



FIFE IAM

Kingdom of Fife Group IAM, helping improve road safety in Fife and beyond.

August 2021

Group update

We hope you are doing well and enjoying the warmer weather now that summer has arrived. I'd firstly like to give you a quick update on the group returning to normal, if there is such a thing any more.

Our section on the right gives an update on the current situation but I would like to emphasise that we are working as hard as we can. I'd also like to take this opportunity to thank all our volunteers that keep the group operational.

Online offerings

Whilst we return to in person observations, we do plan to continue utilizing zoom to help support learning as well for other group activities.

Do you have a topic you want to hear about or even want to present to the group? It doesn't need to be 'advanced driving' related so feel free to drop us a line and let us know.

We'd also be keen to know if you are happy returning in person for some activities. Again, please let us know your thoughts on this.

You can contact us at newsletter@kofgiam.org.uk or through our social media channels listed on the right.

Thanks for renewing

Also, a big thank you to those that renewed their memberships recently. Although last year we didn't automatically take renewals, we are optimistic that this year we will be able to be more active and therefore renewed membership at the start of July.

The group doesn't have a large expenditure but your annual membership fee helps us pay for insurance, equipment and in the last year our zoom membership.

Lockdown update

I am pleased to say that we are back carrying out observed rides and drives again as restrictions ease.

However, as we were essentially shut down for over a year, we do have a waiting list and we are doing our best to get through this.

We appreciate your patience whilst we work through this. If you are waiting, we'll contact you directly but you can also keep up to date on our social media channels below.

[Facebook](#)

[Twitter](#)

[LinkedIn](#)

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Police Updates

I have a reasonable number of initiatives from Police Scotland that I thought was worth sharing as a topic this month. I've included links when appropriate if you wish to find out more.



Starting with [Twitter](#) - Road Policing Scotland - have a few campaigns around just now particularly as we are in school holidays, staycations and people travelling on roads they may not be familiar with.

Firstly, they are posting about their attendance at the 'Car Meets' in Dunfermline and Kirkcaldy. They are advertising their presence and that safety cameras would be nearby. That being said, one of the attendees clearly doesn't follow @polscotrpu as they then [tweeted](#) about stopping a car that left the meet travelling at between 130—140 mph on the A92.

Speeding Campaign

Seems like a good time to say that Police Scotland have launched a [campaign](#) to highlight appropriate speed. It was launched on 19 July however engagement and enforcement begins on 26 July until 8 August. The campaign highlights that [speed](#) is one of the 'fatal four' and can be avoided if drivers pay attention to speed limits and road conditions.

Whilst I'm on the topic of speed, the [Safety Cameras Scotland](#) will have a new mobile unit positioned on the Clackmannanshire bridge. This is primarily to deal with major events happening at Knockhill during certain weekends.

Staycating - The art of staying within the country whilst having a holiday.

I'm not sure when staycation became a word but it looks like its here to stay, so to speak. It was bothering me so I went and looked it up, apparently its been around for 20 years, with references dating back to 2003. Anyway, back to the point.

With a lot of people holidaying within the UK this year, as a result of Covid, Police Scotland are promoting a campaign alongside Road Safety Scotland. They have launched a [Campaign](#) that is primarily aimed at those not used to Scottish roads but I think the advice is useful for everyone.

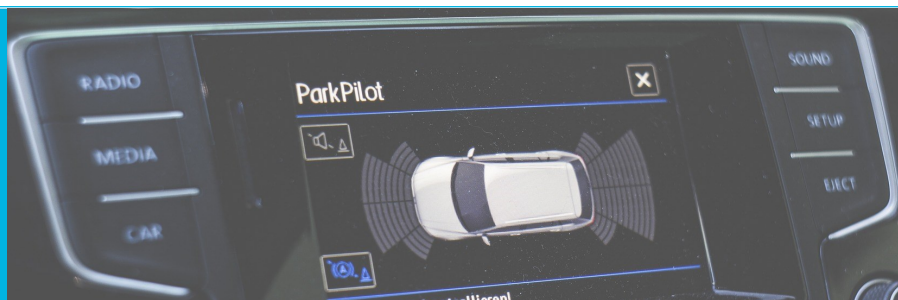
Now, I like the idea but I get the feeling that its been re-hashed a bit as its explains some things we would expect anyone in the UK to know. That being said, they do offer some useful tips from other campaigns with the most likely issue being driving on [Country Roads](#). Its worth reminding people that as you turn that bend, you may come across a sheep, a tractor or even another accident. It's a good campaign that is worth having a look at.

What 3 words

Finally, if you do find yourself on a rural road and have an accident or need support from the Police or another emergency service, its worth pointing out that Police Scotland are promoting their use of the [What 3 Words](#) app. You can download it onto your phone and it gives an exact location of where you are. It is useful in many instances including breakdowns and in accidents. The location of our committee meetings was at Spoon Allows Known. Can you find it?

The Police are using it in their tweets to further recognition and show where incidents have occurred. Have you downloaded it? It may be useful, particularly if you break down in the middle of nowhere.

Vehicle technology changes



We continue our foray into some of the changes that have occurred with technology in our vehicles. We are looking at a few different technology advances this month.

Active Bonnet

For fear of activating our Treasurers PTSD, I mention active bonnets with trepidation. In the last issue I highlighted that Scott and I had both picked up new Kias in lockdown and we both hated the lane assist function. Shortly after that, Scott got in touch to say he was having some issues with the active bonnet. We look at it in a wee bit more detail here:

Q. What is an active bonnet?

A. They are designed to protect pedestrians by raising the bonnet (closest to the driver) to extend the distance between the pedestrian and the hard part of the car e.g. the engine.

Q. How does it work?

A. There are two different systems in use by manufacturers. One is mechanically operated by springs (electro-mechanical) whilst the other uses pyrotechnics. The system is deployed instantaneously upon impact with a pedestrian. It creates a small space between the bonnet and engine components to leave a space that can absorb the impact and provide better protection for the pedestrian.

Q. What if its not a pedestrian?

A. Apparently the sensors with cars that have active bonnets sense if a pedestrian is struck. The sensors also monitor speed and should only activate at speeds where the safety measure would be of benefit e.g. it would be unlikely to have any benefit in a collision on a national speed limit for instance.

Q. What can go wrong?

A. Well, as Scott can attest to, sometimes it activates when nothing has happened. A quick internet search will show numerous occasions where they have went off without actually hitting anyone. The electro-mechanical can be easily returned to normal but the pyrotechnic version are costly to repair.

Check out the article from Scott on page 4 on dashcams and why they were useful in relation to the Active Bonnet.

Local Hazard Warning by VW

A quick summary here about a new invention by Volkswagen and you can find our more at the [NCAP site](#).

Its essentially cars being able to communicate with other vehicles to warn of hazards or issues on the road.

The driver will be able to inform others by using short range communications to send a signal. This could be an emergency vehicle emitting a communication to inform vehicles of their upcoming presence or if a vehicle is broken down etc.

Clearly only a small amount of vehicles will have it fitted initially but Euro NCAP think it could be useful in the longer term.

Car Dashcam

As At the risk of alienating part of our reading audience, I'm going to talk about Car Dashcams. This obviously



refers more to the car side of things than bikes, but many car drivers seem to be lagging behind a bit in recognising the advantages of these devices - something that our motorcycle members will mostly have been well aware of for quite some time.

The only real problem with Dashboard mounted CCTV Cameras, or Dashcams, is that you only really find out the need for having one when it's too late and something happens - you then wish you already had one fitted. Luckily, this wasn't the case for me and I already had one in place when it was needed.

There are several different brands and models for sale and a quick check in Halfords or on Amazon will show a bewildering selection. Whilst not wanting to recommend one over any others, I have fitted a Nextbase 322GW camera which sits neatly to the left of the rear view mirror and a Nextbase Rear Window Camera attached to the rear window and connected up to the main Dashcam. The advantage to this setup is that there is only 1 power supply required and everything from front and rear cameras is recorded onto the one memory card at the same time. They also have the (optional) ability to record sound as well as video if required. Finally, it is useful that this records your GPS position and speed along with the date and time.



Total cost for both cameras and the memory card is around £150, so the equivalent now of around 2-3 tanks of fuel! Connecting them up is also easy to do and only took around 1½ hours, including time to neatly conceal all the wires behind pieces of interior trim. If anyone would like any further details on this, please contact me on info@kofgiam.org.uk

As mentioned earlier, I was lucky in that the cameras were already in place and working when the need for them arose. This can happen for a number of different reasons. For me, it didn't involve any other vehicles, or pedestrians, or animals. So what was it then?

It could only be described as a "feature" which Kia fit to some of their vehicles but which in this case sadly didn't work too well. It is called "Active Hood System". The idea is that the car detects if it has hit a pedestrian and if so then it uses technology similar to that used for airbags to raise the windscreen side of the bonnet by around 6 inches, the idea being that the pedestrian has a more cushioned landing as the upper half of their body, and in particular their head, makes contact with the car bonnet.

This all sounds sensible enough, but for me there was just one thing missing ... the pedestrian! In this case the car got it totally wrong and there was no need for the system to have triggered. Nor was there a pothole, or speed bump or anything else that may have caused it to be activated.

In recent KOFG Newsletters, there has been some focus on in-car technology and autonomous vehicles. We have already had an article on Lane Assist and there are other articles planned for future issues. However, this sort of mistake really has to call into question the reliability of some of the technology used in vehicles. To blame this on the fact it happened in a Kia isn't the answer either as the same technology (and many of the same parts) are also used by other manufacturers including Mercedes and Jaguar. In this case it was sensors detecting whether or not contact had been made with a pedestrian, but what if instead it was sensors used to determine whether or not it was safe to pull out at a junction, or to change lanes on a motorway? Do we really want to trust our vehicles this much ?

Where Kia sadly didn't do too well however was in the 3 weeks they spent trying to find a way of avoiding repairing the car under warranty. Their famous 7 year warranty isn't worth much if they are going to argue about where the fault lies every time something goes wrong.

Car Dashcams—continued from page 4

Suggestions from them included everything from asking if a football may have hit the bumper the day before, to whether the car had been properly serviced and maintained to the best one of the lot - “are you sure you didn’t hit something and just weren’t aware of it?”

In the end Kia UK finally did accept it was a fault and repairs were eventually completed under warranty. Whilst the final repair bill was something that was kept between the franchised dealer and Kia UK, it was expected to be between £2,500-£3,000. One of the main factors in them (having to) accept that it should be a warranty repair was the video footage supplied to the garage from the front and rear Dashcams.

It is rather surprising considering the amount of technology being fitted to modern vehicles that the majority of manufacturers have not yet started to fit Dashcams as standard. It would be relatively cheap and easy to do at the point of manufacture.

Until this happens though, I would definitely recommend getting at least a front facing camera in place as you never know when you’ll need it. Certainly for me it was a good decision as the cost of the repair (which I may have ended up having to pay if it wasn’t for the Dashcam footage) was 20 times higher than the cost of the cameras!

Happy motoring ... and filming.

Don't be fueled by the changes

If you haven't heard yet, changes to E5 petrol means that some vehicles made before 2011 will not be able to use the 'standard grade' E5 fuel from September. You can find out more at the [Gov.uk](#) website and they also have a checker that you can find [online](#) too.

What is changing?

During Summer 2020, the 'standard' E5 95 Octane petrol will switch to E10. This will mean that some cars made before 2011 and some motorcycles will not be able to use the standard E5 petrol.

Why is it changing?

The new grade of petrol will contain 10% renewable ethanol which means that it reduces pollution by reducing carbon emissions. This will help with the impact vehicles have on Climate Change.

What vehicles are affected?

If you haven't already, I recommend you look at the online checker to see if your vehicle is affected. I've taken the top 5 manufacturers and highlighted how many vehicles might be affected. I would stress though that if you are unsure, please check [online](#) or check with the vehicle manufacturer.

On a side note, is anyone surprised that Volkswagen have the highest number of vehicles affected out of the top 5 manufacturers. Is this the start of Fuelgate?

If my vehicle is affected, what can I do?

The Government advise that if your car is affected by the change, you can still use E5 although this will be available in the 'super' grade (97+ Octane) and will be clearly labelled at filling stations. If your vehicle is affected and you do put E10 fuel into the tank, the website states that it shouldn't cause any issue as a 'one-time' mistake and next time you fill up you can just add the 'super' grade E5. Should you continue to use E10 in an incompatible vehicle, this could lead to longer term engine damage. The website also points out that the checker doesn't cover classic cars and they recommend speaking to car clubs for advice.



Make	Number of vehicles
Ford	1
Vauxhall	1
Volkswagen	10
BMW	0
Audi	7

Driverless cars

This [BBC article](#) on driverless cars provides information on a trial that has been happening in Oxford. The second [BBC article](#), written 6 months later provides an update to views on the technology.

Initially, six driverless cars were tested in October 2020 driving a 4.5 mile route in Oxford between two railway stations. This is due to run until this autumn.

There are 6 levels of autonomous vehicles, TESLA autopilot is currently considered a level 2 meaning that whilst the vehicle can perform some functions such as acceleration and steering, the driver needs to remain in control of the vehicle.

The vehicles being used in Oxford are classed as level 4 which is a high level autonomous vehicle that does not require a driver to be in control, although during the trial a safety driver will be there to take control should any issue arise during the drive.

The second article from the BBC states that some form of autonomous driving may become legal before the end of the year. Vehicles with Automatic Lane Keep Systems (ALKS) may mean that you won't be legally required to keep your hands on the steering wheel, up to a maximum of 37mph. We'll touch on ALKS in the next issue.

It looks like the Driver would need to be in a position to take over control of the car within 10 seconds of the car notifying the driver. Its certainly an interesting development and we'd love to hear your views. Why not let us know how you feel about the move to autonomous vehicles using the details at the bottom of this page.



Greener and cheaper

I've not spent much time on electric cars in this edition but I'm sure they'll make a silent return next time around. However this article from the [Daily Record](#) suggests that it is up to five times cheaper to run an electric car than it is to run a petrol or diesel car.

The article quotes some research from Uswitch that tested 2 medium size cars to see how far they could get on £50 worth of fuel. The two cars in question were a Nissan Leaf and a Volkswagen Golf. The research showed that you could cover over 2,000 miles in the Electric leaf whilst £50 in the Golf could only cover just over 440 miles for the same fuel value. This is particularly true if you can charge at home where the cost per KiloWatt is significantly less than public charging points.

In the next issue we'll look at accurate range in all vehicle types.

Keep in touch

Don't forget, if you want to get in touch with us to share thoughts or ask a question you can do so by:

- www.kofgiam.org.uk
- [Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#), [Twitter](#) or email newsletter@kofgiam.org.uk