



## Sussex Advanced Drivers – Newsletter

### Autumn 2022

#### Editor's Excuses

Welcome to the Autumn 2022 edition of the Newsletter, a little later than planned and I take full responsibility for that. We are still seeking a permanent Newsletter editor so Committee Members are taking turns at being the interim editor, and this time I did not manage to avoid it.

In this edition you will find some informative articles from Graham Feest, FInstMDT FARRM who also gave a fascinating talk to our group back in May. We welcome articles from any of our members for this quarterly newsletter. Our Group Secretary has an important message for the future of our group.

Having just about survived the hottest summer on record, we are now heading for winter, extreme temperatures take it out of us frail human beings but also affect our vehicles. With the current cost of living crisis there are many amongst us who are juggling priorities with our dwindling finances, although if anyone has found a legal and moral savings scheme to beat double-digit inflation then please do share it. However, back to motoring, regular car servicing and breakdown cover are some of the items suffering from cut-backs although they are also vital factors in road safety, but now I'm preaching to the converted. Just bear in mind that other drivers may not take the same view as Advanced Drivers so as Jerry Springer used to say at the end of his TV show "Take care of yourself ... and each other".

Matt Porterfield, Treasurer and Temporary Deputy Assistant Editor.

#### Chairman's Chatter

Well, we are fast entering Autumn, I hope you all had a good summer. Some of the Committee have attended some recent events where we were invited to attach ourselves to the Sussex Safer Road stands. We had some people interested in knowing more about our group. I took one lady for a taster run but she was busy with other events so declined to continue further.

As the nights get longer it is time to check lights are all working. Do not forget the number plate lights. If they are not, you could be fined.

Our next group meeting is next month, no doubt Margret will give further details in her report. Otherwise, things have been quiet

See you all soon,

Best Wishes

Anthony Platts, Chairman

## **Group Secretary's Gossip:**

Hi All,

Have you had a good summer? Was it too hot for your liking? And too dry? Maybe you enjoyed the freedom of a foreign holiday?

With the children going back to school it is back to the old routine again. Which will also include some meetings we have been able to arrange for our members, the next one on Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> November (7.30 for an 8pm start). Hope to see you there.

Sadly as a side effect of Covid and the long enforced closure we have lost some of our members and are now busy recruiting. We have been invited to team up with the Sussex Safer Roads Partnership (SSRP) and have a shared stand at some local shows. At the beginning of June they joined us at the Rustington Charity Street Fair and in August I was at their stand at the village fair in Wisborough Green. More joint ventures are planned. Apart from information we are offering free assessment drives at these shows in the hope of converting these into advanced driving tutoring sessions and maybe new members.

We need more members to support our work but – even more so – we need an active committee to direct and support our efforts. Members of the current committee have been in their roles for up to 15 years, they feel it is time to retire and pursue some of their other interests. As an example, by the next AGM I will have been the Group Secretary for 5 years, I will be 85 years old, and I want to devote more time to my photography. I will stand back from the committee. As will several of my colleagues.

What does this mean? RoSPA requires all groups to have a Group Secretary (like me) and a Chairman (like Anthony) as their points of contact, together with a supporting committee. I have definitely decided to stand down at the AGM next year, and Anthony is also considering it (as are some others). WHO IS GOING TO REPLACE US? Neither job is hard, it needs someone who can give a little time and enjoy the satisfaction of doing something for the common good.

I very much fear that after the AGM in May next year there will no longer be a Sussex Advanced Drivers Group and with that all the work that has gone into this group over the years will have been for nothing. Please don't let happen.

**If you are even a little interested, come and talk to us, see what it is all about; we will happily explain and, if you are interested, help you find your feet.**

Margret Preece, Group Secretary

Are you sweating whilst putting fuel in your car; feeling sick when paying?  
You have got the  
carownervirus

## **IDLING (from Traffic Safety Roads, a free newsletter by The Graham Feest Consultancy)**

Recent research has revealed that more than 20% of drivers admit to regularly leaving their engines running while their vehicle is stationary despite the impact this has on air quality. The work conducted by CWC Environmental for Idling Action London found that 78% of respondents usually or always switch off the engine when parked or pulled over. However, this leaves 22% of drivers who admit to regularly idling their engines. The research published to coincide with National Clean Air Day also revealed that 5-10% of drivers surveyed have stop-start technology but have chosen to disable it with the most common reasons for doing so being that they worry it might wear out the battery or that they find it annoying.

*(Ed: If the survey was to concentrate on commercial vans and lorries, I suspect these figures would be a vast understatement).*

## **HAZOFF Campaign (by the Editor)**

Make Hazard Lights History



[www.hazardsoff.org.uk](http://www.hazardsoff.org.uk)



Glastonbury Festival sign

I wonder if other members of our group know about this campaign as it is now some 10 years old. As a regular volunteer driver at charity events I find myself entering construction sites and event sites driving everything from a car to a 7.5-ton lorry. In line with current safety rules I do not immediately switch on my hazard lights, although I do ensure my headlights are on, then I am able to use my indicators as normal to let other site users know where I am heading. I am still amazed by the number of professional drivers who are unaware of the advice although this may be due to undergoing training before the rules were changed. If you get a chance, promote it for safety's sake.

## **LESS JOURNEYS BY CAR (another from Traffic Safety Roads)**

It would seem that the impact on the high cost of fuel is making people think more carefully about the journeys they make as nearly half (48%) of UK adults say they are using less motor fuel than a year ago according to the finding of a new survey conducted by Aviva and I would suggest that this is not because they are driving more slowly or smoothly. The aim of the government to have more of the shorter journeys made by means other than the car seems to be occurring, not perhaps for the reasons of persuasion they would like to have anticipated but more linked to cost.

*Ed: Note to the new PM – make rail fares cheaper and easier to understand and you will see a big drop in car journeys)*

## From RAC Newsletter

Whether you are a new driver or have been on the road for forty years, there are bound to be some driving habits that annoy you. Here's what one motoring journalist classes as her ... most annoying driving habits, see if you agree with them.....

*I have omitted a few of the points as they did not seem relevant, certainly not for advanced drivers. Those remaining are some of the more common niggles.*

*What are the driving habits that annoy you the most? Let us know and we will include them in the next newsletter; could make interesting reading.*

### **1. Middle-lane hogging**

Despite police pledges to prosecute middle-lane drivers, nothing has changed.....

More police please, for a proper clampdown on one of the most dangerous, arrogant, stupid habits.

### **2. Taking up two parking spaces**

Simple rule here: when you get out of the car, look at it before you walk away. Not sitting between two white lines? Move it, buster.

### **3. Stopping people zip merging**

Zip Merging is safe, sensible and recommended by the Highway Code. It is NOT pushing in. It is keeping the flow of slow traffic moving.

You think by blocking zip mergers you're doing the right thing morally. You're wrong.

### **4. Changing lanes in slow-moving traffic**

You might think this is saving you time and advancing you up the queue, but science has shown you don't reach your destination any quicker than those who stay in the same lane. You merely impede the flow.

### **5. Queuing for right-hand fuel pumps**

The vast majority of pumps will reach across a car, so it doesn't matter which side you pull up to refuel, as long as you park nice and close. Please just pick the empty one.

### **6. Braking for average speed cameras**

Did you miss the part of the sign that says "average"? That means they've been clocking your speed over the distance since the last camera, or over several cameras, so driving 20mph above the limit then braking for the camera is not going to work, my friend.

### **7. Driving below the speed limit**

Dangerous. While I would never encourage anyone to speed up unnecessarily or drive dangerously, if you are driving 30mph in a 50mph zone for no logical reason, then speed up.

Look in your rear-view mirror. See that build-up of traffic behind you?

### **8. Not letting another vehicle turn right**

To quote the New Radicals, you get what you give. Let someone waiting to turn right across your lane do so next time. It'll delay you for, oh, maybe 10 seconds, and the driver's wave of appreciation will warm the cockles of your heart.

## **10 driving offences you didn't know were illegal** (or did you?)

Many driving offences are clearly defined. If you drive at a speed faster than the limit on a particular road, you're breaking the law. If you cross a solid white line to overtake another car, you're committing an offence.

But there are other driving offences you didn't know were illegal - some of us may regularly commit them without even realising.

Here are 10 ways you can break the law perhaps without being aware you're doing so. Watch for them and make sure you don't commit them.

### **1. Sleeping while inebriated in your car**

If you've had too much to drink, you quite rightly won't consider driving.

But if you've got nowhere else to stay, you might consider sleeping in the car instead, at least until you've sobered up.

However, in doing so, you could leave yourself open to a drunk in charge fine.

The law states that those in charge of a motor vehicle should not be inebriated. This is not overly specific and while you could argue that being asleep means you are not necessarily 'in charge' of the vehicle, the police can (and historically have) used this as an excuse to charge people with a driving offence.

### **2. Flashing your lights to give way**

Many of us will commonly use them to allow other drivers through gaps, but this technically could be considered a driving offence if an accident resulted from it.

Headlight flashes should only be used to warn drivers of your presence on the road.

Simply put, it's open to misinterpretation (particularly as it means different things in other countries), so think carefully before you reach for the beams.

### **3. Overtaking at a pedestrian crossing**

Coming up to a pedestrian crossing on a multi-lane road? Is there a car already stationary there? If the lights then change to green, do not use your extra momentum to zip past the stationary car - this is illegal.

You must not overtake the car nearest to the pedestrian crossing. Why? Because their vehicle may be concealing a pedestrian already on the crossing.

### **4. Letting animals out of the car while broken-down on the hard shoulder**

**The Highway Code clearly states that you must leave any animals in a broken down vehicle when stranded on the hard shoulder.**

Only in an emergency should you consider letting them out - if you don't obey this and an accident is caused by your animal on the hard shoulder, you could face a driving offence charge.

### **5. Parking on the wrong side of the road at night**

Motorists should not park on the wrong side of the road at night.

This is not, as some may think, because you have to drive on the opposite side of the road both to enter and leave the space, actually it's because of the risks dazzling.

You'll both dazzle other drivers with your headlights as you park and leave, while your rear light reflectors will also not be visible once you've left the car.

This is a driving offence under rule 248 of the Highway Code and can receive a Penalty Charge Notice.

## **6. Using your mobile phone as a sat nav in an unfixd position**

The mobile phone law specifically refers to using your phone as a sat nav, stating it is illegal to use a hand-held mobile to follow a map.

In order to use smartphone navigation or a mapping app, the phone must be fixed to the windscreen or dashboard (preferably the dashboard as to not impede the driver's view), so it's in clear sight for use while driving, without requiring you to hold it.

The mobile phone and driving laws have changed and if you are caught breaching them you will now receive a £200 fine and six points on your licence, which would be enough to get a new driver - who has had their licence for less than two years - banned.

## **7. Parking within 10 metres of a junction**

Parking too close to a junction makes it harder for everyone - those approaching the junction have to steer around the car, and those turning into the junction risk driving into an unsighted car on the wrong side of the road.

Therefore, it is a driving offence, so don't commit it.

## **8. Driving on the pavement unless you're turning into a driveway**

Rule 244 of the Highway Code states that you must not park fully or even partly on the pavement unless road signs permit it: in London, it's an offence to park on the pavement, full stop.

This is perhaps one of the most common Highway Code rules broken and, if you're parked in a way to inconvenience pedestrians, you're causing a driving offence.

## **9. Using the horn between 11.30pm and 7am in a built up area**

It seems like taxi drivers do it all the time - beeping the horn late at night. But it's actually illegal - and this includes a short parp when waving to the family during your early-morning start.

It's unlikely the police would charge you if caught, but it's still a driving offence you may not be aware of.

## **10. Driving at more than 50mph in a van on a single carriageway road**

This is a rule that catches many people unawares.

Vans that aren't car-derived\* must not exceed:

- 50mph on single carriageways
- 60mph on dual carriageways
- 70mph on motorways

So don't try to keep up with the flow on single carriageways, as you'll be breaking the law. On dual carriageways, the limit is 60mph, but these vans are allowed to do 70mph on the motorway.

*\*A car-derived van is a goods vehicle which is constructed or adapted as a derivative of a passenger vehicle and which has a maximum laden weight not exceeding 2 tonnes.*

What do you call a Spanish man who cannot remember where he parked his car?

Carlos

## This is your committee

(Please don't hesitate to contact any of us if you have a query).

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**All meetings are held at:  
Scaynes Hill Millennium Hall,  
Scaynes Hill,  
Lewes Road,  
Haywards Heath,  
RH17 7PG  
Doors open at 7.30 for 8 pm start**

To ensure you are kept informed of news and extra activities arranged for the Group, please could all members and associate members let us know of any changes to their contact details so that we can update the Group's database.

Margret Preece (Group Secretary - [margretp@clara.co.uk](mailto:margretp@clara.co.uk)) or  
John Norris (Membership Secretary - [membershipsecretary@mail.com](mailto:membershipsecretary@mail.com))

### Events:

Members meeting on 16 November 2022, 7.30 light refreshments for prompt 8 pm start.

Venue: as above

Speaker: TBC

### Sussex RoSPA

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