



Mr John Valentine
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Dear Mr J Valentine

I'm writing to you in my capacity as publicity officer of the Newbury Group of the Institute of Advanced Motorists, NIAM. I am, also, a Parish Councillor for my local parish of Fyfield. Our parish is rather small and mainly agricultural in nature.

Twice a year we publish a Newsletter to update and inform our residence of any relevant issues. It can be difficult to find enough varied information to make it interesting and appealing. In this Autumn's issue we are going to add a piece on "Winter Driving", provided the by NIAM.

After last years severe winter weather it would be helpful to have piece appropriate to all the motorists within the parish. The NIAM hoped that other parish councils would be interested in adding a similar article in their parish publications and I have taken the liberty in supplying a copy of the article we propose.

The IAM through their Skills For Life courses are keen to improve the standards of driving on our roads and hence make everybody's driving experience more enjoyable and relaxed. There are other financial benefits involving car insurance, break down cover and deals on new cars.

The group itself have regular meetings, guest speakers and attend events, such as the Thames Valley Police Training College Open-day at Sulhamstead on 3rd September.

I would be delighted to help with any questions or enquires.

Councillor Penny Pearson BSc (Publicity for NIAM).
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IAM's Tips for Driving in Winter Weather

As the winter weather approaches, the Institute of Advanced Motorists (IAM) has warned of the increased danger for road users.

If the weather is bad, drive only if it is necessary. If the journey is necessary, ensure that your car is properly prepared and that you know how to cope with changing road conditions.

IAM advice for motorists driving in bad winter weather conditions is:

- Take it slow and allow extra time for the journey, even if it is the usual work or school run. Other traffic on the road will be driving more slowly than normal.
- In snow or ice, slow down and keep well back from the vehicle in front. When roads are slippery it could take ten times longer to stop, so you need to look a long way ahead and plan to change lanes as necessary.
- Use low gears to help keep traction, especially on hills, and use gears to restrain speed on downhill sections to avoid the need to brake.
- The road in front of vehicles clearing snow is likely to be worse than the road behind. Don't pass these vehicles.
- Clear snow, ice and mist so that you have a clear view out of all windows – not just the windscreen. Check the windscreen washer is topped up with windscreen washer fluid for the appropriate outside temperature and that the wiper blades are clean.
- Clear snow and ice from lights, and turn on headlights to see and be seen. Bad weather causes poor visibility for all motorists.
- Pack an emergency kit, such as warm outdoor clothes, a reflective jacket, a torch, a spade, a flask of hot tea or coffee, and a fully-charged mobile phone.

Remember to be cautious at all times, check the weather forecast before starting your journey, and prepare for familiar, short journeys as well as long ones.

If you want to know more, visit the Newbury Group of Advanced Motorists website at www.niam.org.uk, or contact the Group Secretary, Dick Bird, by e-mail on secretary@niam.org.uk or by telephone on 07717 366500. An IAM Skill for Life voucher makes an ideal gift.