



RoSPA Advanced Drivers and Riders North Wiltshire Group

www.northwiltroadar.co.uk



Patron: Her Majesty the Queen

Newsletter

May 2013

Secretary:

Mrs. Monica Graham
114 Marines Drive
Faringdon, Oxon. SN7 7UG
Tel: 01367 242377
secretary@northwiltroadar.co.uk

Dates for Your Diary

Monthly meetings are all held at
Liddington Village Hall opposite the
church.

Monday 10th June

Meeting: Andy Poulton, RoADAR
Examiner

Saturday 15th June

Monthly ride out

Friday 21st – Sunday 23rd June

Bikers' North Wales trip

Sunday 23rd June

Swindon Street Cruise, Queens Park,
Swindon

Saturday 29th June

Strawberries and Steam Festival,
Wanborough

Saturday 27th July

Calne Bike Event

Sunday 8th September

Emergency Services Show

**Do you have a topic you would like
discussed, or know of an interesting
speaker? Please contact Monica!**

WELCOME

Welcome to the following members who
have all recently joined the group:

David Griffiths (bike)

Jezz Dillon (bike)

John McKellar (bike)

Pauline Sawyer (car)

The Group now has an eye-catching red pop-up gazebo to aid in advertising our presence at shows where the large marquee is impractical or simply too hard to transport and erect. If you are attending an event to promote the Group, you are welcome to use the gazebo if you would like to. It's not suitable for events where there may be strong winds, but is waterproof and very easy to put up.



Forthcoming Meetings

Monday 10th June, 7:15pm for 7:45: Andy Poulton, a RoADAR Car Examiner will be our speaker.

Monday 8th July, 7:15pm for 7:45: Speaker TBA.

Merchandise

Due to the group's forthcoming name change, we need to sell off our existing stock of North Wiltshire RoADAR branded clothing. We have therefore reduced the prices on some of our existing stock, for example Polo Shirts are now available for just £2.50! See the merchandise page of our web site for more details.

www.northwiltsroadar.co.uk

Events

Sunday 23rd June, 10:30am – 4:00pm: Swindon Street Cruise, Queens Park, Swindon

Saturday 29th June, 10:00am – 5:00pm: Strawberries and Steam Festival, Lower Wanborough near Swindon

Saturday 27th July 9:00am – 5:00pm: Calne Bike Event

Sunday 8th September: Emergency Services Show

Help required. We are hoping to promote the group at the above events. If you can lend a hand on any of these days please contact Monica.

Bike Ride-outs: Don't forget that regular Bike Ride-outs take place on the **3rd Saturday of each month**. The next ride-out will take place on the **15th June** when Steve Hyde will lead us on a trip to the Severn Valley Railway.

Skillshare

SkillShare is a free ride assessment for any motorcycle rider who would like a chance to find out more about advanced riding. It is primarily a recruiting initiative with the dual purpose of raising the group's profile within the motorcycle community and attracting potential members. Any rider can turn up, without the need to book. They will receive a free BikeSafe style ride assessment with a qualified RoSPA Approved Tutor. Our next SkillShare is on **June 1st** (and the following one on the **July 6th**). Please support the event by helping to publicise it on forums and through distributing posters and encourage your friends to come along for a free assessment. The event is at the Divine Cafe in Cherhill and more details can be found on the web site forum.

Wales Weekend

Our North Wales trip is on the **21st to 23rd June**. Contact Julian if you want to come along. More details are on the web site forum.

Group Area Panel (GAP) Meeting, 27th April 2013

Monica and Nick attended this on behalf of our Group. The meeting was held just North of Bedford and was attended by the following groups: Wiltshire, Home Counties South, Thames Valley, Bedford, Suffolk (motorcyclists), Kent, and by Bob Smalley and Amy Brant from RoADAR HQ.

The GAP representative, Dave Thompson from the Thames Valley group, opened the meeting and explained that it had been some years since the last GAP meeting, longer for some groups than others due to the reorganisation of the GAP areas (more of this later). His area covered from Wiltshire to The Wash, a huge area which made it difficult to visit all groups. Wiltshire had for one reason or another “fallen off the radar”, so in our case the time since the last meeting was even greater than most.

There followed a presentation by Bob Smalley and a group working session aimed at updating groups on the latest moves at HQ and obtaining feedback from groups as to their needs and desires from HQ. Some notable points that emerged were:

- The adoption of an electronic booking system for tests. This has made the system much more efficient, with very fast turnaround times possible between booking and test. The record so far being 4 days from receipt of booking to posting the test report to the candidate. Eventually this will be open to groups. A lively debate took place about access to members’ data which currently is considered to be impossible due to Data Protection rules, but this will be revisited.
- Members will be reminded electronically when their retests are due. Several options were discussed about how to encourage them to take refresher training at this time, including referring them to their local group or offering them a session (for a fee) with an examiner. Groups were very keen that they be kept in the loop for this.
- Roadcraft (both car and bike versions) has been revised and is due for publication in August. Groups were encouraged not to buy any more of the current edition once stocks were used up.
- The Group guidelines have been re-published and are on the RoADAR website. Another revision is due soon and groups will be notified.
- A number of other advice sheets are available but are on the main RoSPA website and need linking to the RoADAR site. This will be looked into.
- There is no plan to change the current test grading structure although other potential additions to the portfolio are being considered such as an assessment booked with an examiner for a reasonable fee.

Glen Mures was then introduced as a new GAP representative for East Anglia. This will reduce the size of the area covered by Dave Thompson making it easier to manage. Everyone welcomed this development.

The HQ representatives left the meeting and Dave Thompson made a few closing remarks. There was very positive feedback about the meeting and a strong feeling that they should be more frequent. Dave agreed to endeavour to make this happen and also undertook to summarise the meeting outcomes and distribute them. He will reinstate his "GAP News" with updates from HQ meetings.

Overall an enjoyable day, if quite a long drive!

Nick Carrington

CONGRATULATIONS!

Congratulations to **Keith Johnston** who recently passed his Advanced Bike Test with a Gold grade. His Tutor was **Mike Southgate**.

Congratulations also to **Stephen Wilkinson-Carr** and **Lisa Wilcox** who both recently passed their Advanced Tutor (Bike) Tests, and also to **Steven Hyde** who recently qualified as an Approved Bike Tutor.



May Meeting Report:

Wiltshire Police Driving School, Devizes

What a great evening and what a good turnout of both bikers and drivers! I think we owe a big vote of thanks to Monica for her perseverance in getting this event organised.

I have to say we were made most welcome. However, we were ushered into the driving school past a grisly display of past and present handcuffs and truncheons, which served to remind us of the law enforcement nature of the work these guys do on a daily basis. There was also some banter about an officer being despatched to check our cars downstairs in the police car park. A few nervous laughs ensued. I am sure we all had more than 1.6mm depth across $\frac{3}{4}$ of our tyres, but it did reinforce the need for those regular POWDER checks.

Bob Ward is the manager of the driving school and he explained that they run a wide range of police courses at all levels up to advanced, plus various other emergency service courses, and specialised VIP protection.

It was interesting to note the level of accountability that Police Drivers are subject to. Bob passed around copies of the Student Manual that is filled in at every stage of the four week standard course. This document is kept on file throughout the career of the officer concerned and is revisited in the event of any motoring incident.

The school has seven instructors and Bob handed over to the newly qualified Mike Mansell who gave a very interesting presentation on ESP (Electronic Stability Programmes). The system was developed by BOSCH in the mid 90's and was first used on the Mercedes S Class and BMW 7 Series.

We discussed the causes of a skid:

1. Harsh or Coarse Steering – reducing the tyre contact area.
2. Excessive or Sudden Braking – wheels lock up.
3. Excessive Acceleration – the nose comes up and front tyre contact is reduced.
4. Driving too fast for the circumstances.

We also discussed the effects of Understeer and Oversteer:

Understeer is known as 'The Killer Skid' due to the fact that you have no control over the front wheels. This can take the vehicle into the opposing carriageway with dire consequences.

Oversteer brings the back around, causing the vehicle to turn faster than the driver intended.

It was interesting to note that the Police Driving School no longer uses the Skidpan. Modern ESP and ABS systems are considered to be far superior to human intervention, and drivers are taught to drive within the capabilities of the vehicle and the road conditions.

The session was rounded off with a BOSCH video dealing with the technicalities of ESP. When the road wheels are travelling faster or slower than the speed the car, the vehicle is effectively out of control. Put simply, ESP is a monitoring system based around individual wheel sensors and a central yaw sensor. When it detects loss of steering control, it automatically applies the brakes to help steer the vehicle where the driver wanted to go. The outer front wheel is braked to counter Oversteer and the inner rear wheel is braked to counter Understeer, some systems also reduce engine power until control is regained.

The next session 'Response Driving', was given by Chris Moore, he previously worked on the Serious Accident Team. Although civilians are not going to be involved in response work it helps understand what is involved, both in terms of personal safety and by assisting the emergency services when responding to an incident. In fact the new edition of Roadcraft, due out in August, will have a section on response driving.

A great deal of emphasis is put on the state of mind required for fast driving. A positive attitude is required, i.e. calm and restrained. Police drivers are taught to avoid a negative attitude, which may be brought on by stress, pre-duty build up, fatigue etc.

There are four legal exemptions that apply to Police Officers driving in the course of their duties:

1. Speed Limits
2. Traffic Lights (10 mph max through traffic lights)
3. Traffic Signs
4. Keep Left/Right Bollards

A general rule for Police drivers is to hang back to create a safety bubble around the vehicle. Watch for signs that other drivers have become aware of the presence of the emergency vehicle.

The presentation was followed by a video from a camera mounted on a police vehicle with the driver undergoing training in response mode. This was very informative and underlined what these drivers have to cope with on a day to day basis, particularly in terms of the unpredictable reaction of other drivers to lights and sirens.

This was brought home to me the following morning on my way to Salisbury. I became aware of an Ambulance some distance behind me. It was gaining on me, so I increased the pace until I came to a layby to let it past safely. I was now following,

and we soon caught up with two vehicles. The driver of the first one brought his vehicle to a complete halt just before the brow of a hill, leaving the driver of the Ambulance completely unsighted. Fortunately a lorry driver coming in the opposite direction read the situation and brought the oncoming traffic to a halt so the Ambulance could make safe progress. I suppose the car driver thought he was being helpful.

The final session covered motorway driving and took the form of a Motorway Quiz. For those of us, including me, who didn't know:

MIDAS means

- Motorway
- Incident
- Detection
- Automatic
- Signalling

ERT's means

- Emergency
- Roadside
- Telephones

VMS means

- Variable
- Message
- Signs

Altogether a very worthwhile evening and we were even invited to the police bar afterwards for a pint of ORANGE JUICE!!!

Peter Emmerson