



The Bedford Group of
RoSPA Advanced Drivers and Riders
Members Newsletter
February 2021

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Welcome to the February 2021 issue of the Bedford Group of the
RoSPA Advanced Drivers and Riders Newsletter.

Main topics:

Committee Meeting 26.01.21

RoSPA update

Chairman's Chatter

How to re write a hit – Martin Kidds

View from the East – Simon Burgin Regional coordinator

Snippets

Quiz

Val Jones

February 2021

Committee meeting



A committee meeting was held via Skype on Tuesday 26th January. At the committee meeting it was proposed a virtual General Meeting will be organised. **Details will be circulated once a date and time has been confirmed.**

To remind you of what our committee members look like in these days of isolation they are as follows:

Top row: Martin Kidds our Secretary & Tutor. Rosemary Whittington, Committee Member. (I am in the top right hand corner – News Editor)

Middle row: David Chamberlain- Training Coordinator), David Worgan –Treasurer & Tutor and Alan Freeman- Webmaster

Bottom row: Stan Jones our Chairman & Advanced Tutor and Jenny Holliday –Tutor

RoSPA Update on Tests and Re-tests

From the 3rd November 2020 RoSPA advised that all members in England who had tests booked between the 5th November and December 2nd would have their tests postponed and that an examiner would be in touch to rearrange. Members were advised to still book a test and that the examiner would be in touch after lockdown.

RoSPA advised 5th January 2021 that all tutoring and testing should stop until further notice and that any meetings should take place virtually

The group hopes to resume training and testing again quickly when it is safe to do so.

Members are advised to still go through the booking system for any re tests if they receive their three year reminder. This will ensure members retain their last result and can be booked in for a test as soon as possible post lockdown.

In summary if anyone has a retest due they should still book and an examiner will be in touch when restrictions ease sufficiently

Val Jones News Editor

CHAIRMAN'S CHATTER

So much training has been lost during the last year which is disheartening for both associates and Tutors. Please be assured that as soon as it is safe to commence training again Tutors will contact their associates, I suspect that Tutors will need to re-assess where they pick up the training.

With vaccines now available, and some of us already benefitting, let's hope that we are now at the beginning of the end of restrictions but we will still need to be vigilant and safe.

I have been impressed with the continued support and interest of the committee during this period. It has discussed matters which have had to be held in abeyance but are ready to release the brake once receiving the go ahead from both government and RoSPA.

You will see from Val's notes that we are hoping to arrange a meeting for members on Skype, once a date is fixed, you will all receive an invitation to join the meeting via a link.

Best Regards to you all

Stan Jones

How to rewrite a hit: thoughts on the new Roadcraft

By Martin Kidds

A new decade brings a new edition of Roadcraft: the police driver's handbook, the foundation of police and emergency services driver training, as well as 'civilian' advanced driver tuition as practiced by RoSPA, IAM Roadsmart and others.

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So, seven years on from the previous edition, what's new, what's different and is the new edition any better?

The most striking thing perhaps about the new book is how much has been carried over. The majority of chapters are identical or near identical to the previous edition published in 2013, indeed much of the text and many illustrations made their debut in the 2007 or even earlier editions and survive unaltered. Where there are changes they are often relatively low key - a section added or reordered, paragraphs rearranged in a slightly more logical sequence and a little outdated content lost.

This may be a good thing. Part of the success of Roadcraft is that it represents the accumulated knowledge, research and practice on advanced driving and which is tried and tested and should stand the test of time - why rewrite a hit? Of course the system of car control remains at the heart of the text and continues to be the cornerstone of all that we seek to do to remain safe as drivers. There's a clear need for members and associates having the latest version of the text available for learning - our examiners will expect our knowledge to be up to date when we present for a test - but I do slightly wonder whether the expectation to shell out for an entirely new book every few years represents good value when there are relatively few changes. On the other hand issuing individual updates any other way probably isn't practical, at least in printed form, and it's always nice to have the excitement of a brand new book to replace a well - thumbed copy!

So what has changed for 2020? New vehicle technology and changes in the driving environment continue to influence updates to the text with a new section in chapter 5 on "Regenerative braking" and its effect on use of the accelerator in hybrid and electric vehicles. 'Smart motorways' get a brief mention in chapter 12. There are welcome additions such as a useful new introduction to chapter 9 on positioning and new sections on positioning for the approach to the brow of a hill and pedestrian crossings. There are some minor changes to text in Chapter 10 on cornering and the limit point and expanded coverage of passing stationary vehicles in the next chapter on overtaking.

There are also a couple of interesting additions to chapters 11 and 12 on human factors affecting overtaking and motorway driving. In fact I wonder if it might have been worth expanding these points a little further and integrating them with some of the other material and including similar in some of the other chapters, such as on the system and cornering perhaps. Similarly more perhaps could have been made of the new paragraph added to chapter 3 on "forward planning beyond the next hazard" which is a valuable addition, with driver trainers such as Chris Gilbert urging us to switch our 'eyes on main beam' and look at the

furthest point we can see and work back in our observations rather than the other way round.

One small but significant change in chapter 7 is the removal of the section covering correcting a skid in older vehicles without active safety features. This had already been cut back – you have to go back to the 2007 edition for reference to techniques such as cadence braking. Whilst any RoSPA members who've invested in a classic Rover P6 or Ford Capri may be disappointed this is surely a sensible and inevitable change, given that all mainstream cars now incorporate these features and the chances of a police vehicle not having them fitted are virtually nil. The discussion of the need to prevent possible causes of a loss of control - coarse steering, harsh acceleration and braking, excessive speed - remains as important as ever.

The trend for the volume to expand in size continues, the new one weighing in at 292 pages, compared with 268 for the 2013 version (and a lean 178 pages for the 1997 edition). Despite that the new edition seems actually slightly slimmer than its predecessor, without seeming to be on lower quality paper. Like with our cars themselves, someone at the publishers is clearly working hard to improve efficiency! There is a crisp new look which works well and the book is attractively presented throughout, as before diagrams help illustrate points made in the text effectively.

Will the 2020 Roadcraft be the last printed edition? There is now an online version available for a subscription which may be worth considering in the near future and this may present a more effective way to make updated content available on a rolling basis, rather than having to wait for the printing presses to roll. There is also the potential to access content in new formats such as video and on a smartphone or tablet with the potential advantages that brings, with the important caveat of the need to avoid distractions whilst in control of a vehicle of course.

For now I am glad to have a new edition of Roadcraft on my bookshelves to sit alongside the earlier ones and it does add some important new points which will help us improve our driving and stay safe. Have you purchased the new edition yet and what do you think of it?

Snippets

(Thank you to Martin kids for forwarding this article)

January 31, 2021

A ban on old tyres to begin for buses, coaches and lorries, following eight-year campaign by bereaved mother

The new law comes into force on Monday, after eight years of campaigning by Frances Molloy

A law banning old tyres on buses, coaches and lorries will come into force on Monday following an eight-year campaign by a bereaved mother.

Frances Molloy has been fighting for a change in the law following the death of her son, Michael, 18, in a coach crash as he travelled home to Liverpool from the Bestival music festival on the Isle of Wight in 2012.

An inquest into the crash which also killed 23-year-old Kerry Ogden and coach driver Colin Daulby, 53, established that it was caused by a tyre that was nearly 20 years old.

As of 1 February, Construction and Use Regulations will not allow tyres which are more than 10 years old to be used on the front steered axles of lorries, buses, coaches or for all single wheels fitted to a minibus.

Ms Molloy told BBC *Breakfast* she felt a “sense of relief” after having the legislation rejected by Parliament eight times.

“For me to give up would have felt like I was giving up on Michael because this is the only tiny bit of justice I’m ever going to get for him,” she said.

The Times January 20th 2021

Reckless E – Scooter Rider Caught by Police on M1

A man was stopped by police after riding an e-scooter on a motorway in pitch black and rainy conditions.

South Yorkshire police said it was “a recipe for disaster” after responding to the reports from worried motorists who saw the rider on the M1 near Sheffield in the early hours of Tuesday morning (19th January.)

The force said the 34 year old rider was removed and the uninsured scooter seized. He is due to face court.

The previous day a woman was found guilty of drink driving an e- scooter in what was thought to be the UK’s first case. The named woman was banned from the roads after riding a rental e-scooter through a red light while almost three times over the alcohol limit and narrowly missing an unmarked police car in Newport, Isle of Wight. She was given a community order and a two year driving ban.

The Times: January 20th 2021

Safety Tech covers only 37 miles of Smart Motorway.

Grant Shapps, the transport secretary, demanded the rapid introduction of a radar system which can spot stationary cars on the motorway within 20 seconds. The radar system has been installed on four of the twenty four sections of English motorway with no hard shoulder.

All stretches where the hard shoulder has been stripped out are supposed to have the “stopped vehicle detection” system by March 2023.

Only 13 miles of motorway on the M3 in Surrey have been completed in the last 10 months. 24 miles on the M25 have been installed and work on a stretch of the M20 in Kent is due to start this month

The new radar system is due to cover 350 miles in total over parts of the M1, M4, M5, M6, M23, M27, M56 and M62.

Information snippet from the New Roadcraft.

The New Roadcraft has a short new section on so called “smart motorways” p232. Which uses technology to monitor and manage flow from regional centres. In addition to traditional style of motorway, two newer types of motorway are mentioned:

- All lane running(ALR)- the full width of the road is available to drivers, with emergency refuge at regular intervals
- Controlled motorways- with three or more lanes, a hard shoulder and variable speed limits

Eastern Region Groups' Newsletter

View from the East - January 2021

Here's a copy of the Eastern region Newsletter from Simon Birgin

Hello, and welcome to 2021.

In the news:

Annual Drink Driving Campaign: At the time of writing I do not have the figures for the campaign yet, but watch this space.

Me myself and I – There I was minding my own business...

Always a witness never a victim. Whenever I am delivering driver or rider training this is a mantra I have lived by and tried to instil in others. Always be the very best driver or rider you can be, and if you do that hopefully you will avoid becoming a victim of a collision, and instead a really good witness. Sadly I became such a victim on Sunday 10th January.

I was on duty driving a fully marked BMW X5P 4x4, the largest car on our fleet. I was covering the north of the county in and around Peterborough, I had already dealt with a collision on the A1 motorway and seized a vehicle for no insurance.

As with many late shifts during lockdown by the time it came to 6.30pm the roads were noticeably quieter and there was little movement in the city centre, so I headed out to the Parkway system around Peterborough.

I exited the A1139 dual carriageway via the off slip and drove up the incline to a traffic light controlled roundabout (they had just gone through their phase to red). I was in lane 1 to turn left and there was a gentleman in lane 2 in a Corsa. The BMW auto held on its handbrake, and the engine switched itself off, while we awaited the change of lights.

Suddenly and with no warning there was a tremendous whack to the back of my head (I initially thought I was being attacked) then the car leaped in the air and landed about 5 metres forward of where we had stopped. I do not remember a great deal for several seconds, until a lady appeared at the driver's side window of the Police car saying "I'm so sorry, my brakes failed". I began to regain my composure and tried to get the BMW to reverse out of the roundabout, but little did I know having yet to get out

of the car that the rear axle and wheels were now part of the body work where they had been pushed forwards, and the gearbox was inoperative. As well as hitting the Police Car the lady had also spun and hit the chap in the Corsa next to me, he was fine thankfully, with very minor damage to his car.

Colleagues from the Ambulance Service and of course my own friends on shift that night quickly arrived and all was well, apart from an incredible headache and sore neck and shoulders.

An investigation revealed that the lady lived locally and this was her everyday commute to and from work. The brakes on her BMW were in perfect working order, and a download of her car showed she struck the back of the Police car at 30mph....Ouch.....

What I do not know is why she failed to see the three red traffic lights at the roundabout, the very large and very visible Police car, and the Corsa. I'll leave you all to your own imagination, but I have my own thoughts....suffice to say, when someone tells me they have had a collision and they have 'whiplash' I now fully understand their pain, thankfully mine faded off after just over a week.

Investigations:

Lots of work going on in the background, but with court delays as they are at the moment I have nothing to report.

What's Next?

My snowdrops are up in the garden and the nights are slowly but surely drawing out. The latest announcement for school's return is hopefully 8th March, which I very much hope will be joined by or followed shortly after by an easing of restrictions. As soon as that happens I am confident that RoSPA HQ will authorise driver and rider tutoring and testing to restart. In the mean-time enjoy the online offerings from the groups that have been able to provide inputs, it is not easy but so worthwhile.

Please keep in touch with your group and stay safe.

Simon Birgin

Eastern Region Co-Ordinator

Val Jones - News Editor

Anticipating Hazards at Night

If you are anything like me I have driven very little recently and find night driving quite challenging on the eyes.

I now have to wear glasses for driving which comes to most of us as we get older. Dazzle and bright lights of oncoming lights pose additional hazards hence it can be prudent to invest in anti-glare coating on driving glasses. I certainly find it helpful.

Roadcraft reinforces that the driver should ensure that all windows, mirrors and lenses of lights and indicators are clean to give yourself the best visibility. It is surprising how many drivers you see who have dirty headlamps or bulbs which do not work.

On unlit roads we know to put our headlights on main beam, but need to dip them for other road users.

Short quiz: *(Possible answers will be in the following newsletter- or you can refer to p.68 Roadcraft 2013 or p.70 onwards in the New Roadcraft.)*

1) In what situations should you use dipped headlights?

- a) _____
- b) _____
- c) _____

2) When should you use fog lights?

3) What action should you take when following other vehicles at night?

