



## Bedford Group RoSPA Advanced Drivers

RoSPA Advanced Drivers and Riders Accredited

## Members Newsletter

November 2023

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**Welcome to the November 2023 issue of the Bedford Group of the RoSPA Advanced Drivers Newsletter.**

### Main topics:

**Magpas Air Ambulance: General Meeting for Members – Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> September 2023 – held at the Training Centre, Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Service Kempston**

**Committee Meeting – Tuesday 31st October 2023**

**Snippets – Car Cannibalism**

**Overtaking – a cautionary tale**

**Quiz answers and new quiz**

*Val Jones*

*November 2023*

## **Committee update**

**The Committee meeting Tuesday 31<sup>st</sup> October was held via Skype**

Discussions included future plans, time allocation for fine tuning for a Better Driving Course, inviting additional members to join the committee, to facilitate the possibility of providing training for motorcyclists as well as drivers in future training. A meeting for tutors was also proposed.

Our new member, Dougie Palmer will join us at our next meeting in the new year. If you recall, Dougie was introduced to our members in our September Edition of our Newsletter. We welcome Dougie as a valued member onto our committee and welcome the expertise he will bring to the group

## **Future newsletters**

NB: I am aware that the newsletter has been getting quite long. This was deliberate particularly during Covid when restrictions meant this was the main means of keeping in touch with members. Now restrictions have lifted, I will aim to make future newsletters shorter. It will also mean that those delivered by post will more easily be fitted into the envelope!

There are now plans to issue newsletters on a quarterly basis.

Members are reminded that the newsletter and past editions can always be picked up from our website.

Val Jones – Newsletter Editor

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## **Congratulations are in order**

No additional passes to report in this particular issue. I am sure others will follow in future additions

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## **Retests – a reminder**

Members with a retest are invited to arrange a free observed drive to provide any pointers to prepare for their test.

Val Jones, Newsletter Editor



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The committee are pleased to be able to share a few words from **Paul Firman FIAM Magpas Community Volunteer Co-ordinator**.

Magpas Air Ambulance give the very best pre-hospital emergency care, in the air or on land, including treatments usually only available in hospital. Operating 24/7, the charity answers four calls for help a day on average, treating around 900 patients in life-threatening emergencies every year.

Magpas Air Ambulance serves the communities of Cambridgeshire, Bedfordshire and across the East of England and are dispatched by both

the East of England and the East Midlands Ambulance Service Trusts – caring for a population of over 10 million.

The charity relies on generous public donations to continue saving lives.

For more information, see <https://magpas.org.uk/about-us/>

**There was an opportunity to hear more from Paul at Magpas at a General Meeting for members which was held on Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> September.**

This was a chance to hear more about our group and a presentation from Paul.

There was lots of cake!



### **Summary Notes**

**Turnout was disappointing as it was only attended by members of the committee.**

Attended by:

David Worgan

David Chamberlain

Tony Glasson

Jenny Holliday

Rosemary Whittington

& Val Jones

Speaker Paul Firman: Magpas Air Ambulance

Magpas stands for Mid Anglia General Practitioner's Service. It was created by Dr Derek Cracknell and Dr Neville Silverston in 1971. Magpas is the oldest emergency medical charity in the U.K. Dr Cracknell was one of the main driving forces to secure a hospital at Hinchinbrook. He promoted the crash barriers on the A14 and a pager system to help with communication.

In 1996 the charity started to use a police helicopter as well as cars. 60,000 patients have been treated by Magpas. (According to the presenter this is now nearer to 80,000)

Magpas' mission statement is - ***"To save lives and limit disability by taking enhanced emergency medical care to patients in moments of need."***

Both car and air ambulance have a doctor specifically trained to deal with trauma and an advanced paramedic. Doctors from a military background have proved invaluable. They are able to offer critical care including the administration of anesthetics, adrenalin, blood transfusions, CPR etc.

Magpas covers the East of England including Cambridgeshire, Bedfordshire, Northamptonshire,

Oxford, Luton, Peterborough and Essex. The helicopter used can now cover a wider area as the helicopter is capable of travelling at 200 miles per hour. They need £6million per year to run the service. Magpas is called out on average 4 times per day. The helicopter can typically be on the scene in 16 minutes. They also use fast response cars. Between the cars and helicopter, they cover approximately 50% of the cases each.

### **Training**

Magpas is constantly reviewing and training staff. Magpas run a two-week regional training course where medics are faced with 40 scenarios to deal with. This course has been adopted by other air ambulance services. Once paramedics have completed the course are then classed as advanced paramedics. Advanced paramedics are based in Peterborough. This widening capability helps release the pressure on the air ambulance. Quite often patients may be taken to hospital by ambulance supported by a medic from a helicopter. With updated technology their ventilator can be linked to the hospital over the mobile network.

The present base for the helicopter is RAF Wyton. They are moving shortly to a purpose- built base at Alconbury Weald.

Paul noted that approximately 20% of call outs are for people who live in Bedfordshire, but there are **only 4**

**volunteers presently from Bedfordshire.** This contrasts with Lincolnshire which has 50 – 60 volunteers. He asked us to spread the word for more volunteers to help raise funds for Magpas.

**Paul asked if anyone would like to help fundraise for this worthy cause see**

**[fundraising@magpas.org.uk](mailto:fundraising@magpas.org.uk).**

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### **Reminder**

**If you are waiting to be allocated a Tutor,** you are advised to purchase and read the current edition of Roadcraft (2020) and The Official Highway Code (2022).

When you are allocated a Tutor, you are advised to **make contact within a four-week period.**

*Drives can be arranged at a mutually convenient time. If contact has not been made within the four-week period, you may be put back on the waiting list to allow another member access.*

**Remember to forward details on your test passes, dates and grades to [secretary@roada-bedford.org.uk](mailto:secretary@roada-bedford.org.uk) to ensure we have the correct details and can celebrate your successes.**

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**Have you been notified by RoSPA that you are due a retest?**

If so, **the group offers an observed drive to members ahead of a retest.** Let us know if you would like to book an observed drive through our Training Co-ordinator? [training@roada-bedford.org.uk](mailto:training@roada-bedford.org.uk)



If we have the relevant details of your last test in our membership records, we can anticipate when a request may be forthcoming.

## **Snippets: Car cannibalism**



**Martin Aldridge's eldest daughter, who has asked not to be named, has been the victim of two separate car-cannibalism attacks.**

After checking that it was legal to do so, he and his partner were forced to drive the 120 miles home to Oxfordshire in a noisy and doorless vehicle.

They must have attracted curious glances as they proceeded as slowly as they could along the back roads. But, bizarre as the theft seemed, it was not the only such incident at Glastonbury that day.

The family's insurance company said that they had received two other reports of doors being taken from Land Rover Defenders at the festival. All these owners were only the latest victims of an alarming new crime trend, which involves cars being stripped and left in situ rather than stolen outright.

This sickening phenomenon has been dubbed 'car cannibalism'.

Many of the stolen parts — not just doors, but anything from headlights to bumpers and even bonnets — are sold to 'chop shops'. These backstreet garages use the

parts to repair damaged cars, which they sell on to unsuspecting purchasers. Other parts are sold via resale websites such as eBay and Gumtree.

Demand for spare parts has increased hugely since the pandemic, when many vehicle part manufacturers closed their doors.

The Russian invasion of Ukraine made matters worse, as both countries play a key role in the supply of car parts to Europe.

According to the Office for National Statistics, 212,900 people had items stolen from their vehicle in 2022, a rise of 10 per cent on the previous year. Car cannibalism comes under this umbrella.

And it's not just the wealthy owners of luxury vehicles that need be concerned. In fact, the most frequent targets are popular, smaller cars such as the Vauxhall Corsa, Toyota Yaris, Ford Fiesta and Renault Clio.



**Episodes like this have earned Birmingham an unenviable reputation as the cradle of car cannibalism**

As the Mail discovered this week, the stress, cost and disruption to owners' lives is made worse still by the fact that, as with so many other instances of vehicle crime,

the police are doing little to catch the perpetrators.

Not that you would suspect it from one early-morning raid on a Birmingham chop shop staged by the West Midlands Police back in May with an ITV crew in tow.

Sparks flew from an angle-grinder as a policeman tore into the metal shutters before his colleagues rushed in and began ransacking the place for evidence.

Three arrests were made — but all related to a cannabis farm discovered on the premises, rather than car cannibalism. It showed the West Midlands Police in the best possible light — as no-nonsense law enforcers cracking down on criminals. But many locals feel they are less available to victims of car cannibalism than they are to TV producers.

That has certainly been the experience of 56-year-old Martin Aldridge, a railway controller who lives not far from that raided chop shop.

His eldest daughter who has asked not to be named, has been the victim of two separate car-cannibalism attacks. The first came one Monday evening last November after she had returned from work and parked her five-year-old Renault Clio on one of the main roads in the Erdington area.

'In the morning, she went back to drive it to work and there wasn't a lot left of it,' says Martin. 'The thieves had broken in through the passenger side window and used some kind of tool to release the bonnet through that window. And then they got the bonnet off and took that, and the entire front end, including the bumper, the grille and all the lights.'

What happened next has proved to be something of a pattern in these cases —

and will be all too familiar to those who have reported other vehicle-related crimes.

The police refused to come out to investigate the theft, offering instead a crime reference number for insurance purposes and closing the case the next day because of 'insufficient evidence'.

After her insurance company arranged for what remained of the Clio to be taken away for repairs, Martin's daughter was given a Vauxhall Corsa as a courtesy car. But that, too, lasted only five days.

One evening, at about 9pm, a local shopkeeper saw two men removing parts from the parked Corsa and confronted them.

'They did a runner, so he went back into his shop and phoned the police,' says Martin. 'He told them that they needed to attend, and they didn't because they said: 'Well, the people have gone now.'

'Ten minutes later the criminals came back to finish the job.



**Renault Clio cannibalised whilst parked in Great Charles Street car park, Birmingham. The front bumper, bonnet and headlights appear to have been stolen**

'This time there were about four of them and the shopkeeper's son said: 'I don't think you should be going out there this time because they don't look like the sort of people you should be messing with.' The police hadn't turned up, so all they could do was watch this mob go off with the parts.

Seven months on, Martin's daughter's Renault Clio is still awaiting repair — due, ironically, to a shortage of replacement parts — and her insurance company has refused to give her another replacement car, deeming their neighbourhood too high-risk as a result of several similar incidents.

'Her work involves visiting lots of different schools in the city so she's having to get public transport, or Ubers, which is costing her a fortune,' says Martin.

'There have been months of waiting with no sign of when she'll get her car back and in the meantime this has pushed her insurance premium up to extortionate amounts.'

Episodes like this have earned Birmingham an unenviable reputation as the cradle of car cannibalism.

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## **Snippets: Accidents relating to overtaking**

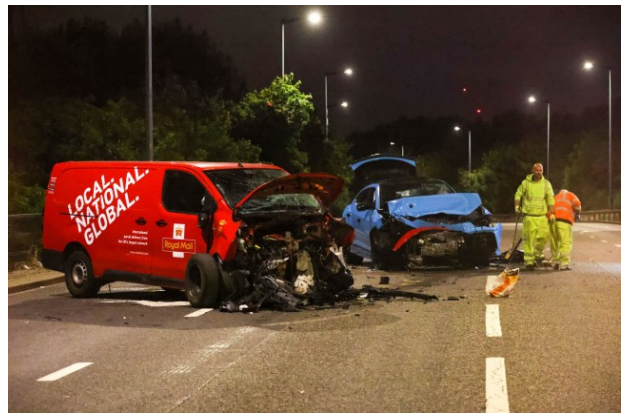
I found some news articles and facts about accidents related to overtaking. According to the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA), overtaking is one of the highest risk manoeuvres for both drivers and riders because it can put the overtaking vehicle into the path of oncoming traffic, often at high speeds. [In 2019, 7,311 vehicles were involved in an overtaking](#)

[accident, of which 52% were cars, and 40% were two-wheel vehicles](#) <sup>1</sup>.

Here are some news articles I found related to accidents caused by overtaking:

### **Metro**

#### **Six injured after crash between Lamborghini and Royal Mail van**



**A blue Lamborghini Urus and Royal Mail van were badly damaged in the crash (Picture: UKNIP)**

#### **Six people have been injured after a £187,000 Lamborghini Urus was involved in a serious crash with a Royal Mail van.**

The horrific head-on collision happened after the supercar reportedly overtook traffic at speed in east London.

Emergency services, including police, paramedics and the air ambulance were called to the scene in Beckton at around 7.20pm.

Witnesses captured the shocking incident on video, showing the moment the cars collided and the aftermath of the smash.

Police say their enquiries are continuing.



A Metropolitan Police spokesperson said: 'Police were called at approximately 19:20hrs on Tuesday, 11 July to reports of two cars in collision at Royal Dock Road, Beckton.

'Officers, London Ambulance Service and London's Air Ambulance all attended the scene.



**Drone footage showed the scene from above following the smash**

'Six people were treated for injuries.

'Enquiries into the circumstances remain ongoing.'

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### **Shropshire Star**

#### **Oswestry driver, 19, killed in head-on crash while overtaking.**

A 19-year-old driver from Oswestry was killed after crashing head-on into another car while overtaking, a coroner has concluded.

Aidan George Pritchard, of Ascot Road, died at the scene of the crash on Trefonen Road,

between Oswestry and Trefonen, shortly before 9pm on January 19.



At an inquest held at Shirehall in Shrewsbury on Monday, Shropshire Coroner John Ellery said a toxicology report had found "moderate levels of cocaine and low levels of alcohol" in Mr Pritchard's system and added that it "may have influenced his driving ability".

Mr Ellery said that the crash had involved three vehicles - a grey BMW being driven by Mr Pritchard, a red Peugeot being driven by John Clarke, and a white BMW driven by Lucy Davies.

Coroner's officer Michael Caesar-Homden told Mr Ellery that Mr Pritchard had been following the red Peugeot in the direction of Oswestry on a section of the 60mph road that had double solid white lines, preventing overtaking.

The coroner heard that Mr Clarke had noticed Mr Pritchard's BMW behind 'not right up to my bumper but too close' as they travelled over the bridge over the River Morda.

Mr Clarke said he had been travelling at around 45mph when Mr Pritchard decided to overtake.

Mr Caesar-Homden read evidence from Michael Lloyd, a front seat passenger in Mr



Pritchard's car, who estimated they were travelling at around 100mph at one point as they overtook.

The coroner heard evidence from Mrs Davies, who said she had seen Mr Pritchard's car overtaking and coming towards her but "thought 'no way, it will pull back in,' but it just sped up."

The coroner was told she had tried to pull towards the hedge to avoid the collision but had been hit before she could do so.

Evidence from Mr Clarke said: "As he pulled out and started overtaking me, I saw the white car coming over the brow of the hill. I thought 'he's not going to make it' and he swerved in and hit the car."

Mr Ellery heard that Mr Pritchard died at the scene despite the efforts of members of the public and paramedics to save him.

The coroner was told that other people were also seriously injured in the crash.

Delivering his conclusion, he said: "It appears that Aidan for whatever reason attempted to overtake the car of John Clarke and collided with the oncoming car of Mrs Davies."

Mr Ellery recorded a conclusion of death by road traffic accident.

### **Andover Advertiser**

#### **Police video shows near-miss as car overtakes tractor**

- A driver's attempt to overtake a tractor nearly resulted in a head-on collision in Wiltshire.

While travelling through the countryside on Friday, Roads Policing Unit officers saw one impatient car cross onto the wrong side of the road as it tried to pass a slow-moving farm vehicle.

Dashcam footage shows the nerve-wracking moment when the overtaking driver returns to their own lane at the last possible moment by squeezing through a narrow gap between the tractor and oncoming traffic.

It barely misses another car travelling towards it at around 45 to 50 miles per hour.

The police car behind the vehicle that was almost hit then slows down to 35mph as the dangerous driver passes it on the right side of the road in front of the tractor.

A Wiltshire Specialist Operations spokesman said: "RPU nearly witnessed a head-on collision due to impatience trying to overtake a tractor.

Thankfully no collisions or injuries, but if you are going to overtake then plan it!

## Answers to Quiz: September 2023

### Chapter 10 Cornering from Roadcraft: The Police drivers Handbook (2020)

- 1) Why does the camber reduce the effects of your steering on a right-hand bend?

**Answer: The road slopes away from the direction of the turn.**

*Road surfaces usually slope to help drainage. The normal slope falls from the crown of the road to the edges and is called crown camber. On a right-hand bend, camber reduces the effect of steering because the road slopes away from the direction of the turn. Remember that this applies if you keep to your side of the road, but if you cross over the crown to the other side, the camber will have the opposite effect on your steering.*

- 2) On a left-hand bend, you should drive as though the limit point is where?

**Answer: Where the edge of the road meets the central white line**

*On a left bend, you should drive as though the limit point is where the edge of the road meets the central white line (or the centre of the road if there is no white line) so that you*

*can stop safely on your own side of the road.*

- 3) What happens to the limit point where the bend is a constant curve?

**Answer: It remains at a constant distance from you.**

*Where the bend is a constant curve, the limit point stays a constant distance from you. Keep your speed constant. If the curve changes, re assess your speed and re-apply the system.*

- 4) Which road position is the most appropriate to give you an earlier view into a right-hand bend?

**Answer: The nearside.**

*For right-hand bends, the nearside gives you an earlier view into the bend. Before you take this position, watch out for poor conditions on the nearside road conditions, blind junctions or exits and adverse camber.*

- 5) What road position would give you the earliest view on a left-hand bend?

**Answer: Position yourself towards the centre line so that you get an early view around the bend.**

*Be prepared to make way for approaching traffic or other offside dangers which need a greater margin of safety. Consider whether your position may mislead other traffic as to your intentions.*

6) What can the curved line of hedgerows and lamp posts tell you about a bend?

**Answer: It can help you assess how severe the bend is.**

*Whenever you can, look across the bend through the gaps in hedges or between buildings for more information about the severity of the bend, but remember to look for early warnings of other hazards as well.*

7) Explain the principle of safe cornering.

**Answer: Make sure your vehicle is in the correct position on approach.**

**Travel at the correct speed for the corner or bend**

**Select the correct gear for that speed.**

8) Define what is meant by the limit point?

**Answer: The limit point is the furthest to which you have an uninterrupted view of the road surface.**

*This is where the right-hand edge of the road appears to meet the left-hand edge in the distance. The more distant to the limit point, the more quickly you can go because you have more space to stop in.*

9) What is the most overriding consideration when positioning your vehicle on the road?

**Answer: Positioning is crucial element in the system of car control.**

*Always consider **SAFETY** before anything else and never sacrifice safety for any other advantage. The ideal position depends on many things, safety, observation, the size of the vehicle, traffic conditions, road layout, cornering manoeuvrability, assisting traffic flow and making your intentions clear.*

### **November's quiz is based on Roadcraft Chapter 11 Overtaking**

1) Which type of road is most dangerous per mile for the road user?

Answer: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2) You're planning to overtake vehicles in a line of traffic, and you've identified a small gap between the vehicles in front. Should you overtake?

Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3) Why is overtaking on a single carriageway the most hazardous form of overtaking?

Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

4) You are planning to overtake on a single carriageway. There's a vehicle moving towards you in the opposite lane. How can assessing its size help you complete the overtaking manoeuvre safely?

Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

5) You're driving on a three-way single carriageway. The vehicle in front is overtaking in the middle lane. Why shouldn't you follow it through the gap?

Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

6) You're planning to overtake the car in front. Both vehicles are approaching a lay-by on the other side of the road. What do you need to be particularly aware of?

Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

7) Another driver is overtaking you. What should you do?

Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

8) *What are the three stages of overtaking?*

*Stage 1- Referred to as:*

\_\_\_\_\_

*Stage 2- Referred to as:*

\_\_\_\_\_

*Stage 3 Referred to as*

\_\_\_\_\_