

# Bournemouth & Dorset Advanced Drivers



February Newsletter - 2026 (edition 128)

## To Poland and back

Last weekend I found myself on a whistle-stop trip to Kraków in Poland. The travel logistics were pretty simple, with a flight from Bournemouth. However, there was a need to avoid expensive parking at Bournemouth Airport (with prices ranging from £90 to £135), the car was left a short walk away.

I've only flown from Bournemouth once previously (on that occasion taxi was my chosen transport as work was picking up the bill), and that was some 20 years ago, so I'm going to imagine things have changed a bit since, however it did appear that the car is very much still king (and a cash-cow!). I didn't spot any safe or secure cycling parking, and the roads aren't very appealing for cycling given the number of commercial vehicles on them, and the pavements in many places were just about wide enough for one when walking, let alone sharing.

Fast forward 2 hours and ground is white with snow, but the pavements and roads are pretty much perfectly clear. It is business as usual, as their infrastructure much be a lot more prepared than the UK is! Even on Saturday morning when the temps were as low as -11, everything was operating as it should be.



My knowledge of Poland isn't great (first visit), but the drivers all seemed quite relaxed, and in Kraków there are plenty of pedestrian crossings, for which the traffic (cars, trams and cyclists) are more than happy to stop and wait at. In many areas there were even dedicated cycle-crossing a few yards down the road from the pedestrian crossings. Most cycling points were painted red, and where pedestrians and cyclists travel in parallel it was a similar arrangement to what we often find in the UK – tarmac for the wheels and paving slabs for shoes. Electric scooters were even available for hire, but I don't think my Beryl app would work! I didn't venture out on two wheels as that requires slightly better navigation skills – maybe next time!

Thankfully the rain had subsided by the time it was necessary to collect the car and head home!

Where will I be next weekend? Maybe you'll find out in the March newsletter.

Before I sign off, it was nice to see some of our members at our recent Annual General Meeting, and even better the committee has gained a few new faces too.

Stay safe & happy motoring,

*Matt Ames*  
*Membership and Newsletter Editor*  
*Bournemouth & Dorset Advanced Drivers*  
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## Forthcoming Social events

### 5th March 2026

Talk by Vald Tibuleac, local group Member and ADI, who runs a driving school for learner drivers. He will highlight some of the key differences between what is taught to learners and our advanced driving tuition.

Time: 1900

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### 2nd April 2026

Talk by Justin Stringfellow & Yvonne Moors from Bournemouth & Wessex Advanced Motorcyclists. This is your chance to ask questions on how/why motorcyclists interact with vehicles.

Time: 1900

### 7th May 2026

(tbc)

Time: 1900

Drinks can be purchased from the bar from 1900, talk starts at 1930. Accessing Wimborne Town football club can be a bit of a fine art. Recommended access is to follow Lonsdale Road (from the B3073) through the new housing estate, and then turn left onto Ainsley Road, and park in the ground's carpark on the right.

As always the latest information about Group Social evenings can be found on our website at: <https://www.bdiam.org.uk/social-events/>

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### New Associate Members of the Bournemouth & Dorset Group

We welcome the following new Associate members who have recent joined the Group. Observer allocations, where known are shown below:

Ben Miller	-	(pending)
Colin Raynor	-	(pending)
Ian Thomsen	-	(pending)
Simon Walden	-	(pending)
Valentin Gravil	-	(pending)

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### IAM Test passes for the Group

Congratulations to our latest Full members of the Bournemouth & Dorset Group who have recently passed their IAM RoadSmart test (observer is listed beside them if known at publication):

Darren Money (F1RST)                      Martyn McCarthy

Great driving and thanks to our Observer Team for helping you achieve your pass.

### Is it POWDER, POWDERY or POWDERS, or I AM SAFE or I'M SAFE?

Martyn McCarthy

Before considering the question, let's take a step back and ask, why, as drivers, are we encouraged to use POWDER, POWDERY or POWDERS or, I AM SAFE or I'M SAFE as part of our pre-drive checks?

Each is a mnemonic, which the dictionary tells me, is a device, a pattern of letters, that assists in remembering something.

That something, for us as drivers, are Rules 89 and 90 (to 94) of the Highway Code.

Rule 89, emphasising the importance of vehicle condition for safe driving, states: *you MUST ensure your vehicle and trailer comply with the full requirements of the Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations and Road Vehicles Lighting Regulations.*

POWDER provides a simple, easy-to-remember, checklist to ensure your vehicle is safe and roadworthy, each letter highlighting a key vehicle check to be undertaken before you drive.

Roadcraft (2025), for a non-police vehicle, details POWDER in Appendix 1 as:

**P**etrol (or charge) – Ensure you have enough fuel/ AdBlue or electric charge for your journey.

**O**il – Oil level. Secure oil filler and dipstick.

**W**ater – Radiator water level including coolant/ anti-freeze mixture. Include washer fluid levels (front and rear).

**D**amage – Visual examination of exterior, looking for insecure items and/or damage.

**E**lectrics – Verify operation of electrical systems.

- Lights – mandatory running lights (main and dipped beam)
- Brake and reversing light
- Indicators and hazard warning lights
- Number plate light (rear)
- High-intensity lights

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- Interior – instrument warning lights
- Windscreen wipers (front/rear)

### Rubber

- Wheels - wheel nuts secured to correct torque setting.
- Tyres - tread depth/ free from cuts, bulges, tears/ pressure/ compatibility

Highway Code Rules 90 to 94, emphasising the importance of a driver's health to safe driving, states: *Make sure you are fit to drive.* You MUST ensure you comply with the full requirements of the Road Traffic Acts.

By adding either S, for Self, or, Y, for You to make, POWDERS or, POWDERY, leads to another mnemonic providing a simple, easy-to-remember, set of questions to ensure you are fit to drive, each letter highlighting a key question to ask yourself before you start driving. Roadcraft details the mnemonic I AM SAFE in Appendix 1 as:

**I**llness: Do I have an illness or symptoms that might affect my ability to drive?

**A**ttitude: How do I feel about this journey? Am I fully focused on the driving task? What human factors do I need to take account of?

**M**edication: Am I taking any medications that might affect my performance?

**S**leep: Am I suffering from lack of sleep/fatigue?  
**A**lcohol: Have I had a drink? Am I still affected by alcohol?

**F**ood: Am I hungry or thirsty? Could low blood sugar or dehydration affect my judgement?

**E**motion: Am I angry, depressed, or stressed? Could this lead me to take risks?

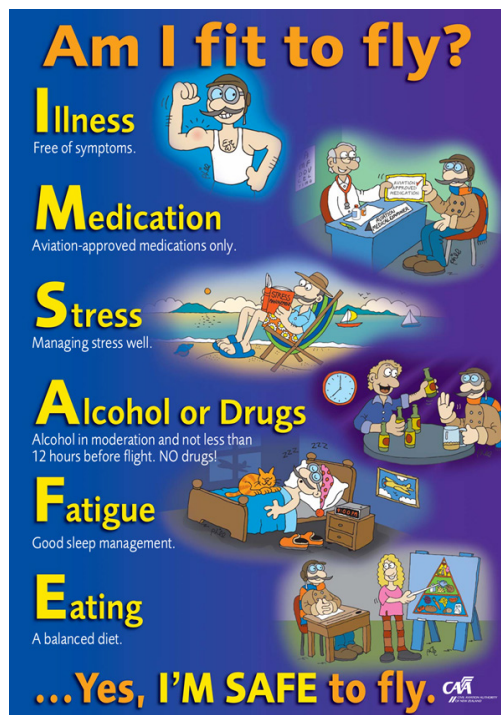
The Advanced Driver Course Logbook, under Human Factors at page 6, provides a different mnemonic, IAMSaFE and details this as representing, Illness, Alcohol, Medication, Stress, and Fatigue, Emotion.

Remembering, the purpose of a mnemonic is to assist in remembering something, Appendix 1 of Roadcraft

helpfully contains the note: **‘There are many versions of I AM SAFE checklist. Follow the one you find most useful’.**

In 40-plus years, the version I've found most useful to me is an adaptation of **I'M SAFE**; Illness, Medication, Stress, Alcohol, Fatigue, and Emotion that's prescribed by the Civil Aviation Authority for use by pilots. I've adapted F to be Fatigue and/or Food and, as Stress can be viewed as 'double counting' of personal feelings, the E I've adapted to be Environment, as in weather conditions, challenging road conditions, driving in another country etc.

My view is simply, given the note in Roadcraft as to following the version proven to be the most useful to me and, that it is a version of something prescribed by the Civil Aviation Authority, if it works for the pilot taking me on holiday to Palma; logically, it's going to work on my drive to Poole!



Returning to the question, whether it's POWDER, POWDERY or POWDERS, or, I AM SAFE or I'M SAFE, given each is a mnemonic intended to assist compliance with Rules 89 and 90 (to 94) of the Highway Code, adapting the words of the note in Roadcraft, whether without or, with the addition of S, for Self, or, Y, for You, or subtle variation in the meaning attributed to any specific letter, *‘Follow the one you find most useful’.*

Drive safely.

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### Drug-drive reoffending increases by 134% over last four years in England and Wales from the IAM Newsroom

- New figures obtained through a Freedom of Information request to the Ministry of Justice reveal a concerning rise in the rate of reoffending
- Nearly half of drug-drive offences are committed by a reoffender
- The UK's leading road safety charity IAM RoadSmart welcomes proposals in the road safety strategy to suspend the driving licences of those suspected of drug-driving
- But the charity says more needs to be done and calls for the introduction of a national drug-drive rehabilitation course

Instances of drug-drive reoffending have surged by more than 134 percent in the last four years revealing a system that is broken and in need of urgent reform, according to victims and road safety campaigners.

A Freedom of Information (FOI) request submitted to the Ministry of Justice by road safety charity IAM RoadSmart shows that drug-drive re-offending rates are surging: in 2024 there were 3,193 instances of drug-driving reoffending - more than 134 percent higher than the 1,363 recorded offences in 2020.<sup>[i]</sup>



Nearly half of drug-drive offences (44%) are committed by a reoffender, according to Government data. One person committed the offence when they had 18 previous drink and drug-driving convictions.<sup>[ii]</sup>

When police suspect a person of drug-driving, they will conduct a roadside screening test such as a swab which can test on the spot for cannabis and cocaine.

They may also perform a Field Impairment Test (FIT) and ask the driver to perform physical tasks to assess

coordination such as walking in a line or standing on one leg. A person will be arrested if they fail the roadside test, FIT, or if the officer still suspects driving is impaired by drugs. The offender will then be taken to a police station and asked to provide a sample of blood or urine for laboratory analysis.

One of the reasons that reoffending is rife could be because of delays of up to six months to process blood tests, which means people who have failed a roadside test are allowed to continue to drive.

Some of those drivers have gone on to kill while their results are pending.

Jane Hickson was killed by Paul Wright who was on bail for drug-driving at that time, having been arrested six months earlier after testing positive at the roadside.

Tim Burgess was killed by Joshua Eldred who had also been bailed pending a blood test, meaning he was free to drive. Both tests would later prove to be positive.<sup>[iii]</sup>

The backlog has been acknowledged in the Government's new road safety strategy, which proposes giving police powers to suspend the driving licences of those suspected of committing a drug-driving offence.

Exploring alternative methods for drug-driving evidence collection and sampling is also on the table. Australia has been using immediate, roadside evidential saliva sampling for nearly two decades, combining this with laboratory testing for rapid case resolution.<sup>[iv]</sup><sup>[v]</sup>

Research conducted by IAM RoadSmart in August 2025, through a survey of 2,053 UK motorists, found that 82 percent support a proposal to give police powers to suspend driving licences immediately pending trial for those testing positive for drug-driving.<sup>[vi]</sup>

Separate figures show that drug-driving on the whole is increasing: 20,072 people in England and Wales were sentenced for drug-driving offences in 2024 – 143 percent higher than in 2017.

A conviction for drug-driving carries a minimum one-year driving ban, an unlimited fine, and up to six months in prison.

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While the drink-drive rehabilitation scheme has in place for 25 years<sup>[vii]</sup>, no such national scheme exists for drug-drive offenders although trials are being undertaken.<sup>[viii]</sup>

A drink-drive course is offered to drivers who have been disqualified for 12 months or more. It can reduce the length of the ban by as much as a quarter.

Studies show that offenders who did not attend a drink-drive rehabilitation course were up to two and a half times more likely to reoffend compared to those that did attend the rehabilitation course.<sup>[ix]</sup>

### Case study

Charlie Ward's father was killed by Samuel Russell, 37, who was more than ten times over the drug-drive limit and nearly three times over the drink-drive limit after consuming cocaine and alcohol.

Steven Ward, 62, died from head injuries in 2024 after being struck by a car just yards from his home in Englefield Green, Surrey.

Russell was jailed for nine years and nine months in November after admitting causing death by dangerous driving.

Ms Ward, 31, from Leamington Spa, said: "My dad was walking on the pavement just yards from our family home when he was hit and killed by a drug and drink driver. My mum was at home, and she heard a bang but thought nothing of it until police knocked on the door. Not having dad around has devastated our family and left a huge hole in our lives. I feel so angry that someone's stupidity and personal choice led to this. I think that more needs to be done to stop drug and drink drivers from ruining people's lives."

IAM RoadSmart Policy, Public Affairs, and Communications Manager William Porter said:

"The system for dealing with drug-drivers hasn't kept pace with the huge increase in reoffending. The fact that those who have tested positive to a roadside test are allowed to get back into the driving seat pending a laboratory blood test shows that the system is broken. We welcome the proposed Government shakeup and

would like to see an immediate suspension when a driver has provided a positive roadside saliva drug test.

"We also need to see the introduction of a drug-drive rehabilitation course with better screening for drug and mental health problems and with clear pathways to treatment. Drug-drivers often need support to break the pattern of reoffending by changing their mindset and habits, understanding how drugs impair driving, and the serious consequences for themselves and others."

### IAM roundup of 2025

In our mission to create safer roads for all, we're proud to have delivered more than 2,400 on-road courses and assessments for people who drive for work in 2025.

### 2025 | A year's snapshot



But there's more to do. An estimated one in three road traffic fatalities involve someone driving or riding for work. The UK's first road safety strategy in more than a decade arrived in January, with ambitious targets to reduce deaths and serious injuries by 65% by 2035.

We remain dedicated to helping businesses reduce work-related road risk by promoting good practice, accountability, and compliance with existing legislation.