



The **BEDFORD** Group of RoSPA Advanced Drivers and Riders Members Newsletter

Visit the **BEDFORD** Group online at www.roadada-bedford.org.uk **January 2010**

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January Meeting

We will start the evening with a viewing of the "The Secret Life of The Motorway". For those who did not see the BBC4 series this is a fascinating film that charts the beginnings of the UK motorway system and contains archive footage on the construction of the first motorways and a selection of public information films showing you how to drive on a motorway.

Hopefully this will then lead to a discussion and review of how times, roads, cars and road safety have changed and improved over the years. There will also be the usual tea, coffee and biscuits to keep you going.

See you 8pm on the Tuesday 19th January 2010 at the Training Centre of the Bedfordshire and Luton Fire and Rescue Service, Southfields Road, Kempston.

Final reminder: Our usual meeting room is no more. Parking and the way in to the venue is as before, but walk past our usual lecture theatre venue until you reach the end of the corridor then turn right (at the T-junction!) to our new meeting room.

**Welcome to another year,
another decade (where did the
last one go?) and snow and ice!**

The November Meeting: This was an excellent talk by Geoff Willis primarily about the "Blue Light Users Conference 2009" which is organised by the Association of Industrial Road Safety Officers. The first conference was held in 1997 as a one off event, but is now an annual event lasting 2 days and attended by around 200 delegates. The conference's aim is to debate the

requirements for all "blue light users" and to agree a standard training package for all "blue light users". Further details of the work of the "Association of Industrial Road Safety Officers" can be found on their website at www.airso.co.uk.

Is it Me? Well the bad weather is with us big time. Although thankfully the end of the bad weather may not be too far off. Despite the warnings / advice given in my October newsletter I, and I am sure you too, couldn't believe the antics of some road users. Why can't drivers clear their windows fully of ice

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and snow before driving off? I have also lost count of how many cars I saw also driving with 4 inches or more of loose snow on their roof just waiting for the snow to slide forward over their windscreen under heavy braking obscuring all forward vision.

Add to that cars with their lights on in poor visibility (good) but so much snow and /or ice on the lights that they may as well have left them switched off. Does it really take that long to clear your lights and windows before setting off?

The recovery people have been making a few pounds and more from “driver error = car in ditch error” as seen all over the county and beyond. No doubt the body repair workshops are busy too. I just hope that the workload in GP surgeries and Casualty Departments has not escalated too. My rant could go on forever, but I am sure you have got the message? And anyway I am hopefully preaching to the converted.

One thing this weather does make you grateful for is having a car with an electrically heated front windscreen, as well as a heated rear screen. Am I right in thinking that the only manufacturer to provide these on “reasonably priced cars” is Ford? If this is the case – why? If Ford can do it why can’t other manufacturers do the same? Do any cars have heated steering wheels to warm the hands up after a frantic spot of pre-driving ice scraping?

The freezing conditions have taken their toll on the road surfaces too – potholes have appeared and many of the traffic calming platforms (speed humps) are in a bad condition, particularly on their cambered edges. Straddling the edges to protect your vehicles suspension may not always be the best option for your tyres. So scan the road ahead and avoid any bad surfaces and hopefully nasty repair bills.

Smile It’s only ice:

Today’s smile was an inspection that I was asked to carry out at work. It read “Inspect footpath – It is very slippery when icy” Well I have news too So is the rest of the world when its icy!

Future Meetings.

We are fortunate in being able to obtain the services of many interesting speakers who keep us entertained and informed on a variety of subjects, not always transport related. We are very grateful to those who give up their time for our monthly meetings. On occasions we do struggle to find a speaker and we do try not to repeat the speakers too often. If any of you know of someone (or maybe yourself) who would be willing to give us a talk / presentation on a motoring related subject or any other subject / hobby that could interest us I would be grateful if you could let me or any of the Committee members know.

Those who attend the meetings know we don’t bite and we have a good selection of fresh biscuits to munch on! A presentation of about 40 to 50 minutes is ideal which is usually followed by a questions and answers or tell us more session.

Contact details for volunteer speakers are at the start of the newsletter.

Keith Hooson

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