



High Wycombe Group of Advanced Motorists

Chairman's Report for the year ending 31st December 2024

This report is submitted at the 41st HWGAM AGM, 4th March 2025.

2024 saw a modest increase in the number of new Associates coming through IAM RoadSmart to take up an Advanced Driving Course with our Group, up 2 from the prior year to a year-end total of 17. I am also pleased to say that 2025 has started strongly, with an additional 5 new Associates coming on board – let's hope the trend continues as we work to spread the knowledge and expertise needed to enhance Road Safety across our region.

11 Advanced Driving Tests were taken last year – resulting in 2 F1RSTs, and a further 6 passes. It is regrettable that 4 Associates dropped out before completing the course. I am delighted to report that two of our Committee members (Tim Nicholson, Bern Warr) achieved their MASTERS with Distinction, and a third member (Bob Hill) successfully re-certified his MASTERS with Distinction qualification.

We currently have 13 certified National Observers, and in my dual role as Chief Observer I have been coaching 3 Trainee Observers who are planned to join our team very shortly after their assessments. We are now opening the next wave of Observer Training for which a couple of members have already expressed interest, so if you think you might have the skills and interest to become an Observer, please contact me or our Membership Secretary, Valerie Brickell, and get your name on the list!

High Wycombe Group membership is holding steady at around 90 members.

In 2024 we wanted to try some new, or refreshed, ways of promoting IAM RoadSmart in our region, and engaging with our membership. To this end we successfully participated in two promotional events, and ran three members events.

We took our new exhibition stand to the Safety & Wellbeing Day at RAF High Wycombe in May, and to The Big Meet, a car show in West Wycombe in July. We received very positive feedback from organisers and participants, and both events proved instructive for us, as we work to find appropriate forums to engage with the local driving population and promote the benefits of Advanced Driving techniques.

For our members, the Skidpan Experience Day at Thruxton race circuit, organised by Sean Pearce and Margaret Gordon, was definitely a hit, allowing participants to get the feel of controlling a range of different cars on a very slippery road surface, with different levels of electronic driver aids. Hopefully not a situation that many will have to experience in daily driving, but with the recent very wet and stormy weather combined with poor road conditions at least those drivers will be better equipped to handle it if the situation were to arise.

The second Members event was a guided tour of the Mini assembly plant in Oxford, organised by Bob Hill. Again, a full turn-out with a positive response from attendees who enjoyed seeing the incredible complexity, and speed, of a state-of-the-art car factory, which produces 850 vehicles each day.



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Thirdly, and thanks to Maria Marston, we have been able to deliver First Aid training sessions at no cost for the benefit of our members. The first of three sessions was held in Amersham in December 2024, and all participants found it to be very informative with practical hands-on experience of wound dressing and use of Automatic Defibrillators, which are becoming a common sight in key public locations across the region. Thanks are due to Margaret Gordon for organising these sessions, and of course to Maria Marston for giving up her time to share her expertise with us.

We also launched the Members Refresher Drives, with the first wave of some 30 members – those who passed their Advanced Test the longest ago - receiving an invitation to go out for an Observed drive, free of charge, with one of our National Observers to brush up on their skillset and help to keep pace with developments of modern-day driving. Four members have taken up the opportunity, finding it to be very worthwhile, and we are now launching the second wave.

The latest new initiative we are trialling is a digital Newsletter for members, created by Andrew True, which contains a combination of current road safety updates, together with some guidance and advice on topical advanced driving situations. Three Newsletters have been issued to date - I hope you are finding these interesting – and please do provide comments and thoughts about how we can continue to improve these, and indeed send in other ideas for activities, events and information which you would like the Committee to consider.

Affiliated with IAM RoadSmart, the High Wycombe Group of Advanced Motorists is a Charity which exists thanks entirely to the voluntary and unpaid efforts of your Committee and Observers to whom I offer my personal thanks for the many hours dedicated to supporting this group, and to coaching new Associates out on the road. We are looking for additional Committee members, so if think you might like to join the Committee and help steer and support this group, please do get in touch.

Please join me in recognizing and thanking your Committee, and Trustees of this group:

Tim Nicholson, Treasurer
Valerie Brickell, Membership and Observers' Secretary
Margaret Gordon, Group Secretary
Sean Pearce, IT Administrator
Bob Hill
Bern Warr
Tara Ridgeway

Wishing all our Members and Associates many miles of safe and enjoyable motoring in 2025.

Nigel Mason

Chairman and Chief Observer, High Wycombe Group of Advanced Motorists.