



RoSPA Advanced Drivers and Riders North Wiltshire Group

www.northwiltroadar.co.uk



Patron: Her Majesty the Queen

Newsletter

October 2012

Secretary:

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Dates for Your Diary

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

Monday 12th November

Meeting: Martin Evans, Wheels, Skills
and Thrills project

Monday 10th December

Meeting: Jonathan Glover, Swift Medics

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

AGM

Many thanks to those of you who attended the recent AGM. It was good to see such a good turnout despite the dreadful weather. Thank you for making the effort to come along and support the group. The following members were elected onto the committee:

Chairman: Nick Carrington

Secretary: Monica Graham

Treasurer: Mike Southgate

Bike Training Officer: Julian Burton

Bike Co-ordinator: Julian Burton (on a temporary basis). *We are looking for someone to take on this role. It is not too time consuming. When new associates join the co-ordinator allocates them to an available tutor and maintains records of progress. Ideally the co-ordinator attends the monthly committee meetings, but we understand that this may not always be possible, particularly if you live some distance away.*

Car Training Officer: Andrew Horton

Car Co-ordinator: Peter Emmerson

Committee Members: Geoff Sumerling, Kevin Hugo, Mark Sealey

We would still like some more volunteers to join the committee. Meetings are held on the 3rd Wednesday of each month, 7.30pm at Liddington Village Hall in the committee room upstairs. They last as short a time as possible. We realise that it is not possible for everyone to attend every meeting, but we are getting low on committee members due to work and other commitments. So if you live within a reasonable distance of Liddington, please think about helping out. The more help we have the less there is for others to do. Contact Monica if you'd like to help out.

Forthcoming Meetings

Monday 12th November, 7:15pm for 7:45: Martin Evans from the Wheels, Skills and Thrills project will be our speaker. This project aimed to improve the driving standards of males aged under 25 from disadvantaged areas of Bristol. We are sure this will be a very interesting evening so hope you can come along.

Monday 10th December, 7:15pm for 7:45: Jonathan Glover from Swift Medics, a registered charity providing pre-hospital emergency care in Wiltshire, will be our speaker.

Events

Bike Ride-outs: Don't forget that regular Bike Ride-outs take place on the **3rd Saturday of each month.**

Friday 11th January 2013, 8:00pm: Christmas/New Year meal: See below.



Renewals

You should have received your membership renewal form with notice of the AGM. If you joined the group **before** January 2012 you need to renew your membership and complete the form please. The renewal fee is £14 which can be paid by Bank Transfer or by cheque. The form must also be filled in and returned to Monica, either by post or email.

If you have not renewed by 16th November your details will be deleted from our records and you will no longer belong to the group. Associate members who have not renewed will not be able to continue with their rides or drives and Tutors who have not renewed will not be able to continue tutoring.



January Christmas/New Year Meal

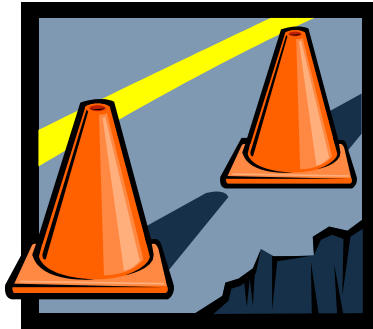


This year's Christmas/New Year Meal will be on Friday 11th January 8pm at the Oriental Buffet restaurant at Pepperbox Hill, Meadway, Peatmoor, West Swindon.

The price is £12,50 for a buffet menu which includes starter, main course and pudding.

They will do a grilled steak and salad if you would rather have that. Please let me know if you would prefer this when booking your space, by email to secretary@northwiltsroadar.co.uk.

Payment of £12.50 must be received by Friday 21st of December. Please can you pay by bank transfer using the following account details or send a cheque made payable to North Wilts Roadar to my address on the top of this newsletter. Sort Code 20-84-58 Account Number 80006998. Please add your name and "xmas meal" as the reference.



October Meeting Report:

Matt Holmes, Highways Agency

The Highways Agency is responsible for the strategic road network in England. This consists of the motorway network and the major trunk roads. Other roads are managed by local authorities.

One Friday evening, there was a snow event which caused significant congestion. The Highways Agency (HA) offices were empty, so the emergency services were left to deal with coordination and resolution of the resulting congestions. This prompted questions about the role of the HA and if it was appropriate that the emergency services were managing traffic. It was also recognised that traffic is growing, congestion is increasing and there is no significant new road build programme. As a result, 7 years ago the Traffic Officer Service (TOS) was created with a brief to manage traffic flow. This would have the benefit that police resources could be released to focus on crime related duties.

The TOS is an England only service with seven regional control centres. We in Wiltshire are part of the SW region which employs just over one

thousand officers and covers all motorway routes and one trunk road (A38 Devon). The TOS has a target to reach an incident in twenty minutes maximum. However the staff will be allocated to manage traffic “out of area” if needed, for example during the Olympics in London and during the Gloucestershire flooding.

The officers are coordinated from the control centre. The control centre also operates the signs and signals above the motorway to alert drivers to potential danger. Sometimes a reported hazard cannot be pinned down very accurately at first and this leads to the scenario where the 50mph advisory signals appear to be on for a long distance with no apparent danger.

In a three month period this summer, the SW region dealt with 2,600 incidents including 925 breakdowns, 910 debris incidents and 300 damage only road traffic collisions.

Amongst other services they perform is the high wind filtering scheme. The old Severn Crossing becomes dangerous in high winds. Sometimes it has to be closed and traffic diverted over the new bridge. At other times,

cars are allowed to cross but motorcycles and lorries are diverted.

The TOS has very few legal powers and concessions although they do have a concession with regard to the use of the hard shoulder in order to access and resolve incidents.

The TOS has the responsibility and authority to stop and direct traffic. Where an air ambulance is called, this requires traffic to be stopped in both directions. The TOS can also recover a vehicle; there is a 2 hour limit on motorway hard shoulder for a vehicle to be recovered. The HA has powers to move broken down vehicles exceeding this time or in relation to abandoned vehicles.

The HA also employ Incident Support Units (contractors) wearing the H.A badge. These are deployed to sort large incidents e.g. road repairs following a major incident.

The officers receive training in interpersonal skills and on traffic management. Training does not involve an advanced driver training session. This may be surprising as some HA patrol vehicles do a quarter of a million miles in 18 months.

Tragically, the TOS lost their first officer recently. Following an incident where a vehicle had been recovered from the central reservation to the hard shoulder, an officer was struck by an out of control car. Matt emphasised the importance of never sitting in a broken down car on the hard shoulder - get out and away from vehicle.

A very interesting talk followed by a rummage through his vehicle to look at the variety of equipment that they carry. Very interesting – Thanks Matt.

Mark Sealey

WELCOME!

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

Alex Cross (car)

Bryan Davis (bike)

CONGRATULATIONS!

Congratulations to **Mike Ashton** who recently passed his car test with a silver grade. His tutor was **Gerry Tierney**.



Bike Ride Outs 2012

The details for the November and December ride outs have now changed from those previously advertised. Details are now as follows:

Date	Lead	Grade	Destination/Start Point/Start Time
17 th November 2012	Stephen Wilkinson-Carr	P	Compton Abbass, then Cheddar. Start Little Chef, Chippenham. 9:30 start
15 th December 2012	Andrew	R	Going for gold (postboxes) Start Little Chef Chippenham, 9:30 start

Full details for these ride outs are available on the Motorcycle forum pages at www.northwiltsroadar.co.uk.

Bike Ride Outs 2013

The 2013 calendar is now under development. Please let us know if you can lead a full or half day ride next year.

