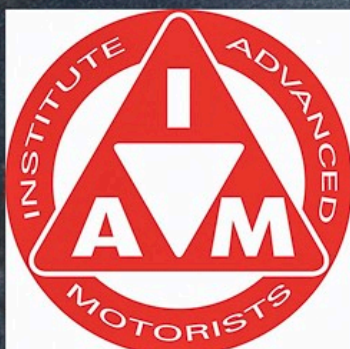
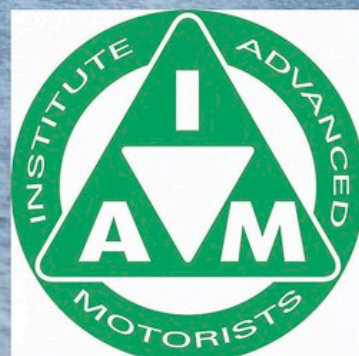


# The Road Observer

The Newsletter of the North Down  
Advanced Motorists Group



Summer 2018







## The Road Observer

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

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

Summer 2018

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

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### Test passes

**Congratulations this month to motorcycle members**

**Sharon Wood**

**Trudi Cole**

**Michael Gould**

**William McAteer**

**who all achieved F1RST passes**

**and to car members**

**Grainne McCabe**

**Karen Boutros**

**Also to Simon Beckett on qualifying as a car Local Observer**

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

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### Cover picture

The May cover picture was Main Street in Greyabbey looking towards its junction with Church Street and North Street and, according to the street names, formerly known as Water Lane and Hard Breid Raas respectively. Congratulations (in the order in which they responded) to Shaun McKittrick, Norman Shearer, Simon Beckett, Guy Thomson, Stephen Massey, David Harcourt and Annie McFarland.

The cover picture for this issue is also local but might be a bit more difficult. No prizes, just the satisfaction of good observation and, of course, a mention in the Road Observer.

## Dates for your diary

14 August - STAC enrolment (Observers required for demonstration drives/taster sessions)  
4 September - STAC 1  
11 September - Group Night (TBA)  
25 September - STAC 2  
2 October - STAC 3  
9 October - Group Night - AGM. Guest Speaker TBA  
23 October - STAC 4  
30 October - STAC 5  
6 November - STAC 6  
13 November - Group Night - Speaker Andy Day - surveillance vehicles  
27 November - STAC 7  
4 December - STAC 8  
11 December - Christmas Dinner

STAC - Short Term Associate Course. 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.

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## Taster sessions

North Down offers taster sessions for anyone interested in advanced driving or riding and is not sure what it entails. Each person taking part will receive a concise briefing and an overview of IAM RoadSmart driving principles followed by an on-road session and ending with a debrief. Drivers will use their own car on local roads, with a local assessor and can discuss any areas of concern with their assessor during their session.

The tone of the session is a low-pressure introduction on how to make driving enjoyable, stress-free and fun.

**For anyone wanting to develop their skills further, and go on to enrol for the Advanced Driver Course will receive a 10% discount on the standard £149 fee.**

If you know anyone who might wish to take part or might want more details please get them to email their name and telephone number to [secretaryndam@gmail.com](mailto:secretaryndam@gmail.com) or phone 07760 578444.

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The campaign will run from Wednesday 1 August until, and concluding, Friday 31 August. This is an exciting new initiative which IAM RoadSmart hope will encourage all road users to demonstrate courtesy to one another. To make this campaign a success, we need your help. With our nationwide network of Groups, we have a great chance to spreading the message throughout the UK and making our voices heard.

For more information click on the following link [‘Thumbs Up For Great Driving and Riding!’](#)

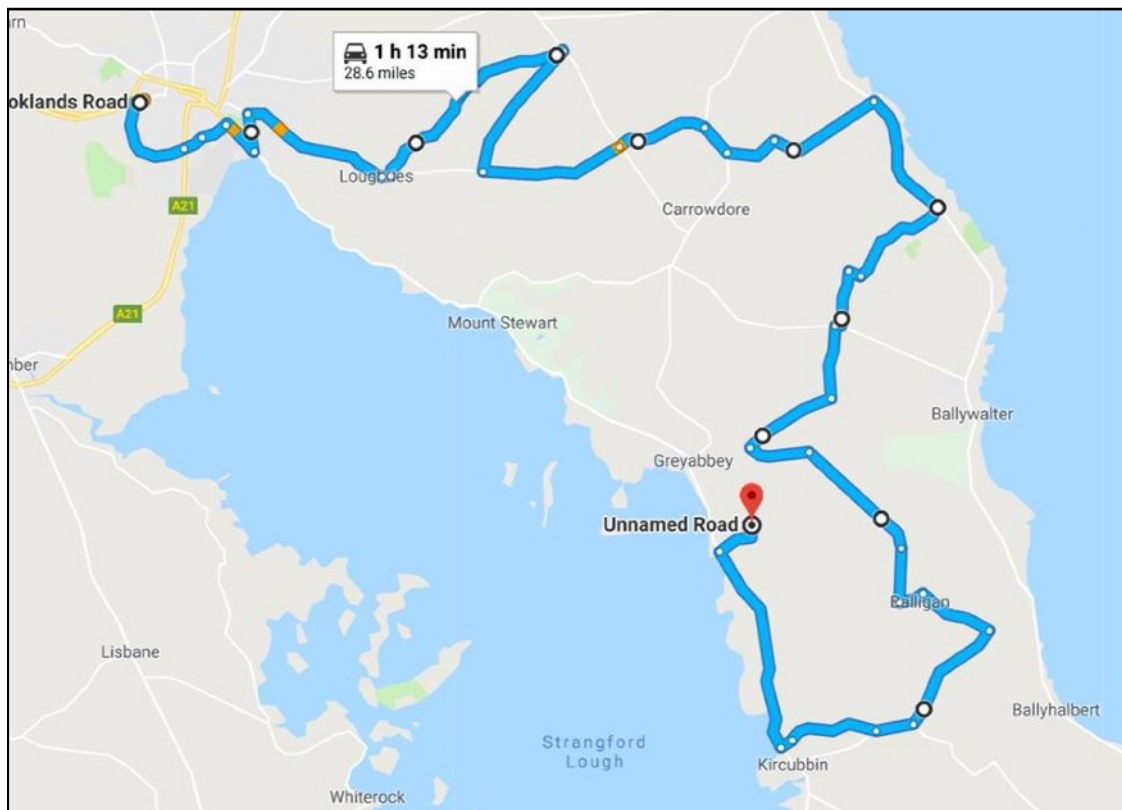
# Bike Runs

## May

4 bikers turned up (5 including Phil, who thought better of it after the route was explained.)

We managed to turn the 7 miles Ards to Greyabbey into a cross country venture, BKT would be proud with all the gravel and grass up the middle of the roads.

We encountered a couple of sets of horses and various agricultural machinery before landing at Harrisons for morning coffee.



## June

Some of our group (and guest) enjoying today's run from Sprucefield to Slieve Gullion. We then completed the forest drive before heading to Newcastle via the Mourne for more coffee. Nice to find a few roads that Mr Thomson hasn't been on. The weather was kind to us too, only a few light showers and some glorious sunshine.

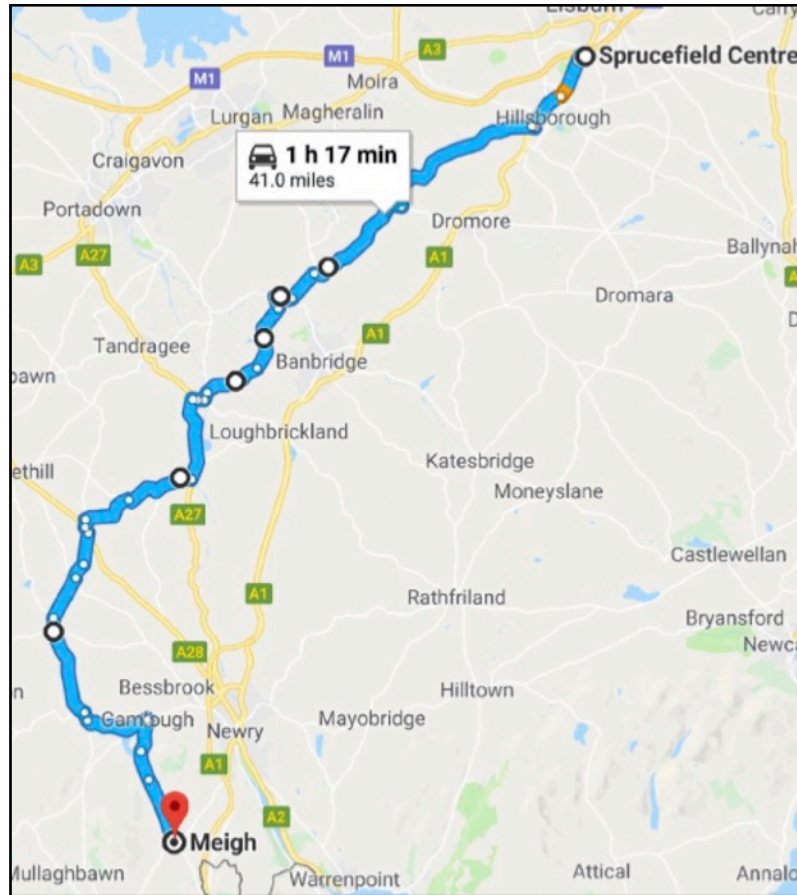


Ken, Don, Norman, Guy



8 bikes on display

The route to Slieve Gullion:



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## Summer driving

With the summer season continuing, IAM RoadSmart head of driving and riding standards Richard Gladman has put together some tips to keep you safe on the road.

- Do you know where you're going? Plan your journey so you know when and where to take planned breaks (if applicable) and check for any traffic problems
- Do weekly car checks which include tyre pressures, tread depth and condition and checking fluids – replenish screen wash but if other fluids are low, check for underlying problems
- Stay hydrated by keeping a bottle of water in your car. We recommend having plenty of water as it is essential to stay hydrated to maintain concentration and control body temperature
- When driving, fatigue can slowly kick in – especially in heat. Concentration starts to slip after two hours so take regular 15 minute breaks. Get out of the car and stretch
- When driving into the direction of the sun, use your sun visor to help block out the glare and if that doesn't work for you, invest a decent pair of sunglasses. Keep the windscreen clean inside and out
- Put together an emergency kit; some drinks and snacks, a charger for your mobile phone and a road map for last minute detours are all useful items. Some entertainment for your younger passengers may make the journey less stressful

Richard said: "Preparation is key to an enjoyable trip. A well maintained car and a fully fit and prepared body can make the difference between a pleasant drive in the country and a nightmare journey to be endured. Whilst the trip may be about the destination, it is much better if the journey is enjoyable too."

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## Essentials everyone needs to keep in their vehicle

Whether it's summer or winter, there are some key items you'll need in your vehicle all year around to help you stay safe on the road. Richard Gladman, IAM RoadSmart's head of driving and riding standards, writes about the eight essentials that you should always keep in your vehicle.

Note: If you have friends and family who are unaware of advanced driving techniques, please share these tips with them to help them stay safe on the road.

- Carry an empty fuel can with you. Don't carry a full or partially full one as this is a fire hazard and if it has recently had fuel in it, flammable vapour may still be present
- You never know when you'll need a first aid kit, so keeping one in the boot of your car is always handy for either yourself, or another road user if you're first on scene at an accident



- If you've broken down on the side of the road, the last thing you want is to be cold and unable to see your way around the dark. That's why we advise drivers to always keep a torch and set of batteries in their vehicle, along with warm clothes, a blanket and a high visibility jacket. And don't forget food and drink to stop your energy levels from dropping - bottled water is a must
- The battery on your car can go flat at any time, whether you're popping to your local fish and chip shop or picking your vehicle up from the airport car park after a wonderful sunny holiday. Make sure you keep a set of jump leads in your car so you can start your engine with help from another vehicle
- Keep a spare pair of sturdy shoes with a good grip in your car. You'll need these to turn the wheel brace when changing a tyre, or to push your car if you've broken down, or even just to change shoes if there's a sudden weather change
- An item that's often overlooked is the reflective warning triangle. This gives you extra security for a number of reasons such as breaking down in the dark. Put it out in accordance with the rule from the Highway code 274 which advises to "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."
- A lot of us use our satnavs to travel to unfamiliar places, but what if





your battery dies and you can't find the charger? Or if it takes you the wrong way? The best thing to do is to refer back to your trusty road atlas, so don't forget to purchase an up-to-date copy every year and keep it in your car. A good rule of thumb is to take a look at your road map before you set off, to get an idea of the direction you need to travel in. Find yourself a place to aim for, or motorway signs to look out for

- Last but not least your mobile phone. Switch it to silent and place it in the glove box to avoid any temptation to touch it, but it will be there ready to use when and if you need it

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."

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### And finally.....red sports cars from different decades



Morgan



Lamborghini Aventador (seen at Mountstewart)

And in case you didn't spot them - have a closer look at the dogs in the back of the Morgan:



Morgan images courtesy of Nick Jenkins. <http://freespiritimages.com>

**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**