



The Bedford Group of
RoSPA Advanced Drivers and Riders

Members Newsletter

March 2020

Visit the Bedford Group of RoSPA Advanced Drivers and Riders at <http://www.roada-bedford.org.uk>

 ROSPA is on Facebook. Join the Facebook Group at: [RoSPA Advanced Drivers and Riders](#)

OFFICERS	
Chairman	Steve Davy chairman@roada-bedford.org.uk
Secretary	Stan Jones 01234 266070 secretary@roada-bedford.org.uk
Treasurer	David Worgan treasurer@roada-bedford.org.uk
Training Officer	(Vacancy)
COMMITTEE MEMBERS	
Training Co-ordinator	David Chamberlain 01525 874436 training@roada-bedford.org.uk
Web Master	Alan Freeman
Other Committee Members	Anne Essen, Tony Glasson, Jenny Holliday and Rosemary Whittington
Newsletter Editor	Val Jones

**Welcome to the March 2020 issue of the Bedford Group of the
RoSPA Advanced Drivers and Riders Newsletter.**

We welcome Benjamin Holmes and Steven Djogo who joined since our last newsletter. At the recent Group Members meeting I volunteered to pick up the mantle of Newsletter Editor following Ian's retirement. For those of you who don't know me I am Stan Jones' wife. You all know of him! At the same meeting I was co-opted onto the committee.

Main topics:

Report on Members' Meeting 20th February

Chairman's Chatter

Secretary's Notes including Effect of Coronavirus

Val Jones

21 March 2020

Chairman's Chatter

Steve Davy

Chairman's Chatter

Welcome to the spring edition of the newsletter. The flowers seem to think it is spring but scraping the ice from the car last week and the heavy rain over the last few weeks, from a driving point of view, it is probably still what we tend to call winter driving. However over the last few years it seems like the summer flooding has been as much as an issue for driving as winter flooding. As the climate changes it will be interesting to see how the predicted hazards of higher temperatures and more rainfall in the UK mean that we have to adapt our approach to driving.

Finland used to require "ice tyres" (rubber tyres with metal spikes) to be used through the winter as they left their roads untreated with ice and snow present all winter. Over the last few years the ice and snow have not been present and their roads have been destroyed by the metal spikes. This winter the law changed to make "winter tyres" (like our summer tyres that most people in the UK use all year round but with a softer rubber compound and different tread pattern) mandatory and ice tyres are only to be used when conditions require. Will we see changes to vehicle requirements as well because of climate change?

We held a very interesting Group Meeting with our Regional Senior Examiner, Tony Gabb, on 20th February. This gave an opportunity Group Members and Associates to ask Tony questions about any aspect of driving and the test procedure. The Committee would be interested to hear feedback from members and associates on how they felt the meeting went, should we arrange more Group meetings like this, what topics you might like to see covered at such meetings. Please do get in touch with me or any of the Committee members.

Finally I would like to express my thanks to Val Jones who has volunteered to be the newsletter editor and to join the Committee. The Committee has co-opted her on to the Committee – with Val's lovely cakes I am not sure though how this will affect the waistline of Committee members. My thanks also for Stan for stepping in so quickly to undertake the Editor's role for the last newsletter.

Keep safe.

Steve

Committee News

Stan Jones (Secretary)

CORONAVIRUS:

Unfortunately we are also affected by the coronavirus. RoSPA have advised that in car training should be postponed, Tutors have been requested to contact their associates. Also no Group meetings should be held, therefore we have postponed the Better Driving Course due to commence in mid-April at Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Training Centre in Kempston. Anyone interested in being advised when we know the date of the next course can contact me. Another cancellation is the committee meeting due to be held on 31st March.

Our AGM due to be held 19th May has not at this stage been postponed as we await developments. Our Treasurer has finalised the end of year accounts to the end of February which have been passed to our auditor.

Another event in which were going to participate cancelled is the Elstow May Festival due to be held on Saturday 2nd May.

I hope the next Newsletter will be much more positive, in the meantime take care of yourselves and drive safely.

Stan Jones

Smart Motorways

1 February 2020

In the last newsletters there were comprehensive reports by various organisations. The Times has reported 'The roll out of smart motorways has been suspended pending the outcome of a safety review, the transport secretary has said'.

Article in the Times dated Friday 13th March

"Safe" smart motorways get a £700m Overhaul

Grant Shapps the transport secretary announced an 18-point improvement plan after admitting he was "greatly concerned" by the numbers of fatal accidents.

"So called dynamic stretches, where the hard shoulder can be turned on or off, would be abolished because they confused motorists, he said. More than 60 miles will be converted into "all-lane running stretches, where the hard shoulder is permanently removed within five years. This includes parts of the M1, M4, M5, M6, M42 and M62.

Highways England will install dozens of extra lay-bys to allow vehicles to pull off the road in an emergency. The maximum gap between them will be cut from 1.5 miles to a mile. They will be a three quarter mile apart where feasible.”

RoSPA Road Safety Tweets

Jan 7 2020- Law change: Driving in a closed Smart Motorway lane which is shown by a red X will cost you £100 and 3 penalty points

Jan 9_ Make sure your windscreen is kept clean. At sunrise and sunset, light reflecting off a dirty windscreen can make it very difficult to see what is going on around you.

GROUP MEMBERS' MEETING

Group Members meeting 20th February

“Meet and Mingle”

The meeting was held at the Training Centre at the Headquarters of Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Centre, Southfields Road, Kempston.

The venue affords excellent facilities.

Steve Davy, our chairman opened the meeting thanking the Fire Service for the room which they had supplied free of charge. Much “meeting and mingling was accompanied” by cake and refreshments in a convivial atmosphere. The group hadn't met for some time so it provided a good opportunity to catch up on forthcoming events.

Tony Gabb: Rospa's Regional Senior examiner answered questions relating to the test experience. A question was asked if there was any differences in test between manual and automatic vehicles. Tony drew attention to the use of kick down, sports mode and tectronic systems. He stressed the important factor is driving safely and following the system of car control regardless whether the car is manual, automatic or indeed electric. He has noted an increase in tests carried out in automatic cars and anticipates tests in electric cars will increase as the market changes.

Tony gave details on the area he presently covers. He oversees 30 examiners in Bedfordshire, Northamptonshire, London down to Potters Bar Suffolk, and Norfolk.

He informed the group that he has plans to move on and his post has been advertised.

Tony noted a trend in an increase in the number of tests during the months of March April and May. All examiners aim to make the person taking the test feel at ease. He invited members taking a test to feed back any positives or concerns as it is difficult for the person in his position to gain an overview of all the examiners and experiences of those taking the test. He acknowledged disappointment from some members who “achieved only a bronze.” He

noted Bronze is still a good standard and much better than many drivers on the road.

Whether one should cross the line in the middle of the road to straighten a bend was discussed (Tony pointed out clearly this does not mean a continuous solid white line as this is never permissible- exceptions in The Highway Code). The conclusion was that safety again is the key and ultimately down to the experience of the advanced driver. It may be prudent to check the examiners stance on the subject before taking your test as different views remain!

The final series of questions related to driver aids and safety features on modern vehicles e.g. driver assist. The car handbook will describe the safety features, but Tony suggested looking at u tube video clips may help drives.
