



FORTH VALLEY GROUP  
OF ADVANCED MOTORISTS



IAM Group 6168

Scottish Charity SC023512

# NEWSLETTER 2023

## Issue 44

### GROUP NEWS

Proposed Member Meetings to be held as follows:

**Winter Meeting Dates – Falkirk Fire Station (subject to availability)**

**03/10/23 – 7.30pm – Speaker will be IAM Roadsmart Examiner Lee Fisher. This ‘Meet The Examiner’ session will be especially useful for Associates and Observers.**

**09/11/23 – 7.30pm – Further info to follow re meeting topic**

You can also follow our Facebook page “Forth Valley IAM”.

**Congratulations to the following people who have passed their IAM Test:**

Associate	Observer
George Carson (bike) 08/05/2023 <b>First</b>	Gavin Cochrane
Mark Shewry (bike) 13/05/2023	Ronnie MacLean
Steven Allan (bike) 28/05/2023	Wilson Hutchison
Gemma Johnston (car) 29/06/2023	William Rose
Charlie Leeson (bike) 30/06/2023	Max Macdonald
Neil Macrae (bike) 18/07/2023	Lindsay Pyall
Colin Adam (bike) 01/08/2023	Ian Macdonald

# Chair's Chat



A very warm welcome to our latest newsletter and an additional welcome from me personally as the new Chair of the Forth Valley IAM Group.

By way of introduction, I'm Dave Waddell (yes, another Dave!). I've been a member of the Forth Valley Group for a couple of years now, passing my Advanced Rider test under the expert observation of Lindsay Pyall in early 2022. I passed with a F1RST, woo hoo!

When I joined the group, my initial interest was two-fold. I'd come back to riding after a hiatus of a number of years and had an interest in volunteering for Blood Bikes Scotland. The Advanced Rider qualification ticked the boxes for both the Blood Bikes, and making sure that as I came back into the motorcycling world, I was armed with skills that promoted safety and confidence in my return to riding. As it turns out, I also met a load of really nice likeminded folks, and so I stuck around!

I'd been interested in joining the Group Committee for a while, so put my name forward earlier this year, then the opportunity arose to get even more involved by way of the Chair role and, after some arm twisting from Belinda (joking of course!) I was elected into the role in May of this year.

It's fair to say I've some big shoes to fill. Our outgoing Chair, Dave Allan, had been in post for 3 years, held other Committee roles prior to that and still holds an observer role! Dave was core to the resurgence of the Car section of our group and led a number of other initiatives over the years. I am thankful to Dave for the work he's put into our Group here in Forth Valley and for his support as I transitioned into the Chair role.

As a group we are very lucky to have a wealth of experience in the members we have around us. Particularly those who have taken the time over the years to train, observe and pass on the core skills and knowledge that is central to the IAM theme of road safety. Whether you are a car driver, rider or indeed both, our Group offers first-hand the ability for any new associate, or seasoned member, to continue to build their own skills and abilities behind the wheel or the handle bars. My thanks to all of you who give up your valuable time to support our cause.

This year to date has been very active for our rider community. Our regular weekend, evening and Tuesday morning coffee ride-outs have been very popular and great way for new associates to get to know the group. We also held another slow skills evening in Stirling, which was well attended, despite the dreich weather. I'd be interested to hear suggestions from our car driver community if there's any activities they'd like to see organised and which we can support.

The immediate focus of the committee from now until early 2024 is the transition of our observer community to the new National Observer standard. We've been liaising closely with Scott Tulip, our IAM area co-ordinator, to try and get both our car and rider local observers aligned with his availability for National Observer assessment. This is a work in progress, but a very important aspect for our group. To date, we've managed to secure dates for most of our car observers' National assessment. We'll continue to work with Scott on plans for motorcycle observer National assessment, which will likely lead into 2024. We're advised that there will be a period of flexibility to allow our current local observers to continue to observe while awaiting National assessment.

As the summer months are starting to draw to a close (blink and you might have missed the sunshine), we look forward to the return of our Autumn/Winter in-person group meetings which will be held at Falkirk Fire Station. We're lining up some interesting speakers. We're always on the lookout for folks to come and speak, so if you have anyone in your network who you think may be a benefit to the group in this regard, please do let us know.

Well, that's all from me for now. I look forward to serving the group over the coming year. I'm always willing to listen to anyone who has ideas or thoughts on what the group should or shouldn't be doing. The group is here for us all - committee, members and associates, it's up to us to make it a success, so let's work together to build on the excellent foundation that's been established here in Forth Valley through the years.

**Dave Waddell**

# CAR / MOTORCYCLE SECTION

## News from the Forth Valley Advanced Riders Group

We are a group of Advanced Riders and Associates who meet informally for social rides over the summer months, and for occasional evening talks during the winter.

The social rides are a mix of weekly 'Coffee Rides' on a Tuesday morning for those of us with flexible timetables, plus an evening and weekend ride each month. Group members take it in turns to propose routes and lead the rides, so we are getting to know other people's favourite circular loops and unexplored small roads.

This year's social rides began at the start of April, when we were layered up in our thermals. By June we were overheating even in our lightest riding gear and July had us in our waterproofs...such are the vagaries of riding a motorcycle in Scotland!

On a damp July evening a group of Observers, Members and Associates gathered in Stirling to practise their slow riding skills under a double rainbow. Being able to control your motorcycle in slow traffic and to confidently effect U turns and other slow manoeuvres are essential skills for riders and observation of these skills is one of the criteria for passing the advanced test. Well done to everyone who took part - slow riding is easier on some machines and harder on others but the more we practise, the better we get!

The Forth Valley Advanced Riders have a WhatsApp group where meeting and ride arrangements are posted and folk can ask questions and generally have a chat. If you are not already in the WhatsApp group, drop an email to Belinda and she will send you a joining link.





Belinda Macdonald  
[secretary@forthvalleyiam.org.uk](mailto:secretary@forthvalleyiam.org.uk)

**Time flies – Tyres age**

Amazing how the years zoom by. I’ve just wrecked one of the tyres on my “classic car”. Until 4 weeks ago this car had only done 100 miles since March 2020 (and during the couple of years before did very few due to trouble finding a replacement steering rack).

So I had not thought much about the tyres except for checking tread depth before the MOTs.

Then I reversed out of my drive at slightly the wrong angle and caught a rear tyre on a stepped paving stone not intended for cars. The paving stone broke and, in a fraction of a second, the part that broke off twisted around and dug its sharp edge into the side-wall of the tyre.

Of course it was the tyre with most tread that was new in 2019!

But this caused me to review all the tyres and consider if others needed replacing too. The other rear is down to 3mm so I will replace. The fronts are 5 or 6 mm, but then I noticed some cracking on their side walls. And I thought “I remember replacing them, it does not seem long ago”. It’s a 4 wheel drive car, but despite that the rears seem to wear about 3 times as fast as the fronts. So I looked for the date stamps on the front tyres - “2310” – that means manufactured in the 23rd week of 2010. Eeeek! They are 13 years old!

I’m a bit of a tyre-obsessive. My first weekend job was in a tyre centre. I cannot let tyres get near the legal limit and I spend days researching wet-grip etc when one of our cars needs new tyres. I’m horrified that I’ve been driving a car with tyres that old (and surprised it’s not an MOT advisory – on a commercial vehicle it would fail an MOT at the ten-year point).



So lesson is – keep an eye on your tyre dates if you have a vehicle that you don’t use for much mileage. And I’m possibly fortunate that I reversed over that paving stone.

**Mark Elder**

## Rules around motorway driving for new motorists

In the UK, there are certain rules around motorway driving that new motorists need to be aware of before heading out on the roads. These rules have been updated in recent years, with the latest regulations now permitting learners to use the motorway under certain conditions.

[RoadSafe: Rules around motorway driving for new motorists](#)



## Identifying road collision hot spots, before they become one

Connected vehicles offer the opportunity to look into the future. Data collected from connected vehicles can be used to help identify dangerous stretches of road before anyone is killed or seriously injured on them.

[RoadSafe: Identifying road collision hot spots, before they become one](#)

## You are invited to submit a nomination for the IAM RoadSmart Annual Awards 2023

The award ceremony will take place on Thursday 16 November - all winners and runners-up will be invited to personally receive their awards. This is a perfect opportunity to say 'thank you' to our amazing volunteers and members for their efforts and commitment to our charity. **The deadline for submitting your nomination(s) is Sunday 10 September.**

[Annual Awards 2023 | IAM RoadSmart | Road Safety Charity](#)

## Complete guide to city pollution charges in the UK

Why are some cities introducing charges for vehicles to enter? To improve air quality, some local authorities are introducing charges for the most polluting vehicles to enter a designated boundary. IAM RoadSmart gives you the run down.

[Complete guide to city pollution charges in the UK \(iamroadsmart.com\)](#)

## Your Current Committee

Chair	Dave Waddell	07952430438	chair@forthvalleyiam.org.uk
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Committee Member	Brian Hambly		
Car Chief Observer	Robin Mair		chief_observer_cars@forthvalleyiam.org.uk
Committee Member	William Rose		

Forth Valley Group website: [www.forthvalleyiam.org.uk/](http://www.forthvalleyiam.org.uk/)

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