



Weston and Mendip Advanced Motorists

(Registered Charity Number: 1050237)

Associates' Handbook.

Welcome to Weston & Mendip Advanced Motorists, which is affiliated to the Institute of Advanced Motorists. This booklet is designed to be an 'Aide Memoir' to guide and assist you in preparation for the Advanced Driving Test conducted by the Institute of Advanced Motorists.

It contains a 'Who's Who' within The Weston & Mendip Group, information on the Advanced Test and a syllabus for the theory sessions which you will undertake. Please take time to read the contents as it may answer many of the questions which you have.

Whether you are a car driver or a driver of another vehicle, you are becoming involved with an organisation dedicated to road safety and the raising of driving standards.

We are here to help you improve your standard of driving and become a better driver, with the ability to pass an 'Advanced Driving Test'. Please make use of the knowledge and experience on offer.

We wish you success in your preparation and subsequent test.

THE ADVANCED TEST

All Tests conducted for the Institute of Advanced Motorists are carried out by Examiners who are serving or retired Police Officers. All are holders of the Police Class 1 driving qualification, acknowledged worldwide as one of the highest driving standards available.

Before the Test, the Examiner will check your driving licence, insurance documentation, road tax and MOT (where applicable). The Test normally lasts for about ninety minutes and covers driving on all types of roads together with a manoeuvring exercise. After the Test, the Examiner will give a full de-brief irrespective of whether or not you have been successful.

If you are successful, you will be eligible to become a Full Member of the Institute and a full Group Member.

For the Test, the Examiner will accompany the Associate in your own vehicle. Application to take the Test is made via the IAM website, although your Observer will advise you of when to apply.

A training programme has been established to help new Associates prepare for the Advanced Test. It consists of four theory sessions and observed driving runs conducted by the Group's own IAM qualified Observers.

THE WESTON & MENDIP GROUP OBSERVERS

Observers operate entirely on a voluntary basis. They are Full Members who have received additional training to enable them to offer advice to Associates in preparation for the Advanced Test.

We always try to allocate Observers who are compatible with each Associate. However, we accept that on rare occasions, things do not always work out! If you find that you and your Observer are not compatible, please contact the Associates Coordinator straight away.

The Group's aim is to help you pass the Test and become a full member of the IAM, and we will do all we can to help you. The Observed Runs form a very important part of your Test preparation.

You will receive a copy of the Manual 'How to be a Better Driver' from IAM Head Office. This is the textbook for Advanced Driving and is invaluable for your preparation. It would be of benefit to you if you have a look through its contents before your first observed session.

Please remember that your Observer is not being paid for the time they are assisting you. In that respect please consider the following:

- a. Co-operate with your Observer who, hopefully, will be someone who lives near you.
- b. Travel to the Observer's home for the start of each run unless you make other arrangements.
- c. Keep in regular touch with your Observer. If you are prevented from making arrangements for future runs please let them know as soon as possible.
- d. Please inform the Associate's Coordinator if you are unable to carry on as an Associate, or if you encounter any difficulties.

OBSERVED RUNS

If you have any difficulty making initial contact with your Observer please let the Associate's Coordinator know.

Before you commence any Observed Runs, please ensure that you have sufficient fuel and that your vehicle is fully prepared for the road.

Your Observer will check your driving licence, insurance and MOT certificates (where applicable) to ensure compliance with the IAM criteria. This should be done before each observed run.

The length of the Run is dependent on your Observer, but allow up to two hours.

During Observed Runs you must understand that you are the person in control of the vehicle at ALL times. The Observers will do their best to give clear route directions.

If possible, always arrange the date and time of your next Run before you leave your Observer at the end of the current Run.

The number of Observed sessions will depend on your initial standard of driving and your rate of progress.

All types of roads will be used covering all speed limits. You will be expected to make use of speed, but only where and when it is safe to do so up to, but not exceeding, the speed limit appropriate to the road you are on. Both your Observer and, ultimately, the Examiner will be looking at your ability to proceed safely at high speeds.

If your Observer considers that insufficient improvement is being made, then a second opinion can be obtained through a Senior Observer.

TRAINING SYLLABUS

The theory sessions are run by a team including a local IAM Examiner, the Chief Observer and Senior Observers.

Theory session 1

- Greeting and Introductions
- Course overview
- The system of driving
- Summary

Theory session 2

- Revision
- Information
- Position
- Summary

Theory session 3

- Revision
- Speed
- Gear
- Acceleration
- Summary

Theory session 4

- Revision
- The IAM Advanced Test
- Driving in the Real World
- Course Summary

You will begin your Observed Runs as soon as you are allocated an Observer, which is likely to be before the start of the theory course. These runs will continue until you reach the standard that will allow you to be successful at the IAM Test.

You will then have a 'Pre Test Check' with a Senior Observer to confirm that you are ready for the Test. Remember that the Group is here to help, and that nobody benefits from an unsuccessful Test due to insufficient preparation.

The Test appointment will be at a time and date convenient to both you and the Examiner. After the Test, please contact your Observer to advise them of the result.

THE CORE SKILLS

Observation. The driver should be able to 'read the road' and allow for other road users' likely behaviour as well as allowing reaction time to compensate for irrational or unpredictable behaviour. The course should be judged so as to minimise the effect of road hazards, making full use of information from road signs and markings.

Acceleration. An advanced driver should (unless they perceive a forthcoming hazard) apply power as progressively as the road conditions allow, achieving or maintaining the desired speed.

Braking. All braking should be completed in good time and harsh braking should be avoided. Brakes should be used correctly. Braking should not be so gradual that it could be replaced by acceleration sense.

Maintaining Adequate Progress. The driver should be able to make progress up to the speed limit, where safe, on all types of road. If progress would require a hazardous manoeuvre (e.g. overtaking) the driver must be willing to sacrifice progress for safety. If a driver travels faster than a speed at which they feel comfortable, they are eating into their safety margin, thereby endangering both themselves and others. They should travel briskly up to the relevant speed limit where it is possible and safe to do so, showing confidence to use the performance available. We aim for an advanced standard, though no one should attempt to drive faster than their ability.

Observance of Speed Limits. The driver should never exceed the speed limit and should travel below it (with due regard for progress) where safety demands.

Clutch Control. The clutch should be used when pulling away and changing gear. It should not be used in place of the selection of a different gear ratio for a given manoeuvre.

Gear Changing and Use of Gears. The correct gear should be selected for any manoeuvre in time for the rest of the System to be applied in sequence. Gear changes will demonstrate vehicle sympathy.

Obstructing other Vehicles. This should be avoided. If unavoidable, the driver must have sufficient awareness of the road and traffic conditions to minimise the danger of such a manoeuvre.

Steering. All changes of directions should be accomplished smoothly so that other road users will not be surprised by sudden changes in direction

Positioning. The driver should, unless hazardous, always position themselves for the greatest forward vision in order to maximise 'time to react'. If no vision or safety benefit is to be gained, positioning should be to the left of the centre of the road.

Lane Discipline. Full use of all lanes should be made on multi-lane roads - positioning should be in the left hand lane unless there are good reasons to adopt another lane. Vision is an adequate reason for the use of either lane on an empty dual carriageway but not if other road users may be confused or inconvenienced. All lane changes should be made in good time.

Observance of Road Surface. Unless forced to do so by more immediate hazards, the driver should avoid travelling over loose, uneven or slippery surfaces, even in dry conditions.

Arm and Mechanical Signals. Signals should be used when other road users are present to benefit from them, or when it is likely that other road users may come into view during the manoeuvre. All indications must be made giving others good time to react. If hand signals are given, they should usually reinforce mechanical signals.

Traffic Signs / Signals / Pedestrian Crossings. The driver should obey the letter of the law at such obstacles and should show due regard for other road users.

Overtaking. It is important that the driver shows their ability to overtake safely and maintain progress. Sometimes the safest overtake will be the fastest. However, restraint in overtaking must always be shown. The driver should not sacrifice safety for speed.

Correct Use of Horn. The horn shall be used as a warning of approach, where appropriate. During the hours of darkness and in certain other circumstances, the horn may be supplanted by flashing the headlamps. **Flashing headlamps is open to misinterpretation and must be used with caution.** Conversely the driver must be very wary of the meaning of headlamp flashing by others. Always establish what is meant in some other way, by position or speed etc.

WHO'S WHO IN THE WESTON & MENDIP GROUP

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|---|--|
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| Weston & Mendip Advance Motorists would like to thank Rob Downing, Phil Stone and Fred White from Avon & Somerset Constabulary for all their support. | |
| GROUP MEMBERSHIP FEES FOR FULL MEMBERS FULL MEMBERSHIP OF THE WESTON & MENDIP GROUP £18.00 PER YEAR IN ADDITION TO ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP OF THE INSTITUTE OF ADVANCED MOTORISTS. | |

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