



The Road Observer



The Newsletter of the North Down Advanced Motorists (Group 8199)
Helping to Improve The Standard of Driving and Riding on the Roads in Northern Ireland and the Advancement of Road Safety

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

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**Congratulations this month go to -
Hugh Finlay, Gareth Hughes &
George King
on becoming Members of the Institute.
Good luck and safe driving to any Associate(s)
approaching their test.**

We usually meet (unless otherwise stated) at the Boathouse, which is situated in the harbour carpark, at Groomsport at 7.00pm on the second Tuesday of each month (except July). For more details of our programme please see the section entitled "Dates for Your Diary".

If anyone has recently done their test, don't forget to contact John (07967 010443) for a debrief. Observers, please keep John acquainted with the progress of your Associate(s).

Group News

Congratulations to Keith Patterson who has been appointed Region 8 Group Co-ordinator. We wish Keith every success in his new role. Keith has promised to write a few words for next month's 'Road Observer' giving his vision of what he hopes to achieve in his new post.

Marie Curie Ladies' Driving Challenge

This will take place this year on Saturday, 16th October, 2010 at Kirkistown Race Track. We have been told that they need 50+ marshals to help the event go smoothly. So if you are free on the day come along with spouses, friends, grown-up offspring, etc., and enjoy a great day's entertainment. The banter is excellent and there is a free lunch for all helpers.

Karting Challenge - 24th July, 2010

We had a full turnout and several other AMNI groups were represented. Everyone had great fun and once again it proved to be a great success.

Congratulations to Aaron, who not only was one of the leading lights in organising the day but he also won the event and drove the fastest lap (obviously a fix) There were also some spectacular breaches of the non-contact rules, a distinct lack of IAM approved advanced driving technique and of course an unnamed Member taking a wrong turn and driving through the pits.

We'll be back next year!

Plenty of photos from the event are on our Facebook page at <http://www.facebook.com/amni.org.uk> (then click on our photos tab).

The final results were:

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|--|-------------|
| 1) Aaron MacQ (fastest lap: 36.10) | 2) Philip O |
| 3) Alan M | 4) Alan D |
| 5) Chris M | 6) Eric M |
| 7) Keith P (our new Regional Co-Ordinator) | |

Road rage makes us worse drivers

26 August 2010

Results from an IAM poll have found that most drivers regularly suffer some form of road rage, and nearly a third admit that anger with other road users makes their own driving worse.

Of the 1,400 respondents to the online poll, 70% stated that they got angry with other road users and 28% felt that getting heated behind the wheel affected their own driving competence.

Tailgating was the behaviour most irritating to drivers, with 28% classing it as the most provocative, while 22% felt that others taking a mobile phone call while driving was the biggest irritation. Centre lane hogging was also mentioned by 15% and drivers also reported a long list of other irritants including aggressive driving, failing to indicate and bad lane discipline.

IAM director of policy and research, Neil Greig, said: "It is good to see motorists disapproving of bad driving, especially

mobile phone use which is on the rise, but it's worrying that so many still get angry when driving. With long commutes and increased congestion making driving particularly stressful, drivers must learn to manage the 'red mist'.

Worryingly, many drivers are ignorant of the law, with the poll finding that 33% of drivers would read or send a text message while waiting in a queue of traffic. Almost 30% would instigate or pick up a phone call, even though research suggests that this is just as distracting as using a hand held phone.

Over a third of drivers found passengers most distracting with more than 60% saying they would be more likely to be distracted with passengers in the car.

The IAM survey revealed that the top distractions were: Passengers (30%), Billboards and other advertising (24%), Watching out for safety cameras (21%), Mobile phones (13%), In Car Entertainment (5%), Sat navs (4%).

Mr Greig added: "It's all about self control – good drivers spot the signs of potential road rage and do everything they can to steer clear of it. If you feel yourself getting provoked by other people driving badly, remember that rising above it is an act of safe driving.

If you feel you're reaching boiling point:

- Pull over and separate yourself from the cause of your anger – usually another driver.
- Never react with a gesture or use your car as a weapon of retaliation.

If you are the subject of road rage:

- Pull over to a safe, public place if you feel threatened
- Apologise for your own mistakes – a cheery wave does a lot to diffuse tension.

Drivers conflicted over cameras

An IAM survey, released today, found that most people agree with the government's policy to reduce safety camera funding, even though a significant majority are supportive of cameras in principle.

The survey of nearly 1,000 respondents found that 44 % supported government proposals to cut central funding of camera operations, with 30% unsure or expressing no opinion and only 26% opposed. Conversely, safety cameras received a 70% approval rating overall.

Kevin Delaney IAM Head of Road Safety, said: "A lot of people like the idea of a camera on their street, slowing the traffic and making their area safer, but feel cheated when they confront one on a main road or in a different area. Rather than being purely hypocritical, it suggests drivers are seeing the lifesaving effects of cameras, but resent being caught out by them.

"It is the exact opposite of Nimbyism – everybody wants one in their own back yard, but nowhere else."

The figures show a big difference between the sexes, with 55% of men supporting the switch-off, whereas only 33% of women agreed. Women were 12% more supportive of speed cameras than men overall.

Nearly half of respondents [49%] believed revenue generation through fines was the main motive behind installing safety cameras, with 26% feeling fines were not the motive. 26% were either unsure or expressed no opinion.

Mr Delaney added: "The 11 year study shows that support has declined slightly over time, but that cameras have maintained a good level of approval overall among the motoring public. There are still many people who believe that safety cameras are primarily for raising revenue who need convincing that well placed safety cameras really do deliver fewer deaths and serious injuries."

Dates for Your Diary

- 31st Aug, 2010 Recruitment Night
- 7th Sept, 2010 STAC(1) - Class and Driving Practice
- 14th Sept, 2010 Group Night - Police Helicopter**
- 28th Sept, 2010 STAC(2) - Class and Driving Practice
- 5th Oct, 2010 STAC(3) - Class and Driving Practice
- 12th Oct, 2010 Group Night - AGM + Guest Speaker**
- 16th Oct, 2010 Marie Curie Ladies Driving Challenge

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