



FIFE IAM

Kingdom of Fife Group IAM, helping improve road safety in Fife and beyond.

August 2019

Water you do?

I was driving on the A92 last week (7th) when the volume of rain turned the dual carriageway into a swimming pool. The next day the IAM produced some really helpful advice for driving in this weather. The web link and a few tips are [on page 8](#).

That was a close one.

Operation Close Pass has been a Police Scotland campaign for the last few years. An undercover, but hopefully, hi-vis police officer took to a bike with a head cam to record unsafe manoeuvres that may place vulnerable road users in danger.

We look at this story in more detail on [page 2](#).

Night Night

Research is being carried out by the Department for Transport on the potential benefits of introducing graduated licenses to improve road safety. The Scottish Government have asked for this policy to be devolved but this has been refused. [Find out more on page 4](#)

British Grand Prix

July saw a weekend of record breaking sport - longest Grand Slam Final, Englands first cricket world cup win and Lewis Hamilton breaking the number of Grand Prix wins on a British track. We look at some of the detail behind that sixth win and wonder if he is our greatest driver of all time. [More on this on page 3](#)

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Operation Close Pass

Two vehicles per day were recently caught dangerously overtaking cyclists in the latest installment of Operation Close Pass operated by Police Scotland. This initiative was carried out in the North East but activities have been taking place in Scotland for the last 2 years to raise awareness.

Cycling is a dangerous activity on our roads. I've been a cyclist on the road, I've been a driver sitting behind cyclists and I've been on the road and seen how dangerously close some cars get to overtaking cyclists.

The Close Pass initiative was trialed in Edinburgh and then rolled out wider after that. The initiative is travelling around the country and we look at some of the results of the operation here. The scheme works by placing an unmarked police officer on a bicycle with a camera on their helmet. If a car gets too close or presents other driving issues then colleagues in a car will stop them and talk through their issues. It is an educational tool but enforcement action can be taken if the behavior was deemed as careless or dangerous driving.

From the news reports that are available on the [Police Scotland website](#), it showed a wide range of interventions. In Fife, in October last year, there was no need to take any action as officers didn't observe any incidents. In Inverness in March 18 they stopped and spoke to 10 drivers in one day.

Several of the operations have also lead to prosecutions for other offences. For instance, in Edinburgh where around 70 people were spoken to in relation to their driving close to vulnerable road users, drivers were also prosecuted for speeding, no MOT, no insurance and careless driving.

My favourite report may have been from the Falkirk area. Over a weekend, 15 vehicles were stopped. However whilst most were for passing too close to the vehicle, one vehicle was stopped for sounding his horn at the cyclist and another got into a verbal confrontation with the undercover police officer. I'm going to guess that they weren't too mouthy when the blues came on behind them.

I think that the safe passing distance is one thing, and certainly of benefit as even if the car doesn't clip the cyclist, the pass can off balance the cyclist causing them to fall off anyway. However the issue of speeding, mobile phone use and generally not following traffic directions - I've seen cars go the wrong way on a one way system 4 times in the last week - all bring danger to vulnerable road users and should continue to be addressed alongside Operation Close Pass.

The issue

In 2016 nearly 18,500 Cyclists were killed or injured on Britain's roads. Of that number, approximately 3,500 were killed or seriously injured.

In 2017, Police Scotland introduced Operation Close Pass. Its an initiative primarily aimed at educating drivers about the safe distances that should be left when overtaking a bike on the road.



What is the advice for cyclists?

Sometimes motorists become annoyed by cyclists who ignore traffic rules. As a reminder, Section 69 & 71 of the highway code state that traffic signals apply to all road user - including cyclists. Section 66 states you should ride single file on narrow & busy roads and never ride more than 2 abreast.

The winning Formula

I'm not the biggest Formula 1 fan - in fact I don't watch it. Seeing a car going round a circuit for 51 laps really isn't my thing. Now give me 22 people running up and down a field for 90 mins and I'm in - but that won't fit into a driving newsletter.*

So why F1 in this edition. Well on the front page I mentioned that Lewis Hamilton had just won 6 Grand Prix races in Britain - that's a new record. F1 doesn't float my boat but stats do so be prepared for some serious number crunching in place of gear crunching.

**Its 51 laps for the Silverstone Grand Prix but I believe it varies depending on length of circuit.*

Breaking records - making headlines

The headlines following Sunday's Grand Prix at Silverstone all referred to Lewis Hamilton as winning a record sixth British Grand Prix. That got me wondering whether this was a common thing e.g. drivers win more at home or whether it was genuinely unique. Knowing nothing about F1, I went in search of someone that did - Mr Google.

I was somewhat surprised to learn that Hamilton has the second highest number of Grand Prix wins - only second to the magnificent Michael Schumacher. To place it in context, Schumacher has 91 wins, Hamilton is on 80 and in third place is Sebastian Vettel on 52. Hamilton and Vettel started in the same year so that shows how impressive Hamilton's form has been.



The question I set out to answer though was 'is winning on your 'home track' unusual'? Again, going back to football, a team is expected to win more at home than away. So to answer that question I looked at some of the top F1 drivers and how many times they won on their 'home' circuit.

Jim Clark, someone we covered in a previous newsletter, and considered one of the greatest racing drivers of all time had 20% of his Grand Prix wins in Britain. This is followed by Nigel Mansell, IAMS honorary president, who had 13% of his wins on home turf. Juan Manuel Fangio and Alain Prost are on 13% and 12% respectively. Only 8% of Lewis Hamilton's wins have come in Britain - however the 6 that he has won overtakes the previous record held by Jim Clark with 5 wins on the circuit.

Strangely enough, Silverstone isn't Hamilton's favourite course (according to statistics, I've not spoken to him). He's won 7 in Montreal and equaling his British record, 6 in Hungaroring. Both of these are also record wins for the Circuit.

Michael Schumacher may only have won 4 races in Germany but appeared to love France more, taking 8 GP wins there and 6 in Spain. Ayrton Senna, who I'm amazed is only coming up now, won 2 races in Argentina but 6 in Monte Carlo. Alain Prost, the 4th most successful F1 driver won 6 times in his native France but was consistent elsewhere including 6 wins in Brazil and 5 in Britain. Winning in your home country is not that common and Hamilton has managed to achieve that on a consistent basis.

The greatest of all time?

In order to surpass Schumacher's total number of grand prix wins, Lewis Hamilton will need to race another 33 times - on average he is winning every third race he enters. That means by the end of the next F1 campaign Hamilton could have the most Grand Prix wins ever and undoubtedly be the greatest F1 driver of all time. What do you think? Let us know on social media - details on back page.

Night Driving

An article in the [BBC](#) recently touched on the topic of night driving and the plan to introduce graduated driving licenses for those that have recently passed their test. We have a quick look here at why they are doing that and what impact it might have.



According to national statistics from the [Department for Transport](#), in 2017, there were over two hundred thousand accidents in the UK. The DfT split them down into fatal, serious and slight, however they also record if they took place during daylight or in darkness.

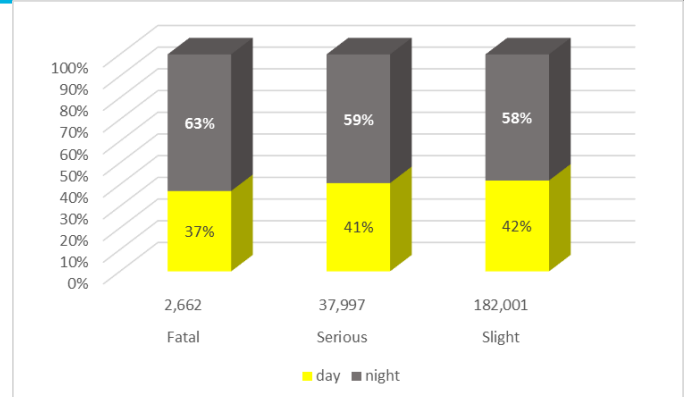
From the graph on the right, you can see that the majority of accidents take place in the darkness. The

[DfT](#) have started research into whether graduated licenses would help reduce the number of accidents that take place at night. They say that one in 5 new drivers crash within their first year of driving. Of course for the bikers, they already have a form of graduated license as they are restricted to smaller engine sizes at first.

The DfT stats for England show that over 1,150 drivers aged between 17 & 24 were casualties in 2017 - 20% higher than any other age range. As a result, the government is looking at a range of measures to help reduce this issue.

Some of the proposal include not driving at night, not carrying passengers under a certain age and introducing a minimum learning period that includes minimum times for training on rural roads, night time driving etc.

Further research is being done into this and several countries that currently operate such systems, including America, Canada and Sweden, will be investigated to gather any lessons.



Speeding

This is a little bit older, from January this year, about the smart motorway on the M1 & M25. There was numerous articles at the time about how anyone travelling over 70mph would be given a ticket - the implication was even at 71mph you were in for a fine. This article from the [RAC](#) covers it but you should check out the comments section - can't think there were too many IAM members on this one.

The description of the cameras sounds a little like those on the M90 at the Queensferry Crossing. The gist of the article is that the cameras are trying to 'catch out' speeding motorists. We all exceed the speed limit at times but if you do, you need to accept the consequences which are 3 penalty points and a £100 fine. You may end up in court, and possibly lose your license, if you go 25% over the speed limit.

We're not just close to the action - We're part of it!

Founded in 1973, the Scottish Motorsport Marshall Club (SMMC) is the only 'four-wheel' motorsport marshalling club in Scotland covering circuit and rally races. The SMMC came to speak to us a while back to inform us about what they do. You can find out more about SMMC at:

www.smmc.org.uk or [@SMMCtweets](https://twitter.com/SMMCtweets)

Motorsport has more influence on how you drive than you may know. A lot of the safety in cars has come from motorsport including the rear-view mirror, disc brakes, engine oil, tyres and seatbelts. One invention that came from motorsport is believed to be the rear-view mirror. An article in the [New York Times](#) suggests that the first time a rear-view mirror was used was in the Indianapolis 500 in 1911.

The introduction of the mirror enabled the car to only have one person, all the other 39 cars had two people - one of whom was responsible for looking behind them. That meant Harroun's car could be narrower and lighter and he won the race with an average speed of 73 mph (in 1911!). Shortly after, rear-view mirrors started appearing in standard cars and are still used to this day.

Indy 500 - May 1911

Ray Harroun apparently got the idea for the mirror when he saw a horse-drawn cart with a mirror sticking out on a pole (wing mirror?). He decided to introduce that into his race car and therefore invented the rear-view mirror.

Now we know how motorsports impact our daily driving lives, let's look at what the SMMC do to help. Their members provide services to the majority of motorsports events, whether these are special stage rallies, speed events or circuit races. The SMMC are always keen to attract new members to their group and you can find out more by using the contact details at the top of the page.



Marshalling at motorsport meetings allows you to participate in this exciting and challenging sport by playing a vital role to ensure the safe and effective running of the many motorsport events that take place every year.

Their Motorsport Rescue Crews provide emergency medical and extrication cover using specially converted vehicles.

The Motorsport Radio Group provides a high quality safety communications service on rallies to improve the safety of competitors, officials and spectators.

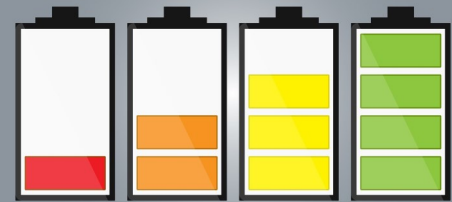
There are no minimum requirements to be involved, but if you already have special skills – technical, mechanical, rescue, vehicle recovery, medical, first aid or administration – then please consider using them as a volunteer with the SMMC.

Whether you want to spend a day in the forests of Dumfries and Galloway, watch the Touring Cars at Knockhill, or see the spectacle of single seater Formula 1 style race cars tackle the twists and turns of the Doune Hill Climb, then SMMC have something for you.

Electric vehicles

Continuing the theme of the last few newsletters, we look once again at some EV news.

We look at EV charging points, courtesy of the [Daily Express](#). The BBC tells us about [upcoming models](#) and [wireless charging](#). Finally we turn to the [government](#) for information on adding noise to EV cars.



EV Charging Points

In Scotland, the majority of charging points are provided through Charge Your Car. They also operate other charging systems throughout the UK and Ireland which means you can access a range of Points throughout the country. They work by registering with CYC and they send out an access card - which in Scotland costs £20 per year however it can also act as a contactless payment card for chargers that require you to pay per charge.

One of the challenges - particularly in certain areas - is that other companies also operate charging points that are not affiliated to the CYC network. This means that you cannot successfully charge your car - as I found out in the Lake District recently.

An article in the Express states that the government are looking to introduce contactless payment machines to all rapid chargers from 2020. That should help keep motorists moving when the CYC card doesn't work!

Charged up and ready to go

Analysis by the European Federation for Transport and Environment suggests that over 200 models will be electric by 2021. It suggests that over 90 models will be fully electric whilst nearly 120 will be plug-in variants. That's approximately triple the number of models currently available on the market.

One of the current barriers for people moving to electric vehicles is the higher up-front price that the fuel type carries - hopefully as more models come on the market, this will increase competition and help bring the price down. The research suggests that by 2025 around one fifth of cars on the market will be electric variants.

Electric car induction

The government has been supporting the use of electric vehicles with grants for purchasing electric vehicles and installing charging points at home. They are now looking at supporting investment for alternative charging infrastructure such as wireless charging, known as induction charging, and 'pop up' chargers that are installed into the kerb for those without driveways or within a city centre area.

Adding more accessible charging infrastructure will help in built up areas and encourage more people to uptake electric vehicles. In total the government is investing nearly £40 million to make charging your car more convenient in the future.

I hear the car a coming, its rolling round the bend

Its not unusual for me to be driving in a car park and people step out into the road (normally with their face glued to a phone) or if they are walking in the road and I'm behind them, they don't often know I'm there so I need to be extra vigilant.

Clearly this can't just be an issue with me as the Government recently introduced new legislation around this issue. From July, any vehicle manufactured must include an acoustic sound system that makes a noise, when the car is driving below 12mph, to prevent them from being too silent in order to improve road safety.

I wonder if you get to choose the sound. I'd probably want something like a T-Rex stomping or a steam train but maybe it will just be a boring engine sound - lets hope not!



A random collection

A random collection of news / information that doesn't really fit anywhere else.

Droning on

My favourite newspaper for some random stories, the [Daily Mail](#), recently covered the topic of police drones keeping an eye on speeding and road safety. They are trialling the use of a drone for a week on the roads into London in order to identify dangerous drivers - they can then deploy officers on the ground to intercept.

This comes after 160 motorists were caught speeding in London in a 5 week period including one driver going in excess of 120mph. The drone will not be fitted with a speed camera but will relay pictures to someone who can then make a decision on prioritisation of resources.

Motorcycle helmets

Did you know that your local Fire Service can use old motorcycle helmets. If you don't want to turn it into a plant pot, give it to the kids / grandkids or sell it on ebay then maybe the Fire Service can benefit from your upgrade. Apparently they use the helmets for training events such as Biker Down and other training measures.

We are happy to pass them on to the Fire Service on your behalf if you are attending one of our events or feel free to hand it in to your local Fire Station.

Who do you think you car?

Did you know that the Government website has a function to check up on MOTs and outstanding vehicle recalls for any vehicle? An example is on the image to the right as well as the website where you can find out more.

The website details the cars MOT history, it shows the pass / fail mark as well as any advisories that the vehicle may have - this is particularly useful if you are looking to purchase a car and want to know its history.

VAUXHALL ASTRA		
Check another vehicle		
Colour	Fuel type	Date registered
Silver	Petrol	1 April 2011
MOT valid until		
1 April 2020		
Get an MOT reminder by email or text.		
If you think the MOT expiry date or any of the vehicle details are wrong, contact DVSA .		
Open		
MOT history		
Check mileage recorded at test, MOT expiry date, defects and advisories, and view test certificate		
Outstanding vehicle recalls		
Check if VAUXHALL ASTRA has outstanding recalls		
www.check-mot.service.gov.uk		

Similarly, as we are all about road safety, the outstanding vehicle recalls is useful to know if there is an issue with your vehicle that needs fixed by the dealer. Check out the web link for more info.

How's your observation skills?

Good? We are glad to hear it. In fact why not put those observation skills to good use by becoming an observer with your Kingdom of Fife Group. We are always looking for car or bike observers to help out with the group. We'll give you all the training you need and it'll help keep your advanced skills at a high level. Contact any member of the group if you're interested in taking your skills to the next level.

Ideas for group events.

As you know, we run numerous events throughout the year for our members - most of which are free to attend. We try our best to cater for what we think you'll like but if you have any ideas then get in touch using the details on page 8 or reply to the email address that sent you this newsletter.

Fire Service and Road Traffic Collisions

A lot of the statistics I throw out in this newsletter around crashes are from the Police - for obvious reasons. However, the Fire Service also get involved in more serious crashes. We take a look at a [recent report](#) on their involvement in crashes from April 18 to March 19.



Attending Collisions

The Fife Fire and Rescue Service attend more serious road accidents within Fife - generally when there is a requirement to intervene in order to free people from vehicles - or obviously vehicle fires also.

The stats on the right show the pattern over the last 2 years split down by areas within Fife.

On the whole Road Traffic Collisions are down by 6% on last year however there were 4 additional fatalities in comparison to the previous year. The 5 fatalities that the Fire Service attended all involved singles vehicles and only one of the fatalities involved a female.

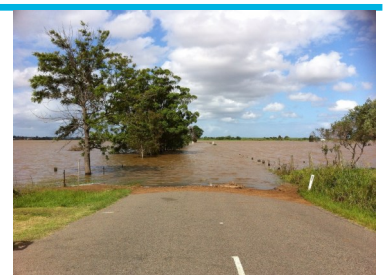
	17-18		18-19	
	RTC	Fatalities	RTC	Fatalities
Cowdenbeath	22	0	20	0
Dunfermline	21	0	13	0
Glenrothes	17	0	20	1
Kirkcaldy	27	0	28	0
Levenmouth	17	0	11	2
North East Fife	43	1	47	0
South West Fife	24	0	21	2
Total	171	1	160	5

In order to reduce fatalities on our roads, the Fire Service are involved in many road safety measures in Fife including Safe Drive Stay Alive, Drive Wise, Biker Down etc which

Flood alert

Given the amount of rain we've been having recently, the IAM put out some advice around driving in heavy rain that can lead to flooding. The advice is on their [website](#) but some advice includes:

- Heavy rain affects stopping - leave at least 4 seconds from the car in front.
- Aquaplaning - ease off the accelerator and grip steering. It'll right itself soon.
- Test your brakes after driving through deep water to dry them out quickly.



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