



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

Visit the **BEDFORD Group** online at www.road-a-bedford.org.uk **Sept 2009**

President **Dr. Lisa Dorn** BSc PhD CPsychol, AFBPS

Bill Brady (Chairman and Senior Tutor) 01234 768408 chairman@road-a-bedford.org.uk

Stan Jones (Secretary) 01234 782071 secretary@road-a-bedford.org.uk

Adrian Bailey (Treasurer) 01234 826466 treasurer@road-a-bedford.org.uk, membership@road-a-bedford.org.uk

Melia Taylor (Training Co-ordinator) 01234312210 training@road-a-bedford.org.uk

Andrew McGrorey (Training Officer) 01234 346907 andrew.mcgrorey1@btinternet.com

Keith Hooson (Newsletter Producer) 01234 404830 newsletter@road-a-bedford.org.uk

September Meeting

Everything You Wanted to Know about Roadcraft, but were afraid to ask.

RosPA advanced driving is centred around the Essential Police Driver's Handbook, "Roadcraft". This month's meeting will be an open forum for all to ask questions, discuss subjects, driving techniques, tell us your tips and add your own comments.

8pm on the Tuesday 15th September 2009 at the Training Centre of the Bedfordshire and Luton Fire and Rescue Service Southfields Road Kempston.

The July Meeting: It seems an age ago, but this was a very well attended meeting and an excellent presentation by RoSPA Driving Examiner, Simon Hill. Simon is also a Traffic Officer with the Metropolitan Police based around the Wembley Area. We kicked off with a new "Traffic Cops limited edition video recording" from Simon's personal archives. Funny? Entertaining? Yes, with many examples of what not to do and why we all need to be aware of everyone else who may venture onto our roads either legally or illegally. The most unbelievable example was a motorist driving north up the M1 in lane three towards the London Gateway Services (that's Scratchwood Services in old money) who was "blue lighted" to pull over. Well did he stop? Yes, but not by safely pulling into the services only 50m away, but he came to a halt in lane 3 of the M1! How a multiple pile up did not occur is anyone's guess! Simon also advised us that although deaths on the road are falling slightly he believes that this is more down to

the fact that modern cars are offering road users greater protection in serious accidents, rather than driver standards improving. A testimony to what motor manufacturers are doing in improving safety features in new cars. But, just how much more misery (lives ruined) could be avoided if all drivers improved their driving standards? Much discussion and opinion was debated on the RoSPA driving test and we were given a good insight into what Simon looks for on the driving tests. Many thanks Simon for an entertaining evening - we got very close to being evicted from the room, as no one seemed to want to go home!

Traffic Calming Warning: There is much debate about the merits and the perils of the numerous "speed humps" that adorn our roads. I have also seen numerous postings / warnings on motoring web sites and publications on the hazards they can present to the road vehicle and tyres in particular.

All content is the opinion of the writer or contributor. It is not the official view of the committee of the Bedford group of RoSPA Advanced Drivers and Riders, RoSPA or any other official body connected to or mentioned by the writer.

Many single carriageway roads have platform type cushions that are curved on their nearside and offside, which mean that providing you can accurately centre your vehicle on the approach to these humps you can pass over them by straddling the hump. In most instances this approach reduces the mechanical stress placed on the vehicle as the vehicle's wheels can then be faced in effect with a "minimal height speed hump". There is a chance that if you spend a lot of your driving life negotiating these speed cushions you could suffer from premature wear to the inner edges of your tyres. However, the bigger danger comes from the speed humps that are not maintained in a very good condition resulting in the edges of the speed humps starting to disintegrate. This can leave sharp and jagged edges at the points where the inner edges of the tyres pass over the humps. There is a chance that these damaged speed humps can cause serious damage to tyres.



Above is an example of a poorly maintained speed hump in Towcester. Block pavements have been used to keep the flat tarmac platform of the cushion in place, but the outer edges block paved edges have been worn away by vehicle traffic. The blocks are now exposed as shown close up below.



Next we have another example in Williamson Road, Bedford.



The block paving cushions is breaking up again leaving potentially sharp edges that tyres do not like.

Repairs as shown below have been carried out using tarmac, but they can still present a hazard.



This is another good reason to make effective use of your forward observation skills. In such circumstances slowing right down before the cushion then driving over the speed hump slowly with one front and one rear wheel fully on the flat platform may be a safer option than trying to straddle the speed cushion. This potential tyre damage also serves to emphasise the importance of checking your vehicle regularly. Don't forget the inner edges and sidewalls of your tyres too in these checks. Keep your eyes open for the condition of the speed humps on Elstow Road Kempston.

Texting/Phoning Whilst Driving:

Select the following link:

www.gwent.police.uk/leadnews.php?a=2172

All drivers should see this film.

It is shocking, graphic but a must see.

All content is the opinion of the writer or contributor. It is not the official view of the committee of the Bedford group of RoSPA Advanced Drivers and Riders, RoSPA or any other official body connected to or mentioned by the writer.