



## Newsletter of The Kent RoSPA Advanced Drivers Group

December 2009

Hello!

....and welcome to our latest newsletter. It's very nearly Christmas, where did this year go? As winters draw on, I have included some tips to help prepare for the expected and *unexpected* joys of driving in the winter.

We also welcome our new committee members and wish them all the best in their new roles. Please note all contact details are available on the group's website <http://www.kentrospa.org.uk/>

Best wishes for a peaceful Christmas and a prosperous new year!

Editor

Please take care of our diminishing hedgehog population!





## WINTER DRIVING CHECKLIST

### Prepare your vehicle

#### Service

Antifreeze tested

All lights clean and working.

Battery check

Windscreen and windows clean

Washer topped up and with the correct mix to ensure the contents don't freeze up.

### Carry rescue equipment

tow rope

spare bulbs

spare fuel

shovel

hazard warning triangle or similar

spare wheel (with tyre at correct

pressure and tread)

high visibility jacket

jump leads

emergency tyre weld (for temporary  
'low speed' repair)

wellington boots or similar

de-icing equipment

first aid equipment (in good order)

working torch

car blanket

fire extinguisher (fully operative)

### Plan your journey by checking:

Weather forecast

Heed any adverse travel warnings

Understand the hazards

Consider the safest route

For further advice please refer to

<http://www.rospea.com/drivertraining/winter/>

Whilst on the subject of winter driving, I was pleased to receive the following report by one of our associates, Marianne Cassidy.

### **Skid Pan Training – Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> September 2009**

It was a grey September morning in Maidstone but at the Kent Police Training School six drivers (a mixture of RoSPA members, associates and guest) were battling the inclement conditions of ice and snow on the skidpan. What a rewarding experience it was too. A must for any driver who like me has never experienced a full blown rear wheel skid. I immediately realised that just a touch too much speed on the turn sent the car pirouetting round like a spinning top. Luckily by the end of the session with Paul Berry's helpful tuition we had all learned to drive in a figure of eight with reasonable control using a combination of careful steering and gentle control of the gas, which was very rewarding.

Fun though it was, it is a sobering thought to imagine that happening out on the road. I was surprised at how quickly the control is lost and if the speed is too fast it cannot be regained. My 20-year-old daughter came along with me and I know she benefited greatly. Three years ago (just after passing her test) she had a nasty skid experience on Maidstone Bridge. After her skid pan training she recognised the reason it had happened was because she had driven too fast for the freezing black ice conditions on the bridge. I know resources are not available but I can't help thinking that this sort of training would be so invaluable for all young drivers, simply because they get the chance to experience what can happen.

I was apprehensive about doing the skidpan training, but I thoroughly enjoyed it and now feel that I am much better prepared should I find myself in a skid situation. I will certainly do the intermediate and advanced sessions. I would like to thank RoSPA for giving me the opportunity to do it and would recommend it to anybody who has not yet given it a go.

Marianne Cassidy

Many thanks to Marianne for her feedback. We will be running further sessions in the next 12 months, please let us know if you would like more information.



### **Some recent articles in the news** (courtesy of Daily Mail and Telegraph)

“Elderly drivers should have to retake the driving test” Says Sir Stirling Moss. He believes they should be re-examined after their 70<sup>th</sup>, 75<sup>th</sup> and 80<sup>th</sup> Birthdays.

There are more than 3 million drivers over the age of 70 on british roads and the total is expected to reach 4.5 million in the next 5 years.

However, official figures show that this group of road users are no more likely to cause accidents than those of any other age group.

Sir Stirling Moss has fallen foul of traffic regulations on several occasions. He was fined and Banned in 1960 following a head-on collision. In 1971, he was fined for making an explicit gesture as he overtook an off duty policeman. He was fined for speeding on the M6 and in 1989 he was fined for driving too slowly on the M4- after straying on to it on his 50cc moped!

### **Late Learner**

On 9<sup>th</sup> November 2009, a 68 year old woman in Seoul, South Korea has passed her driving test on her 950<sup>th</sup> try! The bad news is, is that was just the written test. Cha Sa-Soon passed on the minimum 60 out of 100 points needed and spent 5 million Won ( over £2500) doing it. She should give Maureen a call!

STOP PRESS: She went on to pass the practical- Its never too late!



### **November 2009 Group Meeting event**

We had a very interesting talk on potholes and more given by by George Chandler (of Kent County Council and Rospa Tutor)

George told us how in an earlier life he was part of the team that developed the speed hump, surprisingly at this point everyone managed to stay in their seat!

The presentation was very informative and covered the types of road surface and the choices made being affected by the geology of the base of the road, the usage by volume and type of traffic. Also the history of the existing roads.

Have you ever noticed there are not many North-South Roads in Kent? From the Romans to the Pig Farmers to the Channel Tunnel and the Channel ports, all have an effect on how our roads came about.

We also discussed how roads deteriorate and why... and went on to road designs. Looking at the new Ashford town centre arrangement were the roads melt into the pavements or vice versa?

The conclusion appears to be that it is a constant battle of trucks, the elements and budgetary constraints that affect the quality of our road surfaces.

The weekend after this talk, one of my learner drivers managed to hit a Kent pothole and I am now very familiar with the procedure for reporting them!



### Funny side of Driving

After a car crash one of the drivers is lying injured at the side of the road. 'Don't worry,' said a policeman, a Red Cross nurse is coming to attend to you.'  
Oh no,' groaned the victim, 'couldn't I have a blonde, cheerful one?'

What do you do if you see a spaceman?  
Park your car in it man

There was once a small snail who always dreamed of becoming a race-car driver. One day he heard that an uncle of his had died and left him some money! Now his dream could be realized! He bought himself a car, souped it up, and then painted a large red "S" on it. When he was at his first race, a friend of his asked him why he had painted the big red "S" on the car? Simple, the snail replied when people see my car go zooming down the, track I want them all to exclaim: Oh look!! See the S car go!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

If you don't like these jokes and would like more content please contact the editor with things you would like to read more about!



***Happy Christmas Everybody!!!!***

**The next newsletter will be published on 1<sup>st</sup> March all contributions welcome!  
Deadline for inclusion- 21 February 2010.**