

The Under 17 Car Club

2006 Survey of Former Members (Findings)

“All aspects of the Car Club are excellent”



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1: Executive Summary

This report represents the analysis of the survey of ex-members undertaken during the final quarter of 2006. 93 responses were received from 454 ex-members approached.

The purpose of the survey was to:

- Identify areas for improvement in the experience of members;
- Confirm or refute the beliefs of the Club in relation to the benefits of membership;
- Provide a sound statistical basis for discussions with supporting organisations;
- Provide evidence to support discussions with the Driving Standards Agency and the Road Safety Minister with specific reference to the use of the DSA site at Cardington.

The report is submitted in full to the Under 17 Car Club Committee and will be made available to all members, parents and associates in due course.

Full copies or abstracts relevant to ongoing discussions will be submitted to:

Mr. Jim Fitzpatrick, Road Safety Minister, Department of Transport

Mrs. Rosemary Thew, Chief Executive Officer, Driving Standards Agency

Mr. John Bridge, Assistant Chief Driving Examiner, Driving Standards Agency

Mr. Peter Rodger, Chief Examiner, Institute of Advanced Motorists

Representatives of Local Authorities and the Police Service

The Committee may use the findings for such other Club related purposes as it shall see fit.

Key findings are:

	Members	General Public
Novice Driver Accident Rate*	1 in 10	1 in 5
DSA Test Pass Rate (X/1)	92%	47%
DSA Test Pass Rate (All)	80%	47%
Conviction Rate (Males)**	22.2	51.6
Points on Licence	5.4%	14.3%
Pass Plus Participation	34%	15%
IAM/RoSPA Rate	10%	0.5%

* Estimate per driving year

** Per thousand driver-years

Most importantly, all respondents confirm that being part of the Club was a hugely enjoyable experience, would recommend it to others and have found direct benefit on the road from the education they received.

These findings confirm that the Club should continue to uphold the high standards that it has set for itself.

TRL Report 652 on Novice Drivers (ISBN 1-84608-651-5, 2005) makes a number of suggestions to altering the current, general public, training procedures in order to produce safer drivers. One such suggestion is the extension of the learning period, similar to the French scheme. Whilst this is in essence a good idea, an alternative could be to send young drivers to the U17 Car Club or other similar pre-licence development schemes.

The DSA website lists the top ten reasons why novice drivers fail their practical test on the first occasion. These include:

- ineffective observation;
- poor judgement;
- lack of accuracy in reversing;
- not properly checking mirrors;
- lack of steering control;
- inappropriate speed.

These are all essential skills that the Club teaches on a regular basis so that after regular attendance and instruction members will perform these tasks automatically and effortlessly. A nationwide expansion of the Car Club scheme is clearly one way to deliver significant road safety benefits across the whole novice driver population.

The survey methodology, analysis and results have been validated by Mr. Doug Haynes, BSc, MSc, Director, School of Business Information, Liverpool John Moores University.

2: Introduction

The aim of the Under 17 car Club is:

“to enable under age drivers to practise and improve their driving skills legally and safely, in a variety of different vehicles, under properly supervised conditions, and to take an active interest in cars and motor sport and ultimately to produce safer young drivers on our roads at age 17 and beyond.”

Under 17 Car Club Website

The key findings of this report show that ex-Club members are more likely to pass their practical test on the first occasion, less likely to be involved in an accident, less likely to be convicted of a motoring offence and have a higher propensity toward taking advanced driving tests.

This report seeks to highlight the huge benefits that are accrued by those who attend the Club. Most importantly this report shows how the Club is not only beneficial to its members but also other drivers on the road. The Club is a safe environment in which those under the age of 17 can learn to drive.

Safe driving attitude is the key theme of the Club; hence the members gain experience of car control in a responsible manner. This enables them to have more assurance in their abilities when they venture onto the public roads. Moreover, the skills acquired at the Club result in a high level of competence, resulting in lower accident rates amongst former members as compared to the national average for novice drivers. Key statistics are provided in sections 8, 9 & 10 of this report.

The Club commissioned a survey (Appendix One) to discover areas in which it might improve its service and to gain useful insight into the on road experiences of its former members. The Under 17 Car Club has existed for thirty years, has received the Prince Michael of Kent Special Award for Road Safety and has helped around 3000 young people improve their driving abilities, including the former World Rally Champion, the late Richard Burns.

The Club commissioned this survey not only for its own interests but also to alleviate the concerns of the Driving Standards Agency and the Department for Transport over the Club's use of the DSA facility

at Cardington. The findings of this report aim to assist the Club in its understanding of the opportunities available to its members, the benefits that are accrued by those who attend the Club and the possibilities that may be available in the future.

The survey was sent out to 454 former Club members. 93 responses were received, roughly equating to one response for every 5 surveys sent out; this high level of returns gives a statistically viable result. It is intended that the survey will be updated each year and progress monitored.

The initial findings of the survey have already been used to support a submission to the Novice Driver Inquiry held by the Transport Select Committee (Appendix Two). It is the Club's contention that high quality, organised, consistent and well structured pre-licence driver training, coupled to adoption of earlier, observed, on-road driver training would have significant impact in reducing accident rates amongst novice drivers.

Cogitamus Limited

Mr. Paul Beckford, BSc, MSc, of Cogitamus Limited is the son of Professor John Beckford, Vice-President of the Under 17 Car Club. Paul was not a member of the Club, has not benefited from its activities and has no vested interest in the outcome of the survey.

Validation

The survey methodology, analysis and results have been validated by Mr. Doug Haynes, Director, School of Business Information, Liverpool John Moores University.

Acknowledgements

The Club acknowledges with thanks the support of Paul Beckford and Doug Haynes in the preparation of this report.

3: Methodology & Validation

Throughout its existence, the Club has informally monitored the experience of members on the road through continued contact with these members either directly or indirectly. Typically, for example, a member reaching 17 will inform the Club upon passing their test and in the event of any significant experiences, for example when they use knowledge or skills acquired during their membership, e.g. First Aid or Skid Pan Training. These informal contacts have allowed the Club to build a broad picture of the impact of its activities.

In order to develop a properly grounded and detailed understanding of the impact of the work of the Club it was decided to undertake a formal survey of ex-members. Given that most ex-members are not in regular contact with the Club, it was decided that a paper-based survey rather than an interview, despatched to their last known address, would provide the most appropriate means of gathering data.

A pilot questionnaire was developed and tested on a sample of ex-members still associated with the Club. The draft was also sent to John Bridge, Assistant Chief Driving Examiner, Driving Standards Agency, for comment.

The final survey (Appendix One) was despatched to 454 ex-members from 1995 onwards. The survey returns were anonymised in an attempt to encourage complete honesty. To ensure the integrity of findings, the survey forms were returned to Mr. Doug Haynes, Director, School of Business Information, Liverpool John Moores University, who both recorded the arrival (and numbered) each survey, and undertook a sampling exercise to provide a basis of comparison with the full findings from all the responses.

93 responses were received, a response rate of 20.5%.

Mr. Haynes' comments are incorporated below.

Validation Report

I can confirm that the Car Club pilot and full surveys have been conducted as detailed in the methodology. This approach was taken to preserve the integrity and confidentiality of the individual responses.

The analysis is informative and gives estimates which enable valid indicative comparisons between ex Car Club member profiles and the general public in relation to driving test success, more advanced driver participation and accident rates.

4: About Members

This section outlines the general details of members' experience. As can be seen from Appendix One the questions asked include the duration of attendance, the grade achieved, any awards received and whether the member is still involved with the Club in any respect.

Of the 93 respondents, 70% were male and 30% female. Whilst there are slightly more males than females involved in the Club, gender has no bearing whatsoever on membership or on the ability to progress through the grades.

Grade achieved by respondents before leaving the Club:

Grade X	8	(10%)
Grade 1	15	(20%)
Grade 2	30	(35%) (DSA Practical Driving Test Standard)
Grade 3	29	(35%)
Grade 4	4	(5%)
Grade 5	1	(1.25%)
Unstated	1	(1.25%)

21 out of 93 (approx 25%) are still involved with the Club at some level; furthermore, 12 of these 21 are marshals or intend to become one in the near future. This reflects the friendly atmosphere that defines the Club. Indeed this atmosphere is highlighted by comments made by the respondents themselves:

'In my years as a member, I met several people all of whom would be rated very highly, it is clear those involved have a passion for the Club, this aids the Club meet its aim of producing safe young drivers.'

'The Club was a great experience, taught me valuable skills, the Club's high standards unfortunately do not represent the majority of drivers on the road.'

Key Findings:

In the last five years the Club has produced another 8 drivers to Grade X standard, compared to 60 in the 30 years of the Club's existence. Further, 53 out of the 93 respondents achieved Grade 2 which is broadly equivalent to the DSA test standard. Importantly 25% of respondents are still involved with the Club in some respect which reflects the friendly, family-like atmosphere in which members learn.

5: Venue Attendance

This section sought to ascertain the frequency of attendance at each of the different venues the Club uses. The Club offers a variety of venues that each offers members a unique experience, although admittedly there is a lack of representation the further north one travels.

Castle Combe 90% of respondents attended Castle Combe frequently, making it the most popular venue.

Wymeswold 85% did not attend Wymeswold, making it the least popular. The Club is no longer using this venue, due to lack of availability.

TRL 50% of respondents attended frequently.

Bedford,
Bourne,
Finmere,
North Weald 50% of respondents never attended these.

Cardington 30% of respondents attended Cardington frequently whilst the same percentage never attended it.

Comments:

'More sessions at places like TRL where there is a realistic road layout.'

'The Club prepares you as best as possible for public roads, the Club cannot prepare you for the actions of others on the roads.'

'Very well, especially the use of two lanes at Castle Combe which is realistic of a road situation.'

'Very good quality especially the venues like Combe, TRL & Cardington. The assessment process is rigorous & takes commitment from both member & associate. The volunteers who run the Club do a highly professional job.'

Key findings:

The Club aims to utilise venues that give members an experience that is as close as possible to driving on public roads, hence the popularity of venues such as TRL, Cardington and Castle Combe.

6: Membership Experience

This section highlights the attendance rates at the special events that the Club offers.

These events extend the normal teaching regime of the Club offering experiences that most drivers will rarely if ever attain. The wide variety of special events seeks to provide members with experience of driving in both unusual conditions and vehicles. These activities combine enjoyment and education to ensure that members can have fun but at the same time learn how to control a vehicle responsibly. Below are some of the respondents' comments and the percentage of attendance at the events:

DSA driving test seminar – 40 %

This event, provided by the DSA, seeks to prepare members for the DSA practical and theory tests using videos and discussion offers examples of test situations and possible questions that may be asked.

'Very helpful for what DSA are expecting.'

'Helpful towards test preparation.'

Skid pan – 62%

This event offers members a unique experience in car control that proves vital once driving on public roads. The skid pan is an area of ground that is covered in a combination of oil and water (hence its title) and members are encouraged to make the car skid in order to understand the unpredictability of a sliding car and to learn how to control it.

'Great fun & very beneficial to on road driving.'

'All drivers should do this before being allowed on the road.'

'Very enjoyable have used training since passing test.'

First Aid Training – 54 %

This event, mandatory for senior members, offers the opportunity to gain a formal qualification in first aid, which proves invaluable in all walks of life.

'Very good qualification to have in and out of the Club.'

'I participated twice, fun & useful, looks good on CV too!'

Skill Tests – 64%

The skill tests are a part of the grading system of the Club and seek to both teach members new skills and assess their current driving standard.

‘Great fun, helps with lessons and test at 17 greatly.’

‘Good fun and develops observation and manoeuvring skills.’

‘Fun & invaluable when honing spatial awareness & vehicle control.’

Advanced Car Control – 58%

This event is an opportunity for members to learn car control at high speeds in a safe, controlled environment. This involves cornering, advanced observation and vehicle positioning.

‘Great way of teaching safe high speed driving techniques in a controlled environment.’

‘Excellent experience: showed that high speed demands an appropriate attitude.’

Team Challenge – 31%

This event is an opportunity for members to operate as part of a team and is a great morale boosting yet competitive event.

‘A fun way to learn highway code & control a variety of vehicles.’

‘Beneficial & enjoyable.’

Duckhams Cup – 29%

This event is similar to the team challenge except it is geared towards the lower grades, encouraging them to hone their skills and progress further through the grading system.

‘Good warm up for the other challenges, great opportunity for lower grades.’

‘Great fun, big confidence booster.’

‘A good way to introduce newer members.’

BP Cup – 24%

As Team Challenge but for higher graded drivers.

'Beneficial & enjoyable.'

'Great test of consistency.'

Truck Day – 52%

This event offers a unique opportunity for members to drive a variety of large vehicles including 7.5 tonne trucks, 5 & 6 axle articulated lorries, a dumper truck and fire engines.

'Beneficial & enjoyable.'

'This was a great experience that not many get a chance to do.'

4x4 Day – 29%

This event offers the opportunity to learn to drive a totally different type of vehicle, again adding a layer of experience to members' driving abilities that a large proportion of drivers never gain.

'Learn more about cars, skills helpful for when it snows.'

'Really great day - done several times.'

'Great experience & fun day.'

Single Seater Day – 23%

An exciting opportunity to drive a racing car in a controlled environment; this allows members with an interest in motor racing to experience the thrill of driving a very powerful automobile on a racing circuit with expert tuition.

'Had a really good time, was nervous at first but loved it in the end.'

'Gave me a chance to try out a racing car at an age where it is not normally possible.'

'Couldn't sleep that night it was so enjoyable.'

Karting – 43%

An event geared towards fun and competition, but again this experience provides the opportunity for members to learn car control skills.

'A good competitive social event.'

'A responsible safe way to have fun at high speeds.'

'Very enjoyable, good for getting to know other members.'

Magic Day – 54%

This event provides an opportunity for all members to be driven in a variety of exotic and luxury cars. Members at Grade 1 or X may also get the opportunity to drive these cars, which is an unforgettable experience. Magic Day is a fund raising event with proceeds going to CLIC and in more recent years the Richard Burns Foundation and Teenage Cancer Trust.

'Excellent chance to see cool old cars & link to CLIC always taken seriously.'

'A great way to raise money & experience high performance cars in controlled environment.'

'I don't believe anywhere else such fun would be possible - great for charity too.'

'One of the best days at Car Club, fun, a great turn out and benefited charity.'

Caterham Day – 20%

An opportunity to drive an extremely powerful yet small car; this allows members to gain experience in aspects of driving such as over-steer and allows them to understand the performance of a powerful car.

'Over-steer, what more can I say.'

'Really good day had not had any experience of Caterhams before.'

'Great experience.'

Rally Day – 32%

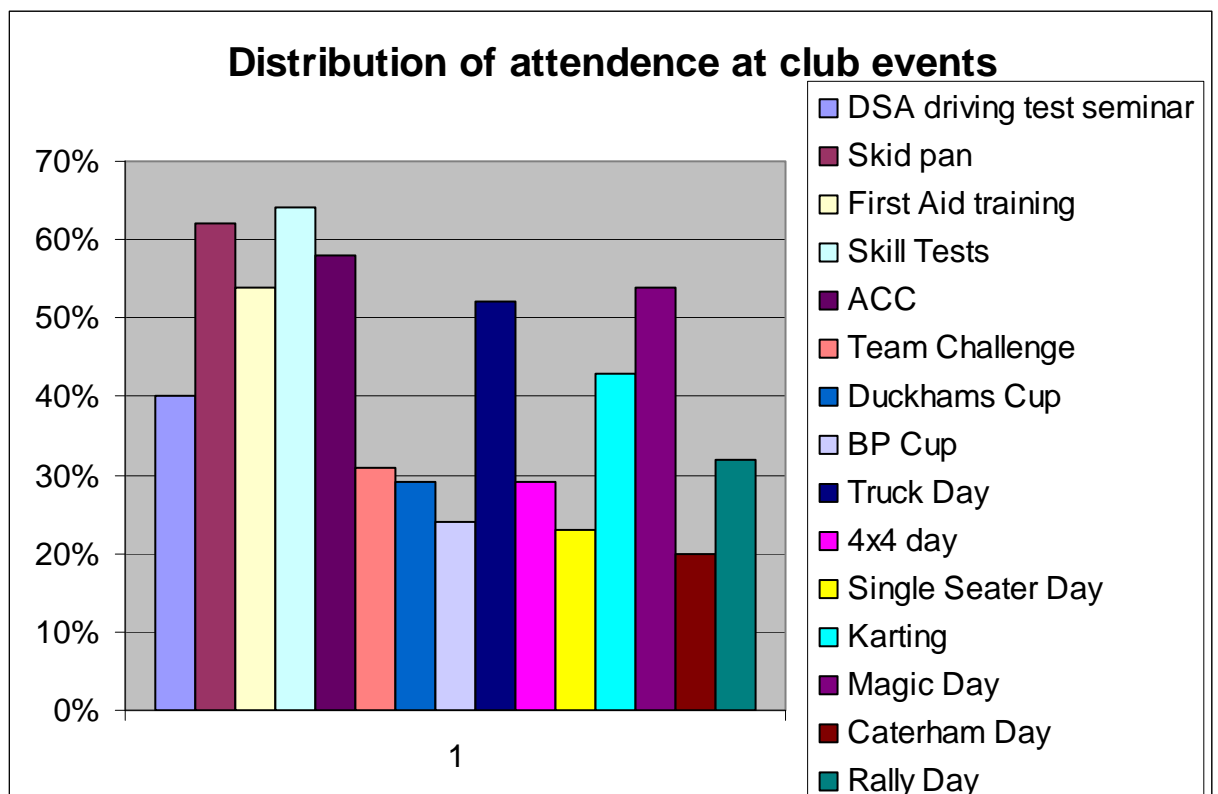
This event does exactly what it says on the tin, offering a unique experience of learning high speed car control in an off road environment.

‘Very well organised, learned a lot as I drove a variety of vehicles.’

‘Best fun & good high speed skid control experience.’

‘A highlight of my time as an U17cc member.’

‘Fun packed day, gives a greater understanding of how car works.’



Key Findings:

Most importantly 95% of respondents would recommend the Club to a friend, reflecting the enjoyable and beneficial experience they gained by attending the Club.

The variety of special events offered by the Club covers a wide range of driving skills from hazard perception to high-speed car control. All activities offer members an experience that broadens

their attitude to driving. The experience gained through attendance in these activities has often proven useful to members once driving on public roads, most notably the skid pan session.

7: Parent/Associate Experience

The Club is run by volunteers and this is reflected in the values of the Club. The key to its success is the efforts of the committee and associates who give up their free time to ensure the smooth functioning of the Club's activities. Consequently cooperation and communication are key in the organisation of the Club, meaning that all are welcome to contribute. The warm, friendly atmosphere of the Club means that attendance at each event can be treated as a day out which the whole family can enjoy.

The Club's emphasis on safety means that parents can put their worries at ease as they know that their child is driving in a controlled environment. In this section members' parents were asked if they had previously taken an advanced motoring test, or if they had done since their child had joined the Club. They were asked if they felt that the time, money and effort they put in was worthwhile and asked them to point out some of the benefits they as parents accrued during their time with the Club.

6 respondents' parents since joining the Club have taken the IAM (Institute of Advanced Motorists) test. 4 respondents' parents have taken the RoSPA (Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents) Gold test, 1 has taken the RoSPA Silver test and 1 the ADI (Approved Driving Instructor) test. This totals at 12 out of 93 respondents' parents who have taken an advanced motoring test since their child joined the Club. This compares to 8 respondents' parents who had already taken an advanced test before their child joined (5 IAM, 1 RoSPA Gold & 2 ADI).

98% of parents stated that the hours and mileage they contributed to their child's pre-17 driving experience was worthwhile. Amongst the variety of responses, some of the most common parental benefits were, firstly, a valuable bonding experience with their offspring, secondly, an increase in confidence in their child's ability to control a motor vehicle and hence parents were reassured about their child's safety, thirdly, a large proportion believed they had saved money on driving lessons as a result of attending the Club and fourthly, many parents had the opportunity to reassess and refine their own driving techniques. These experiences can clearly be seen in the parents' comments:

'Dealing with a disability was hard. The Club gave us a way of bonding. Importantly it provided the opportunity to talk to all ages & gain mutual respect.'

'Very grateful for the experience & helped a lot when it came to taking test and after passing.'

'Peace of mind due to child's advanced level driving skills.'

'They teach awareness and road safety so parents felt more comfortable when you start driving.'

'Very good shared experience, opportunity to interact & work together towards common goals.'

'Bonding with children when not arguing about speed, mirrors, hands on wheel, shuffling etc. Dad was a better driver too.'

'They felt that my attitude to driving & other road users benefited alongside my driving skills.'

'Excellent. Everything was very worthwhile in preparing him for driving on the roads. Wouldn't it be good if all youngsters had this opportunity.'

Frequency Distribution of Parents Views: Was it all worthwhile?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	88	97.8	97.8	97.8
	No	2	2.2	2.2	100.0
Total		90	100.0	100.0	

Key Findings:

98% of parents thought that the time and effort they put in to attending the Club was worthwhile.

13% of parents have taken an advanced motoring test since their child joined the Club.

Many of the parents stated that they had better peace of mind now that their child is driving on public roads knowing that the Club had prepared them as well as possible.

8: Provisional Licence

In this section members were asked to give details about any ADI lessons they had received, any on road practice they had with parents or another adult and lastly they were asked to provide the details of their theory and practical test results.

Statistical analysis shows that respondents who took driving lessons with an ADI were slightly more likely to pass their test on the first occasion; however this may at best be described as a weak correlation owing to the fact that the same number failed their test on the first occasion irrespective of lessons with an ADI.

Further, the optimal number of hours with an ADI that resulted in the highest pass rates is between 3 and 12 hours. This is obviously a large range and reflects the individual talents of each driver, the grade achieved (and therefore their experience) when they left the Club. However, it is plausible to state that if a novice driver has about 7 hours of lessons with an ADI then they are more likely to pass their practical exam first time.

**Number of Hours Vs. Passed Practical
1st Time Crosstabulation**

Count	Practical 1		Total
	Pass	fail	
Hours 2	1	0	1
3	5	0	5
5	1	1	2
6	1	0	1
7	1	0	1
10	4	1	5
12	1	0	1
14	1	0	1
22	0	1	1
25	1	0	1
30	0	1	1
45	0	1	1
Total	16	5	21

The above table shows the correlation between passing the practical test on the first occasion and the number of hours of on road practice each respondent had.

**ADI Lessons Vs. Passed
Practical 1st Time Crosstabulation**

		Practical1		Total
		pass	fail	
ADI lessons	Yes	19	7	26
	No	15	7	22
Total		34	14	48

The above table shows the correlation between the respondents who passed the practical exam on the first attempt and those who took or didn't take ADI lessons.

There is a slightly higher chance statistically of passing the practical exam first time if one has taken lessons with an ADI, however with the same number of respondents failing their test first time irrespective of ADI lessons, the statistical link appears weak at best.

Key Findings:

Whilst the statistics do not fully support this, it is considered likely that some level of ADI tuition coupled to experience on the road will be beneficial to most members prior to taking their DSA test – and the Club should recommend this. If nothing else, the real road driving environment is very different to that which is experienced at the Club and members should be encouraged to gain some real road experience prior to the test.

9: Full Licence

A frequency distribution has shown that the higher the grade achieved at the Club the less major or minor mistakes made by the member when taking their practical driving test.

Moreover 80% passed their practical test at the first attempt, a statistic that is almost double the national average of 43%. Further, as we examine the higher grades more closely, we see this figure approaching 90%.

Length of attendance Vs. Accident Involvement Crosstabulation

Count	Involved Accident		Total
	Yes	No	
Years 1	0	4	4
2	7	13	20
3	3	17	20
4	6	13	19
5	4	11	15
6	1	2	3
7	2	0	2
Over 7	0	6	6
Total	23	66	89

A strong correlation exists between the length of time spent in attendance at the Club and the respondents' involvement in an accident. As one would expect the longer one attends the Club the less likely they are to have an accident. These statistics support the statement from the Club's website which asserts that prospective members should be aged below 15 when they join as the full benefits that the Club has to offer can only truly be gained the longer one attends.

Passed Practical Test 1st time Vs. Grade Achieved Crosstabulation

Count	Grade						Total
Practical	X	1	2	3	4	5	
Pass	7	12	18	22	3	1	63
Fail	1	1	8	3	1	1	15
Total	8	13	26	25	4	2	78

Accident Involvement Vs. Passed Practical 1st Time Crosstabulation

		Practical 1		Total
		Pass	Fail	
Involved Accident	Yes	18	5	23
	No	45	10	55
Total		63	15	78

This survey has confirmed what the Club itself believed to be true; namely those who progress to the higher levels (Grades 1 & X) are more likely to pass their test first time, will need less driving lessons in order to do so and are far less likely to be involved in an accident than those with lower grades or those who have not attended the Club at all. An example of the high standards to which the Club teaches is the pass rate of grade 3s which is almost 90%. This statistic is exceptional when one considers that it is grade 2 which is broadly equivalent to the DSA test.

Grade achieved Vs. Accident Involvement Crosstabulation

		Involved Accident		Total
		Yes	No	
Grade	Grade X	1	7	8
	Grade 1	4	12	16
	Grade 2	11	19	30
	Grade 3	7	21	28
	Grade 4	0	4	4
	Grade 5	0	2	2
Total		23	65	88

Of grade 3 respondents, 25% have been involved in an accident. This does support the fact that the Club teaches all of its members to an extremely high standard. Despite this it can be suggested that the higher the grade achieved, the less likely it is for a former member to be involved in an accident. As can be seen from the above table, at grade 2, 33% have had an accident, at grade 1, 25% and at grade X only 12.5% have been involved in an accident. So there is some statistical evidence to support this claim.

Cumulative frequency of respondents who have taken Pass Plus

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	31	34.4	37.8	37.8
	No	51	56.7	62.2	100.0
	Total	82	91.1	100.0	
Missing	3	8	8.9		
Total		90	100.0		

Importantly, the tables above and below show that the Club's members have a higher propensity towards taking the Pass Plus scheme or the IAM/RoSPA advanced driving tests. Indeed 34% of respondents have taken Pass Plus which compares to the national average of 15% of novice drivers. This is more than double the national average, reflecting the mature attitude that the Club encourages despite a lack of hard evidence of benefits.

Cumulative frequency of respondents who have taken IAM/RoSPA

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	8	8.9	9.6	9.6
	No	75	83.3	90.4	100.0
	Total	83	92.2	100.0	
Missing	3	7	7.8		
Total		90	100.0		

Further, 9% of respondents have taken the IAM or RoSPA advanced test compared with approximately 0.5% nationally. These high numbers of participation further reflect the mature attitude that the Club seeks to encourage amongst its members. Driving can be extremely enjoyable but with such enjoyment comes great responsibility.

Pass Plus Participants Vs. Accident Involvement Crosstabulation

		Involved Accident		Total
		Yes	No	
Pass Plus	Yes	10	21	31
	No	12	39	51
Total		22	60	82

Of 31 respondents who have taken Pass Plus 33% have been involved in an accident.

Of the 22 respondents who have been involved in an accident 10 had taken their Pass Plus, whilst 12 had not.

Most importantly, however is the fact that of 93 respondents, 66% have not been involved in an accident at all - irrespective of whether they have taken their Pass Plus or IAM – and these statistics cover an average of 2½ years on the road.

IAM/RoSPA participants Vs. Accident Involvement Crosstabulation

		Involved Accident		Total
		Yes	No	
IAM/	Yes	3	5	8
RoSPA	No	20	55	75
	Total	23	60	83

Key findings:

Of the 23 respondents involved in an accident, 20 had not taken their IAM/RoSPA test. This suggests that advanced, on road training would provide additional benefits to members after their Club experience.

10: Road Experience

'The Club prepared me extremely well it provided me with the skills to drive on the road. The support I received from the instructors & other members helped develop these skills & my attitude'.

26% of respondents have been involved in an accident since passing their driving test.

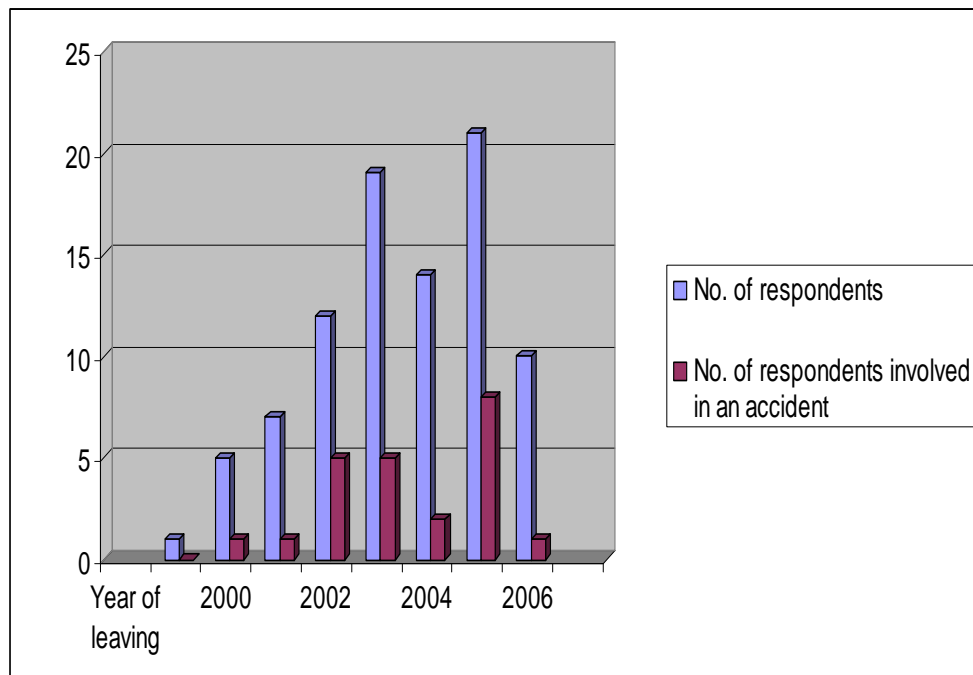
However, 76% of respondents who passed their test first time have not been involved in an accident.

According to the Insurance Company website www.17to40.co.uk, 1 in 5 new drivers is involved in an accident during their first year on the road, indeed 17 year olds are 56% more likely to have an accident than other road users.

When the responses of the Club's survey are analysed we can see that 1 in 4 has been involved in an accident, which is lower than the national average and often the respondents have been driving for more than a year, adding even more significance to the skills and attitude that the Club fosters.

Analysis of accidents by length of time on the road shows the following:

Year of leaving	No. of respondents	No. of respondents involved in an accident
1999	1	0
2000	5	1
2001	7	1
2002	12	5
2003	19	5
2004	14	2
2005	21	8
2006	10	1



No. of respondents	No. of years driving	Year of leaving	Total years of driving experience
1	8	1999	1x8 = 8
5	7	2000	5x7 = 35
7	6	2001	7x6 = 42
12	5	2002	12x5 = 60
19	4	2003	19x4 = 76
14	3	2004	14x3 = 42
21	2	2005	21x2 = 42
10	1	2006	10x1 = 10
			315 years total

According to the insurance company 17to40's website (www.17to40.co.uk) 1 in 5 new drivers will be involved in an accident during their first year on the road. As can be seen from the table below, around 25% of the respondents have been involved in an accident since passing their test. Whilst this may appear slightly higher than the national average, these statistics cover a range of 5 years, thus if we take the average amount of time on the road to be 2½ years for the data set, the likelihood of a former car Club member being involved in an accident during their first year of driving is 1 in 10. Those who have not attended the Club are twice as likely to be involved in an accident.

The respondents' figures shown include all accidents whereas those for www.17to40.co.uk include only reported accidents, i.e those where there was a claim. Adjusting the respondents' figures to only

include accidents where there was an insurance claim reduces the number to 18 – around a 20% reduction. The likelihood of a former Car Club member being involved in a reported accident during their first year of driving becomes approximately 1 in 12.

Cumulative Frequency of Accident Involvement

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	23	25.6	25.8	25.8
	No	66	73.3	74.2	100.0
	Total	89	98.9	100.0	
Missing	3	1	1.1		
Total		90	100.0		

Accident Involvement Vs Own Mistake Crosstabulation

		mistake1		Total
		Yes	No	
Involved Accident	Yes	11	11	22
Total		11	11	22

Further, exactly 50% of respondents involved in an accident admitted to the accident being their fault, whilst the other 50% were not. Although there seems to be no exact statistic, young drivers are generally regarded as much more likely to be responsible for accidents they are involved in than older drivers. However the Club's survey indicates that for past members responsibility is equally shared.

Key findings:

From the questions asked it is not possible to draw a direct comparison with the Novice Driver statistic of 1 in 5 Novice Drivers being involved in an accident in the first 12 months on the road.

That said, the overall accident rate of 1 in 4 over an average of 2½ years on the road converts to an annual rate of 1 in 10.

If we take the 'total years driving' at 315 years and divide that by the number of accidents, 23, we arrive at a number of 1 accident involving an ex-member (regardless of fault) for every 13½ driving years. If the number of accidents is taken as 18 (those where there was an insurance claim), we arrive at a number of one accident every 17½ years.

Members by Gender Vs. Driving Convictions Crosstabulation

	Convictions		Total
	Yes	No	
Males	5*	62	67
Females	1	25	26
Total	6	87	93

* One of these convictions attracted no points.

The survey shows that the proportion of members convicted of a driving offence is just under 6.5% which, when combined with the 315 total years driving, produces a statistic of one conviction per 52½ driving years.

Finding comparable data for the general public has been difficult but we know that young male drivers are particularly prone to committing motoring offences with one of the most prevalent being careless driving.

The Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions published statistics showing that between 1988 and 1997 male drivers aged between 17 and 19 committed 144 motoring offences per thousand driver-years, compared to 51.6 per thousand driver-years for all male drivers.

Young female drivers fared better, but even so over the same period female drivers aged between 17 and 19 committed 29.6 offences per thousand driver-years, compared to 14.2 per thousand driver-years for all female drivers.

According to insurance company Confused.com, the number of drivers with penalty points on their driving licences has increased by 50% since 2003. Their figures now suggest that 1 driver in 7 has points on their licence.

Key findings:

If we again take the total years driving at 315 years and divide that by the number of convictions by gender, we can compare Club members' data with that for 10 years ago whilst acknowledging that the number of motoring offences has since risen.

Convictions per thousand driver-years	Members 17-24 1999-2006	General Public 17-19 1988-1997	General Public All ages 1988-1997
Male Drivers	22.0	144.0	51.6
Female Drivers	11.4	29.6	14.2

Despite the absence of directly comparable data, it is clear that male members are considerably less likely to be convicted of a driving offence – less than half as likely than male drivers generally and, in the critical few years following their 17th birthday, over **6 times** less likely.

Using the insurance company figure of 1 in 7 drivers having points on their licence produces the following comparison:

	Members	General Public
Points on Licence	5.4%	14.3%

Again this shows that members are far less likely to be convicted of a motoring offence which reinforces the Club's contention that learning to drive pre-17 in a safe, controlled environment not only delivers sound technical skills but instils the appropriate behaviour and driving attitudes.

11: Reflections

A TRL Report (TRL 652) on Novice Driver Safety and the British Practical Driving Test (2005) has found that novice drivers learn some useful skills during the early stages of unsupervised driving. The report laments that if this learning could take place in relative safety during the pre-test period (like in a controlled environment such as a car club), there could be a substantial road safety benefit.

Further, the report also indicates that it is possible the extra experience and practice built up by older drivers tends to produce a more stable driving style, which is less susceptible to degradation during the early months of unsupervised driving. Indeed the same principle may be applied to those members who achieved the higher grades (1 and X), who have accumulated several years experience in car control, hazard awareness and forward planning. As safety is a key theme of the Under 17 Car Club, the teaching ethos focuses upon looking ahead in order to be as prepared as possible for the unexpected. Interestingly, the TRL report highlights that 'an extreme difficulty most candidates possess during their test is the inability to look ahead'.

It is true that young drivers, especially males, tend to be faster and more aggressive, with greater propensity to violate the formal and informal rules of the road. The reasons behind this are not as unclear as some may think. It is an attitudinal problem, which is not particular to drivers of any age, one that can only be dealt with through education.

Indeed, as the TRL report highlights, it is necessary to directly influence driver training in order to emphasise the risks of irrational behaviour so that positive safety attitudes can be developed. The report even suggests that such an influence may be more appropriate than modifying the practical test itself, or changing existing legislation to allow novice drivers to gain more experience before driving unsupervised. As the Club points out on its website, there are a variety of grades to be achieved and this requires regular attendance. In order to gain the top grades it is useful for the member to join the Club by the age of 14 at the very latest. This allows sufficient time to educate the member in the necessary practical and attitudinal skills of a safe and responsible driver. Those who join the Club at the later age will not receive the full benefits that the Club has to offer.

The report also highlights two features common of young drivers involved in accidents that significantly are key educational tools of the Under 17 Car Club. Firstly, there is a lack of anticipatory hazard perception, yet as those lucky enough to attend the Club will know, if you always anticipate a hazard then you can spend time being

pleasantly surprised rather than shocked. Secondly, the Club holds meetings all year round in a variety of venues (although admittedly there is a lack of representation the further north one travels). Specifically the Club holds meetings regardless of weather conditions including night time driving, thus enabling the member to gain invaluable experience.

Comments: how members felt the Club prepared them for life on the road:

'Incredibly, I passed within 6 months of turning 17. U17cc increased my confidence and awareness. I'd never have done so well without them.'

'Made me an able & confident driver so did not make many mistakes whilst learning, could concentrate on awareness more than how to drive.'

'Good experience driving in different conditions and vehicles and emphasises safety.'

'It prepared me as much as it could for the real world, it was very helpful, the good thing about the Club is there are not any idiot drivers like on public roads.'

'As well as possible without actually going on a public road. Car control, highway code knowledge, attitude to driving, level & variety of experience all had a considerable & positive effect.'

'Very well, the Club provided me with a wide variety of experiences & knowledge & enjoyment. In my mind this helped me to become a safer driver.'

'Observation is key: being able to predict if another road user is going to do something that results in action being taken, for example, braking.'

'The understanding that a motor vehicle needs to be respected, good car control & the importance of it, both resulting in safety being most important.'

'Hazard awareness & being able to judge things in different conditions.'

'All aspects of the Car Club are excellent, especially the grading system and tests.'

'Superb organisation! Absolutely worth the time & effort: good mixture of fun & disciplined activity.'



Appendix One

Ex-Member Confidential Survey

A. About your membership

1. Are you Male or Female?	
2. When did you join?	
3. When did you leave?	
4. What grade did you achieve?	
5. What age were you when you left?	
6. Approximately how many meetings did you attend in total? (We average 35 meetings per year.)	
7. How many years were you a Member?	
8. Achievements/Awards: (e.g. Driver of the Year, Skill Test Winner, Grade X Shield)	
9. Are you still involved in the Club? If so, in what capacity?	

B. About venue attendance (please tick as appropriate)

Attendances	a. Frequently	b. Sometimes	c. Rarely	d. Never
1. Bedford Autodrome				
2. Bourne				
3. Cardington				
4. Castle Combe				
5. Exeter				
6. Finmere				
7. North Weald				
8. Prodrive				
9. TRL				
10. Wroughton				
11. Wymeswold				



Appendix One

C. About your membership experience

Did you participate in any of these activities and, if so, were they enjoyable/beneficial? Please circle the appropriate answer.

	a.	b. Comments
1. DSA Driving Test Seminar	Yes No	
2. Skid Pan Training	Yes No	
3. First Aid Training	Yes No	
4. Skill Tests	Yes No	
5. ACC/Linework	Yes No	
6. Team Challenge	Yes No	
7. Duckhams Cup	Yes No	
8. BP Cup	Yes No	
9. Truck Day	Yes No	
10. 4x4 Day	Yes No	
11. Single Seater Day	Yes No	
12. Karting	Yes No	
13. Magic Day	Yes No	
14. Caterham Day	Yes No	
15. Rally Day	Yes No	
16. Other (please state)		



Appendix One

D. About Parent/Associate experience

Please circle the appropriate answer and provide any comments

	a.	b. Comments
1. Did your parent(s)/ associate(s) have any formal driving qualification (e.g. ADI, RoSPA, IAM) or relevant experience before you joined the Club?	Yes No	
2. Since joining the Club, has your parent(s)/associate(s) obtained any formal driving qualification?	Yes No	
3. What are your parents'/ associates' views of the Club? E.g. were the hours and miles they contributed to giving you pre-17 driving experience worthwhile?	Yes No	
4. What are the parental benefits?		



Appendix One

E. After you obtained your Provisional Driving Licence

Please circle the appropriate answers

1 a. Did you have driving lessons with an ADI?	Yes No	b. How many?	
2 a. Did you practice on the road with a Parent or other Adult?	Yes No	b. How many hours practice did you have?	
DSA Driving Tests	a. Date(s)	b. Pass/Fail	c. Number of Driving Errors
3. Theory Test Attempt 1 (Highway Code)		Pass Fail	
4. Theory Test Attempt 2 (Highway Code)		Pass Fail	
5. Theory Test Attempt 3 (Highway Code)		Pass Fail	
6. Theory Test Attempt 1 (Hazard Awareness)		Pass Fail	
7. Theory Test Attempt 2 (Hazard Awareness)		Pass Fail	
8. Theory Test Attempt 3 (Hazard Awareness)		Pass Fail	
9. Practical Test Attempt 1		Pass Fail	
10. Practical Test Attempt 2		Pass Fail	
11. Practical Test Attempt 3		Pass Fail	
12. More than 3 attempts?		Pass Fail	



Appendix One
F. After you obtained your Full Driving Licence

Please circle the appropriate answers

Basic Information	a.	b. Comments
1. Do you have your own car?	Yes No	
2. If no, whose car do you drive?		
3. Do you have access to more than one car?	Yes No	
4. What is your approximate annual mileage?		
5. Approximately how many miles have you driven since passing your test?		
6. Have you taken Pass Plus?	Yes No	
7. Have you taken the IAM or RoSPA Advanced tests?	Yes No	
8. If yes to IAM, how many observed drives did you take before attempting the test?		
9. If yes to IAM, how many attempts did you need to pass the test?		
10. Have you taken part in the 'Young Driver of the Year' Competition?	Yes No	
11. If Yes, how did you progress through the competition?		
12. Which company insures your car?		
13. Have you driven abroad? If so, how many miles?	Yes No	
14. Do you drive for work or business purposes (apart from to/from work/ college)?	Yes No	



Appendix One
G. About your experience on the road

1. Have you been involved in any accidents? Yes/No

If **yes** then please complete the following, circling answers where appropriate

	a. Acc 1	b. Acc 2	c. Acc 3	d. Acc 4
2. Number of vehicles involved				
3. Severity Major repairs (> £1,000) Minor Repairs (< £1,000)	Write-off Major Minor	Write-off Major Minor	Write-off Major Minor	Write-off Major Minor
4. Was anybody killed or injured?	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
5. If there were injuries, were these serious or minor? (Serious injuries would be ANY requiring hospital in-patient treatment).	Killed Serious Minor None	Killed Serious Minor None	Killed Serious Minor None	Killed Serious Minor None
6. Was there an insurance claim?	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
7. Was the accident a result of your mistake?	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No

8. Have you been convicted of any motoring offences? Yes/No

	a. Off 1	b. Off 2	c. Off 3	d. Off 4
9. Type of offence (e.g. speeding)				
10. Date of conviction				
11. Penalty (points)				
12. Penalty (fine)				
13. Penalty (other)				



Appendix One H. Reflections

The information in this section will help us to improve the Club for present and future members.

1. How well did your experience with the Club prepare you for driving in the real world?

--

2. What could the Club do differently to better prepare you for the public roads/ traffic?

--

3. What skill, knowledge or experience gained at the Club has been the most useful to you on the road?

--

4. How would you rate the standard and quality of different aspects of the Club: venues, documentation, website, briefings, AGMs, social events, instruction, instructors, committee/ officials, marshals, etc.?

--

5. Would you recommend membership of the Club to other eligible young people? If so, why? If not, then why not?

--

6. Any other comments?

--

THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP.

Appendix Two



Transport Committee
House of Commons
7 Millbank
London
SW1P 3JA

15th December 2006

Dear Sirs,

Novice Drivers Inquiry

On behalf of the Committee and Members of the Under 17 Car Club we submit the attached evidence to your inquiry. In addition and by way of supplementary evidence, we have provided under separate cover a brief BBC Television news report on DVD. A transcript of this news report is provided as Appendix 1.

We would also be willing to provide oral evidence to the inquiry if requested.

Contact Information:

The Under 17 Car Club, 19 Exmoor Road, Thatcham, Berkshire, RG19 3UY

Paul Silverwood, President

Tel.: 07850 561455 Email: paulsilverwood@yahoo.com

Professor John Beckford (Vice-President)

Tel.: 07785 360249 Email: john@doxarus.com

The evidence we provide draws on significant experience (30 years) of training pre-licence age drivers (11-17 year olds) and reflects some initial findings of a recent survey of ex-Club Members now on the road the results of which are currently being analysed. It is our contention that high quality, organised, consistent and well structured pre-licence driver training, coupled to adoption of earlier, observed, on-road driver training would have significant impact in reducing accident rates amongst novice drivers.

Yours faithfully,

Paul Silverwood

John Beckford

Encs.

Mr. Paul Silverwood and Professor John Beckford
The Under 17 Car Club, 19 Exmoor Road, Thatcham, Berkshire, RG19 3UY

Appendix Two



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Based on extensive experience combined with a recent, anonymised survey of ex-Club Members, the full results of which are still under evaluation, we offer the following as evidence of the value of our approach:

	Ex-Club Members	National Average
Novice Driver Accident Rate	1 in 10	1 in 5
First attempt DSA Practical Test pass	Grades 1 & X: 92%	47%
First attempt DSA Practical Test pass Pass Plus	All Grades: 80%	47%
	34%	15%
IAM or RoSPA Advanced Test	9%	1%*

(*approximate)

We contend that high quality, organised, consistent and well structured pre-licence driver training, coupled to adoption of earlier, observed, on-road driver training would have a significant impact in reducing both KSI and conviction rates amongst novice drivers.

Our principal recommendations to this inquiry are:

- 1: A stronger developmental focus on:
Attitudes, Behaviour, Observation Skills, Risk Assessment coupled to basic driving commentary.
- 2: Extended supervised development for novice drivers through:
Accompanied driving from age 16, incentive based graduated licensing post DSA test, skid training.
- 3: Development of a national pre-licence driver training scheme.
- 4: Emphasis by ADIs/Driving Schools on low accident rates rather than test pass rates.
- 5: Maintain the 6 penalty point legislation for novice drivers who have not undertaken advanced tuition and passed an advanced test.
- 6: Not to introduce lower speed limits for novice drivers due to the impracticality of effective enforcement.

Appendix Two



1 Introduction

- 1.1 Paul Silverwood and John Beckford are respectively the President and Vice-President of The Under 17 Car Club. Both are actively engaged in the development and delivery of its pre-licence driver training scheme and have personally contributed to the development of around 1,500 young members over 12 years. Both are Members of the Institute of Advanced Motorists (IAM), drive significant distances in connection with their occupations and are fathers to four young, male drivers.
- 1.2 Since 1976, The Under 17 Car Club (www.under17-carclub.co.uk) with the active engagement of Members' parents has taught over 3,000 pre-licence age children to drive. The Club has developed a tuition and assessment process which develops responsible attitudes, technical skills and a positive road safety ethos. Membership is open to young people from all backgrounds from the age of 11. The Club evolves its work to meet the changing needs and challenges of young drivers and engages with ADIs, Police and Emergency Service Drivers, RoSPA and the IAM in setting very high standards. Members develop their driving skills through a rigorously assessed grading system, aspiring to a standard equivalent to the IAM/RoSPA advanced driving tests with progress dependent on a balance of responsible attitude and technical skill.
- 1.3 The Club's Members experience driving all types of vehicles and undertake a varied, enjoyable and challenging programme. Extending knowledge beyond basic skills training, Members undertake a series of driving theory, hazard awareness, mechanical knowledge and close maneuverability tests to further their understanding of vehicle dynamics and raise their awareness of the performance and handling limitations of both themselves and the vehicles.

These young drivers, on average, enjoy three years driving in a private, secure and managed environment in which they develop a positive road safety ethos, a defensive and risk averse driving attitude and practise the technical skills required to drive with care and consideration on the public roads. The skills developed include skid training, first aid and advanced handling involving both a wide range of vehicles and, in appropriate circumstances, motorway speed driving.

- 1.4 Based on our recent survey of ex-Club Members (the full results of which are still under evaluation), we offer as evidence of the value of this approach the following:

The yearly accident rate for ex-Club Members is 1 in 10 compared with the national average for novice drivers of 1 in 5;

The first attempt pass rate for ex-Club Members (all grades) in the DSA Practical Driving Test is 80% compared with a national average of 47%. This pass rate rises to 92% for Members who achieved Grade 1 or X (the two highest Grades which require at least 3 years membership to attain).

We contend that high quality, organised, consistent and well structured pre-licence driver training, coupled to adoption of earlier, observed, on-road driver training would have a significant impact in reducing both KSI and conviction rates amongst novice drivers.

Appendix Two



2 *The Nature of the Problem*

To what extent novice drivers are more at risk of being involved in a collision than other drivers, and whether this is primarily a consequence of age, inexperience or a combination of both.

- 2.1 Publicly available information (TRL/DSA/Insurance Companies) confirms that novice drivers are at greater risk of collision than other drivers. Either inexperience or age will be a significant factor in this risk – and where they are both present in a young novice driver they are potentially combinative rather than additive in effect.
- 2.2 Addressing this issue is not, for us, primarily about developing greater technical skill, but about educating novice drivers such that they both comprehend the level of risk associated with driving and develop a risk-averse attitude when behind the wheel.
- 2.3 Key deficiencies in the skill development of young drivers include their observation skills, attitudinal response to presenting risk, risk evaluation and comprehension of the dynamic limitations of their vehicle (particularly when fully laden). These deficiencies can be, at least partly, overcome through extended experience and further development of skills and attitudes.

3: *Attitudes*

Do young people's attitudes to driving have a significant impact on the collision rates of young and novice drivers?

- 3.1 Absolutely. Combining lack of skill beyond the level required to satisfy the requirements of the DSA Test with the youthful tendency to 'show off' coupled to the handling and performance limitations of the vehicles typically driven by this age group, collisions are inevitable.
- 3.2 There is a cultural expectation that once a licence is acquired, young drivers (perhaps particularly males) will demonstrate their new skill to their peers. This age group focuses on the 'right to drive' with limited acknowledgement of the associated responsibility to themselves or other road users. Young and novice drivers do value their licences and, while the 'six-point' rule for novice drivers acts as a limited constraint on poor road behaviour, the low potential for being caught does inhibit its effectiveness and does not deal with inadequate driving which is, perhaps, not illegal. Our investigations suggest that Ex-Members have a much greater awareness and positive attitude to risk, safety and other road users and that they value their licences more highly than their peers. This seems to be rooted in positive engagement with driving from a younger age and specifically recognises driving as a privilege, not a right. Supportive adult engagement with their driving development is also important.
- 3.3 Whilst enhanced skills and risk-averse attitudes would both serve to reduce collision rates, it is our view that the greatest benefit would arise from the development of a risk-averse driving culture. Discussions with ex-Members of the Car Club and their peers reveal that the extended learning period (average 3 years, and up to 5 years in some cases) for Members, coupled to the consistent focus on safe attitudes and the broader skill development regime, generates both a higher level of skill and a significantly safer attitude on the road. Comparative collision rates are 1 in 10 for ex-Members compared with the 1 in 5 average. (Source: www.17to40.co.uk).

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- 3.4 Reflecting our investigations, a typical course with an ADI prior to a DSA test will focus on the technical skills required to actually handle the vehicle with limited opportunity for development of sustainably defensive, risk-averse attitudes. The examiner in a time limited DSA test, whilst undoubtedly evaluating attitudes, cannot be expected to fully determine how the candidate is likely to behave when not being examined. It is likely that candidates understand the attitudes that must be demonstrated in order to pass the test and are capable of doing so for its duration.
- 3.5 The general focus of promotions by Driving Schools is on the DSA test pass rate. By implication, ADIs and Driving Schools are 'teaching the test'. It may be that a shift in the emphasis of relevant promotional material would be a desirable pre-cursor to a shift in collision rates. Emphasis by Schools on a low collision/ accident rate of its pupils post-DSA test would perhaps be preferable to current practice.

4 Driver education and testing

How effective are the existing practical and theory driving tests at identifying safe driving skills and behaviour? Has the hazard perception test achieved its objectives?

- 4.1 The DSA practical test can only meaningfully enable assessment of basic safe technical driving skills although awareness of risk can also be assessed. The test cannot, by definition, attempt the assessment of unsupervised driver behaviour. The hazard perception test does attempt to evaluate driver awareness of and response to presenting risks but does not perhaps adequately reflect the realities of the road. It may be that this could be complemented by risk assessment based commentary driving during the Practical Test.
- 4.2 Drivers who are 'taught the test' will be tutored to do those things which the examiner requires and not do those things which should be avoided – this is not necessarily an indicator of behaviour when unsupervised. The necessary post-test absence of continuous observation means that consistency of behaviour is in the control only of the novice driver.
- 4.3 It seems that some form of graduated or limited licensing associated with secondary or advanced tests after a specified time period or mileage and coupled to post-test tuition would provide significant benefits.

5 Driver Education and Testing

Could changes to driver education and testing help to make novice drivers safer?

- 5.1 Our experience suggests that a number of changes to driver training could be beneficial. Commencement of training at an earlier age (e.g. 16) and providing for a longer period of supervised driving pre-test would be beneficial and would provide the opportunity for longer term behaviour and attitude development and assessment.
- 5.2 This could also provide the opportunity to extend the range of technical skills taught to include, for example, compulsory skid tuition, motorway driving, night driving and 'green' driving tuition. This may have implications for the training and qualification regime of ADIs and suggests that at least some on-road driving tuition may need to be compulsorily placed in the hands of qualified professionals.

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- 5.3 There would of course be significant cost implications for young and novice drivers in extending the period of pre-test training. Whilst it may be considered by some that the cost is not currently particularly high, further increasing it may lead those who are financially weak to avoid the process altogether and simply drive without a licence.

6 Graduated licensing

Graduated licensing schemes involve the phasing-in of driving privileges. Typically, a graduated licensing scheme imposes additional restrictions on new drivers either for a fixed period of time after passing their test or until a second test is passed.

- 6.1 Introduction of post-test training leading to an IAM/RoSPA equivalent standard of test would undoubtedly be beneficial. Novice drivers could be encouraged to pursue such training either through incentives or compulsion. Either approach could be linked to insurance costs, vehicle size or power limitations, restrictions on passengers and associated with compulsory use of a visible indicator e.g. a 'P' (Provisional), 'N' (Novice) or 'R' (Restricted) plate.
- 6.2 An incentive based approach would be preferable, in our view, to adopting limitations based on legal compulsion. Both approaches present compliance and policing difficulties, though the individual incentive approach is more likely to engage the mind of the novice driver as it has implications for personal finances and would, in effect, be policed by the insurance companies.
- 6.3 Blending the two approaches, it may be useful to revise the two year 6 penalty point rule such that drivers who have not undertaken approved further training remain on that limit and this could easily be combined with the display of a 'P', 'N' or 'R' plate on the vehicle. Taken together these would probably act as a strong incentive to take further training.
- 6.4 Except in the case of a lower speed limit which would create its own dangers, each of the individual suggestions listed in the question has merits but all suffer the same limitation of being difficult to enforce in the absence of visible policing and the potential absence of any visible external restriction indicators on the vehicle.
- 6.5 Ultimately, safe driving can only be achieved when the individual driver takes responsibility for her or himself, any passengers and other road users. This cannot be legislated into existence but can be achieved through the development of a driving culture amongst novice drivers in which peer pressure demands safety. Discussions with ex-Members of the Club show that their friends prefer to be driven by them, because they feel safe – and the ex-Members themselves regularly refuse to travel with other novice drivers (despite them having passed the DSA test) because they feel their safety is compromised.

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7 Changes to the driving age

Would there be any benefit in changing the minimum age at which a provisional or full licence may be obtained?

- 7.1 Yes. We believe that, in concert with some other countries, the provisional driving licence should be available at age 16 and associated with a longer term training programme for novice drivers of at least one year. As at present, provisional licence holders should not be eligible to undertake the DSA test until at least age 17 and eligibility for the test should be associated with having undertaken some form of approved training.
- 7.2 Raising the minimum age would, in our view, would have no positive benefit and, indeed, considerable negative impact, not least of which would be an increase in joy-riding.

8 Different treatment of offenders

Drivers face disqualification and re-testing if they acquire six penalty points during the first two years after taking their test. Could further, similar provisions for the different treatment of novice drivers who offend be introduced?

- 8.1 The six penalty point rule is quite a powerful incentive to good driver behaviour although the risk of getting caught driving illegally is relatively low.
- 8.2 Consistent with earlier remarks, in order to encourage novice drivers to undertake post-test training, it is suggested that drivers who have not undertaken such training should continue to be regarded, legally, as novice drivers for the purposes of penalty points and re-testing. Development from 'novice' to 'advanced' driver is not simply a function of experience and time on the road but of active engagement in further self-development. This is an indicator of the attitude of mind necessary for safe driving, representing acknowledgement of the limitations of basic training and the need to learn more.
- 8.3 The perception that the novice driver is invincible and has the right to drive as soon as he or she is 17 and passes the DSA test needs to be altered. Developing the understanding that the DSA test is only an initial stage in their driving training and experience will go a long way to reducing novice driver KSIs. It is essential that the responsibilities and obligations of the driver are asserted to the same extent as the rights.

Appendix Two



APPENDIX 1

Transcript of BBC TV “South Today” - Broadcast on BBC 1 & 2 on 7th November 2006

Sally Taylor MBE (South Today Presenter): “Telling them about the dangers is a first step. Giving them the proper skills to cope when they get behind the wheel is another. Our Transport Correspondent Paul Clifton has been to meet one group that thinks it’s found the answer - teaching kids to drive from the age of 11.”

Paul Clifton (PC) BBC Reporter: “Until 3 minutes ago Laura Thompson had never sat in this Jaguar. You would never have guessed it. Laura comes from Reading. She’s only 15 but she’s been driving for 3 years.”

Laura Thompson (LT): “It is a talking point with all my friends I have to say. They’re all really jealous. Because they all really want to learn to drive. I’ve brought a few of them to the Car Club as well and yeah it’s a really good opportunity as well.”

PC: “Laura is one of 300 members of the Under 17 Car Club.”

Instructor (in background): “How close should we be to the car in front?”

PC: “They drive most weekends. On the test track at the TRL in Crowthorne or here at Castle Combe Racing Circuit in Wiltshire.

LT: “The hardest thing I think is probably right at the start is learning to do the change the gear without just stalling the car and just basically getting the car going in a straight line is probably the hardest thing to do at the start.”

PC: “On the race track Laura’s quite happy driving at up to 90 miles per hour. She’s driven dozens of different vehicles.”

LT: “I’ve driven an articulated lorry, fire engine to a Mini-Cooper. You drive a whole range of different cars.”

PC: “Students drive trucks and rally cars too. The aim is to produce drivers who are far safer and far more responsible than other teenagers. It’s run by volunteers and it costs far less than normal driving lessons.

Paul Silverwood: “By the time they get to 17, they’ll have had hundreds of hours and thousands of miles experience under their belts and therefore, when they hit the roads at 17, they’ll be driving better than most drivers on the road. We do encourage the more experienced youngsters to swap cars as often as they can so that they get this wide range of experience.”

PC: “So does it work? Well, I felt safer being driven by Laura than by some of my friends and they are old enough to be Laura’s parents. Paul Clifton, BBC South Today, Wiltshire.”

Sally Taylor: “Interesting scheme.”



The Under 17 Car Club Survey

Validation Report

I can confirm that the Car Club pilot and full surveys have been conducted as detailed in the methodology. This approach was taken to preserve the integrity and confidentiality of the individual responses.

The analysis is informative and gives estimates which enable valid indicative comparisons between ex Car Club member profiles and the general public in relation to driving test success, more advanced driver participation and accident rates.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Doug Haynes".

Doug Haynes

Director, School of Business Information

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