



Sussex Advanced Drivers – Newsletter

Winter 2022



A word from the temporary editor and Group Secretary

Hi All

My turn again to be the editor and I hope to produce an interesting newsletter for you.

Looking back on the last year, there have been some bright spots. We have joined up with the Sussex Safer Roads Partnership and had a joined stand at various events around Sussex. I attended two, in Rustington (near Worthing) and in Wisborough Green, and there were others in Brighton and Ardingly. It was good to be able to talk to some of our Group members and to members of the public who were considering joining us (the first of these new members has just passed the advanced test with a Gold grade). We hope to attend more events in 2023 – watch this space.

We think this might be of interest: Sussex Advanced Drivers are offering financial assistance to a Group member (of recent Gold standard) who wishes to take the RoADAR Level 3 course (www.rospa.com/advanced-driver-coaching). RoSPA has developed this new qualification for drivers who are interested in further improving their driving and tutoring. The only condition we make is that our selected candidate would have to commit to support the running and/or tutoring of the Group for the following 3 years.

If you are interested, please let me know at margretp@clara.co.uk.

We also thought that a first aid course for members of the Group would be of interest, and we have been in contact with some excellent and popular trainers ('www.firstaid4you.co.uk'). They are aware of what we do. *"The course is based around an Emergency First Aid at Work course (that is the certificate you receive) the way it is emphasised makes it relevant to the occupation/role of participants. Therefore we would include action at an RTC as well as becoming concerned if an associate is not able to undertake an observed run."*

The course would be held at the Millennium Hall in Scaynes Hill and be a total of about 6 hours in length, with breaks of course. It is planned to have no more than 12 people on the course and our treasurer is willing to subsidise it (thank you, Matt). The date would be a Saturday in March, we are hoping to find a date when all interested members are available.

For now we need to know: would you be interested in such a course? What would be your preferred Saturday in March (give 2 dates if possible)? Once we have these details we can make more concrete plans.

Please email me on margretp@clara.co.uk if you would like to join us.

To some housekeeping matters: it has always been and still is very necessary to recruit new members to the Group, too many have not renewed their membership after lockdown. I am still puzzled at the reason; we did not charge for membership during and just after lockdown because we had nothing to offer. Now we are up and running (driving) again; the new meeting place in Scaynes Hill is a big improvement and has plenty of parking; we have had some interesting speakers. What else do we need to do? Has everybody lost interest in promoting safety on our roads?

I am sad to say that – unless there are some changes – this Group will cease to exist after the AGM in May. Anthony Platts, our Chairman, will not stand for re-election, neither will I as Group Secretary, or Kevin Reader (Events Organiser), and one or two other committee members. This would present a problem for East and West Sussex residents who wish to improve their driving as the nearest groups are in Surrey or Kent. Is there anybody willing to give a little bit of time and energy to keep this group alive? It is neither difficult nor very time consuming.

Enough from me, wishing you all a very happy Christmas and with best wishes for 2023.

Margret
Group Secretary

From our chairman

Dear Members

It is hard to believe we are coming up for Christmas and the end of another year.

This last year we have been able to regain meetings in person rather on Zoom.

We have an open meet on 25th January when the Safety Camera team are giving a talk and in March a First Aid course may be arranged.

The next AGM is in May and a number of Committee members are standing down so volunteers are need to fill the posts of Secretary, Chairman and Events Secretary.

As we approach winter driving may be more difficult. I do not need to remind people that they should ensure that their vehicles are in good condition.

As this is the last letter of the year

I wish all Members a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

See you all in 2023

Best Wishes

Anthony



Tutor Review (Duncan Hauser)

On a cold and bright December Saturday Morning, 5 of the Sussex Group's tutors met at 10:30 am for a coffee at the "Starbucks" at the Hickstead junction of the A23. After exchanging pleasantries and discussing some of the news, we set forth in 2 cars for a short (half an hour) drive on the local roads with one of the tutors in each car giving some coaching tips to the driver of the car. Bearing in mind that the drivers have achieved a standard of Gold in the advanced drivers' test, it was very interesting to see that there were ways in which all of us can improve and freshen up our attitude towards driving.

Some of the points for discussion were the significance of "slow" signs painted on the road, and why some of the warning (triangle) signs and "sharp corner chevron" signs were backed with reflective paint while others were not. There is considerable folklore around the reasons for these installations including the occurrence of fatal accidents that may or may not have motivated the authorities to paint the road, or give a sign a special backing, but we could not establish these as facts.

Referring to the published articles from the body that erects and paints road signs, we could only deduct that "SLOW" is used to support the existence of a warning sign, and we should take note that there will almost certainly be a hazard ahead (junction, side entrance, etc.) that is hidden from immediate view.

The motivation for supporting a sign with a reflective yellow backing is because it is in a position of reduced light. That would make it easier to see, you may say, but there is something else we can take from it: If the sign has a yellow backing, perhaps we should take extra care because visibility in the area of the hazard may be reduced!

So, we learned enough on that Saturday morning to encourage us to do it again; and this time we would like to invite other members and associates to participate. The next time we meet will be on the 4th February, so, if you enjoy driving and learning how we improve ourselves, please pencil it in – same time same place. Please let me know if you would like to join us by emailing me at duncanhauser@ntlworld.com so I know how many to plan for,

Happy Motoring, and Happy New Year
Duncan Hauser (Sussex Group Training Officer)

UK MOTORISTS BACK NEW DEVICES TO HELP PREVENT SPEEDING (Graham Feest consultancy)

Three out of four UK motorists are in favour of new technology which helps prevent speeding, according to a new survey. Speed limiters which actively regulate speed, make a sound or vibrate through the steering wheel or pedals have just become compulsory for new cars introduced in the European Union.

New consumer research from motor finance specialist Startline's August Used Car Tracker has shown 73 per cent of drivers would welcome the devices in the UK.

Now it will be interesting to see whether the UK government follows the EU in making limiters compulsory although there is a possibility that manufacturers, who often specify the same cars across the whole European market, will now fit them anyway.

NEW CAMERA DETECTION TRIAL. (Graham Feest Consultancy)

A camera system to catch drivers using mobile phones behind the wheel is being trialled in Devon and Cornwall. The technology can also detect whether drivers are wearing a seatbelt, it is being rolled out on select routes across the two counties.

The trial is being funded by the Vision Zero South West road safety partnership and overseen by Devon and Cornwall Police in an effort to deter drivers from distractions which can result in serious and fatal collisions.

The system, developed by Australian firm Acusensus, is housed in a vehicle equipped with multiple cameras which record footage of passing motorists. Images captured by the cameras are processed using artificial intelligence to determine if motorists were using a handheld mobile phone or if drivers and passengers were without a seat belt. It can also determine the speed a vehicle was travelling at the time. Any images in which a potential offence is detected are then reviewed by a human. If an offence has been correctly identified, the driver will either be sent a warning letter or a notice of intended prosecution.

NEW VEHICLE LIGHTING TECHNOLOGY. (Graham Feest Consultancy)

Many people become disorientated when driving in the dark and coupled with poor road lighting and road markings some 40% of collisions happen during the hours of darkness varying in terms of the time of the year.

The risk increases whenever a driver takes their eyes off the road. Focussing on and orientating yourself in a dark vehicle means more time is spent not looking at the road in front. A vehicle travelling at 56 mph covers 25 metres per second. It means that even a short glance at the satnav screen, or tuning the radio, can result in 'driving blind' for ten metres or more. On an unlit road this could potentially mean missing an important sign, a bend in the road, or an obstacle. Ford is currently trialling new headlight technology that projects directions, speed limits or weather information onto the road so the driver's gaze can remain fixed on the way ahead. Unlike previous systems that project onto the windscreen, this method means it is in the line of sight on the road in front outside the vehicle. The technology could even provide the driver with information about changes in weather, such as snow falling, fog, slippery conditions, or an icy road ahead. Connecting the headlight to the navigation system could display upcoming turns, while the width of the vehicle could be projected onto the road, helping the driver to judge whether the vehicle will fit through a gap or into a parking space.

BEST MOTORWAY SERVICES IN A USER SURVEY. (Graham Feest Consultancy)

Transport Focus spoke to more than 31,000 visitors at 119 motorway services in Great Britain about their views on the toilets, staff, value for money of the food and drink, electric vehicle charging, and the impact their visit has on the mood of drivers.

The survey which has now been carried out for five years indicated that overall motorway service operators had again performed well overall, with 93% of visitors happy with their visit but it was Rugby on the M6 run by Moto which was rated the best this year. Rugby also came out on top as the site visitors were most likely to recommend to someone making a similar journey and the highest satisfaction with the toilets, at 99%.

For the first time, Transport Focus surveyed motorway services visitors in Scotland and Wales operated by Roadchef and Welcome Break. Sarn Park (Welcome Break) is the highest-rated services in Wales (97%) and Hamilton (Roadchef) the highest-rated in Scotland (94%).

A different kind of car insurance (RAC)

“We know customer needs are changing when it comes to car insurance, with fewer miles being driven and the need for more flexible cover that suits different lifestyles. By utilising new technology, this will provide transparent value for the exact number of miles driven.”

Pay by Mile, from RAC Car Insurance

The new product offers a range of features that makes it radically different from other standard car insurance models, including:

- Simple pricing. After paying an initial one-off £50 activation fee, the premium is made up of two parts: the *Parked Premium* – this is a set charge paid at the beginning of each month to insure the vehicle whilst it’s not being used, and the *Mileage Premium* – a small per-mile charge for insuring the car while it’s being driven, which is paid at the end of each month
- A true monthly subscription – no fees for amending a policy, and customers are free to cancel at any time without being charged
- No credit agreement – pay monthly at no extra cost
- Management of policy securely online or via the Pay By Mile app
- No tricky devices to plug in, and no tracking of driver behaviour – customers just stick the Pay by Mile ‘drive tag’ to their windscreen, pair it with their smartphone (app), and their miles are recorded

Dogs in Cars (RAC Newsletter)

Did you know you could be breaking the law in the UK if your dog isn’t “suitably restrained” when travelling by car? Whether it’s for a trip to the vet or a visit to the beach, most owners will take their dog in the car at some stage. It almost goes without saying, however, that cars can be dangerous for dogs if care and common sense are not applied.

Remember also that the Highway Code states motorists need to ensure dogs are “suitably restrained” while travelling in the car. Here are some do’s and don’ts for driving with your dog, whether he’s in the front seat or the car boot.

DOs

Restrain your dog

Use a good quality harness, or a crate or guard, to keep your dog safe. There are many on the market so do your research first or seek advice from your vet.

Always carry water

Cars can get hot even when they’re moving, and dogs may become dehydrated on long trips. You can buy travel water bowls to ensure a drink is always on-hand.

Make regular stops on long rides

If you intend to be in the car for a long time, be sure to plan your journey so you can make plenty of stops. Your dog will appreciate being able to stretch their legs, enjoy a drink and some fresh air and go to the toilet.

Use window shades

While these are designed for babies and young children, your dog may also benefit as they help keep cars cool and block out direct sunlight.

Try to help your dog relax

There’s nothing worse than travelling with an anxious pooch. Do whatever it takes to ensure your dog is happy,

Drive to fun places

If your dog only ever goes in the car to visit the vet, he may associate it with distress rather than entertainment. Be sure to travel to places he loves visiting too.

Be mindful of motion sickness

Most dogs will outgrow this condition, but if you’re concerned about it, go to your vet as they may be able to prescribe medication. It’s also worth bearing in mind dogs tend to suffer less if they’re facing forward while you’re driving.

Don'ts

Don't let your dog hang out the window

While this may look cute, it's highly dangerous. Our vets have witnessed dogs suffer horrific injuries after hitting a passing vehicle while hanging out of a car.

Forget to switch off airbags

If your dog is secured in a harness in the front seat, be sure to move the seat as far back as possible and switch off the passenger-side airbag as it may do more harm than good if you have an accident.

Open windows entirely

It's imperative to keep your dog cool on car journeys, and this can be achieved by opening windows a little to allow a cool breeze to circulate. But never open them entirely as your dog may try to jump out.

Take your dog anywhere without an ID tag or microchip

By law, dogs who go outside must have a microchip implanted by the time they're eight weeks old and wear a collar with their owner's name and address.

Feed your dog just before you travel

This can upset your dog's tummy and bring on motion sickness, which is the last thing you'll want on a long journey.

Leave your dog alone in a car

This is particularly dangerous on warm days. Dogs can overheat within a matter of minutes, and heat stroke is a common cause of admissions to pet emergency clinics and hospitals in the summer.

Forget to take a food supply

It's worth taking some of your dog's usual food on any long car journey, just in case you break down or get stuck in heavy traffic.

Don't Make a Mistake (Graham Feest Consultancy)

One of the fundamental principles of the Safe System Approach is that road users and indeed drivers make unintentional mistakes and from time to time get things wrong, get tangled up in situations where they are forced to do something which is quite uncharacteristic; and yet for whatever reason on the other side of the coin is big brother, in whatever guise, waiting to pounce!

With enforcement powers now available to local authorities by application to the Secretary of State, it seems another group of people are about to fill their coffers by bringing misery onto drivers who just get it wrong.

We already have many councils enforcing bus lane infringements by camera technology (and its no use in making an appeal) and if you are a stranger to the area, you just don't know whether the bus lane is operating or not; at 30 mph you certainly don't get the time to read all the information on the sign and watch the road ahead to find out. The lack of a national standard in this area, so everyone knew what the score was, would be so helpful and yet I get the fact that there is no need to have a lane closed to other traffic when the need is not there and so variants may well be sensible, but it does not help the motorists.

Is it any wonder that statistically a licence holder picks up a fixed penalty every three years or so and now growingly it is potentially getting worse as Sheffield Council is the latest to apply to the Government for new traffic enforcement powers to stop drivers making illegal manoeuvres.

The council is bidding for new powers relating to 'moving traffic offences' such as driving through a 'No Entry' sign or entering a yellow box junction when the exit is not clear. At the moment, these rules can only be enforced by the police so the council hopes the move would "improve road safety" and tackle congestion across the city.

It is proposed the powers would be used in three separate sites across the city, using Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) technology to identify drivers that break the law.

I have to say that I am not convinced that this is a real action to "improve road safety."



This is your committee

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

Chairman	Anthony Platts	aplattsdrivertraining@hotmail.com	07885 096921
Group Secretary	Margret Preece	margretp@clara.co.uk	07773 874562
Treasurer	Matt Porterfield	matt.porterfield@fireflyuk.net	07799 640641
Training Officer	Duncan Hauser	duncanhauser@ntlworld.com	07958 284577
Membership Secretary	John Norris	johnsnorris@gmail.com	07775 781699
Vice Chairman and Events Organiser	Kevin Reader	kevinreader@btinternet.com	07761 635027
Newsletter Editor	vacant		
Webmaster	vacant		
Committee Member	Dave Raine	david.raine41@gmail.com	07887 695385
Committee Member	Douglas Wragg	dgwragg@gmail.com	07778 811349
Committee Member	Gwyn Davies	gwynjanet@aol.co.uk	078870616505

Group Secretary's notes:

All meetings are held at:

Scaynes Hill Millennium Hall, Lewis Road, Scaynes Hill, Haywards Heath, RH17 7PG

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) or

John Norris (Membership Secretary - jsnorris@me.com)

Future Events

All events start at 19.30 with tea and coffee for a prompt 8pm start

25 January 2023	Safety Camera Team
22 March 2023	TBC
19 April (AGM)	Katie Bourne (Sussex Police & Crime Commissioner)
19 July 2023	TBC

Sussex RoSPA

Disclaimer: The information contained within this communication is drawn from a variety of sources and whilst every effort is made to ensure it is correct, Sussex RoSPA cannot be held responsible for any misinformation provided by third parties. It should also be noted that in using the information it does not necessarily reflect RoSPA policy, practice or its position on any given matter, unless specifically stated, but is provided for the purposes of information to its members.