

At the same time driving licences were introduced, there was no aptitude test or a check for fitness or eyesight. Just pop down to the post office with your 5 shillings and there you go. Minimum age for motorcycles was 14 and cars 17. No driver whatever their age needs to show any knowledge of the law pertaining to road users or those new fangled things, road signs.

The Motor Car Act made provision for local authorities to erect road signs, standardising the hollow red triangle as a hazard warning, solid red circles showing what is prohibited and a white circle indicating speed limits. Signs were put up by anyone RAC, AA, Council, cycle clubs, so confusion rained.

As cars began to be mass produced they became more reliable, faster and therefore the accident was on the rise. In the 1920's there were bus races, where individual bus companies were trying to pick up more passengers, to increase revenue, sped through streets and even forced the opposition off the road. There was greater competition for the road spaces between all vehicles.

As a response to the growing anarchy on the roads the Road Traffic Act of 1930 gave local authorities power to regulate bus services, made it law that you must have insurance, and required the Ministry of Transport to prepare a guidance for all road users in the form of The Highway Code.

The original Highway code carried advertising. It was a booklet with adverts for insurance (now a legal requirement, RAC, AA, BP, Castrol, also Autocar and the motorcycle Mag).

You were advised of those new fangled things called traffic lights and it listed towns where you may find them. There was also sound advice, with special attention drawn to the drivers of motor vehicles who were told to be ready to stop when meeting a flock of sheep, a herd of cattle or a pack of hounds.

The 1935 Highway Code, this was far more comprehensive than its predecessor although then as now, contravening. The Highway Code did not necessarily mean you were breaking the law, but as was pointed out in the inside cover, A failure on the part of any person to observe any provision of the highway code, could count against them in a court of law.

The Illustrations included the meanings of various road signs, it carried out the two speed limit signs 30 in built up areas and national (which at the time was no speed limit)

To ensure the drivers had the correct skills to handle a modern car or motorcycle in 1935 it became compulsory to sit a test. Within a year the death toll on the roads fell by 1000.

*continued*

## Safe stopping Distances.

One of the most interesting innovations in the 1946 Highway Code was the inclusion of a table of 'stopping distances' for drivers. These were given as a guide based on ideal road and weather conditions and on a vehicle which was performing perfectly.

From 50 MPH it was estimated that a competent driver's speed of reaction would give him a thinking distance of 50 feet, added to a braking distance of 125 feet making an overall stopping distance of 175 feet.

Amazingly the typical stopping distances in the latest edition of the highway code, although expressed in meters rather than feet, are identical to those published in 1946.

Whilst it would be argued that the modern driver does not react any faster than a driver in the 1940's, therefore thinking distance should remain the same. Modern cars with servo assisted disc brakes, far better tyres, traction control and ABS can stop far more quickly than the 1940's counterparts. Where safety is concerned no doubt the decision was taken to err on the side of caution and stick to the well tried and tested formula first seen in 1946.

In my humble opinion there were no distractions within the car of 1946, no heater, no radio etc. The driver was concentrating on the main job at hand of driving. Today we have a raft of both legal and illegal distractions, info systems, entertainment systems, Sat Nav, smart phones, e-mails, text calls, all distracting us from the driving, so you are lucky if the driver is concentrating on the main job at hand, so keep the stopping distances the same, and give us all half a chance.

*Ed: My thanks to Steve Riches*

## **ELECTRIC CARS SET TO BE EXEMPT FROM COMPANY TAX IN 2020**

Businesses looking to add electric vehicles to their fleets are set for a boost next year — with battery-powered cars set to be exempt from company tax in 2020.

Following a review of the changes to the new Worldwide Harmonised Light Vehicle Test Procedure (WLTP) regulations, the Treasury has abandoned benefit-in-kind charges (BiK)

on electric cars next year. As a result, cars emitting less than 50g/km of CO<sub>2</sub> and capable of at least 130 miles of electric range will be covered by a zero per cent BiK rate from April 6<sup>th</sup> next year. This stretches to hybrids and plug-in hybrids, though no models fitting these criteria are currently available in the UK.

Charges will apply from the 2021/22 financial year though, with a one per cent BiK rate on these vehicles, which will increase to two per cent in 2022/23. A two per cent rate had originally been planned to be applied in 2020/21.

A statement from the Treasury said it "recognises the value of the company car market in supporting the transition to zero-emissions technology" and also considers that by encouraging more company car drivers into low-emission cars, it can help generate "a competitive second-hand market in these vehicles".





## **'DANGEROUS' USED TYRES PUT LIVES AT RISK, COUNCILS WARN**

Motorists are being urged to check used tyres over before they buy.

"Rogue" used tyre sellers are endangering the lives of motorists up and down the country, according to local councils.



The Local Government Association (LGA), which represents councils in England and Wales, found that nearly half of used tyres in some areas are being sold illegally. The organisation says the so-called part-worn tyres are sometimes sold with serious safety defects, unsafe repairs and incorrect labelling, and it is urging motorists to be vigilant when they consider buying used rubber.

According to the LGA, prospective buyers of part-worn tyres should check they are in good condition, with no cuts or bulges and plenty of tread left over. The organisation also says used tyres should bear the required 'part-worn' tyre marking, which shows that the tyre has been checked over and meets legal requirements.

The gravity of that advice is shown by recent government statistics, which revealed that 719 road casualties were also recorded in reported UK accidents in 2017 where illegal, defective or under-inflated tyres were a contributory factor. Worse still, over the same period, some 17 people died in accidents caused - at least in part - by tyres in poor condition.

But the LGA says the onus is also on the used tyre trade to clean up its act. The organisation has warned unscrupulous sellers of illegal used tyres they face not only the confiscation of their stock, but also prosecution, which could lead to a sizeable fine and even prison.

"Dangerous part-worn tyres are putting motorists' lives at risk and blatant, inexcusable breaches of the law are happening with shocking prevalence in some areas," said Cllr Simon Blackburn, chair of the LGA's Safer and Stronger Communities Board. "Cheap used tyres might be tempting to buy but if they don't have the correct legal markings, motorists could unknowingly buy illegal tyres which could contribute to a major accident.

"Motorists buying used tyres should go to a reputable trader and check they have 'part-worn' stamped on them as without this mark, they are unlikely to have been checked and the retailer is breaking the law. They should also look out for any cracks, tears, lumps and check the state of the thread before buying.

"Used tyres might not be the best investment. New tyres are available to suit all budgets, provide a safer option and should last longer, meaning they may offer better value for money in the long term. Selling illegal used tyres to unsuspecting customers is a really serious offence and we encourage all motorists to report potential breaches of the law."

## **DRIVERS RATE M20 AS WORST MOTORWAY IN ENGLAND**

England's least popular motorway is the M20 in Kent, according to major new research.

A survey of drivers by watchdog Transport Focus found that the link between the ports at Dover and the M25 has an overall satisfaction rating of just 65%.



The road scored particularly badly for the quality of its surface at 59%.

One respondent described it as “bumpy, uncomfortable to drive on” while another said it is “full of potholes”.

Drivers on the M20 have suffered disruption in recent months as one section is being converted into a smart motorway, while temporary barriers have also been installed as part of Brexit preparations.

It is the first time Transport Focus has published the findings of its new Strategic Roads User Survey, which covers motorways and major A-roads managed by Highways England.

Other roads near the bottom of the ranking were:

- ◆ The M6 (72%) which runs from the West Midlands to Cumbria
- ◆ The A52 (72%) in the East Midlands
- ◆ The M25 (76%) which orbits London
- ◆ The A34 (76%) which runs from Greater Manchester to Hampshire

England's best major road, according to the survey of more than 8,500 road users, is the A19 (95%) in the North East, which was praised for having “no major holds ups” and giving “no stress” to drivers.

The highest ranked motorway is the M11 (92%) which links London with Cambridgeshire, while the average satisfaction score across the whole Strategic Road Network was 82%.

Transport Focus chief executive Anthony Smith said: “The Strategic Roads User Survey gives Highways England the most robust picture ever at a national, regional and individual road level of driver satisfaction on the motorways and major A roads that it manages.

“This survey reflects the experience of all drivers – whether in cars, vans, lorries, coaches or on a motorbike – across a range of key issues.

“The results show where Highways England should focus its efforts to maximise satisfaction, including reducing delays arising from accidents and improving user experience with journey time and road surface quality.”

## **EASY DOES IT!**

I have a fear of speed bumps, but I am slowly getting over it.

## **SEVEN IN 10 WOULD NOT FEEL SAFE IN A SELF-DRIVING CAR**

Seven in 10 motorists would not feel safe as a passenger in a self-driving car, according to new research.

An IAM Roadsmart study of more than 1,600 people found that 70% would feel either “unsafe” or “very unsafe” in a fully self-driving vehicle where there is no driver input. Just four percent of respondents said they would feel “very safe” in such a vehicle.



By the same token, three-quarters (75%) of those quizzed said they felt the autonomous vehicle should not always be in “ultimate control”. And of those, four in 10 (40%) said they were “strongly” against the idea. Similarly, 90% of respondents said the driver should always be able to take over control of an autonomous vehicle should the need arise.

Interestingly, respondents were also very clear over whether the human element of driving should be negated in future. When asked whether they agreed with the assertion that ‘all human drivers should be banned from driving on the roads once fully autonomous vehicles are widely available’, some 82% said they either “disagreed” or “strongly disagreed”.

And two-thirds of those questioned said they were either “concerned” or “very concerned” that we are heading “towards a future where the vehicle takes over more and more functions previously controlled by the driver”.

There was some support for existing driver assistance technology, however. Half (50%) of respondents claimed to be either “comfortable” or “very comfortable” using systems such as adaptive cruise control, which maintains a safe distance to the car in front, and lane-keeping assistance, which holds the vehicle in its lane. But despite that, more than a quarter (27%) still claimed to be uncomfortable with the technology.

Neil Greig, IAM RoadSmart’s director of policy and research, said the results showed general public mistrust of driverless technology.

“It’s clear from the results of our survey that the motor industry has a big job ahead in convincing drivers of the safety virtues of self-driving vehicles,” he said. “While on paper they offer significant advantages in eliminating human error from collisions, there is a lot of confusion, misinformation and an over-abundance of terminology which has made the public distrustful of it.

“Some 44% of our respondents felt poorly or very poorly informed on autonomous vehicles with only six% feeling very well informed. There needs to be an industry-standard on the acronyms and product names used, and car companies need to come together, alongside government, to ensure the facts out there are clearer and easy-to-understand.”

## **BUSINESS NEWS**

Sir Hartley Chintz, the famous upholstery expert who recently fell into a fabric loom, is said to be almost completely recovered.



# Group Night Diary

Meetings are held at the Small Hall, Crofton Halls, York  
Rise, off Crofton Road, Orpington, BR6 8PR  
Doors open 7.15pm for 7.45pm start

10th December 2019  
The Christmas Quiz  
(including buffet)

10th March 2020  
57th AGM  
(with Guest Speaker to be announced)

9th June 2020  
(with Guest Speaker to be announced)

If you would like to organise a Group Night or have any suggestions for a Speaker, then please contact a member of the Committee.

Their details can be found on page 24.

## Want to Drive on the Skid Pan?



Following the group's successful "Skid Pan Experience" at the Essex Skid Pan, Kelvedon recently, we will be booking another date later in the year.

There are some names already on the list for the next event, so if you want to go, get your name down early to avoid disappointment.

The visit will start with a briefing on what you will be doing including safety instructions. There are 10 places and there will be 2 instructors who will give a demonstration on the skid pan and then you will be able to drive with the instructor and practise what you will have been shown; to create a skid and to be able to keep control, hopefully!

The cost is £63 each and you will be using the skid pan cars which are both front and rear wheel drive.

Please let Michaela Halse have your name by e-mail, telephone, text or post to:-

39 Great Queen St.  
Dartford  
Kent  
DA1 1TJ

E-mail to: [michaelahalse121@gmail.com](mailto:michaelahalse121@gmail.com)

Phone: 020 7802 3240 Mobile: 07860 409493

**Book now to avoid missing out !!**

## SKID PAN VISIT

SE Group members posing with their certificates after an enjoyable and exciting day at the Skid Pan Training Centre at Kelvedon.



## OLD TYRES USED TO RESURFACE ROADS

Old tyres could be used to resurface motorways in a bid to stop them being sent to landfill sites abroad. A new asphalt has been invented using waste rubber from tyres in a trial funded by Highways England. The surface has already been laid on part of the M1 near Leicester to test its durability and, if successful, it could be used on motorways across England. It comes amid concerns over how best to deal with the 40million waste tyres produced in Britain each year. Tyres cannot be sent to landfill here under EU rules, so most are recycled. However, as many as 500,000 a year are shipped to landfill sites in Asia and the Middle East. The new road surface, developed by British company Tarmac, recycles tyres by adding granulated rubber to the mix. The trial used £180,000 from Highways England's £150,000 innovation fund. Paul Fleetham, of Tarmac, said: "Used tyres offer an opportunity to unlock the benefits of a circular economy."

*Ack Daily Mail 08/08/19*

## A COW'S TAIL

A man staggered into a hospital with a concussion, multiple bruises, two black eyes, and a five iron wrapped tightly around his throat. Naturally, the Doctor asked him, "What happened to YOU?" "Well, I was having a quiet round of golf with my wife, when at a difficult hole, we both sliced our golf balls into a field of cattle.

We went to look for them and while I was looking around I noticed one of the cows had something white at its rear end. I walked over, lifted its tail, and sure enough, there was a golf ball with my wife's monogram on it - stuck right in the middle of the cow's backside. Still holding the cow's tail up, I yelled to my wife, Hey, this looks like yours!" I don't remember much after that.'

## **HOW TO AVOID DINGS AND DAMAGE TO YOUR CAR**

Every car owner fears picking up dings and damage and it can seem like it's an unavoidable hazard. There are steps you can take to help prevent the threat of a new door ding, a kerbed alloy or a scuffed bumper after a trip to the shop, though. Here are some tips:-

### **Lower kerbside mirror when parallel parking**

It doesn't matter how good you are at parking, one day, you're bound to kerb a wheel if you parallel park on a regular basis. That said, it's an issue that is easily avoidable with a simple little trick. If you're concerned about dinging your alloys, lower the kerbside mirror as you approach to see exactly where your rear wheel is, allowing you to position yourself close without causing damage.

### **Park in quieter areas of car parks**

Car parks are a haven for attracting door dings and scuffs caused by other careless drivers, but they're an unavoidable hazard in most cases. If you don't mind walking a little further to your destination, try parking in quieter areas of a car park — in effect reducing chances of a ding.

### **If busy, park as central as possible in a bay**

That said, we've all been there before it's a Saturday afternoon, you've forgotten to buy food in for tea and the supermarket car park is full to the brim. There's no choice but to park in between two cars, and you look over to see the one next to you covered in scuffs and dings, indicating the sign of an owner that isn't interested in keeping their car pristine. Parking as central as possible in a bay creates an equal distance to cars either side of yours. It's not the ideal scenario, but it's better than laying over to one side of the bay and putting your pride and joy at risk of being knocked by someone in a rusty MPV.

### **Invest in alloy wheel protectors**

Coming back to kerbing. If lowering your mirrors isn't enough to cull your fear of damaging your car's wheels, invest in some alloy wheel protectors. These low-cost covers are easily available and a doddle to apply — adding a protective layer over the rim to prevent the underlying metal being damaged. Think of them like a phone case, only for your alloys.

### **Open doors carefully**

It may be easy to blame other people for dings and damage to your car, but it's just as possible you could cause them yourself if you're not careful. One culprit is careless door opening slamming them into other cars or obstacles nearby.

Take an extra moment to gently open them, allowing for better control and not a sudden burst open that may fling them into something nearby. If it's windy outside, be careful too a sudden gust of breeze can easily catch an open door and potentially cause it to hit an obstacle.

### **Fold mirrors in when parked**

Wing mirrors are a part of a car that is one of the most susceptible to damage. A passing car could easily knock them while your vehicle is parked up, so it's always a good idea to take the extra seconds to fold road-side mirrors in once you've left your car. Better still, many modern cars come with self-folding mirrors putting your mind at ease.



## **GOVERNMENT CALLS FOR ACTION TO REDUCE TYRE AND BRAKE PARTICULATE EMISSIONS**

The UK government has called on the car industry to find ways to reduce the amount of pollution caused by wear on tyres and brakes.

Despite extensive work to reduce tailpipe emissions, little has been done to reduce the amount of particulate pollution from tyres and brakes because it is so difficult to measure.

However, the independent scientific committee Air Quality Expert Group (AQEG), has warned that tyres and brakes alone could account for 10 per cent of national emissions of PM 2.5 by 2030.

In a new report, the AQEG says that “these particles enter the airstream having a detrimental impact on human health for drivers, passengers and bystanders”. It also noted that plastic particles from tyres enter sewers, which can have harmful consequences for marine life.

Environment minister Thérèse Coffey said: “The documents published today make clear that it is not just fumes from car exhaust pipes that have a detrimental impact on human health but also the tiny particles that are released from their brakes and tyres.

“Emissions from car exhausts have been decreasing through development of cleaner technologies and there is now a need for the car industry to find innovative ways to address the challenges of air pollution from other sources.”

Mike Hawes, chief executive of industry body the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders, said: “The automotive industry is committed to improving air quality and has already all but eliminated particulate matter from tailpipe emissions. Brake, tyre and road wear is a recognised challenge as emissions from these sources are not easy to measure.

“A United Nations global group, including industry experts and government, is working to better understand, and agree how to measure, these emissions. Maintenance of the road surface, as well as further investment in new vehicle technologies, is essential to reducing these emissions without compromising safety and we welcome further research in this area.”

According to government figures, nitrogen oxide emissions have fallen by 29 per cent since 2010, with sulphur dioxide emissions down 62 per cent. A report will be released soon that assesses the impact of microplastics from tyres and clothing on the marine environment.

## **HUMOUR IN UNIFORM**

The search for the man who terrorizes nudist camps with a bacon slicer goes on. Inspector Lemuel Jones had a tip-off this morning, but hopes to be back on duty tomorrow.





## WORD SEARCH ~ COMMUNICATION

Hidden in the grid below are the names of 24 different forms of Communication.

They may read horizontally, vertically or diagonally, but always in straight lines.

F	P	B	Q	X	E	F	T	M	W	I	K	G	A	N
J	F	I	I	Y	R	M	P	E	D	N	J	D	C	A
A	V	N	Z	S	S	T	A	D	L	T	T	A	C	D
A	T	P	O	M	E	M	N	I	T	E	L	L	U	B
N	M	I	A	L	M	P	A	A	L	R	G	B	V	J
D	X	A	F	M	A	A	O	E	S	N	L	R	E	M
K	J	A	R	E	P	A	P	S	W	E	N	O	A	H
X	E	D	V	G	H	H	C	I	T	T	Z	C	R	M
L	E	A	N	J	O	I	L	T	M	C	W	H	V	T
O	F	L	G	N	R	R	E	E	A	X	A	U	W	M
T	W	Q	E	C	E	R	E	B	T	N	O	R	D	V
N	X	Q	U	T	M	A	G	A	Z	I	N	E	D	R
K	R	L	S	P	E	E	C	H	D	G	W	O	X	U
N	A	O	X	I	E	L	B	A	C	Z	K	D	Y	K
R	P	F	J	G	V	Z	R	I	Q	Y	J	Y	V	S

AEROGRAM	FAX	MEMO	SEMAPHORE
BROCHURE	INTERNET	NEWSPAPER	SPEECH
BULLETIN	LEAFLET	PAMPHLET	TANNOY
CABLE	LETTER	POSTCARD	TELEGRAM
CIRCULAR	MAGAZINE	POSTER	TELEPHONE
EMAIL	MEDIA	RADIO	TELEX

## **DO YOU CARRY THESE ITEMS IN YOUR CAR?**

Richard Gladman, IAM RoadSmart's head of driving and riding standards has written about eight essential items that you should keep in your vehicle to help keep you safe on the road.

### **Phone and charger**

Turn your phone to silent and place it in the glove box to avoid temptation to use it whilst driving. Ensure you remember a charger for any emergencies when you do need to use it.

### **First aid kit**

You never know when you might need a first aid kit. You may need yourself or you may be able to help another road user if you're the first on scene at an accident. So, keep one in the boot of your car just in case.

### **Empty fuel can**

Carry an empty fuel can with you. DO NOT carry a full or partially full one as this can be a fire hazard if it's recently had fuel in. Flammable vapour may still be present.

### **Warm clothes/blanket/high vis**

We recommend keeping a blanket and some warm clothes in your car. The last thing you want is to be cold whilst broken down on the side of the road. Ensure you wear a high visibility jacket whilst manoeuvring around your vehicle so other road users can see you.

### **Food and drink**

Don't forget to bring some snacks and water to keep your energy levels up, always carry a bottle of water when driving.

### **Jump leads**

Your car battery can go flat at any time and can be a worry when your car won't start. Make sure you keep a set of jump leads in your car so you can start your engine with help from another vehicle.

### **Shoes**

Now, this may sound silly but keep a pair of comfortable/sensible shoes in your car. You never know when you're going to breakdown, and where for that matter. You may need to assess your car in the typical English weather.

### **Warning triangle**

An item that is regularly overlooked is the reflective warning triangle. In accordance to the Highway Code rule 274 you should "put a warning triangle on the road at least 45 metres (147 feet) behind your broken-down vehicle on the same side of the road, or use other permitted warning devices if you have them. Always take great care when placing or retrieving them, but never use them on motorways."

Richard says: "A journey can be a pleasant experience with the right planning. But it can turn into a nightmare if circumstances change and you do not have the right tools for the job with you. Getting stranded either in suddenly changing weather conditions, breakdowns or road closures will be made more bearable if you can let people know where you are, and survive in relative comfort and safety until you can get safely where you're going."

## **DRIVERS COULD BE HIT WITH PENALTY POINTS IF THEY FAIL TO WEAR SEAT BELT**

Drivers caught not wearing a seat belt face tougher punishments under Department for Transport (DfT) plans.

Offenders in Britain could be handed penalty points in addition to a fine, meaning some may lose their licence for failing to buckle up.



Currently, motorists who do not strap in are handed a £100 on-the-spot fine but no points. The DfT did not reveal how many points may be given to drivers for not wearing a seat belt, but three points are used in Northern Ireland.

Motorists can be disqualified from driving if they build up 12 or more points within three years.

Prince Philip was spoken to by police in January after being photographed driving without a seat belt.

More than a quarter (27%) of the 787 car occupants who died in crashes on Britain's roads in 2017 were not wearing a seat belt, according to DfT data.

This was compared with 20% during the previous year.

A survey commissioned by road safety charity Brake earlier this year indicated that nearly half (49%) of young drivers had been in a car with someone not wearing a seat belt in the previous 12 months.

Introducing points for failing to wear a seat belt is one of 74 measures being considered as part of the Government's Road Safety Action Plan.

Ministers are also analysing the feasibility of fitting breathalyser-style devices to vehicles driven by convicted drink-drivers.

So-called alcolocks – installed on all French coaches – prevent a vehicle from starting unless the driver passes an alcohol breath test.

Transport Secretary Chris Grayling said: "The UK has some of the safest roads in the world, but we are not complacent and continue to look at how we can make them safer.

"Today's action plan is a key milestone in our road safety work and sets out the important steps we are taking to reduce the number of people killed or seriously injured on our roads."

Steve Gooding, director of motoring research charity the RAC Foundation, said: "It is barely conceivable that tens of thousands of drivers and passengers make the decision each day not to belt up.

"The direct effect of non-compliance might be felt by the vehicle occupant themselves in the event of a crash, but ultimately the emergency services are left to deal with the roadside consequences and the taxpayer foots the bills."

## **ENTERTAINMENT NEWS**

Next week, we'll be talking to an out-of-work contortionist who says he can no longer make ends meet.

## **HOLD YOUR HORSES! HOW TO PASS HORSES SAFELY ON THE ROAD**

You may see more horses on the road during the summer months, and more than likely they'll be on a country lane. Here are IAM RoadSmart's tips on how best to pass a horse safely on the roads.

Horses are powerful animals and have extremely heightened senses. They are also 'flight' animals so if they become scared, they will revert back to their natural instinct. The British Horse Society has reported that nearly two horses are killed each week on UK roads. In last year alone, 87 horses and four people have been tragically killed.

### **If you're approaching a horse from behind:**

- ◆ Slow down and hold back. The rider will indicate whether it's safe to approach and overtake. If they don't, make sure you stay at least three car lengths behind and be careful to not move into this space. Be prepared to slow down further or even stop to protect yourself and the horse and rider. Avoid any sudden movements and loud noises such as revving the engine and playing your music loudly
- ◆ Most riders, and occasionally their horses will be in hi-vis so you should see them and able to slow down in good time. Remember in the countryside they could be around any corner
- ◆ When passing the horse and rider make sure you give plenty of space. We recommend at least a car's width and ensure it's done slowly. Remember to always pass "slow and wide" stick to 15mph or under. Take a look at this video explaining it from the British Horse Society: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VJfZM41oUOE>
- ◆ If you're on a country road and there's not much room to manoeuvre around the horse, the rider may decide to trot towards the nearest lay by or grass verge. Do not speed up to match their trot, stay back and allow the rider to get to safety before overtaking
- ◆ Often when you see two riders it is for safety reasons. This could be an inexperienced rider or nervous animal being coached along by a more experienced companion. Give them some consideration
- ◆ Keep an eye out for the rider. They will often give you signals asking to slow down, stop or to overtake. They will acknowledge you and assist you to pass, but their main priority is keeping themselves and the horse safe, so they'll be trying to keep their hands on the reins at all times
- ◆ Always accelerate gently to pass the horse and when moving away. Both rider and horse may both be inexperienced and nervous in traffic; do your bit to keep them safe
- ◆ If there are grass verges, many riders will take the option to move themselves up onto them and allow you to pass. Please continue to pass slowly as the noise of your engine can still spook the horse

### **If a horse is approaching on the other side of the road:**

- ◆ Slow down completely and consider putting on your hazard warning lights for anyone that may be behind you. You may need to stop to allow the horse to pass you safely if it is safe to do so

*continued*

Horse rider and IAM RoadSmart's digital content executive Jaimi McIlravey said: "Please continue to be careful when driving close to horses. From personal experience, it's not always a car that will spook a horse. You may be driving safely with enough gap between yourself and a horse and rider, however, something else may scare them, so be sure to stay alert.

If you see any incidents involving a horse and rider please contact the police with any information you have. You're also able to report an incident through this website: <https://www.bhs.org.uk/our-work/safety/report-an-incident>

## **ESTIMATED 2.7M UK DRIVERS HAVE CRASHED WHILE USING MOBILE PHONES**

### **Research also shows a fifth of us admit to texting while driving.**

Around 2.7 million drivers could have been involved in a collision or veered off the road because they were using their mobile phones while driving.

That's the conclusion of new research from vehicle maintenance chain Kwik Fit, which surveyed more than 2,000 Brits and found that seven percent of drivers had either had a collision while using a phone behind the wheel or veered off the road while distracted by their phones during the past two years. Assuming the survey sample is representative of the general population, Kwik Fit says that could mean up to 2.7 million of us have crashed while distracted by a mobile phone.

Furthermore, four percent of respondents said they had been involved in accidents where another driver was distracted by their mobile, meaning an estimated 1.8 million people have been put in danger by the actions of others.

Despite the statistics, though, Kwik Fit says drivers were candid about the lure of their smartphones while on the move. Around a quarter of motorists (24 percent) admitted to reading texts when driving, while one in five (20 percent) confessed to sending them. And the research showed texting wasn't the most common reason for using a phone. More than four in 10 (44 percent) said they had taken a call on loudspeaker while driving, while 41 percent admitted to making calls on loudspeaker.

Kwik Fit's study also revealed a noticeable generation difference when it comes to being distracted by mobile phone use. Incredibly, 18 percent of drivers aged 18 to 34 admitted to having had an accident or veering off the road while using a phone, but none of the over-55s quizzed confessed to the same offence.

Roger Griggs, the communications director at Kwik Fit, said the survey results were concerning, and urged motorists to stop using their phones while driving.

"It is alarming to see that so many motorists are still risking their lives and those of others by using mobile phones behind the wheel," he said. "There are already so many other distractions on the road that it is vital that drivers pay attention and remain focussed at all times.

"So many things can happen on the road, but unfortunately we can't prepare for everything and concentration is key. We encourage drivers to keep their cars maintained to ensure they are as safe as possible, but ultimately, the most important feature in the safety of any vehicle is the one behind the wheel."

# KNOW YOUR FUEL

## SAME FUEL NEW LABEL

Petrol and diesel now have new labels at filling station pumps. There's no need to worry or to change what you do – **the fuel you use is exactly the same.**

Just learn your new label to help you choose the right fuel every time.

### What the new labels mean

The labels use symbols for petrol or diesel, plus a letter and number to tell you the type and maximum percentage of the relevant renewable fuel it contains.

The fuels are exactly the same as before and retailers are likely to still call them petrol (or unleaded) and diesel.



### PETROL

- circle symbol
- E stands for ethanol
- 5 means up to 5% renewable ethanol



### DIESEL

- square symbol
- B stands for biodiesel
- 7 means up to 7% renewable biodiesel



HM Government



## POLITICS

The House of Commons was sealed off today after police chased an escaped lunatic through the front door during Prime Minister's question time. A spokesman at Scotland Yard said it was like looking for a needle in a haystack."

## **COURTS REPORT**

- ◆ A 69-year-old company director deliberately knocked a teenager off his bicycle and then punched him after the cyclist had pulled in front of his vehicle at temporary traffic lights near roadworks. The man rammed the back tyre of his 17-year-old victim's bicycle during the incident in the village of Summerseat, Greater Manchester. Witnesses said that after the lights turned green the driver repeatedly sounded his horn and flashed his lights at the cyclist. The man, from Bury, was found guilty of dangerous driving and common assault.
- ◆ An 11-year-old boy was killed in a crash after a spider dropped on to his mother's hand while she was driving, an inquest heard. The crash happened in Tregaron, Ceredigion, in May last year. When the spider landed on the mother's left hand her eight-year-old daughter, who was in the front passenger seat, became hysterical. Her mother turned to calm her down, resulting in the crash. Verdict: misadventure.
- ◆ Three "crash for cash" fraudsters have been jailed for creating a 50mph pile-up on the M6 in Coventry in a bid to win an insurance payout. All three admitted conspiracy to commit fraud by false representation, after being caught on dashcam footage and were jailed for between 20 and 25 months each.
- ◆ A woman who criticised the Duke of Edinburgh after a car crash that broke her wrist, has been banned from driving for six months for speeding. The woman, who called for the Duke to be prosecuted if he was found to be at fault, was sentenced in her absence at King's Lynn Magistrates' Court for two counts of speeding in 2018. After the collision in January, the Duke surrendered his driving licence and the Crown Prosecution Service has said that he faces no further action.
- ◆ A 19-year-old university student died after she swerved her car to avoid hitting a pheasant, an inquest heard. The woman lost control of her vehicle on the A66 and collided with a van. Multiple witnesses reported seeing a pheasant cross the road immediately before the crash. Verdict: accident.

## **IS IT LEGAL TO STOP AND HELP A MOTORIST ON A MOTORWAY?**

"While motorists might be thinking they are doing a good deed by pulling over on a motorway, the fact is that doing this is against the law – and drivers are putting themselves at unnecessary risk," explains the RAC's Peter Williams.

"The only times when it is acceptable to stop on a motorway is in the event of an accident or breakdown, or to provide assistance if an accident has occurred, providing it is safe to do so.

"If you do pull over to help a motorist who appears stricken on other roads, proceed with caution. If you can safely avoid getting out of your car while offering help, do so as this will allow you to easily leave again if something doesn't feel right.

"Finally, trust your instincts – if anything appears non-genuine, and certainly if someone is asking for money to complete a journey, calmly decline and drive off. Then when it's safe to, stop and call the police to alert them."

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Views and opinions expressed in SEGMENT are not necessarily those of the Editor or the South Eastern Group Committee or IAM Roadsmart. SEGMENT is the official publication of the South Eastern Group of Advanced Motorists.

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SEGMENT is printed by Darenth Print & Design Ltd. Tel. No. 01322-288627