

# The Road Observer

The Newsletter of the North Down  
Advanced Motorists Group



December 2024







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

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

December 2024

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### Test passes

Congratulations this month to motorcycle member

Roger Clegg

who achieved a F1RST pass

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

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### November Cover Picture

The November cover was of High Street in Killyleagh looking towards Strangford Lough. Congratulations to Colin Hay, Richard Walker, Ralph Magee, Jim O'Brien, David Hall, Ernie Foster and Ivan McStea (Belfast Group).

Do you know where the months cover picture was taken? This one may be too easy! There is now a prize to aim for as well as the satisfaction of good observation and, of course, getting a mention in the next Road Observer. The prize is a year's Group membership to the Member who gets the greatest number of correct answers in the year to October 2025. Submit your answers to: [leslie.ashe.LA@googlemail.com](mailto:leslie.ashe.LA@googlemail.com)

## **Dates for your diary**

In addition to the regular STAC nights for car Associates and the regular bike runs (notified by email to bike members and also on Facebook) we have a varied programme for the Group Nights. All meetings will take place in the Boathouse at Groomsport Harbour car park unless otherwise stated.

|             |   |
|-------------|---|
| 14 January  | STAC enrolment - introductions and demonstration drives for new Members. Training for Observers |
| 4 February  | STAC 1 - Human Factors  |
| 11 February | Group Night - Talk by MLA on Road Safety matters  |
| 25 February | STAC 2 - IPSGA  |
| 4 March     | STAC 3 - Core driving skills  |
| 11 March    | Group night - CRASH accident management services  |
| 25 March    | STAC 4 - Bends  |
| 1 April     | STAC 5 - Junctions and roundabouts  |
| 8 April     | Group Night - to be announced   |
| 22 April    | Easter Tuesday - No meeting   |
| 29 April    | STAC 6 - Overtaking   |
| 6 May       | STAC 7 - Motorways and dual carriageways  |
| 13 May      | Group Night - Return visit by K9 Rescue (practical demonstration)                               |
| 27 May      | STAC 8 - Manoeuvring  |
| 3 June      | Additional driving practice   |
| 10 June     | Group night - Drive/ride to The Rhinka for ice-cream.   |

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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## **Christmas Dinner**

The December Group Night was our Christmas Dinner at what has become our usual venue - Carnalea Golf Club. For the last how many years David produced an individual menu choice card created on his laser for every member. The aim is to remind you of the menu choices made several weeks earlier. This year, however, the laser is out of action and he substituted printed cards. Not the same impact but essential nevertheless. The food and service were good.

Many thanks to everyone who provided prizes for the ballot, especially Chair Tina who provided the bulk of them. Below is a selection of pictures of the event and a few of the winners in the ballot with Tina. For information Ivan hasn't grown to 7ft tall!







## December Motorcycle Run

Our biking section had a terrific pre-Christmas motorbike run around our favourite peninsula. The weather cooperated, delivering high winds, some sunshine, and (luckily) no rain! The roads were virtually deserted, providing an ideal setting for our final run of 2024.

Of course, no holiday ride is complete without a dash of Christmas spirit! Both Brians deserve a special mention for their great efforts—complete with a Santa helmet, flashing lights, and even a moving 'passenger'! Well done, both! We're already looking forward to starting the new year with our next run on Saturday, January 18, 2025. Fingers crossed for nice weather! Keep an eye on our website's blog for updates.

We hope members and followers had a safe, relaxing, joyful, and peaceful Christmas and wish all a happy New Year. See you in 2025!



# Review of Keis Heated Gloves.

By Ivan Greenfield

Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> December the bike section had a last run of the year round the Ards Peninsula. The weather forecast was suggesting it would stay dry with the prospect of blustery conditions worsening as the morning progressed into the afternoon. As we intended to be home by lunchtime at the latest, the weather was not a serious concern.

Let me first make it clear, with the recent cold weather, I have been suffering with a problem, where from just above the first joint on both hands my fingers were turning white, becoming cold and creating quite a considerable degree of pain. Even just out walking this had become an issue with the cold weather and good quality gloves including some of the motorcycle variety were only a short time solution. I have previously ridden all year-round wearing summer gloves, usually a leather type material with vented fingers and knuckles; winter gloves being thick, bulky and not, for me at least, a comfortable item to wear.

The Keis gloves are heated using a battery, which is available separately, or a 12v supply from a vehicle, in my case my motorcycle. The 12v battery connecting leads are supplied along with a wire harness to pass down the sleeves of a coat or jacket and a lead to plug into a cigarette lighter socket (now known as a 12v supply or outlet socket). Jack sockets are available on the back of both gloves along side a press and hold switch to turn the gloves on and off and adjust to one of three heat settings.



I used these for the first time riding the bike. They were thick/bulky to the feel for me, as I said before I do not like winter gloves due to this feel. I connected them via fly leads on the sleeves of a Keis heated Jacket that I wear and I will review this at a later date. The connections are simple to make and the fly leads on the jacket are plenty long enough to allow the gloves to be connected before being worn. The switches on the back will flash red once to indicate they are connected once the connection is made, in my case when I have the engine running and I connected my jacket to the fly lead I have attached to my bike. For clarity the jacket does not require to be turned on for the gloves to be used.

The gloves themselves are lined with a thin fleece type material, common on winter gloves. There is a Velcro strap over an elasticated wrist and a long Velcro adjustable cuff. I prefer to pull my sleeve over this cuff and this proved to be much more difficult than expected due to the cable and connector fitted on the cuff. There is hard knuckle protection under the outer waterproof and windproof layer and triangular rubber protectors for the knuckles of index and two adjacent fingers. There is no additional protection for the small finger or the thumb. There is a substantial rubber type protector for the outside heel of your hand. The palm has a mesh style rubberised surface and a small rubberised surface on the pads of the centre three fingers (index and two adjacent fingers) and



the index finger and the thumb have a touch screen surface addition. There is a waterproof zip pocket approximately 60mm wide and as deep as almost half the width of the cuff ie. across the inner portion of the cuff.



In use the gloves only feel like they heat on the outside so the addition of the heat from heated grips would be preferred or essential in my case. Having said that I had to turn the temperature down to minimum and eventually turn the gloves off as my hands and more importantly my fingers were quite comfortable. Despite my past dislike for the thicker, bulkier, winter type gloves I did not find these were a problem in use. All the controls on the bars and there are plenty of them were as easily reached and used as with the, normal up to now, summer items.

Many thanks to Ivan for this review.

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### 5 Series BMW crash

Coming back from Belfast on the A2 in twilight towards the end of November I saw a BMW off the road and it looked like a bit of a mess. It was too dark to do some pictures so I went back the next morning. The car was well off the road and, in ending up in the field having crossed the grass verge, the footpath, a grass bank and demolished 4 concrete fence posts on the way, it was in a sorry state. There wasn't a straight panel to be seen. A write off if ever there was one. One of the pictures shows its location in relation to the road and I leave you to speculate how it ended up there!







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### Whinney Hill

The road from Craiganlet cross-roads to Hollywood goes down Whinney Hill. If you don't know it there is quite a steep descent with a couple of bends and it has a 30mph speed limit. For some time the 30 mph signs were obscured by a high hedge to the extent that it was easy to miss them. On a recent drive I saw that the hedge has been cut down but presumably it was done by machinery because the hedge at the 30 mph signs missed getting a trim and are still obscured!





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**And finally..... “Caution go slow” isn’t going to solve the problem!**



**The views expressed in the “Road Observer” are not necessarily those of the Editor, the North Down Advanced Motorists Group or IAM RoadSmart**