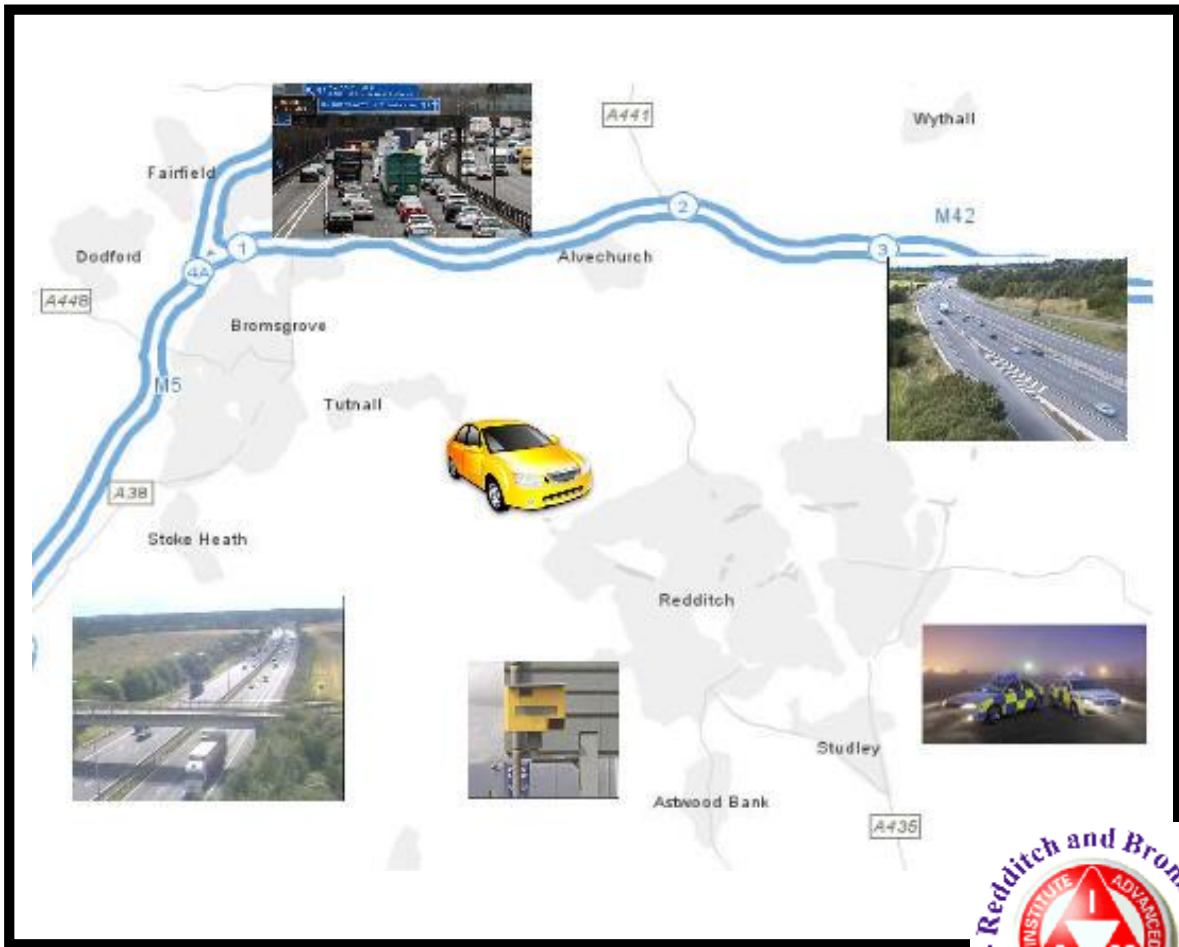


Group Newsletter



September 2009

Stand-in Editor's Jottings

First and foremost is there anyone out there with an ambition to edit a newsletter? If there is let me know, and the job is yours.

Being a grumpy old woman, I wonder how long it will be before some drivers realise that driving and mobile phoning are not only incompatible but also illegal. This thought occurred to me as I watched a woman driver leaving the petrol pumps at a supermarket with the phone pressed to her ear. When will people realise that a car can be a lethal weapon, and not a phone box. But then they obviously do not care about the safety of other road users as long as they can chat to their mates. How did people manage before mobile phones?

Some interesting news about a project that the group is preparing to run this autumn: Under the slogan "**It's not cool to die Young**" we are launching a competition for young drivers between 17 and 23.

To take part in the competition youngsters are asked to write a piece of not more than 1500 words based on the question '**The Importance of Good Driving Practice**'. There are six prizes of Skills for Life on offer to the best entries. We have thought long and hard about what form the competition should take, and I know that there are arguments about how, or what, we have chosen and may discriminate against some young drivers. But we had to be realistic and consider what we as a committee could deal with in terms of judging entries.

And finally, if there is anyone out there with a burning desire to edit our newsletter please let me know. **Please, pretty please.**

Your group needs you

Joan Scott

Redditch and Bromsgrove Advanced Motorists.

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held at Beoley Village Hall on Wednesday, 17th June 2009.

Meeting opened at approximately 19:48.

Those present: the **President**, Inspector Ian Joseph, who officiated; **Chairman**, Joan Scott; **Chief Observer**, Graham Mitchell; **Senior Observer**, Sir Malcolm Guthrie; **Observers**, Mike Lane, Richard Reynolds and John Parry; **Members**, R.A. Davis, R. Graham, R. Harper, Graham Sutton, John Tomson, Jeanette Grill, Steve Sanders (**Secretary**), Bernard Winspur (**Treasurer**), Ann Crompton (**Newsletter Editor**), Richard Attwood, Ray Ravenhall, Michael Carter, Sarah Franklin, Jeanette Grubb, Valerie Grey (Spelling), R.J. Graham and guest, Anne Overs.

Ian Joseph opened the meeting, welcoming the members present before handing over to the Chairman, who then asked for apologies. These were received from David Smith, (**Webmaster**), Jerome Keane and John Cypher.

Joan Scott (**JS**) asked if everyone had seen a copy of last year's A.G.M. minutes and if they were a true record of proceedings. There being no dissention, it was proposed by **Ray Ravenhall** and seconded by **Reg Davis** that these should be adopted; all were in favour. **JS** then gave a brief summary of her year office, pointing out that a full version was in the last Newsletter.

JS went on to advise that, as part of a joint effort with Worcester Group, we had attended 'Transport Through the Ages', with four representatives, to their one! She highlighted our 'Young Drivers' proposal and brought up the subject of meetings' attendances, being pleased with the A.G.M. turnout and hoped the regular ones would be as well supported. **JS** called for the adoption of the 2008 minutes and her report. Graham Mitchell (**GM**) proposed the motion which was seconded by Richard Reynolds (**RR**) and adopted with no dissentions.

Bernard Winspur (**BW**) as usual, made a concise but thorough presentation of the accounts, with a fuller version to be circulated in the next Newsletter. Income was lower, mainly due to the loss of members. He summarised the Income & Expenditure accounts and explained that the surplus would be lower than actually stated due to some late expenses coming to light.

He advised that the Committee had decided to change the Bank, because this would be more convenient for those using the accounts, the original having closed its Bromsgrove branch. There are still thirty three members paying their subscriptions into the old account but he was going to write to all, to try and get this brought up-to-date.

Because of careful planning and parsimonious spending by the Committee, subscriptions for the coming year would remain as now and all things being equal, would probably be so again for the following year. He advised that the accounts had been sent to Head Office and also to the Charity Commission. Having made his presentation, he asked for questions. **SS** asked if having signed the Gift Aid form, this was perpetual and **BW** thought it was until Ann Crompton (**AC**) pointed out that this was unlikely, as we had changed the name of the group, which would necessitate a change of bank details. **BW** agreed and new mandates will be sent out. Accordingly, a vote in favour of adopting the accounts was proposed by Mike Lane (**ML**), seconded by **AC** and carried unanimously.

Turning to agenda item 6 where it was proposed that the Groups' name be changed from Redditch Advanced Motorists to become Redditch and Bromsgrove Advanced Motorists, **JS** gave a brief summary as to the reasons, which were supplemented by **SS**, who pointed out that most of the Committee lived in the Bromsgrove area and many applications came from within it: a simple name change might make it easier for prospective Associates to find us. **AC** asked about stocks of named merchandise, a point which **SS** had not considered. After a very brief discussion it was thought that the amount involved was not worth considering. No further comments were forthcoming from those present so the proposal was put to the meeting. **SS** proposed and **Michael Carter** seconded, with all in favour.

JS handed the meeting over to the President, who introduced himself and apologised for poor attendances at Committee meetings. He explained about meetings between the police and public in order to improve dialogue and also emphasise that **inappropriate** speed is a problem.

He was particularly pleased to learn about the Young Driver initiative, saying that it was a good idea.

Next came the election of the Officers on the Agenda as item 7. Since all were willing to stand again, **Ray Ravenhall** proposed and **RR** seconded the

motion, which was carried unanimously. **AC** explained why she had to retire as the Newsletter Editor and Sir Malcolm Guthrie (**MCG**) explained his position, so the Committee, less these two members, was re-elected en-bloc. **JS** would be sending an e-mail or letter to all members, seeking help with a replacement Newsletter Editor and **MCG** had agreed to be co-opted as a non-I.A.M. member, so without voting rights, as the minutes secretary until such time as a replacement could be found.

Item 8 saw **BW** propose that **Alan Docker**, our local, friendly Chartered Accountant, should be re-elected as the Group's auditor. This was seconded by **GM** and all present were in favour. A letter of thanks would be sent by the Chairman.

Matters moved on to Any Other Business, when **SS** advised that the Group comprised ninety five members, the annual return had been sent to Head Office and he highlighted some statistics in a book printed by the I.A.M.. **Valerie** advised that, in her area, several young drivers go to private schools in Birmingham and she would be delighted to do something with publicity for our scheme. **Bob Chambers** pointed out a scheme currently run by Worcester Group. **RR** had reservations about whether or not the Group could continue, in view of the poor support at Members' Meetings but was heartened by the number present at the A.G.M. There being no further points, the meeting moved on.

The Group has three trophies, which are presented annually: **The Richard Attwood Shield** is presented to a member, who is not on the Committee but who has contributed the most to the running of the Group in the previous year. **This award was presented by Richard Attwood to Jeanette Grubb for her excellent work in keeping the Members supplied with refreshments at the meetings.**

The Observer Trophy is presented to the observer who has contributed the most to the running of the group, either by the number of associates guided through the test, or maintaining and contributing to the group aims. This year, **JS** honoured **Ray Ravenhall** with the trophy.

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The Richard Reynolds Trophy is presented to the member who has shown ability above and beyond what is normally expected in the role that he/she plays within RAM. This award, which is in the sole gift of Richard Reynolds, may or may not be presented on an annual basis. This year, it was

awarded to **Ann Crompton**, retiring Newsletter Editor, who had done sterling work over a long period of time, while maintaining a full time job, producing a daughter, undergoing teacher training and working as a trainee teacher.

Additionally the Committee agreed unanimously that an additional present should be given to **Ann** by way of two rose bushes

There being no further business, after thanking all those involved, **JS** closed the formal meeting at approximately 20.38.

After the formal business **Bob Chambers** gave a talk on the new test forms which now have to be completed immediately after the time of the test, with a copy of the result handed to the candidate.

Fitness to Drive

We all pass ourselves fit to drive once we enter the vehicle insert the key and start the engine. But what is fit to drive?

Eye sight the law requires you to be able to read in good sun light with or without contact lenses or glasses letters on a motor vehicle on a number plate positioned 20.5 meters (roughly 67 feet away) letters 79.4mm (roughly 3.1 inch) high.

This does not take into account 'Fields of Vision', when looking directly forward observing what is occurring to the sides, the horizontal and left/right or vertical, above/below where concentration is directly forward. So establishing these four quadrants is useful when crossing the road looking left/right. It makes sure the road is safe to cross as a pedestrian. The vertical quadrants take in road information from either signs on posts or gantries over head or painted on the road.

Most of the sensory input to the brain for driving is visual. Surprisingly there is little evidence that defects of vision alone cause road collisions nevertheless adequate standards of vision are required to drive on the roads today. Which are set down by statutory requirement and follow guidance from the Secretary of State for Transport's Advisory Panel for Vision and Driving. Which are applied by the DVLA

Defective hearing may result in failure to hear a warning, resulting in an accident. However profoundly deaf persons do not have to notify the DVLA until they reach 70 years of age and they are only likely to be refused a licence if they are totally unable to communicate in an emergency. These same criteria apply for LGV's and PCV's. Defective hearing need not be declared when applying for a driving licence nor at the onset of the condition should the person hold a licence, unless that person has another condition affecting their fitness to drive, in which case the disorder must be notified to the Licensing Centre at Swansea.

The EC Directive on driver licensing states: "driver licenses shall not be issued to, or renewed for applicants or drivers in group 2 if their hearing is so deficient that it interferes with proper discharge of their duties" (personal communication, J. Taylor, previous Chief Medical Officer, Department of Transport) Cars are not included in group 2.

Normal hearing is difficult to define, as the definition is essentially arbitrary and age dependent. A wide variation exists in the degree of perceived handicap arising from a given measurable level of hearing disability. The difficulties have to be seen in relation to a high existence of hearing impairments and reported hearing problems in the general adult population. Total normal hearing, implying a stringent definition is truly necessary only in a few jobs, audiometric testing within employment is usually monitored in support of a hearing conservation programme

In countries such as Pakistan and China deaf persons are not allowed to drive, although they are lobbying to be allowed. Concerns are that deaf people requiring hands to talk signing and driving could pose a problem especially when two hands are required. Also trying to lip read a passenger while in control of a car or being unable to identify emergency sirens, which direction the sound originates. How would they call for help if broken down or communicate with police if 'pulled over', and hearing the car alarm if activated or seat belt warnings if not wearing in the car.

But are these issues really different? How many motorists take their hands of the wheel to use the phone, tune the radio or CD player. Eat or drink while on the move or play music too loud so outside noise cannot be heard. Remember the phone can be very distracting!!

Basically common sense paying attention and eliminating distractions applies equally to hearing and deaf people equally. Research shows deaf drivers do not have more accidents or fines than hearing drivers so there should be no reason why deaf drivers cannot drive.

You must be medically fit to drive. Aware that some medication will affect your ability to control a vehicle, notify the DVLA if you are unfit to drive either now or in the future.

Alcohol and drugs; as a driver you must be aware that driving with alcohol in the blood is extremely dangerous, carrying severe penalties if driving or attempting to drive while over the legal limit.

We are aware of the alcohol limit in breath: - 35 microgrammes/100 ml. which is equivalent to a blood alcohol level of 80 mg/100ml blood.

Assessing drug levels is much more difficult due to the fact many prescribed medications contain controlled drugs.

Should you be required to undergo a drug assessment remember to declare what medicines you have taken in the previous two weeks, including cough sweets. Informing the test assessor, post the test is not an option. The result will stand what ever the outcome and the information will be passed on to relevant people.

Disabilities if your vehicle has been adapted for your disability make sure that the modifications don't affect the safe control of the vehicle.

Richard Reynolds

Minutes of meeting Summer Meeting of Region 3 held on 18 July 2009 at Hindlip Hall

The meeting was opened at 10.00 a.m. by the Chair, Bryan Davis who introduced the new committee – Adrian Court (Vice Chair Bikes) not present as recovering from illness so Derek McMullan had kindly volunteered to stand in for him at the meeting.

1. PRESENT: 43 in attendance

From Groups:

Jackie Martin, Andy Weaver (*Birmingham car*), Keith Daffern, Paul Lewis (*Coventry bike*), Jonathan Wood, Malcolm Rathbone (*Coventry car*), Mary Bevan, Paul Wright (*Herefordshire car*), Andrea Beech, Rex Mound (*Kidderminster car*), Keith Peace, Roy Follows, Simon Hepenstall (*Lichfield car/bike*), Frank Torrens, Nigel Godman, Mike Hilton (*Mid Wales car/bike*), Joan Scott, Mike Lane (*Redditch car*), Justin Stokes, John Morris, Les Bell (*Shropshire car*), Keith Adams (*Solihull car*), Les McDowell, Mike Hammond (*Stafford car/bike*), John Bailey, Rob Purser, Steve Phipps (*Telford and Wrekin car/bike*), Sarah Harrison (*Walsall car*), Tim Hutt, Derek McMullan (*Worcester and Herefordshire bike*), William Austin (*Worcester bike*), Howard Brooksbank (*Worcester car*),

Committee: Bryan Davis, Carol Osborne, Jacquiey Atkinson, Glynnis Jeavons, Bob Jackson

RCO: John Lickley (Bike), Bruce Ferguson (Car)

Visitors: Dave Shenton (*HO Group Support Manager*), Paul Woozley (*HO Membership Development Manager*), Clive McNaney (*Examiner*), Mike Lovelock (*Staff Examiner*)

2. APOLOGIES

David Carless (*Shropshire car*), Adrian Court (*Birmingham bike*), Les Pratt (*Birmingham bike*). Keith

Maddison (*Stratford car*), Phil Oakes (*North Staffordshire car*), Dave Wilkinson (*Birmingham Car*),

Chris England (*Mid Wales car/bike*), Alan Huish (*Redditch bike*), Mark Shuck (*Examiner*), and

Wolverhampton group

Groups not attending/no apologies received – *Burton & South Derbyshire Cars, Derby Cars,*

Derby Bikes

3. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

Frank Torrens had been omitted from apologies so this will be amended. The minutes were recorded as a true and accurate copy. Proposed by Rob Purser, seconded by Keith Daffern.

4. TREASURER'S REPORT (10.15 am)

Jacquiey Atkinson thanked groups for their patience and for sending 08/09 and 09/10 subscriptions so promptly after receiving invoices. There are a few groups who have not paid and Jacquiey will be sending a reminder.

Action: Any groups not yet paid their region 3 subs to ensure they send payment as soon as possible please.

Jacquiey explained the frustrating delays in getting the new Region 3 bank account open (I.e.bank's inefficiency!) and it should all be completed within a couple of weeks now. Groups will be sent receipts by e mail for their subscriptions once the cheques have been banked.

Action: Each group to e mail Jacquiey with a treasurer e mail address (or someone from your group that can pass information on to treasurer) so that Jacquiey has up to date addresses for receipts etc - jatkinson48@hotmail.com

Bank Balance: the committee took over the account with a balance of £622.63. Following the collection of subscriptions, Region 3 bank balance stands a £1128.63.

Bryan thanked Jacquiey for her hard work in sorting out the finances and also gave thanks to groups for their support.

6. PAUL WOZLEY - MEMBERSHIP DEVELOPMENT MANAGER HEAD OFFICE (10.20 am)

Paul briefly introduced himself and explained his new role within the IAM structure. He is keen to hear groups' opinions on positive retention of members, acquisition of new members and member benefits.

Car/bike groups split off for separate discussions (10.30 am – 12 noon)

The group split as appropriate, car group staying in lecture theatre chaired

by Glynnis Jeavons and bike group moving to coffee lounge chaired by Derek McMullan.

Car Group Minutes

7. REPORT/INFORMATION FROM BRUCE FERGUSON RCO

GAR (Group Affiliation Report)

Most groups have completed fully and sent to Bruce on time. Bruce stressed need for this information to be sent promptly as late submission can result in a group being sent a £400 invoice for insurance.

Groups going direct to HO for assistance

There have been instances of groups trying to shortcut the system and go direct to HO for financial assistance requests and queries. HO will NOT finance events after they have taken place.

Action: Any requests/queries from groups for assistance to go through Bruce. Please e-mail him with any applications for financial assistance etc. If groups do need to contact other people please copy Bruce into the mail so that he is kept informed. Please can groups give Bruce/Head Office feedback on how their event went that they had assistance with so that it can be monitored how money is spent and how successful events have been.

Kidderminster group mentioned that they had e mailed Head Office for support with their 10th anniversary event and had heard nothing.

Action – Bruce to investigate and contact Kidderminster with reply.

Observer Training Day

Bruce gave thanks to all for a very successful day. The next event will be at Hindlip again on 17th October. Full details will be sent out with the next Region 3 newsletter.

Web pages

Some group websites are VERY outdated with incorrect information on them.

Action: Groups to check that SFL prices are correct on their web pages. Please publish forthcoming events whenever possible on web pages.

Several groups from audience then asked Bruce who they should contact at Head Office if they have a problem with their web page

Action: Bruce to supply groups with a Head Office contact for web page queries at the Forum meeting in November 09.

RCO vacancy

Bruce is standing down at the end of year.

Action: Anyone interested in being an RCO please e mail Dave Shenton for further information - dave.shenton@iam.org.uk

OPEN MEETING/DISCUSSION

Glynnis opened the discussion by explaining that as a first forum meeting under the new committee it was the intention to get a feel of what groups would like at future meetings in terms of topics discussed, structure of morning etc and that everyone needs to be involved and putting forward ideas for the region to move forward.

There was a variety of subjects discussed, lead by Glynnis, including the following:

Ideas for getting to know each other better

Hereford suggested inter group competitions within the region rather than national competitions and asked if committee could organise. Would give a chance to socialise and get to know other groups, improve communication and goodwill. Join up with bike groups perhaps on occasion too for events?

Action: Committee to discuss at their next meeting- would need help of groups to organise but in principal seems a good idea

Sharing Best Practise for delivering courses/training

General consensus advertising best way to promote groups/events but often prohibitive in cost. Fire Brigades can be a good link as they are very involved

in road safety. Local classic car clubs were suggested as an avenue to explore as they often have regular magazines and they may consider putting in advert for a group. Some companies have newsletters for their employees and will put in adverts free of charge or for a very nominal fee.

Query on giving discounts

The question was asked as to whether groups are allowed to give discounts (e.g. to associates or young drivers) if they are financially able to do so and it attracts new members. Head Office does not recommend giving discounts but if groups wish to do so and it is successful then it is currently permissible.

SFL – Is it value for money?

Very heated and lively debate on the pros and cons of the recent increases in SFL fees. Many groups are disgruntled and feel that they are losing potential new members. Bruce had already reported a 60% drop in test applications and many groups feel the increased price has contributed to this. Some groups requested a breakdown of how the SFL fee is made up (for example what proportion is for admin, for test, for group etc). A suggestion was made from the floor about using

Senior Observers from one group to test candidates from another (under strict rules to be fair to all) to cut cost of paying an examiner but generally people felt that candidates would prefer to have the accolade of taking their test with a police trained, formal examiner, separate to the groups. All are concerned about the general drop in membership and applications for tests and some think IAM image is still “fuddy duddy” in youngster’s eyes. All in all a lot of valid points were raised for consideration although ultimately it was reiterated by Bruce and Dave Shenton that SFL does represent value for money and that the fees had to increase for the IAM to continue and that cut backs have been made in staffing at Head Office due to recession etc.

Action: Bruce to get breakdown from HO of how the Test Fee is calculated and report back at forum meeting in November 2009

Post Code Areas

Some Groups are getting examiners allocated incorrectly to associates for tests. Mike Lovelock explained that there is a system set up at Head Office on computer that automatically allocates examiners to chosen postcode for tests. However some postcode areas are very large and seemingly cover obscure areas that one wouldn’t expect and occasionally a blip occurs. Head

Office is aware of the problem and is looking at a way to resolve. Associates do have the provision on their test form to state what area they would like their test to be conducted in e.g. near where they work rather than near where they live or where their group meets and where possible these requests are met.

Reaction times presentation

Bryan Davis gave a brief presentation on the importance of observation and reaction times ably assisted by two members of the audience and balloons!! The message of this presentation was to make sure as an observer taking an associate out you are giving them clear, concise instruction AND that both you as an observer and they as an associate are looking ahead for potential problems and sharpening up observation/reaction times to potential situations.

12 noon – Bike and car groups reconvened for general feedback and any other business as follows:

Both car and bike groups gave brief resume of each other's meeting (bike minutes below)

Guest speakers – if any group knows of good guest speakers (free or chargeable) please e-mail Bryan on region3newsletter@btinternet.com so that it can be shared with all

Next car observer training day 17th October 2009 at Hindlip. Training will be for existing and trainee observers, refreshers, even senior observers if required. No cost to groups as IAM funding. Details with newsletter. Applications for places to Bruce.

Steve Mann Trophy being held on 27th Sept - info from Andrea Beech. Please send any applications in by the end of August for drivers of any age, especially younger ones – see newsletter for further details

Contributions are required for the Region 3 newsletter from groups to make it a successful and interesting read. Please send articles/letters/suggestions to Bryan on region3newsletter@btinternet.com

Plea for webmaster – committee would like to develop a Region 3 website. We need someone to help us! Paul Wright (Herefordshire)

volunteered to assist and will speak further to Bryan so that ideas can be taken to next committee meeting.

Coventry Cars have asked if anyone can help out at their Peugeot Young Drivers Event on 4th Oct at MIRA, Nuneaton. Please e mail Jonathan Wood on jonathan.wood@londonmidland.com if you can assist

Bryan asked groups if they were happy with the bike/car split for discussions and everyone agreed that it had been successful and will repeat at November meeting

Dave Shenton/Bryan have asked all groups to be vigilant in checking driving documents of new associates and ensure that this is being done.

There have been a couple of instances where it has not been undertaken, documents have turned out to be invalid and tests have been delayed as a result. Also please ensure your observers are instructing associates correctly AND LEGALLY as there have been a couple of incidences reported to Head office where associates have been encouraged to speed and this is NOT acceptable. New speed limit drops are frustrating but routes can still be devised using twisty roads, motorways, dual carriageways etc to encompass all speed limits as appropriate!

The RBAM Committee

President : Inspector Ian Joseph

Vice President : Trevor McAvoy

Chair: Joan Scott, * chairman@redditcham.org.uk, ' 01527 836258

Chief Observer (Cars): Graham Mitchell, * vice.chair@redditcham.org.uk

Secretary: Steve Sanders * membership@redditcham.org.uk, ' 07812 017641
Eclipse House, 25 Cheltenham Avenue, Bromsgrove, Worcs. B61 0RU

Treasurer: Bernard Winspur, * treasurer@redditcham.org.uk, ' 01527 876444,
3, Warwick Ave, Bromsgrove. B60 2AH

Library & Merchandise: Mike Lane, * library@redditcham.org.uk, ' 0121 411 1670

Events Organiser: Richard Reynolds, * events@redditcham.org.uk, ' 01527 460590

Observer Trainer: Keith Pope, * obs.trainer1@redditcham.org.uk, ' 0121 433 4658

Observer Trainer & Commercial/Towing Observer: Paul Hinde,
* obs.trainer2@redditcham.org.uk, ' 01527 524211

Motorway Training: David Smith, * motorways@redditcham.org.uk,
' 01527 893426,

Webmaster: David Smith, * webmaster@redditcham.org.uk

Newsletter Editor: Vacant, * newsletter@redditcham.org.uk

Minutes Secretary: Sir Malcolm Guthrie, * minutes@redditcham.org.uk

Road Safety Rep: Roger Woodward, ' 01527 526463

See us online at: www.redditcham.org.uk