

# Newbury Group of Advanced Motorists

## Advanced Driving Articles

### 2. The Advanced Driving Test

*by David Skinner, Institute of Advanced Motorists, Newbury Group*

In the previous article we introduced advanced driving and looked at some of its benefits. So, if you decided to do it, what would it involve?

The IAM's advanced driving programme is called Skill for Life. Most people enrol for it on the IAM website, [www.iam.org.uk](http://www.iam.org.uk), or by post. It costs £139, and for that you get the full course to prepare you to pass the advanced driving test. That cost also includes the test fee, the first year's membership of the IAM, a year's membership of a local group and the IAM manual, 'How to be a Better Driver'.

You will be encouraged to contact your local group, which for this area is the Newbury Group of Advanced Motorists. The group will allocate you to an observer, a group member who has passed the advanced test and who has been trained to pass on the skills and techniques to others. With your observer sitting beside you, you will drive on a variety of routes over all types of roads, to learn the skills and techniques. One drive, usually the second one, will be a demonstration drive in the observer's car, but all the others will involve you driving your own vehicle. The drives will take place at a frequency to suit you – once a week is ideal but they could be less frequent than that. In between the drives you will be expected to practise the skills during your normal driving. You will learn to do a commentary about what you can see and how you plan to negotiate hazards; that is not a mandatory part of the IAM test but is a very useful skill.

After about eight to twelve drives you should be ready for a 'cross-check', a kind of mock test, with a senior observer, and will then proceed to the actual test. The Examiner will be a serving or retired police driver; who will be very thorough but will also put you at ease – he or she wants you to pass as much as you do! The test route will cover a range of roads and will take about an hour. The Examiner will ask you some questions on the Highway Code, which you are expected to know, and will then tell you whether you have reached the required standard. The test is not hard and the pass rate in the Newbury Group is over 85%.

If you want to know more, visit the Newbury Group of Advanced Motorists website at [www.niam.org.uk](http://www.niam.org.uk), or contact the Group Secretary, Dick Bird, by e-mail on [secretary@niam.org.uk](mailto:secretary@niam.org.uk) or by telephone on 01488 608242.