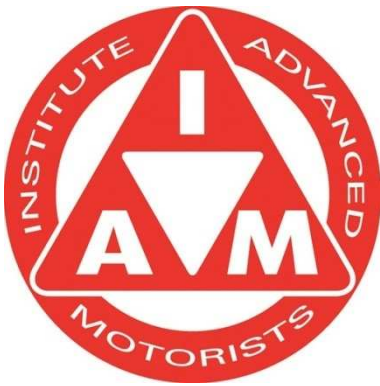


# Warrington Group of Advanced Motorists



March 2010  
Newsletter

WARRINGTON GROUP OF ADVANCED MOTORISTS

IAM Group Number 5075

Registered Charity Number 1048554

Website: [www.warrington-advanced-motorists.org.uk](http://www.warrington-advanced-motorists.org.uk)

Email: [contact@warrington-advanced-motorists.org.uk](mailto:contact@warrington-advanced-motorists.org.uk)

President Bryan Moore

Vice Presidents Paul Griffiths & Christian Givvons

Committee Members: Group Year 2009 - 2010

**Officers**

Chairman	Andrew Bloomer	Tel: 07768 990083
Vice Chairman	Peter Fawcett	Tel: 01925 659119
Treasurer	Steve Segar	Tel: 01925 727173
Secretary	Roy Nelson	Tel: 01925 229675
	15 Holford Way	Mbl: 07711 765194
	Bridge Park	
	Newton le Willows	
	Merseyside	
	WA12 0BZ	

**Committee Membership**

Associate Co-ordinators Cars	Mike Mercer	Tel: 01925 222102
	Andrew Bent	Tel: 01925 710825
Merchandise	Fiona Soutar	Tel: 0161 928 4056
Minutes Secretary	Derek Butler	Tel: 01925 728916
Motorcycles Liaison	Vacant*	
Newsletter Distribution	Barbara Mealey	Tel: 01942 203048
Newsletter Editor	Fiona Soutar	Tel: 0161 928 4056
Publicity	Peter Marsland	Tel: 01925 755921
Website Editor	Chris Rogers	Tel: 01925 861222

**Non-Committee Posts**

Membership Secretary	Ian Bell	Tel: 01925 634484
	49 Littleton Close	
	Great Sankey	
	Warrington	
	Cheshire	
	WA5 1HB	
Associate Coordinator M/c/s	* Gordon Blackshaw	Tel: 01925 860967
DVDs	Carlo Marrow	Tel: 07882 425811
Caravan contact	Rod Hackwell	Tel: 01925 638045

**DISCLAIMER** - The contents of this newsletter are purely the opinions of the contributors and do not necessarily represent the views of the Institute of Advanced Motorists or the Warrington Group.

## CHAIRMAN'S CORNER

It doesn't seem five minutes since I was writing last month's Chairman's Corner and I wonder how many of you managed to "crack" the puzzle I set you. I did hear of one lady (and you know who you are) who managed to solve it in her head, so well done to LF!



I've decided this month to set you a practical exercise, which some of you may have seen before, others not. Follow the instructions below and see the results:-

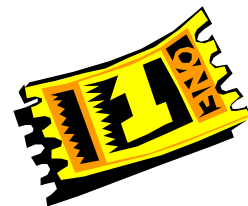
1. While sitting at your desk in front of your computer, lift your right foot off the floor and make clockwise circles.
2. Now, while doing this, draw the number '6' in the air with your right hand. Your foot will change direction. Weird isn't it!

I was very pleased to see that, despite the snow on Sunday 21 February, three associates managed to get down for observed runs, one of whom was a new associate. I'd like to thank all three for making the effort to get down and also thank the three observers (Derek, Fiona and John) who took them out - well done to all of you. It was noted, however, that a certain senior observer and stalwart of our Group (not naming any names, but our Secretary knows who I'm referring to!) decided to stay at home under the duvet (although he claims he'd walked his dog 1<sup>st</sup> thing) and keep warm rather than braving the elements!

Keep safe,

Andrew Bloomer

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## PETER RODGER PRESENTATION

Together with Roy Nelson, I've arranged for our Chief Examiner, Peter Rodger, to give a presentation to the Group at 19:30hrs on Wednesday 26th May 2010. The venue will be The Park Royal Hotel, Stretton Road, Stretton, Warrington, Cheshire WA4 4NS (same venue as AGM).

For those of you who don't know Peter, you can get more information on his background via the "Events" tab on our web site ([www.warrington-advanced-motorists.org.uk](http://www.warrington-advanced-motorists.org.uk)).

Peter is a very entertaining and able orator, and it should provide for a lively evening. I'd be very grateful if you'd let me know if you would like to attend, so that I can keep a record of numbers likely to attend.

Andrew Bloomer

**WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS**

WELCOME

Welcome to new members Elaine Appleton, Paul Jones, Judith Hannon and Pete Pinnington to the car section, and John Inett to the motorcycle section. Good luck and please should you have any problems or queries, please ask and we will endeavour to resolve them.

Congratulations to Santhos Jagadeesh on passing the car test.

When you pass your test and receive your membership information from head quarters, please let me know so that the membership records can be updated with your IAM membership number and expiry date.

Ian Bell

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I am pleased to welcome John Inett & Jack Davies to the Group. John rides a Triumph Rocket 111 (2.3 litre, or as I call it the Beast) and Jack rides a Yamaha R6.

Gordon Blackshaw

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**CONGRATULATIONS TO JOHN NORSWORTHY**



John recently re-qualified as a Senior Observer with the local Staff Examiner. John is one of our longest-serving observers and was one of the first in the group to become a Senior Observer. Well done, John!

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**SWIMATHON CHALLENGE**

I think I must be mad, but then most of you know that I am anyway. I have decided to do a sponsored swim in aid of Marie Curie Cancer Care and would appreciate as much support as possible or should I say give me money!!

I normally do 40 lengths when I go swimming but this challenge gives a choice of 1km, 2.5km or 5km. Guess which I chose - yes 5km or (in real money) 200 lengths. I told you I was mad!!

I have decided to do this in my own time and not on a fixed swimathon date. I shall be attempting this challenge (all in one go) either on 30<sup>th</sup> or 31<sup>st</sup> March 2010.

Anybody interested in sponsoring me can see me any Sunday morning at the caravan. My contact details are also at the front of the newsletter.

Thanking you in anticipation.

Barbara Mealey



## TRAINING NOTES: SPEED

Speed forms the third element of the system, with a number of simple rules available to enable the driver to judge the appropriate speed for the road conditions. Using the vehicles' power and acceleration smoothly and safely, and selecting a speed which is safe for the situation are important skills of an advanced driver.

The examiner's check list, provided on page 51 of 'How to be a better driver', outlines what the examiner looks for in relation to speed during the Advanced Driving test:

- Are speed limits adhered to?
- Is the use of acceleration excessive or insufficient?
- Is acceleration smooth and progressive?
- Is acceleration used at the right time and place, and with economy in mind?
- Does the driver make good progress and exercise proper restraint?
- Is the balance of the vehicle maintained in bends?



Breaking a speed limit is one of the most common reasons for people failing the Advanced Driving test. If you're in doubt about what the speed limit is, look out for repeater signs and street lighting. The lack of repeater signs and presence of street lighting at regular intervals usually indicates a 30mph speed limit (HC rule 124).

The limit point technique should enable the driver to identify the correct speed for corners and bends. The limit point outlines one of the golden rules of advanced driving - to drive at a speed that allows you to stop safely in the distance you can see to be clear on your own side of the road. It should also encourage the correct application of



the system, encouraging the driver to brake, change gear and steer in the correct places on approach and when travelling through a bend, and maintaining the balance of the vehicle.

Good use of acceleration sense on twisty roads or changes in speed limits can also produce a smoother drive, as well as saving fuel. Forward observation and planning are essential to the proper application of acceleration sense, enabling the driver to remove pressure from the accelerator in sufficient time to slow the car down to the correct speed without applying the brakes. However, caution should be given to the use of acceleration sense when the vehicle behind is tailgating, as brake lights can act as a valuable warning to this driver that you are slowing.

Finally, consider what an appropriate speed is for the particular situation you are driving in and the hazards present. 30mph roughly equates to travelling 45 feet a second; if in doubt, hold back, allow the hazard to pass, and then continue on with your journey.

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## FACEBOOK



You can now find us on Facebook - just look up Warrington Advanced Motorists.

## IAM DRIVER SKILLS DAY

The IAM Driver Skills Day had been advertised on the IAM website member's area and in the winter 2009 copy of "Advanced Driving" and it was something that always tickled my fancy. They were planned to attract drivers who want to improve their road skills but was not intended to be a free for all track day. The venue (Mallory Park) had been carefully chosen, not because it is a race circuit but because it offers a very controlled environment away from the usual two way traffic, junctions, pedestrians and street furniture. There would be no racing, pace making or timing of any kind and only road legal cars would be allowed entry. So, I finally took the plunge, signed up and paid my money and was allocated to the afternoon session on the 19th February.

The day did not start well - there had been snow falling overnight in the Midlands but the morning session was only delayed by about 10 minutes due to the need to clear the track. I watched the end of the morning session from the Hairpin and was impressed with the variety of vehicles, saloons, small hatchbacks, estates and sports car (including a Ferrari Testarossa) all driving enthusiastically but safely.

Once the morning session was finished and cleared out the way, we moved into the centre of the circuit and "registered". We were allocated to an Instructor, 3 cars per Instructor and we would each have 1 to 1 with the instructor for the duration of the afternoon. Our vehicle documents were then checked to ensure we had road legal cars and then it was in to the briefing. Very simply, you did what the Instructor said - you passed on the left hand side, you let people past if they were faster than you, you watched out for flags indicating that something needed attention or doing, and you were to go out and enjoy yourself and learn at a speed you were comfortable with. The track for the day had all the chicanes in use, plus an additional one on the start/finish line to keep the speeds down to below 70 mph.



In our group of three was myself in my Audi A4, an Audi TT and a Mazda 6. We met our Instructor "Flipper" Rudge who explained how it would run with him taking us each out in turn, 10 minutes worth of laps on the track and then in to change over to the next person and so on until the end of the afternoon session. That period back in the pits would allow us time to reflect on what had happened, what we had learnt and chat to other people before our next run (and allow the brakes to cool down!)

So off we went - slow first couple of laps with "Flipper" outlining the gears, braking points and lines to go through the corners/chicanes. I first of all felt we were braking far too early for the corners but he was preparing for the higher speeds in later runs. We slowly got faster and faster and I was starting to enjoy it when the 10 minutes were up and it was time to go in. However, subsequent 10 minute sessions got better and better as I was hitting all the right braking points, gear changing, and the lines (well, .... most of the time!) and was getting more confident in the car and my handling of it. My eleven and half year old car had risen to the occasion superbly!

What memories do I have of the day now? How similar it was to the way we practise as Advanced Motorists on the public road to being on a race track (albeit under VERY

controlled conditions) - observation by identifying the braking and turn-in points, braking in a straight line until we had the right speed, going through the "hazard" (i.e. corner) under a steady throttle and accelerating as the road opened up. It was the same IPSSGA (Information, Position, Speed, Gear, Acceleration) that we use on the public road, and it was the same "Gears are for Going, Brakes are for Slowing" mantra. The last session was particularly memorable because I was now familiar with the circuit and what I needed to do. I was briefly held up by an Aston Martin DB9 in front of me through a couple of chicanes (although it shot away from me on the straights, it was making a poor job of cornering and that was what allowed me to catch him). Another thing was how much you had to concentrate on what you were doing - anything less than a total 100% concentration wasn't enough - a couple of times I had spotted there were faster cars coming up behind, and I missed the braking or gear changing points because I was looking in the wrong direction at the wrong time! Finally, my car normally does about 28mpg around town, 35mpg or better on a run. For the duration of the time on the track, I averaged 18.5mpg!



Would I do it again? You bet - I know a bit better now how to get the best out of the car and me as a driver, and it was good fun as well!

Would you want to do it? If you enjoy driving and want to improve your driving further - Yes. Was it safe? - Yes, the track had been configured to keep the speed down, you did what the Instructor told you to do, and even IAM Surety (as my Insurer) was happy with me going to the IAM Driver Skill Day because virtually ALL Insurance policies exclude Track Days or going onto Circuits in the Policy. IAM Surety charged just £15 to remove that exclusion for the day whereas a normal "Track Day" Insurance cover is around £100 (and they are also likely to increase the excess payable). That's how convinced IAM Surety was of the safety of the scheme.

Mike Lyne

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### **SITUATIONS VACANT: PUBLICITY OFFICER**

This is one of the more interesting jobs on committee, since you provide the ideas or follow up other peoples. It involves meeting all sorts of interesting people - road safety officers, the press, the police, fire fighters and visiting local car showrooms and colleges. The group is looking for someone with ideas, enthusiasm and commitment to take over this important recruiting position, since without members there will not be any group.

### **PUBLICITY BOARD ATTENDANT**



A kind person is required to move the group's publicity boards from libraries to colleges etc. It's not a big job - approximately 2 hours per month for 10 months a year, but you must have car & phone.

For more information about either of these roles, please contact Peter Marsland on peter.marsland@virgin.net or 01925 755921.

**GIGGLES: CHURCH BULLITINS**



The Fasting & Prayer Conference includes meals.

The sermon this morning: 'Jesus Walks on the Water.'

The sermon tonight: 'Searching for Jesus.'

Ladies, don't forget the rummage sale. It's a chance to get rid of those things not worth keeping around the house. Bring your husbands.

Remember in prayer the many who are sick of our community. Smile at someone who is hard to love. Say 'Hell' to someone who doesn't care much about you.

For those of you who have children and don't know it, we have a nursery downstairs.

Next Thursday there will be tryouts for the choir. They need all the help they can get.

Irving Benson and Jessie Carter were married on October 24 in the church. So ends a friendship that began in their school days.

At the evening service tonight, the sermon topic will be 'What Is Hell?'. Come early and listen to our choir practice.

Eight new choir robes are currently needed due to the addition of several new members and the deterioration of some older ones.

Scouts are saving aluminium cans, bottles and other items to be recycled. Proceeds will be used to cripple children.

Please place your donation in the envelope along with the deceased person you want remembered.

Potluck supper Sunday at 5pm - prayer and medication to follow.

This evening at 7pm there will be a hymn singing in the park across from the Church. Bring a blanket and come prepared to sin.

Low Self Esteem Support Group will meet Thursday at 7pm. Please use the back door.

The eighth-graders will be presenting Shakespeare's Hamlet in the Church basement Friday at 7 pm. The congregation is invited to attend this tragedy.

Weight Watchers will meet at 7pm at the First Presbyterian Church. Please use large double door at the side entrance.

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## FORMER PRESIDENT ALAN DOMVILLE CONTINUES HIS RECOLLECTIONS OF MORE THAN 50 YEARS IN MOTORING JOURNALISM

I carried out my first road test two years before I could legally drive. I was 15 years old and had just joined the long defunct Warrington Examiner, opposition newspaper to the Guardian which was located in Bewsey Street. Times were hard for the Examiner, a paper whose fortunes had declined with those of the Liberal party which it had long supported. Readership was a 10<sup>th</sup> of that of the Guardian and, more importantly from owner's point of view, advertising revenue was desperately low.

Into the editorial department bounded one of the advertisement salesmen and he announced he had secured, against all the odds, an exclusive half page ad. from a car showroom just around the corner called Percy Duckworth. The ad. was inviting readers to take a test drive in the new Vauxhall Victor, the great new model on display at the 1957 Motor Show. To make sure there would be a satisfactory response to the advert the sales rep. implored us all to write off to take a test - and that included me. Sure enough, a few days later this car of the moment arrived outside the family home. The man from the dealership was a little surprised - but delighted that I had responded to the ad. and duly took me for a spin.

I didn't want to leave the Examiner - the atmosphere in the newsroom was so exciting - but while still at school I had been promised a job in Sankey Street. Incidentally, my interview consisted of handing to the editor a note scribbled by a family friend that read "Here he is." I was simply told to start the following Monday!

Within a few years I was running the features department, the raison d'être of which initially included of a single half page for motoring. One of my first road test cars was supplied by PLP Motors, the parent company of what had been Duckworths - and I would meet again the man who had driven the Victor. This time he let me drive! I thought it might be a good idea to tie in my piece with an ad. - a concept that simply grew and grew. By the time I was retiring from the Guardian back in 2006, the combined motoring and property section often contained more pages than in the main newspaper.



One idea I had that didn't get accepted, however, was for a separate paper in which readers could advertise their car for sale along with a photograph of it. Some years later, a fellow called John Majedski, a journalist working for the Reading Post, came up with the same idea and he was also told by his newspaper that it simply wouldn't work.

He persisted with his project, obtaining backers. Auto Trader came into being in 1976 and he sold it for £174 million some years later. The sponsor of the Reading Football Stadium became Sir John Majedski last year. You win some and you lose some!

## HEELZ ON WHEELZ EVENT FOR LADY DRIVERS

The Warrington Road Safety team are hosting a free ladies night at the Fir Grove Hotel, Knutsford Old Road, Grappenhall on Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> March called 'Heelz on Wheelz'. Casualty statistics show that female drivers in Warrington, particularly the WA4 area, have a higher risk of being involved in a collision.

'Heelz on Wheelz' is not just a road safety show: it's all about looking after you and your car. As well as beauty demonstrations and a fashion show, you will be shown how to change a tyre, how to check the car's water, when to change your oil, as well as keeping yourself safe when driving alone. There will be free prize draws throughout the evening and an opportunity to have your car checked and washed free by the fire fighters from Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service. The first 100 through the door will receive a free goody bag.

For more information, contact Beverley Mercer, Road Safety Officer, Warrington Borough Council on 01925 442689.

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## APRIL'S NEWSLETTER

Contributions to April's newsletter are more than welcome. Please send them to:  
newsletter@warrington-advanced-motorists.org.uk  
or pass them to any committee member.



The deadline for April's newsletter is 21<sup>st</sup> March 2010.

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## NEWSLETTER BY EMAIL

It costs the group over £90 a month to print and send out the newsletters, not to mention the paper used each month for this task. To help minimise this cost, why not have the newsletter sent to you by email? It's easy to set up - just send an email to:



peter.fawcett@warrington-advanced-motorists.org.uk

Please include in your name and address in the email to help with the administration side of things. No more waiting for the postman - do it today.

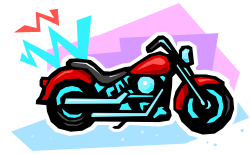
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## ROADCRAFT DVDS



The group has six copies of the Roadcraft DVD available for use by associates and observers. A refundable deposit of £10.00 each is required. Please contact Carlo (contact details on front page of this newsletter) if you would like to borrow one.

### CONFESSIONS OF A BAMBE (PART 3)



My 3rd session was a trip around Ashley Bends (I was assured by Gordon that any of his associates will know this road!). Once again, the weather was very sunny and warm and having been in Barcelona the previous weekend to see Warrington Wolves win, I hadn't done much practice since my last session with him. The rustiness soon fell away but once I hit Ashley Bends I really had to be on my mettle because the road was winding, narrow and the road surface wasn't the best with the threat of horses around every corner and resulting "mess" on the road. I managed to negotiate the road, albeit a little slowly for Gordon's liking, keeping in position for all the bends, and it was a good job that I did. As I approached the end of the bends and a 30mph speed restriction, the road bent sharply to the left and then 20 yards later a further sharp right. As I started to go round the final right hand bend, a "sporty low slung" Mercedes came round the corner in the opposite direction  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the way on my side of the road. By good positioning sense and correct speed, it didn't cause me any problems whatsoever and both Gordon and I went on our merry way. Now you might ask, why did I describe the Mercedes as "low slung"? The reason for this is simple - although being on a bike affords you excellent vision over hedgerows and the like on rural roads, because the Mercedes was low slung neither Gordon nor I spotted him and if either of us weren't in the correct position on the road then a nasty accident may have happened.

After a short debrief and a few well placed words of wisdom from Gordon, we set off again and this was the 1<sup>st</sup> time I could honestly say that I felt like a biker and at one with my machine, which was a great feeling. That being said, I still realised I'd got a lot to learn before I become the finished product.

My 4<sup>th</sup> session was fairly uneventful and involved a combined rural and urban route. My main problems were negotiating roundabouts and junctions, in which I was far too hesitant and my observation, anticipation and planning weren't up to scratch. The primary issue was that I lacked confidence at slow speeds, so when I approached these hazards I tensed up and that's when problems occurred. As Gordon kept saying to me - relax and everything will just flow! Sound advice, but more difficult from my perspective to put into practice! However, practice makes perfect so I went out by myself a few times before my next run.

My 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> sessions were fairly uneventful, and overall my riding was vastly improved but occasionally, I did mess up a junction or something for no real explicable reason - it's not like I didn't know what to do, but sometimes things just went awry! After these sessions and some regular "chippy runs" on a Thursday evening with other bikers in the group, it all started to come together and, at the beginning of October, I passed my test.

I'd like to say a big thank you to Gordon for putting up with me and getting me through the test and the rest of the bikers in the Group that I've met for making me so welcome. The one piece of advice I can give to anyone training for test, whether it be on 2 or 4 wheels, is listen to your observer and then get in plenty of practice between observed runs because that's when you can make your mistakes without any prying eyes and by critical of your ride/drive - it's the best way to get better!

Andrew Bloomer

**IMPACT PROTECTION**

The Department for Transport has rated another 25 motorcycle helmets under its Safety Helmet Assessment and Rating Programme (SHARP). All motorcycle helmets sold in the UK must meet the minimum standards of UN ECE Regulation 22.05 or comply with British Standard 6658:1985, but SHARP assesses the extent to which helmets offer protection above these minimum requirements by using a wider range of tests to provide riders with more information on how much protection a helmet can provide in a crash.

Motorcyclists are one of the most vulnerable road user groups. In 2007, 24,381 motorcyclists were injured in accidents, with 588 being killed. Head injuries occur in 80 per cent of all motorcyclist fatalities. The SHARP tests - which award ratings of between one and five stars - have revealed that the safety performance of helmets can vary by as much as 70 per cent, with helmets across a wide price range scoring highly.

So far, 175 helmets have been rated under the scheme. It is estimated that 50 lives could be saved each year, if all riders wore the safest helmets available. An independent report on SHARP has been published by the Transport Research Laboratory ([www.trl.co.uk](http://www.trl.co.uk)). For more information about the scheme and advice on choosing the right helmet, visit: [www.direct.gov.uk/sharp](http://www.direct.gov.uk/sharp)

Source: The RoSPA Occupational Safety and Health Bulletin, January 2010.



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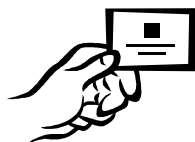
**DATES FOR YOUR DIARY**

Sundays at 10:15am 7 <sup>th</sup> , 14 <sup>th</sup> , 21 <sup>st</sup> , 28 <sup>th</sup> March 4 <sup>th</sup> , 11 <sup>th</sup> , 18 <sup>th</sup> , 25 <sup>th</sup> April	Observed Runs (car) Refresher Runs (car)	Near the ALDI car park, Crossfield Street, Warrington, WA1 1UP
On arrangement with your observer	Observed Runs (bikes) Refresher Runs (bikes)	On arrangement with your observer
Sunday 28 <sup>th</sup> March 10:00 Sunday 25 <sup>th</sup> April 10:00	Biker's end of month run	Poplar 2000 Services, Lymm
Every Thursday at 19:00 (weather permitting)	Chippy Run (bikes)	Poplar 2000 Services, Lymm
Saturday 24 <sup>th</sup> April	Publicity day	Marketgate, Warrington town centre
Sunday 25 <sup>th</sup> April	Open day	More information in April's newsletter
Wednesday 28 <sup>th</sup> May	Peter Rodger Presentation	The Park Royal Hotel, Stretton, Warrington

Further details of all of these events can be found on our website:  
[www.warrington-advanced-motorists.org.uk](http://www.warrington-advanced-motorists.org.uk) or by asking any committee member.

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**FINISHED READING? PASS IT ON....**



Personal recommendations from members are one of the main ways we recruit new associates, so please feel free to pass on this newsletter.