

## Chairman's 2008 Annual Report

Dear Members,

I'm pleased to report that the last year has been another outstanding year for the Dumfries & Galloway Group of Advanced Motorists and Motorcyclists during which time we have beaten last years record for the number of successful Advanced Tests from cars and bikes, and hence the number of new IAM Members joining the Group has increased again.

Our intake of Associates has also increased for the second year running, to the point where once again we have comfortably overtaken both Glasgow North and South to become Scotlands most successful Group in attracting Associates and getting them through the IAM Advanced Test. This success has not happened by accident but rather by good planning, financial support and above all, by the hard work and dedication of our Observers, who give their time freely to advance the cause of road safety throughout Dumfries & Galloway. Without their efforts both we as a local Group and the IAM nationally, would not exist in the form it is today, and I believe we owe them all a debt of gratitude.

With regard to planning, you may be interested to know that we have a Vision for the Dumfries Group, which your committee developed in 2006, and each year plans are drawn up and pursued by the committee by which we will make further progress towards reaching our Vision. It's worth reflecting on the fact that the 5 year horizon set out in the Vision says that although we started from an initial base of only 50 Members, by the end of 2006 we will achieve 100 Members and by 2010 this will have increased to 200. I'm pleased to tell you that that by the end of March 2008 this objective for 2010 looks like being reached at least 1 year early. Indeed, were it not for the fact that this year we have seen an unusually high level of Members not renewing their membership of the Group we would have been edging even closer to this stretch target but as it is we were just shy of 150.

During the course of the last year we have done many fine things towards meeting our annual plan, such as running radio promotions to attract more Associates, especially motorcyclists, we have increased our Observer numbers to meet the increased demand, Senior Observer numbers have increased, the Group Magazine has increased circulation to 450 copies and thus reaches a wider audience, and so on. Of course, in a charitable organisation such as ours, where everything is done voluntarily and after a days work is done, we have not achieved all of the goals we set ourselves and we know that much remains outstanding and needs attention. I refer here to matters such as how to retain Members once they have passed their Test, how to attract more Members to attend our meetings, how to identify continuous income sources so that we can continue to extend our activities, how to improve the publicity we receive, and so on. But these matters are for the future and apart from making mention of them here I will leave them for next year's committee to attend to.

I want you to be proud of what your Group had achieved from humble beginnings some 4 years ago when our membership rumbled along year after year at around the 50 level and we were seen as a Dumfries centric organisation. Over the last 3 years we have spread our wings and come of age. We now have Associates, Members and Observers throughout the length and breadth of Dumfries & Galloway. I was particularly pleased at a recent Observer evening in Dumfries to find that we had Observers turning up from as far afield as Port Patrick and Stranraer, and I hope we can continue to encourage this camaraderie within the Group.

All this fine work would not have been achieved without an active committee and I want to thank them for their help and support and particularly mention the years of hard work by our Secretary, Helen Cameron, our Vice Chairman, Graham McColm, who has done so much with his team to advance the cause of motorcycling in the region, to Russell Wears for keeping us in a financially healthy state and to Peter Dodds for the background work he does in keeping our membership records up to date. To Tommy Jardine, our President, who has attended almost every committee meeting and has been influential in bringing new ideas into the Group and establishing useful contacts with local business. Although not a committee member, I also want to thank Graham Watson, our Web Master and Magazine Editor for all his sterling work over many years. We would be in a far worse position were it not for the dedication of all

these Members and I thank them one and all. If I have forgotten to thank anyone it is not intentional, so please forgive me.

I also want to thank Dumfries & Galloway Council for the financial support they have given us for the 2<sup>nd</sup> year running. Without their support and the support from a number of private businesses we would not have been able to pursue our goal of helping young drivers. I hope from the good work we do in this area we can continue to attract further funding in future years.

This is my last year as your Chairman, and having been in this position for the past 5 years it is time for me to vacate the position and pass on the mantle to someone else who will hopefully take the Group on to even more success in the advancement of road safety in our region. The IAM has a policy that for a healthy Group there should be rotation of officers so I am following their advice.

Before I close my Chairman's Report I would just like to say that while we offer car and bike Skill for Life coaching to anyone and all age groups, our focus has gradually converged on young drivers and inexperienced motorcyclists and I am also proud of this fact as these road users are at greatest risk. I hope once more that in future years we will continue to do all we can to encourage and assist these 2 groups to engage with us.

In conclusion I want to say how proud I am to have been your Chairman and to been part of the success of this Group. I wish you further success in the future and I will watching your progress with interest.

Alan Jones  
Version 2, 11 May 2008

## **Group Chief Observers Report 2007-2008**

Dear Members,

It gives me great pleasure to inform you that the past year had seen us enrol even more Group Associates that ever before in the 31 year history of this Group. The numbers we have attracted, which stands at a massive 113, has put us, for the 2<sup>nd</sup> year running, as the top Group in Scotland, beating the traditional big Groups such as Glasgow North, Glasgow South and Edinburgh, by a healthy margin.

On the car side we have had 37 Test passes, of which 22 were young people, and on the bike side we had 20 passes, of which 2 were young people, giving us a total of 57 passes over the past year. This compares favourably with the 2006-2007 year in which we only had a total of 54 passes. Unfortunately, this past year saw the number of motorcycle passes fall in relation to the previous year and I'm sure that Graeme McColm will explain the reason for this in more detail when he gives his report.

On the car side we have increased the number of Observers, which now stands at 29, of which 9 are young people, with a healthy number being based in the SW of our region. One of the challenges however, that we face with the car Observers is to ensure they remain engaged with us, as we do seem to experience an unusual high degree of fallout, especially with the younger Observers.

One of our interesting and novel developments this year had been the use of the IAM's Drive Check for young people in Stewartry. This involves working with Stewartry Police to perform Drive Check's on young people who have come to the attention of the Police, some of whom may be referred to the Procurator Fiscal. So far we have enrolled 10 young people with the IAM for a Drive Check and we have funding in place for a further 30 during the course of this year. A number of us have met with the new Procurator Fiscal and senior police officers and I can tell you that this is an initiative, which is receiving interest on many fronts could well be expanded to other parts of the region and possibly beyond in time.

Alan Jones

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