

MAKING THOSE CONNECTIONS

By Sarah Sillars OBE, chief executive officer

I hope you are all enjoying this long-awaited summer – and using the fine weather to get out in your cars and on your bikes, meet with friends and colleagues and enjoy making those friendships and connections that makes summer worthwhile.



I wanted to talk to you this month about this very subject – the importance of making connections and establishing relationships.

We are under no illusions that any membership organisation has to pursue new opportunities for growing its member base. Our team at head office is doing fine work; but as our ambassadors in the field we need your expertise, input and enthusiasm to make that happen.

I wanted to give you a case study of a relationship that has blossomed here.

We have built up a strong connection with Auto Express magazine in the past year. This started by the Communications team using its past contacts to get 'through the door' and get to know the current editorial team – and find out the way they worked, their likes and dislikes and the stories that would appeal to them and their readership.

They attended one of our functions last year, giving Communications the chance to discuss new feature ideas. That led

to the IAM being asked to be Auto Express' official Christmas anti-drink drive campaign partner in 2014.

We provided the magazine with exclusive figures and expertise from the IAM Driver Retraining Academy.

This partnership was proactively promoted ahead of time in the IAM's first ever joint press release with Auto Express; a very prestigious connection.

We kept this momentum going. Auto Express continued to call on the IAM for rapid response to a number of key motoring issues, knowing our 24 hour press line would deliver an immediate response.

We were therefore featured in major features on fines for car theft, the reasons for lane closures on motorways and extent of drug-driving in England and Wales.

This meant when I joined in February, the IAM was well placed to offer Auto Express an interview with me just ahead of the general election.

The timing was perfect – as the UK's top consumer motoring publication, they wanted to know everything the IAM stood for in its representation of UK road users.

It gave me the chance to showcase the IAM and what we do to a vast and attentive audience. The contents of the interview were also used the following week, with our agenda standing side-by-side with the AA and RAC.

Most recently we were called upon to comment again as the driving test reached its 80th anniversary, based upon our recent press release on the subject.

And that's not the end of it – we are now working on a feature with them on how drivers of different generations might cope with the current driving test, and I have just attended the Auto Express New Car Honours on the IAM's behalf in London.

This shows just one example of how a first-class commitment to relationship building can result in massive dividends.

I would love for us to take this kind of approach to grow our relationships with organisations to promote what both our charity activity does and our business driver training - spanning the general public as individuals and businesses.

And it goes without saying that we will give you all the tools to achieve this. I never forget this isn't possible without you. So please keep telling us what you need, and we will do our best to accommodate it.

SARAH



GET READY FOR THE IAM MOTORCYCLING FESTIVAL TO 'ROAR'!

The very first IAM ROAR Motorcycling Festival is only a few days away, and the event promises to be a celebration of riding in a social atmosphere amongst like-minded enthusiasts.

The festival takes place on 11 July at the National Motorcycle Museum in Solihull, and a day of activity and celebrity guests have been planned.

Paul Woozley, membership development manager, has been co-ordinating the planning of the event along with Dave Shenton, head of field operations.

Paul said: "We wanted to make the festival a real celebration of what riding is all about. We have kept the admission cost to a minimum, and are offering the chance for groups to ride in together to promote the social aspect of riding.

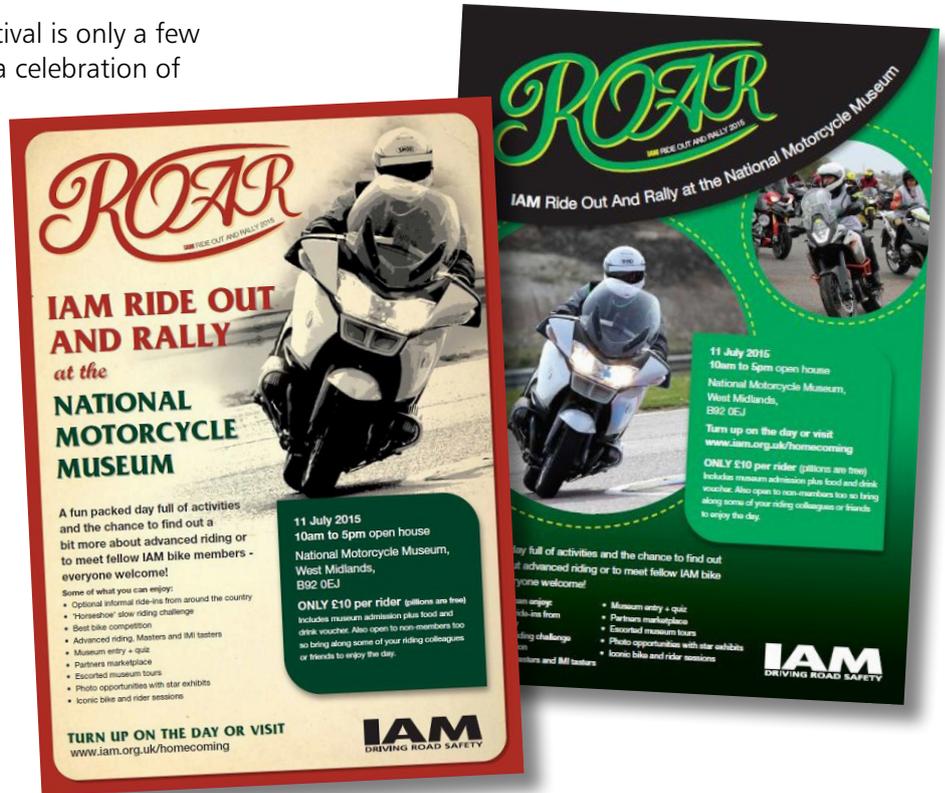
"We have a full programme of activity all day, and see this as a day for the enthusiasts."

Groups have been offered dedicated and signed parking areas, and so far 14 have requested it.

Celebrities attending include 11 times Isle of Man TT winner (including three wins at the 2015 TT) Ian Hutchinson as well as Steve Plater and John Cooper.

Steve is a four times winner of the British Superbike Championship and was the 2009 British Supersport champion, while John starred in the 1960's and 70's in the 500cc world championship and Isle of Man TT.

The £10 admission includes museum admission, free quiz, a food and drink voucher plus the opportunity to participate in all activities. Your ticket also gets you a free escorted museum tour and photo opportunities with some of the prize exhibits.



"We have a full programme of activity all day, and see this as a day for the enthusiasts."

There is also a chance to show off your skills in a slow riding challenge created by Birmingham Advanced Motorcyclists.

Paul added: "We really hope that members will bring along their friends and family and having seen what we have to offer, be tempted to join the IAM and see the many benefits we have."

It's still not too late to book. For more information visit <https://www.iam.org.uk/homecoming> or call 0300 303 1134.

ARE YOU USING SOCIAL MEDIA?



If so, Like our Facebook page ([facebook.com/skillforlife](https://www.facebook.com/skillforlife)) and follow us on twitter (@IAMgroup) to keep up to date with what we've been up to – and let us know what you've been doing too.