



Newsletter

1st Quarter, 2026

Diary Date: **Annual General Meeting**
Tuesday 3rd March
at 7.30 pm.
Liston Hall, Marlow, SL7 1DD

IAM 70th Anniversary Year

IAM IS 70 (Seven decades as a road safety charity):



Founded in 1956 by a group of motoring enthusiasts to promote a better standard of Driving, the organisation evolved, growing the community and rebranding in 2016 as IAM RoadSmart - a name that was modern and helping a wider community connect with the charity and its cause. IAM has delivered 70 years of road safety education and will be recognising some of its community, volunteers, and heritage through the



power of storytelling throughout 2026 as IAM RoadSmart continues to build a sustainable charity for the next 70 years.

Source. IAM RoadSmart

GROUP NEWS:



Congratulations to Barry Hatch on achieving an excellent **F1RST Pass** in his recent IAM Advanced Driver Test (seen here with his High Wycombe Group Observer, Sean Pearce). This is a commendable achievement for any driver, but at 91 years old it is even more notable, especially given the current Government focus on Older Drivers. Barry signed up for the Advanced Driving Course following an IAM RoadSmart Mature Driver Review. Sean reports *“Barry was already a highly competent and safe driver, and a joy to be with as an Observer whether on urban, rural or busier dual carriageway and motorway roads. Really all we had to do was frame his driving around IPSGA and ensure that we'd covered all the competencies in the Drivers Logbook”*. Sean concentrated on making more progress towards posted speed limits where safe and on ensuring not to exceed the slower limits. With Sean's guidance Barry developed extended **Observation, Anticipation**

and **Planning** which, combined with improved throttle control, and appropriate use of the advanced features of his Hyundai Ionic 5 Hybrid meant he could maintain safe and legal speeds more confidently.

After 8 driving sessions plus the Group's standard “second check drive and a follow up pre-test refresher” Barry met with IAM examiner, Peter Gunn, who reported that Barry gave *“one of the best test drives I have been fortunate to examine during 2025 and was a well-deserved F1RST”*.

Prior to retirement Barry was a Chartered Civil Engineer with world wide experience on marine works, tunnels and motorway projects. He is an active supporter of the Friends of Maidenhead Waterways – part of the River Thames.

*For more on the Mature Driver Review follow this link: <https://www.iamroadsmart.com/courses-services/for-individuals/mature-driver-review/>

COMMITTEE:

Chair
Membership Secretary
Group Secretary
Without portfolio

Nigel Mason
Valerie Brickell
Margaret Gordon
Bob Hill, Tara Ridgeway and Bern Warr

Treasurer
Chief Observer
IT Admin

Tim Nicholson
Nigel Mason
Sean Pearce

HEADLIGHT GLARE:



The RAC reports that 4 in every 5 drivers are concerned about headlight dazzle. IAM RoadSmart's Nick Lyes reports that "drivers are increasingly telling us they are concerned by the glare of headlights in modern cars, and some are now even limiting the amount of time they spend driving during darkness to avoid glare. Being dazzled by headlights has a worrying impact on road safety, and we need policymakers to take this matter seriously."

The Government has commissioned a report into this issue, but here is some **interim advice**:

- Keep your windscreen clean.
- Keep your own headlights clean.
- Regularly clean your spectacles, and remember regular optician checkups.
- Briefly look left or to the curb until you can clearly see again, and be prepared to slow down/stop.
- Ensure your own headlights are not affected by carrying a heavier than normal load (rear seat passengers plus boot luggage, for example).
- Automatic dimming lights do not always pick up on-coming vehicles/cyclists/pedestrians, so know how to manually dip them.



Photo sources: RAC/IAM RoadSmart. See also ROADSMART Spring 2026 (IAM's magazine)

AVERAGE SPEED ENFORCEMENT AROUND ROADWORKS (National Highways Guidance):



A **fixed speed limit sign** plus Average Speed Check means monitoring by cameras, working 24 hours a day in all weather conditions. **Every vehicle** is recorded on entry and exit cameras using Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR), which matches the vehicle data recorded, and calculates the average speed. For **vehicles not exceeding** the average speed limit the data collected is automatically deleted, however, the data for vehicles with an average speed exceeding the speed limit is sent to the Police to decide on the most appropriate action.

Photo Source: National Highways. Click [HERE](#) for more information.

FIVE REFRESHERS ABOUT BIKE AWARENESS (With better weather on the way?):



Photo Source: IAM RoadSmart

1. When overtaking/passing leave a sufficient gap – **at least 1.5m**. The faster your speed the wider the gap! If you cannot create a sufficiently safe gap to pass, then reduce your speed to safely overtake.
2. Stay a **safe distance behind**, until it is safe to overtake/pass. Reduce your speed early, and prepare to be patient.
3. Do **not cross** double white lines if the speed of the cyclist is in excess of 10mph. (Highway Code Rule 129).
4. Make **one overtake** when coming upon a cycling group. Treat the overtake as one large vehicle. Be patient.
5. In built up areas **be aware** that cyclists could be making more progress than you, and filtering in and out. **Regular** mirror and blind spot checks are extremely important.

IAM RoadSmart WELCOMES GOVERNMENTS NEW ROAD SAFETY STRATEGY:



Photo Source: IAM RoadSmart

With target and policies to make our roads safer, the strategy focuses on all key aspects, such as behaviours/training/vehicle technology/enforcement. There is an emphasis on **younger drivers**, and also action being taken on **drug-driving**. **Separately**, IAM RoadSmart reports that drug-driving reoffending increased by 134% over 4 years to 3193 cases in 2024. Some of these drivers have been involved in fatal accidents!

For more information on IAM RoadSmart's response to the Government strategy click [HERE](#).

For more information from IAM RoadSmart on drug-driving reoffending click [HERE](#).

(Unless stated otherwise, visuals are courtesy of the High Wycombe Group of Advanced Motorists)

www.highwycombeiam.org