High Wycombe Group of
Advanced Motorists
Registered Charity No.1083420

Affiliated with IAM RoadSmart

42nd Annual General Meeting

Tuesday 3rd March 2026 at 7.30pm
at Liston Hall, Marlow.

Present

***Committee*:** Nigel Mason (NM) Chairman & Chief Observer, Tim Nicholson (TN) Treasurer, Margaret Gordon (MG) Secretary, Sean Pearce (SP), Bob Hill (BH), Bern Warr (BW)
Apologies: Valerie Brickell (VB) Membership Secretary, Tara Ridgeway (TR) Deputy Treasurer.

Attendees: Heather Allen, Alan Baker, John Bennett, Kapil Dhir, Peter Gunn, Barry Hatch, John Ludlow, Ronald Macdonald, Maria Marston, Shirley Mckiernon, Martin Simpson, Ray Stidwell, Paul Royer, Ian Walker,

Guests: Alex Beeston, Chair TVGAM, Tony Green (IAMRS)

Apologies: There were 20 apologies.

NM opened the meeting at 7.30pm, welcomed members and guests to the 42nd Annual General Meeting and set out the programme for the evening.
After the AGM a short break for refreshments would be followed by a presentation from **Rob Heard MBE** entitled **'Helping Older Drivers Stay Safer for Longer.'**
Rob Heard is the founder and Chairperson of the Older Drivers Forum and is nationally recognised as an expert on Older Drivers. His career in the Police Force spanned 30 years and prior to retirement he was the Sergeant in charge of Road Safety for Hampshire and Thames Valley Police. As an advanced Police Car and Motorcyclist, he led the Forces Special Escort Team looking after Royalty and Heads of State. His tenure as a senior Police investigating officer instigated the Older Drivers Forum following several serious and fatal incidents involving Older Drivers.

2. Minutes of the Last AGM.

The Minutes were circulated in advance of the AGM and accepted by all as a true record, signed by the Chair.
Proposer: Paul Royer Seconder: BH.

3. Matters Arising.

None

4. Chairman's Report.

NM circulated his second Annual Report as joint Chair and Chief Observer in advance of the meeting. He thanked the Committee for their hard work during a very active year for our Group resulting in a large increase in new Associates. He attributed this to increased media presence by IAM RoadSmart and the Committee's own efforts to attend local events.

Associates: 31 new Associates welcomed as opposed to 17 in 2024. NM thanked them all for their patience as this significant 82% uplift resulted in longer than usual waiting times for allocation to an Observer. He expressed his gratitude to all our Observers for accepting second Associates in parallel to reduce the waiting list effectively thereby allowing seven Associates to be allocated in January alone.

Advanced Tests: 14 Advanced Driver tests were taken. There were 2 FIRSTs and 9 passes, and he congratulated and thanked the Associates and their Observers.
One of our Observers, Tara Ridgeway passed the Masters course.

New Observers: NM welcomed 2 new Observers, Mark Powell, also a Trustee of IAM RoadSmart and Paul Royer, both of whom being a wealth of driving expertise, skill and passion to the team. In addition, two new trainee Observers, Kapil Dhir and John Ludlow are already well on their way to being ready for their Observer Assessment and will bring very relevant expertise to the Team.

Refresher Drives: The first half of the year saw the introduction and completion of our local group Member Refresher Drives. It provided additional member value for all members wishing to revise their Advanced Driving skills. This local initiative has been adopted by IAM RoadSmart, although as a paid-for option

Events: To promote IAM RoadSmart road safety within the area and the benefits the Advanced Driver Course can bring our group attended 7 local shows and events around Chesham, High Wycombe and surrounding villages. These included Fetes, Car Shows, an RAF Base Safety Day and a presentation to the High Wycombe WI.
With the support of the Committee and additional volunteers the Events schedule planned for 2026 will include a few for our members. Options being considered include a visit to the National Highways Control Centre, an Off-Road 4x4 driving experience and a possible Advanced Driver Team Treasure Hunt.

Newsletter: The digital Newsletter, containing a diverse range of topical items and updates has been well-received. NM thanked Andrew True, the instigator and creator of these quarterly issues.

NM encouraged members to provide comments, thoughts and information on how we can continue to improve the content of these. In addition, any other suggestions or ideas for activities, events which members would like to the Committee to consider would be gratefully received.

In conclusion NM reminded members that the High Wycombe Group is a Charity which exists entirely to the voluntary and unpaid efforts and dedication of the Committee and Observers. He appealed for additional members to join the Committee, in particular to assist with Digital Media, Communications, planning and running events and Member Admin support. If any member can help to support our Group, please make contact.

5. Treasurer's Report and Adoption of Accounts.

TN circulated his Treasurer's Report, together with the 2025 Income and Expenditure statement, prior to the meeting.
Our financial situation remains reasonably robust. The current account balance stands at £2,008.14 and the deposit account balance is £7,543.28 with a total of financial assets (current and deposit accounts) £9,551.42, as opposed to £8,898.12 at the end of 2024. Income exceeded outgoings by £653.30.
The increase in funds was largely due to a reduction in events costs whilst the increase in Member subscription contributed a small additional amount.

The Committee is moving from the present cumbersome banking arrangements of cheque only payments which incur extra charges to more convenient online banking. The implementation of this is in progress allowing access by the Chairman, Treasurer and Deputy Treasurer. Two authorisations will still be necessary for payments to be processed.

The accounts were adopted by all present.
Proposer: SP Seconder: BW.

6. Election of Officers (Chairman, Treasurer, and Secretary)
All Officers must retire annually

The current committee comprises:
OFFICERS:

Chairman	Nigel Mason	Happy to continue
Treasurer	Tim Nicholson	Happy to continue
Group Secretary	Margaret Gordon	Happy to continue

7. Election of Committee (One third must retire)

COMMITTEE:

Chief Observer	Nigel Mason	Standing down
Membership Secretary	Valerie Brickell	Standing down - Volunteer needed
Website	Sean Pearce	Happy to continue
Member	Bob Hill	Standing down but happy to continue
Member	Bern Warr	Happy to continue
Member	Tara Ridgeway	Happy to continue

Nominations for Committee 2026:

	Nominee	Proposer	Seconder
Chair	Nigel Mason	Paul Royer	Maria Marston
Treasurer	Tim Nicholson	Paul Royer	Maria Marston
Secretary	Margaret Gordon	Paul Royer	Maria Marston
Chief Observer	Bern Warr	Peter Gunn	TN
Membership	VACANCY		
Member	Bob Hill	Maria Marston	Alan Baker

The Committee for 2026 comprises:

Chairman	Nigel Mason
Treasurer	Tim Nicholson
Group Secretary	Margaret Gordon
Membership Secretary/Observer Coordinator	Volunteer needed
Chief Observer	Bern Warr
Webmaster	Sean Pearce
Without Portfolio	Bob Hill
Deputy Treasurer	Tara Ridgeway

VB retired as Membership Secretary for personal reasons. NM urged Members for help to fill this vacancy. TN commented that this is role need not necessarily be undertaken by an IAM member.
Until a replacement is found, the Membership Secretary's role will be undertaken by MG.

8. AOB.

No matters were raised

9. Date of Next Annual General Meeting.

Tuesday 9 March 2027.

The formal business of the AGM concluded at 7.50pm.

The evening concluded with enthusiastic applause from the members in appreciation for Rob Heard's presentation. NM thanked him for a revealing and enlightening hour, presenting him with a small gift.

Barry Hatch Achievement Recognition

Given the current Government focus on Older Drivers and the theme of our passionate presentation, the evening finally ended appropriately with a special presentation for an outstanding achievement to our Member Barry Hatch aged 91, who received his Certificate for a F1RST Pass in his IAM Advanced Driver Test, mentored by his Observer SP. Barry applied for the Advanced Driver Course following an IAM RoadSmart Mature Driver Review.

PRESENTATION BY BOB HEARD MBE

'Helping Older Drivers Stay Safer for Longer.'

Rob Heard is nationally recognised as an expert on Older Drivers, regularly being interviewed by TV, Radio and the Media on the subject. He has spoken and presented at numerous National conferences on mature and older drivers can be supported to carry on driving safely for longer but also when is the right time to retire from driving.
In the 2025 New Years Honours list, Rob was awarded an MBE for his work in road safety and particularly mature and older drivers. He now works as a Road Safety Consultant for numerous organisations, specialising in Mature and Older Drivers, Vision and Driving and he is a Driver Awareness Trainer for UK Roan Offender Education (UKROEd), the not-for-profit organisation responsible for the management of the National Driver Offender Retraining Scheme.

Rob presented not only an extensive illustrated talk consisting of some informative and alarming statistics on the theme of older drivers, but he also included a review of the new Government's Road Safety Strategy 2026 for reducing deaths and serious injuries on our roads. He began with a question:
'How many people are involved in road crashes every day in the UK'?
Deaths – 5. Serious injuries – 8. Slight injuries 347
The cost of injury collisions to the UK economy is estimated at £43.2 billion.

'What kills and injures people on our roads?'
'The Fatal Four.'

- Speed is the biggest – 26% of fatalities
- Drink and drug driving – cannabis takes two days to clear the system. Even trace amounts would lead to disqualification.
- Mobile phone use while driving
- Seat belts (lack of)

Rob noted that a fifth is being added in 2026: Careless Driving.

Whilst serving as SIO with the Serious Collison Investigation Unit, Rob witnessed 300 fatal incidents, many involved older drivers. In 2011 a fatal head -on collision resulted in the death of a young driver confronted by a car travelling on the wrong side of the road. The driver of the vehicle was 89 years old, not fit to drive with no sight in one eye, received a 9-month sentence. Repeated pleas from the family to stop driving had gone unheeded. It was this incident which inspired Rob to research and set up The Older Drivers Forum.

Older Driver Statistics:

In the UK drivers are required to renew their licence at 70 years of age, thereafter every three years. They self-certify they are fit to drive, can read a number plate at 20m and are responsible for notifying the DVLA of any medical conditions of which there are 183. Doctors and optometrists have no legal obligation to inform the DVLA.

In November 2025 there were 6.3million older drivers in Great Britain, 15% of all drivers, increasing every year by ¼ million,

- The oldest driver being 109.
- 11% of all the miles driven
- 8% of all casualties
- 24% of all fatalities.
- Fatalities of drivers aged 70 & over have increased 45% since 2010
- This figure is forecast to increase by 22% in 2040

- Drivers of any age who drive less than 2000 miles/ year face a higher risk of being involved in an accident.
- Drivers over the age of 65 require 22% more time to recognise and respond to hazards. At a speed of 70mph the relates to an extra two car lengths.
- 38% more likely to be involved in collision when failed to look properly.
- 55% more likely to be involved in a collision when failed to judge another's speed or path of travel.
- Most collisions occur at right turns like at T-junctions.
- 4.5 times more likely to experience a collision involving illness or disability.
- Mobility and head movement reduce with age.
- Older drivers are less likely to speed.

Older Driver Statistics research into the Road Casualty data from the DfT in 2023 indicated that fatalities are falling for young drivers (22% decrease) but rising (24% increase) for older drivers.

The Older Drivers Forum recommends a three-pronged approach to helping older drivers by:

(i) Raising awareness:

- provide practical and informative advice
- inform older drivers of the risks they face and how to reduce them.
- how to identify the right time to retire
- offer advice to family and friends
- give advice to medical practitioners and opticians
- a dedicated website: www.olderdriversforum.com giving advice on licence renewal and the law, eyesight and medical conditions, driving tips, national assessments.

(i) Voluntary Driving Appraisals and Assessments:

Two options:

(a) confidence building by joining IAM RoadSmart Mature Driver Review, using the driver's own car or local council schemes.

(b) Medical condition may affect ability to drive safely assessment with Driving Mobility a DVLA accredited organisation.

(ii) Mature Driver Assessment Standardisation:

A working group made up of academics, experts and providers creating application and report templates, assessors' guides and sessions on Vision and hazard awareness.

Assessors must be approved driving instructors and completed the Road Safety GB 'Ageing Driver ADI Training Course.'

Vision and Driving

Standard vision for driving Group 1 licence holders in the UK are:

- an individual must read a number plate at 20m
- must meet the minimum eyesight standard for driving by having a visual acuity test – being able to read the third line down on an eye chart
- have an adequate field of vision

Eyesight statistics:
90% of driving is visual
5-10% of drivers don't meet required vision standards which represents over 3 million drivers. This figure increases in summer due to use of non-prescription sunglasses.

33% of people over 40 are affected by glaucoma, macular degeneration, cataracts and blindness.
Eyesight can be greatly affected between daylight and dark conditions. Eyesight takes about 9 seconds longer to recover from glare in older drivers.

To carry on driving safely for longer:
Don't be complacent
Undertake a Mature Driving Assessment
Have an optometrist eye test at least every two years with a field of vision check.
Check with your doctor you are safe to drive and ensure DVLA is informed if you have a notifiable medical condition.
Check with a pharmacist that any medication or combination of medication is safe for driving.
By doing the above you will stay safe for longer and remember – there will be a time when you will need to retire from driving.

An overview of the Government's new Road Safety Strategy 2026

1. Targets to reduce deaths and serious injuries reduced by 65% by 2035 and for children under 16 a reduction of 70%

2. The Government is considering compulsory eye tests at licence renewal from 70 years onwards to:
- ensure drivers have safe vision as they get older
- replacing the current self-declaration system for over 70's.
- understanding how this change could affect you.
- cognitive tests for Older Drivers to maintain safety and independence.
- an eyesight poll for drivers to have their say

3. Stricter drink/drive limits.
- England and Wales now have the highest allowable limit in Europe. No change since 1967. The new limit could put a driver over the legal limit after one drink.

4. Better support for new and younger drivers.
- Minimum learning period 3-6 months
- Additional night and bad weather driving

5. Tacking Dangerous and Illegal Driving.
- Uninsured driving – higher fines and 3-6 months
- Not wearing a seat belt – 25% of fatalities involve non wearing of seat belts.
- Drug driving
- Ghost plates – illegal, modified registration plates designed to evade detection by ANPR.

6. Safer Vehicle and Road Systems.

New and modern safety technology and better road design reduce risks for all drivers. Clear guidance and training are important to ensure drivers understand and use these technologies safely and with confidence.

- Driver monitoring and awareness – drowsiness and attention warning, advance distraction warning and blind spot information
- Collision avoidance and braking – Emergency braking for pedestrians and cyclists. Autonomous Emergency Braking for vehicles (AEB)
- Low speed and manoeuvring safely – reversing and moving off
- Impact protection and data – event data recorders (black box)
- Vehicle condition – tyre pressure monitoring systems
- Frontal full width impact protection
- Tyre pressure monitoring systems

Signed: ---------- Chair Nigel Mason

Date: ----------