

GUILDFORD & DISTRICT GROUP OF ADVANCED MOTORISTS

Registered Charity No. 1051069

NEWSLETTER



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Spring 2007

www.guildford.iam-org.uk



Happy Easter!

Data Protection Act

Members and Associates are reminded that your name, address, telephone number and membership details are stored on computer files to assist with the management of the group and the distribution of Guildford Group correspondence.

We do not pass your details on to anyone else.

Editor's Notes

Please note that the views and comments herein are published without prejudice, being those of the writers and not necessarily those of the Group or the IAM.

Copy date for the Summer edition is Friday 11 May 2007.

KEY DATES

Observed Runs

Sunday runs 2007 - all 3rd Sundays this year

15 April (Easter is Sunday 8 April)

20 May

17 June (Father's Day)

15 July

19 August

16 September

21 October

18 November

16 December

Committee Meetings - Ripley Small Hall

Thursdays between 8pm and 10pm

24 May

5 July

6 September

1 November

AGM & Observers Meeting - Ripley Large Hall

Saturday 8 September 8.30am - 1pm

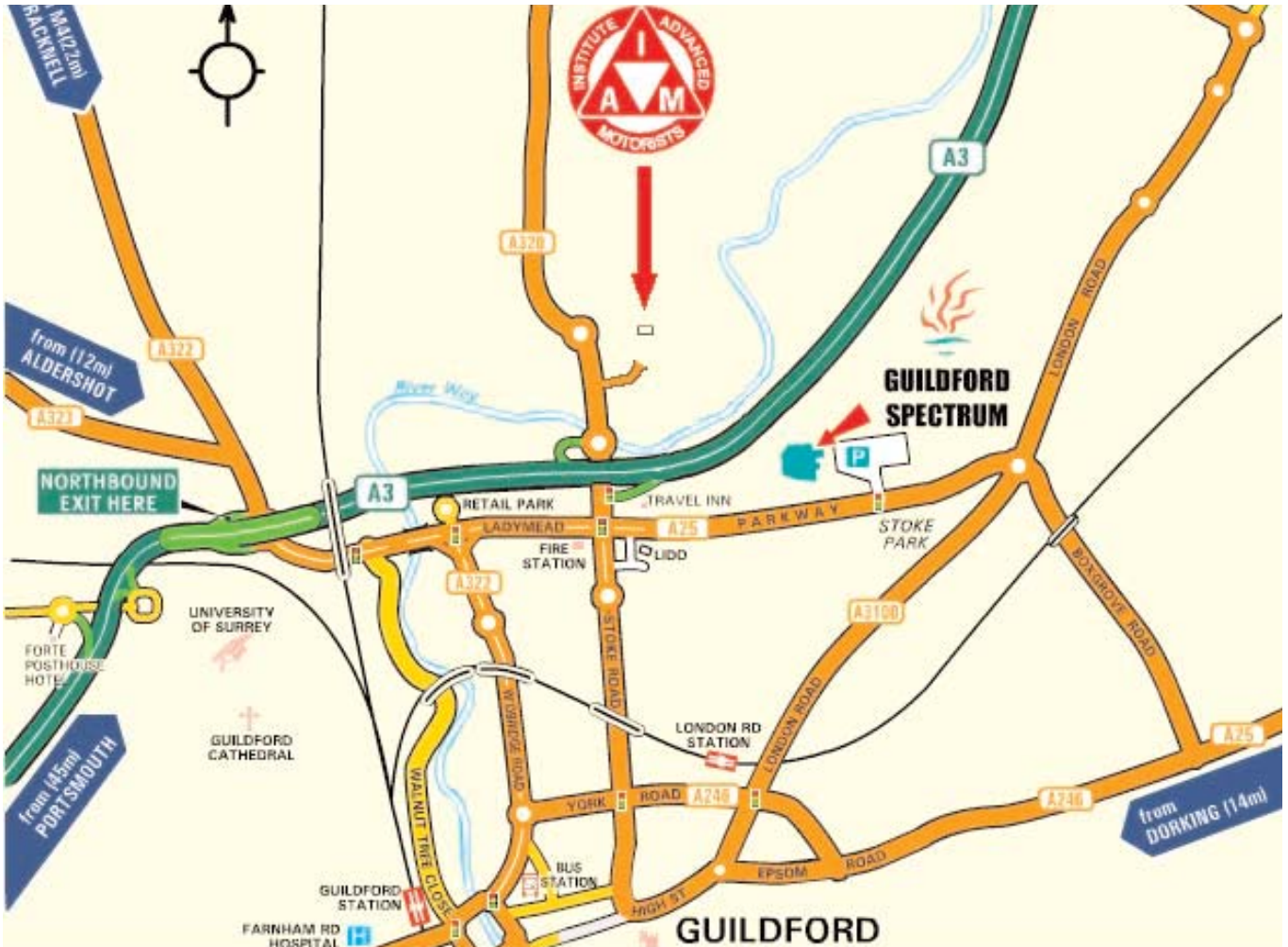
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Third Sunday of each month at 9.15am, 10.30am and 11.30am

Guildford Borough Council, Woking Road Dept, Guildford.
Telephone 01483 564814 on Sunday from 9.00am to 1pm

Appointments for Observed runs -
contact the Chairman on 07817 490 446 or 01252 519355



Associate Membership £85

Entitles the Associate to 6 Observed Runs in their own vehicle during the 12 months following the date of their first appointment, and includes:

- the cost of the IAM Advanced Test and
- + the first year's membership of the Institute on passing the test
- + copy of 'How to Be an Advanced Driver' book
- + copy of 'The Highway Code'
- + Full Group Membership (whilst a Member of the Institute) £5 per annum
- + or £7.50 per couple living at the same address

DON'T FORGET! Associates aged 25 years and under enjoy a discount of:

£10 off the Associate fee

£10 off the IAM fee

- that's all the benefits of IAM training for only £65!

Help a younger driver be a safer driver - pass on our details!

Hello and welcome to the second 2007 issue of the Guildford IAM newsletter.

I hope you found the features in the first issue interesting and useful - we plan to continue the mix of useful hints and tips for more advanced driving with articles of special interest.

If you still want to review any driving or car related gadgets please send them in. And for the summer issue I'm particularly interested in hearing about your first prang - an event normally embedded in our driving consciousness that we never forget... that sinking feeling as you realise metal has made contact with metal... but hopefully far enough in the past that you can look back with a bit of humour! Please send your tales in by **Friday, 11 May** and I'll devote a page or two to your anecdotes!

As always, member feedback and contributions are very welcome. Many thanks to Alan Philpott this issue for his article about Community Care Driving.

Yours sincerely,

Louisa Wright-Wastell
Editor

RENEWALS

2007 membership subscriptions are now due for renewal.

You should have received your letter to update your details and send back - at only £5 it's great value!

You'll continue to receive your newsletter plus have access to exclusive group events like the skid pan courses, and upcoming lectures courtesy of Surrey Police.

When you receive your letter, you'll see a section inviting you to 'Gift Aid' your membership fee.

This does not affect what you pay in any way.

What it does mean is that your IAM group can claim back 28p in every pound we receive, and as a registered charity, you can appreciate how important this is for the IAM to help us continue to improve driving standards and make our roads safer.

A LETTER OF THANKS!

It's great to hear from our members, especially when they have good news! So here's a letter from Trevor Smith who recently passed.

"I would like to say a big "thank you" for all your help and guidance I received from the "Guildford Group" to get me through the Advanced Driving Test."

Congratulations Trevor, we're delighted you passed!

Well another year has passed. I hope you all had a very pleasant Christmas break and that you made many New Years resolutions. If you haven't then here's one for you; strive to be more patient and tolerant of other drivers. I know as advanced motorists we say we already are, but when you see a tailgater, or someone on a mobile phone, are you certain you don't get just that little bit annoyed? I know I do. Getting annoyed adds nothing to your driving and doesn't get you to the end of your journey any quicker. Here's another; do you check your vehicle as often as you should? If someone points out a blown headlight do you not feel a little bit guilty that you should have picked it up?

The recent spell of snow has raised the issue of the skill of drivers. A driver appeared on the television saying that even with their 4x4 they could not get out of their drive. Just because of four inches of snow! Driving in snow and ice requires different skills, but isn't that difficult especially if you have 4-wheel drive and low ratio. Keep the revs low, stay in the highest gear possible and take it slowly. How often do you see drivers spinning their wheels with the engine screaming and they wonder why they can't get any grip? Why do I mention this now? Well, the same rules apply for muddy roads and tracks. So if you want to go off-road, you must develop your skills. The group will be organising skid pan courses again this summer and we are also hoping to fit in an off-road course if there is sufficient interest.

Last year the group joined forces with the Surrey Police Driving School and local Advanced Motorcyclist Groups to attend the Surrey County Show. On Monday, 28th May this year we will again have a stand at the show and the police and motorcyclists will join us. We are always looking for volunteers to staff the stand for an hour or so. We all have a story to tell as to why we wanted to undertake the training, pass it on to others and help spread the word and make the roads safer for us all. The group relies on the show to swell our pool of Associates. So if you can spare the time, please contact Paul Whitehead and join our team (if only for the free entry ticket!)

Now is the time to ensure that you are ready for those summer trips. If you are travelling overseas, make sure you know the legal requirements of the countries through which you will travel. Fluorescent vests; spare light bulbs; warning triangles and a first aid kit are just some of the items you could need. Don't forget about money and also fuel when on a motorway. Make sure that you know the driving rules.

One thing which is starting to cause concern is the increased use of SatNav systems in vehicles. They are a good aid when used sensibly but you still need to engage brain when using it. Recently the police had to close the A3 because a driver was driving down the wrong side of the road. The excuse was that their SatNav direction was to take the first exit at the roundabout. The first road happened to be the slip road off the A3! Drivers are also manipulating the controls of the SatNav whilst moving. This is extremely dangerous, possibly more so than using a hand held mobile phone as you need to take your eyes off the road for more than a fleeting second. Many fitted systems are locked when the vehicle is running but of course there are many removable systems where this is not possible. We all have our own ideas as to the positioning of the SatNav. The usual place is on the front windscreen but personally I have mine by the gear leaver so I cannot see it. There is a pleasant voice giving me instructions, I do not need to look at the screen. I also have a general idea of where I am going before I set out so it is only for any difficult parts that I need assistance. I am sure we will hear more of this in the future. What are your views?

Whatever you do and wherever you go, enjoy your summer driving and stay safe.

Paul Wallace-Stock
Chairman

We're delighted to announce all situations are filled!

Group Secretary

Stella Croome-Johnson has kindly offered to take over the role of Group Secretary from September 2007.

We thank Paul Whitehead for his unfailing dedication to the group since 1992, where he has held most posts from Chairman for three years and Secretary from 2001.

Welcome Stella - good luck in your role!

Front Desk Manager

Sam Hughes is our new front desk manager. Welcome Sam, we hope you enjoy the role!

ANNOUNCEMENT

IAM Festival Time is Here! Surrey County Show - **Get FREE Entry!**

That's right - your Guildford and District IAM group will be taking a stand at the regional event of the summer - the Surrey County Show in Stoke Park, Guildford on Monday, 28 May.

We need volunteers to help out for a short stint on our stand.

It's easy:

- Talk to members of the public about advanced driving
- Only 2 to 3 hour slots during the day, 8.30am to 6.30pm
- Free badge and refreshments provided
- Meet other group members
- The best bit - **FREE** entry ticket for each person who agrees to help!

Once again we are sharing the stand with Surrey Police Driving School and local IAM bike groups which means the stand will be buzzing!

If you are able to help out on the day, even for only a short time, please contact Paul Whitehead on 01276 472354.



By Paul Wallace-Stock, Chairman

Shared Space is a EU Project, which has been going for many years and is borne out of the fact that the advent of the motorcar has meant traffic-led thinking is a dominant influence on the design and use of public spaces. In large parts of the public domain, other purposes have been subordinated to the traffic function and the space is designed largely from the wish to limit the dangers of motorized traffic. **Space has become a system of rules, prohibitions and orders.** Human beings are required to adapt to the system rather than the other way around. Social norms and values become subsidiary to traffic rules and man, as a user of the space, is reduced to a 'traffic participant'. The roads in many of our towns and villages bear this out.

Shared Space strives towards a design and layout of public spaces where traffic, humans and any other spatial functions are in balance. It requires a clear distinction between public space and traffic space. In public space, the freedom of movement and the social interaction between people are decisive criteria; residential space must be designed as 'people space' and must invite social behaviour. A driver travelling through the public realm is a guest, and behaves accordingly. A driver's behaviour is different in traffic areas which are designed for rapid movement to destinations. **Shared Space** makes a clear distinction between **Public Space** and **Highways**.

Movement in Traffic Space are direct, focused and largely predictable. The speeds are high, and there is almost no eye contact. People's behaviour is largely guided by legal traffic systems, other road users and by traffic engineering signals, such as road markings and traffic signs. On the other hand, movement in social space is usually unfocused, unpredictable, and relatively slow. In social spaces people's behaviour is largely determined by the physical environment and by the behaviour of others, and eye contact plays an important role.

Shared Space aims to generate public spaces where traffic, social and all other spatial functions can be in harmony. Social space is designed in such a manner that we do not conceive it as traffic space, but as people space - a space where the social functions of the public space takes centre stage. A person travelling through is aware that they are a guest because of the layout of the space and in response they adjust their traffic behaviour to the social behaviour of the context.

In the public realm, behaviour of drivers and of others is determined more by contextual signals than by rules, instructions and prohibitions. ***The visible presence of a school and of children playing has more effect on behaviour and speed than a sign that warns of children crossing the road.*** Shared Space requires that society is visible in public spaces. The more we can experience the cultural context and human activities, the more the space becomes alive for us and the more involved we feel. Our streets and squares are not anonymous places, but spaces that belong to us.

An important premise of Shared Space is that behaviour on roads in areas with a public character is influenced more by the environment than by the usual tools of the traffic profession. Over the past decades, roads and their immediate surroundings have been turned into uniform spaces that command uniform behaviour. People spaces that are open to interpretation have been displaced by uniform traffic spaces without room for interpretation. Because the spaces themselves are no longer open to interpretation, everything needs to be explained with signs and text. **The road user must be able to tell from the space, i.e. the road and its surroundings, which behaviour is appropriate and required.**

Various experiments at reducing the level of road markings and signs are being trialed throughout Europe, including the UK. The following pictures show the before and after of a junction on Kensington High Street. I know where I would prefer to drive and walk.



I believe we will see many more of our roads adopting this method and the end result is likely to be an improvement in our environment and, who knows, even driving behaviour.

READER ARTICLE: DRIVING WITH CARE

By Alan Philpott

I'm retired with a little time on my hands. Just before Christmas, an article appeared in our local paper in which the "CARE IN HASLEMERE" charity appealed for drivers. I contacted them (01428 652 505) offering my services to transport "the sick, the elderly, the lonely, the handicapped, or anyone facing a sudden crisis". After submitting my application with details of a local referee I was taken on. Before being allocated jobs, I got my insurance company to sign and return a standard letter agreeing that my policy covers me for such volunteer driving. Since then I have been called upon to drive applicants for the "CARE" services - about once a week, on average.

I recommend such an activity to anyone with a bit of time to spare who would like to do something for their local community. Your local council would give details of similar organisations in your local area - charities that would welcome an addition to their driver numbers.

"Care in Haslemere" works like this: Every driver is a volunteer; there is no resentment if a driver has to decline a job e.g. if you've made prior arrangements. I get from two to fifteen days' notice of a request. If I'm available, the "Care" desk officer gives me the name, address and contact details of the client, the details and its likely duration. I call the client to confirm arrangements. When I leave home, I set the odometer trip in the car to zero and note the mileage when I arrive home again, after completing the task. Periodically I claim 40p a mile to cover petrol, servicing, insurance, depreciation, etc. which is tax free and doesn't have to be declared. Often, the client will offer a sum of money based on a guide provided by "Care" which I collect and keep until I make my claim. These contributions hopefully cover the driver's claims and contribute towards rent of the "Care" office and its telephone bills. Managers and desk officers are all volunteers.

Traffic measures such as sleeping policemen, chicanes and central islands belong in the traffic environment. When they are used in an area with a public purpose, they put the road user on the wrong track. Traffic measures do not encourage the required social behaviour; instead they encourage legal traffic behaviour. **Do not apply technical traffic measures in areas with a residential nature.** Many accidents are due to a lack of interaction between traffic participants. Consider the number of right of way incidents in the accident statistics - 60 to 70% of all accidents are so-called 'right-of-way accidents'. **People take right of way, but are rarely given it.** These two pictures show how the same area can appear totally different.



By restoring interaction in those sites where social behaviour is obvious, the number of accidents can be reduced. **You encourage social behaviour by regulating less with signs and markings and by calling upon the self-regulating ability of people.**

We all prefer to be in an environment where people behave socially, where they take each other into account. A reduction in the number of traffic signs, sleeping policemen, traffic lights, and other traffic elements that are alien to the environment immediately improve the quality of the space, as can be seen above. When different types of road share a space and the right of way is not regulated, they need to negotiate the right of way and need to make eye contact. This is only possible when the speed is below 20mph. In places where speed or the right of way has not been regulated explicitly, the speed of the drivers will reduce automatically. Think of the 4-way junction concept in America.

In Shared Space the car becomes the equal of other road users in residential areas. They should respect each other. Many traffic measures give drivers the feeling that they are put upon and lead to irritations and induce antisocial behaviour. Drivers must feel they are taken seriously; this is a precondition for their social behaviour.

What feels safe is not necessarily safe. And conversely what feels unsafe may actually be quite safe. Shared Space is successful because the perception of risk may be a means or even a prerequisite for increasing objective safety. When a situation feels unsafe, people are more alert and there are fewer accidents. Separating traffic flows often increases the feeling of safety, but in practice it appears to be counterproductive - the number of accidents increase. Separating traffic flows blinker people and causes an increase in speed. Because everyone has their own lane, they take less account of other road users. **Do not try to remove that unsafe feeling, but use it to best effect.**

I have a set of useful accoutrements provided by "Care"; a card identifying my car as being on voluntary service, a little ID card plus a Surrey badge and card identifying me as a Community Transport "Driver on Duty". This helps me park to set down and pick up, for example, patients at hospitals. It enables me to park my car whilst waiting, and provides access to canteens and any staff discounts in them. I have also found my GPS system, my "roadwatch" device and my blue disabled badge invaluable at times (not everyone has the latter although some clients may have).

Some jobs are well defined - attendances at clinics usually have a finish time. Other tasks may be a bit more open-ended. I was told on one occasion that a hospital pre-op assessment would last about an hour. It lasted three hours, so some flexibility is required!



Jobs vary from 4-5 mile runs to the doctors' surgery or a shopping trip to 70 or more miles to visit a loved one in hospital. Some jobs from, say, nursing homes will involve taking a staff escort from the home as well. If I had had a large estate car, I could be asked to carry the occasional wheelchair.

The benefits of these charities are many. Lonely clients get to meet new faces and, as non-drivers, can meet their travel needs at a fraction of the cost of a taxi. They get out and about and enjoy a change of scene. I meet new and often very interesting folk with many tales to tell. If you enjoy driving as I do, the extra outings to new areas and destinations are a good way of learning more about the roads in the area and provide a carbon-friendly way of justifying drives!

If you have the time and the inclination, please investigate ways in which you can help those in your community less fortunate than yourself; find your local voluntary support group and offer yourself as a driver to help the less privileged in your area!

Editor's Note: I know someone personally who relies on Community Care drivers to visit their ill husband in a local care home - the support these drivers offer is invaluable, often becoming someone to talk to as well as a being their source of transport.

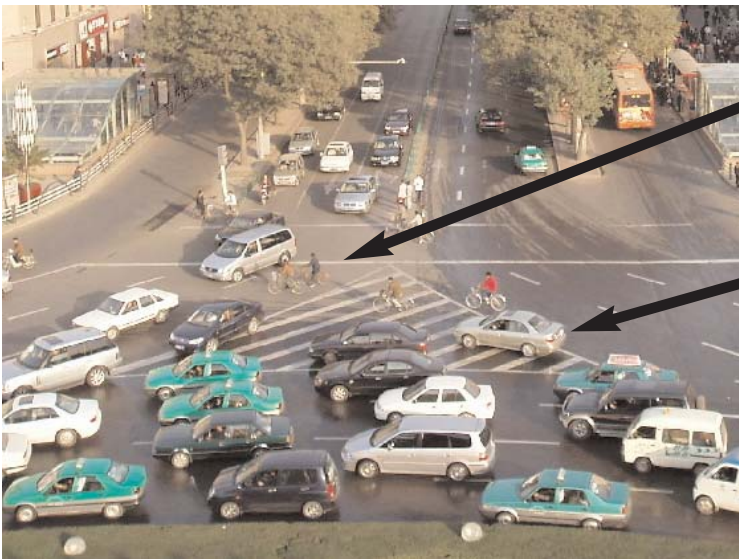
If you enjoy driving and using your Advanced skills, and have some spare time, there isn't a more perfect way of combining your driving passion while providing such a fantastic service to your local community!

By Paul Wallace-Stock

Following a recent visit to China I was intrigued to see the state of the driving in a country which has only recently opened its doors to the wider world and a country where until recently, owning a car was a distant dream and then only for the very rich. All that has changed with thousands of cars joining the roads every month! Over the past few years the second-hand car market has arrived and now owning a car is not just for the super rich. Managers even complain that their secretaries have cars!

Of interest, the Chinese variation on our points system has been reversed. When a driver passes the test they are given 12 points. They can lose points for bad driving and when they have lost all their points they are automatically banned from driving and have to retake their driving test before regaining their licence. Not a bad system.

As far as the driving is concerned, road markings seem to be incidental to the desire to get where you want. In Beijing if there are 4 lanes on the road they would fit 6 vehicles across it and in Shanghai they fitted 7! Cyclists and pedestrians take their chances and do not expect drivers automatically to stop at pedestrian crossings.



Note the cyclists taking their chances with the cars and the silver car making the 6th car covering 4 lanes. Well these nice diagonal lines keep everyone else away!

That said, I saw very few accidents or damaged vehicles despite them driving extremely close together, not only front and back but also either side. The horn was frequently used but more to

pass the message that you were there rather than any form of rebuke. It was apparent that drivers were very aware of what was going on around them. I saw no road rage, despite some instances which would have had the average British driver up in arms. Pedestrians appeared to take their life in their hands, however, they all seemed to reach the other side safely. The myriad cyclists added to the apparent confusion on the roads.

My overall impression was that in such a populous nation they are required to tolerate each other to a far greater extent than we in this country, this seems to have been translated into the way they drive taking extreme care to look out for other road users. This is discussed in the Shared Space article earlier, and perhaps there are lessons for us all in adopting a more tolerant attitude to our driving.

Police 'Better Driving' Lecture Thursday, 28th June 2007

On Thursday, 28th June, Alan Bone & Vince Bailey from the Surrey Police Driver Training Faculty at Burpham have kindly agreed to come and talk to us about **Better Driving Techniques**. This will take place at Ripley Village Hall and will deal with Hazard Perception / Planning Ahead and also (time permitting) Motorway Driving. Some of you will already know Alan & Vince from the Commentary Drives we arranged last year and perhaps also the visit to the Godstone Traffic Control Unit.

The lecture will commence at 7.00 pm sharp and will finish by 9.00 pm. This will allow time for some questions afterwards, although we have to vacate the premises no later than 9.30 pm. Light refreshments in the shape of tea and coffee will be provided.

We do need to know in advance roughly how many people we have to cater for. So if you would like to come, please contact Terry Moody to register your interest either by telephoning him on 01372 452 500. There is plenty of time, but we would like to get an idea of numbers at the latest by the middle of May.

This talk is open to all Group Observers, Associates and Members and we anticipate a very good turn-out. Any questions, give me a call or look for me at one of the Sunday runs.

Terry Moody
Senior Observer
Guildford IAM



There can be few things more irritating than waiting patiently to enter a yellow box junction, only to see cars from the opposite direction "trying their luck" and stopping mid-box - when it's obvious that there is nowhere for them to go.

Not only are those anti-social drivers preventing you moving when the lights are in your favour by blocking you, they are also committing an offence.

The Highway Code is quite specific - you must not enter the box until your exit road or lane is clear. The only exception is if you are turning right, when you can stop in the box while you wait for a gap in the traffic.

So why do so many drivers at peak times ignore the rule?

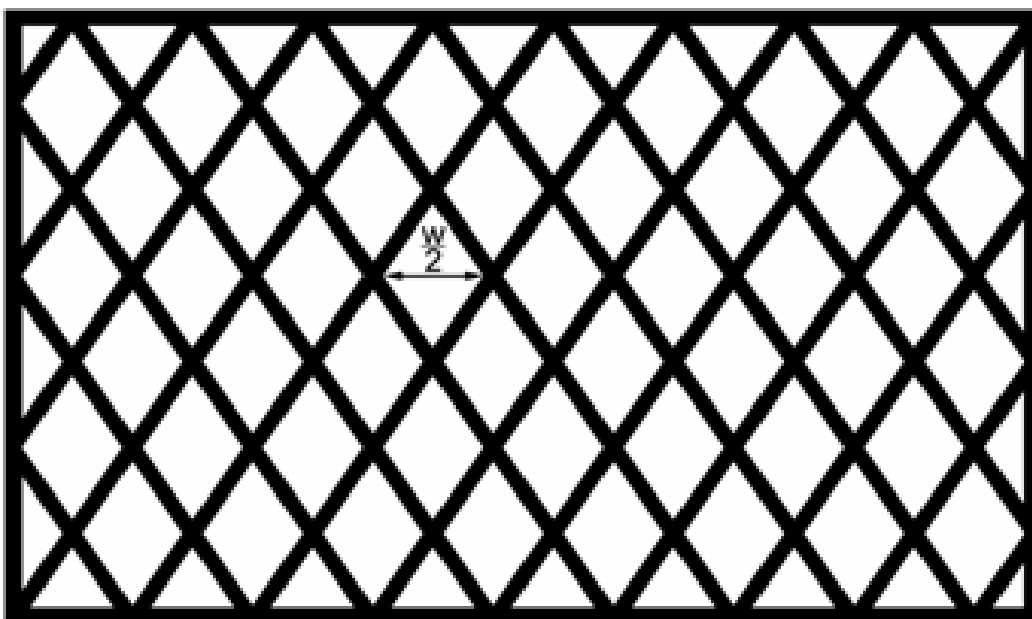
The 'tit for tat' mentality kicks in - if *they* are going to ignore the box, then *I* can as well. Queuing traffic behind you may even encourage you to follow suit by pulling right up to your rear bumper and giving you a toot to keep you moving.

"There are no winners when the box junction system breaks down... aim to be the driver who resets the equilibrium by setting a good example."

Even if you find yourself slightly over the yellow box marking because something catches you out, you should still show restraint. A technical violation of a few inches will still allow other vehicles to use the junction unimpeded. But beware: some camera systems may still penalise you. That said, there is a world of difference between having your front wheels over the yellow paint and going the whole hog by just driving right into the middle.

There are no winners when the box junction system breaks down. You should aim to be the driver who resets the equilibrium by setting a good example.

Have faith: the traffic will move again - and your blood pressure will be a lot lower!



WE WELCOME...

John Childs	Robin Fowler	David Loveder	Mark Wyman
Tony Cook	Michael Freeman	Elizabeth Mather	
Charlotte Cottingham	Duncan Graham	Stephen Mortimore	
Alison Drennan	Mark Griffiths	Lynda Sanders	
Roy Dyer	David Isted	Patrick Sansom	
Mark Feiszt	Lynne Jones	Carole Stacey	
Fiona Keown	John Seccombe	Toby Wells	

RECENT TEST PASSES

Our congratulations this issue go to:

Heather Broda	Kris Flemington	John LeSueur	Russ Widdows	Anna Claire Wilson
Sharon Crawley	David Goodfellow	Andrew McAuliffe	Martine Wilson	
Danielle Dibbens	Samantha Goodwin	Graham Ranshaw	Chloe Wilson	
Nigel Everett	Simon Hughes	Stanley Ross	Trevor Smith	

Well done for passing your Advanced Test!

OBSERVED RUN STATS

Month	Numbers Booked in Advance	Cancelled	Failed to Attend	Runs Conducted
December 06	54	12	9	33
January 07	52	6	6	40
February 07	48	11	2	35

Do try and make your booked run so that we can help more drivers!

NEW FEATURE!

We're now featuring Observers, Associates and Members so we can find out a bit more about who's who in the Guildford & District Group.

This issue... Kevin LeGrand, Chief Observer:

I became Chief Observer in October 2003. Although at first daunting, it has turned out to be very enjoyable and rewarding. This is thanks in no small part to my colleagues on the Observer team, who have to put up with such idiosyncrasies as my monthly "sermon" (as I believe it is called behind my back!) delivered in my Observer newsletter.

My job has two main objectives:

1. to look after the Observer team, a dedicated and talented group of volunteers who turn out regularly on the third Sunday of each month to help Associates prepare for their Advanced test
2. to ensure that consistent standards and approaches are maintained in our work for Associates.

Like all my colleagues, I am a volunteer. In my "day job" I work for a firm that advises companies on pension schemes and other benefits for employees. I run a team tasked with understanding and communicating the complexities of legislation, of which there is far too much! I like to think that the "technical" approach helps my role with the Group.



I like music (my tastes vary, depending upon mood, but I like to think I can appreciate "good" music, whatever the type - although my teenage sons may disagree!) I also love to travel, and my family and I have had many enjoyable trips in Europe and further afield. I enjoy the experience of driving abroad, facing the different conditions and the challenges they present, which I believe all help to improve overall driving ability.

I would encourage all members to strive constantly to improve their driving skills, and act as good examples to other road users. Do come and speak to me if you see me around; I'm always keen to hear other views.

Do you have a friend or relative that would benefit from our advice and guidance?



**If so, please put them in touch with
Chris Hughes
Contact details on the inside back page**

**Please pass on or recycle this newsletter
once you're done with it!**