



FIFE IAM

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

September 2020

Driving down the miles.

There have been several reports around lockdown and driving that I've not quite got to the bottom of yet and I'm going to use this edition to do just that. Apparently the total miles driven has reduced significantly but business miles have increased. We'll get to all of that as we go through this issue.

I've also asked our committee members to provide their thoughts on how driving has changed since lockdown began in March and we'll see the thoughts of our two Chief Observers on the last page.

We'd also love to hear your views. You'll see in the various pieces within here that speeding and accidents have increased so we'd love you to share your experience with us either through email to newsletter@kofgiam.org.uk or through our [Facebook](#) page and we can include it within our next edition.

New Committee members

Our AGM is coming up (see page 3) and we are looking for new members - you don't need to be a full member and it doesn't take too much time on a monthly basis. Contact one of the committee if you might be able to help.



We're (sort of) back!

I hope you are all well and that you and your family have stayed safe during the trying few months.

Both car and group observed drives were back up and running but the new advice from the government looks like we'll need to stop observed car drives for now. We'll keep associates up to date on a regular basis to advise if there are any changes.

Zooming along

During lockdown we thought we'd move with the times and join the 300+ million others that now use Zoom video conferencing on a regular basis. This was necessary for the committee during Lockdown but we will use it for other applications such as training, presentations and our AGM. See inside for more details on our AGM.



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Billions not driven.

It may already be ingrained in your mind, but Scotland entered Lockdown on 23 March this year. Whilst it had many impacts on people, it also had an impact on driving.

With less than a third of the population being 'key workers', when lockdown hit, a lot of people stayed at home and didn't travel.

According to [Heycar.co.uk](https://www.heyca.co.uk), 43.2 billion miles were not driven in the UK! That is a drop of 70% in the mileage driven per year. As a result, more people walked or cycled as a means to getting around.

Clearly less driving meant savings in fuel. According to Heycar.co.uk, just over 2,000 Olympic swimming pools of fuel have been saved which could apparently buy you over 6 million season tickets for Tottenham Hotspur if you were into that sort of thing.

There was also some environmental benefits from this. On average cars emit 333 tonnes of Carbon Dioxide (a global warming gas) per million miles driven. As a result of the miles not driven, the amount of carbon saved is the equivalent of over 25,000 full flights between Paris and New York.

MOT records show a similar but slightly different trend

Similar research was conducted through a company called [By Miles](https://www.bymiles.co.uk). They are a pay per mile car insurance company—more on that to the right. By Miles compared MOT records to identify that the number of miles driven had fallen by 60%. What this research identified is that for the first time since MOT records began, the average annual mileage will fall below 6,000 miles.

The [Department for Transport](https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-transport) website shows average mileage data from England from 2002 until 2019. In 2002 the average total mileage driven was 9,200 miles. In 2019 that had dropped to 7,600 miles per year. That's a drop of around 20% in 17 years however the research from By Miles suggests that this will take a further dip since April onwards.



Pay per mile car insurance

We've all heard of car purchase such as PCP where you pay for the use of the car and a varied price depending on the number of miles that you drive annually. I have to admit I hadn't heard of such a thing for car insurance until I was researching this story. For comparison, I compared 2 quotes for my Golf GT at 7,000 miles per year.

Direct line £380

By Miles £395 (annual estimate)
(£171 standing charge
3.2p per mile driven)

If I drove less than 7000 miles per year then it looks like I could save by paying per mile.

An article by [Money](https://www.money.com) [Supermarket](https://www.money.com) suggest that you pay less on a standard insurance policy if you drive over 10,000 miles.

Interestingly, you may need to connect to an OBD-II socket to verify mileage driven under pay per mile driven policies.



But it's a different story for business miles.

As you may have expected though, not all vehicles have been sitting idle during lockdown. According to this article from [Fleet News](https://www.fleetnews.co.uk), business miles increased

by 2.5 billion miles in June from the previous month.

Given delivery drivers were key workers, its not surprising that business miles were the first to start to show signs of recovery.

Annual General Meeting

This year we are going to need to have a slightly different AGM as gatherings are not permitted at this time. As a result, we will be holding our AGM online via Zoom conferencing.

It is important that we hold an Annual General Meeting both in terms of our regulations as a charitable organisation but it also provides several other opportunities other than the regulatory requirement.

The AGM provides the committee with the opportunity to feedback to its members on how our group is being run but it also provides its members, you, with the opportunity to ask any questions that you may have about the group or the wider IAM organisation.

Keep an eye out for further information on how to join the online meeting. We'll send you a link to click on that will take you to the meeting.

This is the first time that we will be using this software to hold our AGM but we hope that not having to travel to the event may encourage members who have not previously attended our AGM to drop in and find out a bit more about the group.

If you've not used Zoom before:

- You don't need to have a Zoom Account to join a meeting, just click on the link that we'll send you.
- You don't need to have a webcam or have the camera on if you don't want to. It still works without it.
- If you want to ask a question, you can use the chat function to make a comment. As long as your laptop or computer has a microphone then you can also ask questions on the night.

Don't worry, at the start of the AGM we will talk you through how to use the various options to interact on the night.

Date: 21 October 2020

Time: 20:00



Operation Sideburn

Not a Fife [Operation](#) but the name caught my attention so I thought I'd include it. Greater Glasgow Police are tackling anti-social driving behavior within the City Centre. They are using engagement at this stage rather than enforcement but if anti-social behavior continues then enforcement will be used. The aim is to prevent vulnerable, night time pedestrians from dangerous driving.

Motorcycle Safety Campaign

At the end of August Police Scotland launched their annual motorbike safety [campaign](#). They highlight that Motorcyclists are some of the most vulnerable road users accounting for around 13% of road deaths whilst only making up 1% of road users. Check out the link for more information.

Electric Dreams

A few articles popped up over the summer around alternative fuelled cars so I thought I'd touch on a few of them here.

Research from [What Car](#) looked at feedback from electric car owners to understand reliability. Electric cars are on average more expensive than their petrol or diesel cousins and therefore reliability must be strong to ensure people will pay out the extra money to drive an Electric Vehicle.



From the What Car research, the top 5 Electric (well they are all hybrid vehicles) were shared between Toyota and Lexus. The Toyota Yaris Hybrid and the Lexus CT took joint top place with no faults being reported by owners of either vehicle over the course of the past year. The top 3 fully electric cars was the Tesla model S taking top spot, followed by the Kia Niro and then the BMW i3.

A special mention has to go to the Nissan Leaf which is one of the most reliable used cars around.

Conversely, the three cars which were reported to have the most problems by owners over the past year included the Renault Zoe (previous generation), Golf GTE and the Mitsubishi Outlander PHEV.

The Zoe topped the list with issues mainly around electrical problems but also extended to battery, brakes, suspension and interior trim. I have to say the new generation Zoe does get very good reviews.

The Golf GTEs main issue was around the DSG (Direct Shift Gearbox) fitted to the higher spec Volkswagen group cars. The DSG is expensive to fix when it goes wrong but isn't limited to just the electric cars. A quick google shows issues with other non electric versions with this gearbox too. I have to say that I had my GTE for 3 years, had no issues and enjoyed the drive it provided.

The Mitsubishi PHEV's main issues was around the interior trim so not affecting the ability to drive it. Only 13% of owners reported any issues however half of those that did found themselves forking out over £1000 to repair the issue.

Hydrogen Fuel Cells

With the government still looking to move away from combustion engine sources, are there any other alternatives to those that would experience range anxiety from an electric car?

This article in the [BBC](#) discusses the potential improvements that they are uncovering in making hydrogen fuel more adaptable in an everyday vehicle.

Hydrogen cars use hydrogen fuel, dispersed from a pump, and then a fuel cell converts it to electricity. Some of the main problems with hydrogen fuel previously has been that the tanks have been too large to be effective and hydrogen is so light that it can escape the tank.

This new development stores the hydrogen in a 'sponge like system' that enables the gas to be stored at lower pressure and should be more cost effective. They are now looking for vehicle manufacturers to test it further.

Does initial cost put you off going electric?

According to this [article](#), featured in The Guardian, electric car sales had tripled until July and the asking price fell by 5% this year up until August.

The survey conducted by [SMMT](#) highlighted that the majority of people felt the high asking price (52%) and lack of charging points (44%) were the main reasons why they wouldn't yet take the leap to electric vehicles.

A third of the people surveyed think they will be able to transition to electric vehicles by 2025 however a quarter of people surveyed don't think they'd ever be ready to move electric.

One in 6 cars now on sale are available in electric variants with range starting to exceed 200 miles in affordable models..

We've still not learned

In the last newsletter I mentioned that speeding had increased since lockdown started. Unfortunately there have been lots of reports that this hasn't changed much in the following months. On the next page we then look at some thoughts from our chief observers on driving post lockdown.



Speeding and Accidents increase!

A report in [The Courier](#) in June showed that people killed and seriously injured in Fife had increased in 2019-20 year. The number of Adults killed or seriously injured was 141 with the total number of casualties standing at 401. That's an increase of 23% and 6% respectively. Unfortunately the number of children killed or seriously injured increased by just over 25% in the last financial year.

In the last edition we spoke about how speeding had increased during lockdown, possibly as a result of less people on the roads. The data further on shows this may not be the overall picture for Scotland but the severity of the excess speed appears to have made headlines.

This [article](#) from Edinburgh Live reports that three vehicles were stopped on the A1 on the same day for excessive speed with two of the vehicles driving at just under 100mph. That's 30mph over the speed limit which could lead to a fine of between 75-125% of your weekly wage, up to 6 penalty points and possible disqualification for up to 1 month.

Unfortunately this sort of incident hasn't been uncommon and a Freedom of Information request by the [RAC](#) showed that the highest speeding offence between March and June was clocked at 151MPH. The FOI was sent to all UK Police forces and the top 10 highest speeds are listed below. This isn't necessarily reflective of the danger though as one speeder was caught driving at 130MPH in a 40MPH speed limit.

2. Suffolk - 140 MPH	3. Northamptonshire - 138M PH	4. Gwent - 136 MPH
5. Staffordshire - 135 MPH	6. Kent - 132 MPH	7. Humberside - 130 MPH
8. Scotland - 128 MPH	9. London - 125 MPH	10. Lancashire - 120 MPH

The [Scottish Government](#) have started releasing monthly stats on crimes / offences recorded and part of that includes motoring offences. The data actually shows that speeding is down slightly based on the same period the previous year. In August, Dangerous and careless driving; driving under the influence and vehicle defects were all up on the same period last year. Worryingly Driving under the influence was up 50% on August 2019.

Speeding offences actually decreased by 34% on the previous year but I think part of that may be because there are less cars on the road overall which may have brought that number down. Mobile phone use and unlawful use of a vehicle were down 13% and 6% respectively.

As more people have chosen to walk or cycle, it may be the case that road safety is more important than ever. Unfortunately in Fife we seem to be having a high number of accidents and hopefully as a group we can play our part to help reduce that figure.

Experiences post lockdown

Isabel McGregor, Chief Car Observer—It was exciting to get back driving but obviously different. As my car had been sitting unused in the garage it required to be checked over e.g. tyre pressure, wipers, lights, oil level and windscreen wash.

To begin with there were fewer cars on the road and more cyclists. When I parked the car I looked for a space where I could socially distance. I was also aware of more delivery vans in built up areas.

When I took my Associate out for her first drive after lockdown, I had to ensure the drive and future drives must be within current government guidelines and IAM RoadSmart guidelines and have agreement from the Associate.

Prior to the first drive I contacted my Associate by email to seek confirmation from my Associate the following questions:

- Has not tested positive for COVID-19
- Is not showing symptoms of COVID-19 and should be self-isolating
- Has been advised to shield or shelter as part of a vulnerable group or caregiver for a vulnerable person

Face masks were worn by both the Observer and the Associate, I used alcohol hand gel before and after the drive and took gloves along. Other changes included completing the 'Run Sheet' online instead of in the Drivers Course Log after each drive and where possible discussing the drive and answering questions outside of the vehicle.

Obviously new guidelines have stalled us again but we'll keep monitoring the situation and get back out on drives when it is safe to do so.

Mark Ellis, Chief Motorbike Observer - When lockdown started to be lifted, initially I found the standard of driving to be poor. In my opinion some drivers had got used to empty roads so their level of concentration had dropped. No mirror checks indication, lane discipline etc.

I had a driver who I followed out of a T junction, he then stopped and reversed immediately whilst still in the bellmouth of the junction. No indication whatsoever, no checks carried out by him to ensure it was safe to reverse.

Traffic is getting back to normal now, not that normal is always a good standard.

What has your experience been ?

We'd love to know what your experience has been with driving since March.

- Have you seen excess speeding?
- Has your mileage dropped significantly since March?
- Have you revised your insurance mileage since Lockdown? Has it helped?
- How do you think the group could help address some of the challenges in driving post lockdown?

We'd love to hear from you on [Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#), [Twitter](#) or email newsletter@kofgiam.org.uk

Scotland's Road Safety Framework consultation.

As a road safety group, the committee plan to put a response together for this [consultation](#) however anyone can comment. Have a look and feedback yourself or let us know and we can include your feedback as part of the KOFG response