

ROSPA

Advanced Drivers and Riders West Yorkshire

Switch it up

48 hour test drive
All-electric Corsa-e

Drivers

Meet the Examiner



Ford Focus ST170

Torque

Spring 2021



Riders

From the Editor

Happy St David's Day.

The response to the recent newsletter from group members, means the Committee for 2021 remains the same. This will hopefully give the group some stability. I was co-opted on as editor of Torque and Richard Hirst is now the deputy Bike Training Officer. We are still conducting meetings via Zoom, but if you have any questions or wish to raise any issues, please contact the secretary. In a similar vein, RoSPA have decided local groups who were due to renew accreditation during 2021 will be granted a further 12 months extension.

I have both 'Meet the Examiner' and 'Meet the Tutor' articles in this edition, which I hope you find interesting. Following on from the previous article about cycling we also take a look at this growing activity from a very different viewpoint.

I had no feedback about the treasure hunt for later this year but I have gone ahead and started planning. Obviously, until we know how the current restrictions and the pandemic itself are likely to effect it, then I cannot fix a date. I can tell you there will be a few hours of fun for you and the family in some great countryside and taking in some local landmarks.

Articles have been in short supply this time but understandably as members have not been out and about. Can you write an article for TORQUE?

On another note, I became a NHS transport responder in the middle of January, in the hope I could legally go out driving with a purpose. Having downloaded the GoodSAM App  and made myself available for over 700 hours to date, I have yet to carry out a task. A bit disappointing, but perhaps they are over subscribed for volunteers and, as with RoADAR, I am here if they need me.

The cover shows a car parade in Barnard Castle a couple of years ago when times were normal. Lets hope the vaccine will help those times return.

I have been asked several times why I want to be an editor and I always answer, **"Well, to cut a long story short..."**

Our group meetings held on the fourth Tuesday of each month at the Miners Welfare Hall, Main Street, Garforth are well received . Although they are currently not being held, you can look forward to this year's programme as there may be something of interest and the bonus of free refreshments. I am looking for members who attend to write about the presentation. Please let me know if you are able to assist.

The Committee of West Yorkshire RoADAR is not responsible for any article or letter contained within this magazine. All views expressed are those of the individual concerned and do not necessarily imply agreement of the committee or of RoADAR. The editor reserves the right to alter or amend any article.

If you have suggestions or items for the committee you can contact the chairman

chair@wyg-roadar.org.uk



Check out our group Facebook page, like and share it with your friends and also visit the National RoADAR page.

SPRING 2021



Martin Jones

2021 Committee

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Meet the Examiner - Dudley Martin

My dad was a vehicle mechanic and lectured in motor vehicle engineering at Huddersfield college, so cars and bikes were always around. He also raced karts at a national level and so some of my earliest memories were of peanut-butter sandwiches and the smell of Castrol 'R' whilst the family watched dad at various race circuits, the local one being Sunny Vale on the outskirts of Halifax. Now, who remembers that one? I remember my first experience of driving. When I was about 14, my headmaster, assuming that because my dad was a racer I would know what to do, asked me to get his car out of the garage. "Sorry about the scratched paintwork, Sir!"

I started driving and riding the same year, 1976. As a local mobile DJ, I first purchased a Vauxhall van which I brush-painted red with white panels, adding a 'Dudley's Disco' logo! My first bike purchases were two Lambretta scooters for £25. Again, it was out with the paintbrush and a pot of Dulux Eggshell blue. I sold one of them for £25 and used the money to get the other fettled at a local dealer. I remember picking it up and trying to ride it home never having had any instruction whatsoever! Doesn't bear thinking about. A passion for riding developed and I have never been without at least one motorcycle to this day. I'm not one for 'flashy' bikes, preferring practical middleweights which I tend to keep long term. A good example being my BMW K75, which I purchased new in 1988 and rode for 26 years over 83,000 miles.

I joined West Yorkshire Police in 1980 spending the first 9 years covering various community beats in the Huddersfield area before moving to work in Bradford. I did my first 4-week advanced 'patrol' driver course at Crofton in 1983. I found it very challenging, and I remember the approach to teaching was somewhat dated. The morning 'drill' used to make me smile. In order to keep noise to a minimum for our neighbours, all students had to present adjacent to the car doors and, on command, climb in and close doors 'simultaneously'. Failure to get it absolutely right would result in having to do it again and again until we did!

By 1989, I realised the skills I had learned on that course were somewhat diminished and so took it upon myself to undergo refreshment with the Institute of Advanced Motorists (IAM).

Front-line policing certainly alerts you to the devastating and far-reaching impact that serious and fatal road collisions have on the lives of families and communities! I'm not sure I was fully prepared for the personal and emotional trauma that closer involvement with such incidents would have on me when I joined 'Traffic' as a Bradford divisional motorcyclist in 1993. I loved the 4-week advanced motorcycle course and riding the police bike on division, and so it was with some reluctance I was eventually 'encouraged' to undergo the 4-week 'advanced driver' course to become dual trained. I have always considered driver training in West Yorkshire Police to be second to none. In addition to the 12 weeks of driver and rider training mentioned, I also did a 4-week Traffic Law course and went on to do Tactical Pursuit and Containment (TPAC) courses, Hazchem and other specialist courses and the obligatory biennial 2-week driving and riding refreshers.



After 4 years in Bradford, I was successful in my application for the Motorcycle Unit working out of Carr Gate, Wakefield. I really enjoyed my time on there and the unusual opportunities it brought in meeting Royals and celebrities through VIP escorts and involvement in regional and national police operations. From there I went onto the Motorway Section for seven years, six of which I was a Family Liaison Officer. The last two of my 30 years' police service were as the Force Roads Policing Partnerships Officer coordinating and managing the force's response to national road-policing initiatives and traffic-related intelligence.

Recognising the huge potential benefit to public drivers and motorcyclists of learning the skills I had been fortunate enough to have been taught, I had maintained my involvement with the IAM becoming an observer, training coordinator and even group chair. I was appointed as an IAM examiner in 1999 and a couple of years later I joined RoSPA as Motorcycle examiner. To date, I have conducted over 1500 advanced riding and driving tests across the two organisations. My approach to testing for both associations is virtually identical as the skills taught by both are essentially based on *Roadcraft* and differences are largely administrative. The significant difference which regularly causes me some disappointment is the graded awarding of passes offered by RoSPA where successful candidates often get upset when 'Gold' is not achieved. Grade differentiation is not an exact science and to achieve a 'pass' all the required skills must be evident to some degree, but the grade awarded generally relies on the examiner's perception regarding levels of 'consistency'. To relegate any other grade to less than an advanced pass is perplexing. My only motivation to being an examiner is to help the person in front of me to progress on their journey to becoming the best driver or rider that person can be – Period!

In fact, I consider it a real privilege to play a part in the development of a person's 'life-saving' skills and, although I do have a lot of experience, I do not consider myself 'the fount of all knowledge' and try to remain open to learning. It does sadden me, therefore, where a candidate or observer does not feel they can pick up the phone for a chat where they feel aggrieved at the outcome of a test.



You may recall a previous article (Autumn 2020) about the technological advances in motor vehicles. The new *Roadcraft* has recognised these advances. As we all know, we should give a signal whenever it could benefit other road users. *Roadcraft* has added, "You may also need to give a signal to override lane-changing technology." For the uninitiated, Lane Keep Assist does exactly that. Radar and cameras read the white lines on the road so if you wish to move from one lane to another, the technology will try and hold the vehicle between the lines, but using the indicator before making the move will negate this.

New research has found that UK drivers are switching off Advanced Driver Assistance Systems (ADAS), reducing their benefits and increasing the risk of accidents on the road. The research, of 1,387 UK drivers, found that 41% of drivers intentionally switch off safety systems such as Autonomous Emergency Braking or Lane Deviation Warning whilst driving. Nearly a quarter (24%) of drivers with ADAS-enabled vehicles said they were not provided with any information about the importance of these features and how they work when they had the vehicle handed over to them. For example, 55% were unaware that they need to be recalibrated when the windscreen is replaced and over half (52%) of drivers are unaware that the cameras may need to be recalibrated if they have been impacted by body repair work.

ADAS can help keep drivers and passengers safe, but only if the technology is switched on and operating correctly.

A University of Toronto Engineering study has found drivers can become overly reliant on the technology powering automated vehicles (AV) and will stop looking at the road.

Using an AV driving simulator and eye-tracking equipment, researchers studied two types of in-vehicle displays and their effects on the driving behaviours of 48 participants. They found that drivers' sight often drifted from looking ahead, which was especially true with a type of in-vehicle display coined as "takeover request and automation capability" (TORAC). A "takeover request" asks the driver to take vehicle control when automation is not able to handle a situation; "automation capability" indicates how close to that limit the automation is.

Drivers then find themselves in situations where, although they are not actively driving, they are still part of the driving task and they must be monitoring the vehicle and step in if the vehicle fails. No doubt these vehicles can fail and the technology on the market right now is not mature enough to the point where a driver can just let the car drive and go to sleep. We are not at that stage yet.

Tesla's AV system, for example, warns drivers every 30 seconds or so when their hands aren't detected on the wheel. This prompt can support driver engagement to some extent, but when the automation fails, driver attention and anticipation are the key factors that determine whether or not you get into a traffic accident. Even though cars are advertised right now as self-driving, they are still just partially automated and the driver should not rely on these types of vehicle automation.

In one of the team's driving scenarios, the participants were given a non-driving, self-paced task meant to mimic common distractions such as reading text messages, while takeover prompts and automation capability information were turned on. Their monitoring of the road went way down compared to the condition where these features were turned off. Automated vehicles and takeover requests can give people a false sense of security, especially if they work most of the time. People are going to end up looking away and doing something non-driving related.

The researchers also tested a second in-vehicle display system that added information on surrounding traffic to the data provided by the TORAC system, called STTORAC. These displays showed more promise in ensuring driving safety. STTORAC provides drivers with ongoing information about their surrounding driving environment, including highlighting potential traffic conflicts on the road. This type of display led to the shortest reaction time in scenarios where drivers had to take over control of the vehicle, showing a significant improvement from both the TORAC and the no-display conditions. Adding information on surrounding traffic kept drivers better engaged in monitoring and anticipating traffic conflicts.

In August last year, the government launched a consultation that could pave the way to driverless cars being introduced on British roads as early as 2021.

Technology is possibly going to fight the war against drink-driving. The Parliamentary Advisory Council for Transport Safety are conducting research into the use of an interlock system fitted to vehicles which would mean drivers had to take a breathalyser test before the engine would start. This system is already being used in other countries.



Somerset County Council has spent £70,000 to redesign a stretch of road after a number of vehicles equipped with ADAS mistook it for a wall. The issue caused vehicles to apply emergency braking and resulted in some leaving the road altogether in a bid to avoid what the vehicle had computed to be an obstruction. The problem was a cattle grid which was level but on a steep hill, so the car sensors detected it as a solid object. The only solution was to re-profile about 90 feet of the road to take out the sudden change of gradient.



It is however an offence to be drunk in charge of a motor vehicle which would be the case the moment the driver enters the vehicle. If for example the driver blew a positive test then decided to sleep it off until such times as a negative test allowed the vehicle to be driven, the driver could still be deemed to be in charge of the vehicle.
Editor

THE NEW ALL-ELECTRIC Corsa-e

Martin Jones

The government have committed to the UK to bring all greenhouse gas emissions to 'net zero' by 2050, and local councils are trying to push that date to 2030, so it seems electric cars are here to stay. In fact, is there any point in anyone wanting to purchase a new vehicle that is not all electric? After all, even a hybrid could be unusable in some cities and it could soon be of little value.

There are over 30,000 public charging points at 11,000 locations throughout the UK with many of those in places such as supermarket car parks being free. With the Office for Low Emission Vehicles (OLEV) offering grants for home chargers, topping up the battery at home when the car is not being used is obviously more convenient than calling at a petrol station. OLEV are also offering £3,000 grants towards the purchase of a new electric car so this all makes the switch to electric more attractive. I already know my vehicle usage is not suited to owning an electric car because I tow a caravan. Electric cars which are capable of the task are few and far between and those with the capability are far too expensive.

I thought the best thing to do was try one myself, and fortunately, Vauxhall recently advertised a 48-hour test drive of a new Corsa-e, so I decided to take the opportunity and see what all the fuss was about. I read a couple of motoring reviews, and although they are not incorrect they are the writers' opinion, so this is mine.



After a couple of false starts with the dealership, I collected the Corsa-e from Wakefield. After viewing an instructional video in the showroom, the salesman answered all my questions. He told me he leaves the regenerative braking feature on and uses the car in Eco mode to achieve the greatest range. As he unplugged it from the wall socket outside the showroom, he advised me the car was fully charged. The fuel gauge did show full but indicated the car had a range of 149 miles, yet Vauxhall advertise a range of up to 209 miles.



Whilst the exterior of the car looked like a very usual and fairly common hatchback, it does have five doors and alloy wheels. It is the same shape as the petrol 1.2 Corsa, which sells at prices from £17k, although I did find one for a little under £14k. The interior was quite bland, apart from the steering wheel having a rather pointless, flat bottom edge, but it did have a 10" infotainment system. It should have really, as the car is the top-of-the-range Elite model costing £30,665 including the OLEV grant. It has some not-unexpected features, such as lane keep assist, cruise control, speed limiter, blind spot monitor and parking sensors, which are becoming standard on most new cars, and these took very little to get used to.

Although the car has the now-familiar start button, it doesn't actually start it, but merely turns it on. At first it's a bit disconcerting not hearing the engine, but as it was raining and I had the fan on I could only hear that. Having had an automatic for the last year, I didn't have to get used to not changing gear as the car doesn't actually have any. It's really just forward or backwards drive or stop with a lever to engage. The regenerative braking system works off kinetic energy using some deceleration but mainly braking. I quickly realised, as an advanced driver my observations are above average and my anticipation meant less braking. In my opinion, the regenerative braking system was not giving the batteries much extra charge.

During the 48-hour test, I realised I was completely focused on the fuel gauge. Although the gauge itself was consistent, the mileage left until a charge was required was not. On the second day, I started with 111 miles left but after a ten-mile journey this went up to 118 miles. I decided to forget Eco for a bit and switched to Sport mode. The car did have some wheel spin at first but it held the road well, and Vauxhall's

quoted acceleration, 0–60 in 7.6 seconds, is probably correct and definitely helps to define the car as a hot hatch.

I managed to travel 100 miles during the two days over a mix of roads and speed limits including some motorway and city driving, where I believe this car is probably best put to use. At the end of the test, I still had about one-third of the energy left in the batteries but only 49 miles left before a charge was required. I worked out a more-realistic total range of 150 miles.

Vauxhall will install the home charger for £299. There are various apps to locate one of the public charging points but it wasn't worth me wasting 30 minutes sat waiting for a charge. The batteries on the Corsa-e are guaranteed for eight years. Estimates are they will last for 10 to 20 years, and although the cost to replace batteries is falling, it will still be an expensive job. Some public-charging operators are already starting to require payment, and it could end up costing three times the amount of a charge at home. A quick comparison shows the two days I had the Corsa-e could have cost me about the same as refuelling a Corsa 1.2 petrol for the same 100 miles. How long before the electric car owner has to pay Vehicle Excise Duty? The Isle of Man is already charging, and we know how our government seems to take the lead from others.

I would like to be in a position to even consider an electric car if it suited my needs. Although the car itself is quite unremarkable, it is ideal for a daily commute. Compared with the 1.2 petrol model, paying twice the price for the electric version does not compute for me. It is not guaranteed to last any longer than petrol or diesel cars and there are obviously no depreciation figures available. There are too many what-ifs for me at the moment. Still, never say never!

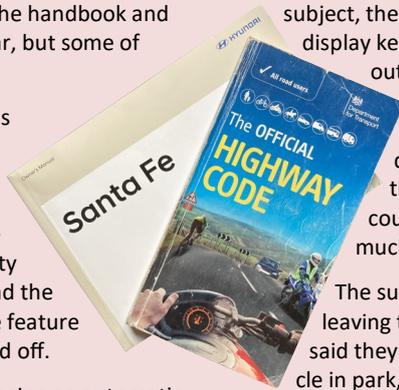
Just Read the Instructions - Martin Jones

As advanced drivers and riders, we know all about reading signs and following instructions, but this is a different category to following IKEA instructions. You can't disassemble your last drive and go back to the previous stage. Probably the most important part of your vehicle is the handbook. It's usually kept in the glovebox and in most cases has never been opened. I am on a couple of Facebook groups and recent questions have highlighted this. I know full well some people don't like to read the handbook and sometimes the instructions are not always clear, but some of the questions have surprised me.

One person couldn't understand why their car's Forward Collision Assist kept activating and described it as being a bit keen. I said perhaps keeping a safer distance from the vehicle in front would do the trick. The response was the driver likes to drive fast but didn't like the safety feature intervention. Had they bothered to read the handbook they would have quickly learned the feature can be set as active, warning or simply switched off.

Another question was about the latest model being an automatic and wondered if owners, when stopping their vehicle, then select neutral or park or simply hold it on the footbrake. Quite a few responded with the advice to simply set Auto Hold, with some saying to select neutral and others saying park. I once again gave my opinion using my knowledge of the car but also from an advanced driver's viewpoint and said the vehicle should be stopped using the footbrake and, therefore, illuminating the brake lights which would warn following traffic. If stopped for more than a few seconds and if traffic behind was stationary then the electronic parking brake should be activated. Activating Auto Hold would leave the brake lights illuminated and against Highway Code advice that a driver MUST NOT use lights in a way that would dazzle or cause discomfort to another road user.

Another member said their car was over-revving, and they were not at all happy with its performance so had returned it to the dealer. Although no faults were found, the owner was still not happy but had then discovered the gearbox had different settings. The driver likes sport mode but in the next breath makes comment about the poor fuel economy. I pointed out that the car has a smart setting which decides if it should be in eco, comfort or sport mode depending on how it is being driven. On the same subject, the driver wanted to know why when in smart mode the display kept changing colour from green to blue. It was pointed out the settings are colour-coded for ease of recognition, and at the touch of a switch it can even display in each setting if it is being driven economically or dynamically. I advised I had spent a morning reading through the manual to gain as much knowledge as I could about the car. The response was, "Books are too much like hard work."



The subject of putting the automatic gearbox in park when leaving the vehicle was also discussed at great length. Some said they never use the parking brake but simply left the vehicle in park, which is totally against the advice of the manual.

The thread soon concluded when I pointed out it was not only unsafe to just leave the vehicle in park but it is illegal to fail to set the parking brake.

Surprisingly, a retired police officer asked if it is an offence to park a 3000kg van on a 30mph road without displaying lights during the hours of darkness. Another retired police officer for some reason directed his question to traffic police officers and said he drives on motorways at 70mph-ish but is frequently overtaken by other vehicles so if he kept his speed at 75/80mph, is he likely to get stopped by a traffic car?

I will let you decide on the last two points.

If you have any questions you can email them to me at torque@wyg-roadar.org.uk



DocBike is a relatively new charity which combines the highly qualified skills of a doctor or critical care paramedic with two wheels, aimed at reducing deaths and serious injuries on our roads due to motorcycle collisions.

When motorcyclists are involved in a collision at speed, often the injuries are catastrophic, and no amount of medical care can save a person's life. This is why a lot of the DocBike charity's time is invested in preventing motorcyclists from being in a collision in the first place.

Working together with emergency services all across the UK, it is the aim of DocBike to be associated with every air ambulance charity around the country. The enthusiasm of local bikers, colleagues in the emergency services and other agencies throughout the UK means the charity is expanding rapidly.

Before DocBike became a charity, the project was set up by Dr Ian Mew, an air ambulance Intensive Care Consultant, and PC Chris Smith QPM, a police motorcyclist, advanced police motorcycle instructor and Family Liaison Officer with Dorset Police. Both recognised that more lives could be saved by investing time and effort in preventing motorcyclists from being involved in a collision, than trying to pick up the pieces and support the loved ones and families of motorcyclists after they had crashed.

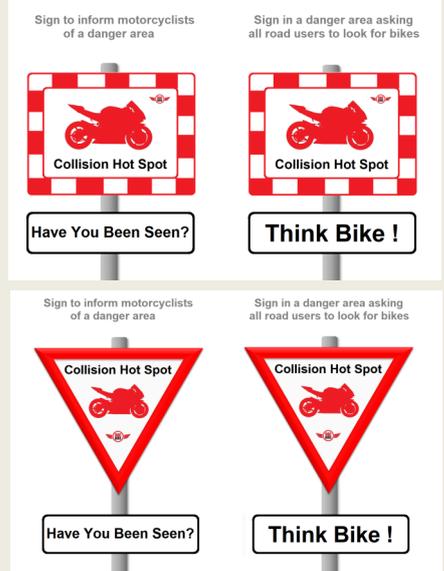
DocBike uses research and evidence base to formulate its approach to preventing motorcycle collisions from happening in the future. A study carried out in 2015 showed that in 74% of all collisions which resulted in the motorcyclist's death or serious injury, the crash could have been avoided altogether, if we had equipped the motorcyclists with the abilities to recognise the warning signs when they're riding and given them the skills to avoid the crash. This number increases to 81% when accounting only for motorcycles of over 500cc, the predominant group involved in serious crashes. This doesn't mean that the motorcyclist is entirely to blame. Often they have the right of way but, through the last module on a Biker Down course, a BikeSafe course or by encouraging riders to become more skilful in their riding, we can give them the knowledge, awareness and abilities to avoid a collision, even when it's not their fault.



DocBike has some very bold injury prevention aims:

- To eradicate all motorcycle related deaths in the UK
- To significantly reduce or eradicate all critical injuries caused by motorcycle crashes
- To help motorcyclists become more skilful riders, to avoid being in a crash

DocBike are hoping to launch new road signs this Spring, aimed at preventing motorcycle accidents and asked road users to vote for a suitable sign. The two options are below.



(As the only road signs to use an inverted triangle are a Give-Way and advanced STOP sign and easily recognisable not only from a distance but also from the rear, I hope they do not choose the bottom option. Editor)

For more information and to see if you can help out www.docbike.org



My last article recalled a particularly enjoyable Friday afternoon in late February when I drove many miles into the depths of rural Shropshire to view and ultimately buy a very cheap Focus ST170.

Unfortunately, the coronavirus pandemic intervened rather abruptly shortly thereafter and I realised, on reflection, that afternoon in February, filled with the V6 sound of my Rover 75 and the smell of a damp old Ford, was one of my last 'normal' outings before everything changed.

I wasn't expecting my first two months of ST170 ownership to start with it being sat on my driveway, SORN in place, while I drove nowhere for the duration of lockdown. I did, however, spend the time sorting through various issues, running it up to temperature weekly and releasing the handbrake every couple of days to ensure it was ready to go once restrictions were lifted.

When that time came, it was a great feeling to get back behind the wheel and enjoy driving the car again. I used it extensively through the summer months, re-learning driving after my longest break off the road since I'd passed my test in 1998. With fewer restrictions still in place and the ability to travel further, we started doing longer family day trips to the coast, with the ST170 being my first choice for these longer drives. It clocked up a fair few miles in that time, visiting locations on both the North East and North West coasts. It wasn't the quietest motorway cruiser, but once on A and B roads it really came into its own with a level of driver engagement most modern cars fail to offer.

However, this was a very cheap ST170 and I had always expected running repairs. A wheel bearing and localised repair to the exhaust downpipe started things off. Then a leaky shock absorber, a grumpy O₂ sensor and a boot that filled itself with water. Two slow punctures also joined the mix. A trip to the tyre centre revealed that one of these must have been driven totally flat at some point. Although visually fine from the outside, viewed from the inside the tyre wall had a very worrying crack around the entire circumference. I'm very glad I got this looked at early on and it yet again highlighted the importance of getting old tyres on a used car properly inspected.



I persisted with repairs and it was running well enough ahead of our break in North Wales to be our holiday car. The weather was glorious and 500 fantastically enjoyable miles followed. Despite its condition in some areas, I always felt the engine was particularly strong on my example and it really thrived on revs, delivering a decent kick above 5,000 rpm when the inlet manifold opened fully, giving that extra ounce of performance.

However, clouds were forming on the horizon. Steering rack failure is common on these cars and all signs were pointing to this being the case for mine. Additionally, a front brake had started to bind, the exhaust downpipe was blowing again and that O₂ sensor still wasn't happy. I'd only intended this as a short-term car and, having enjoyed nearly 3,000 miles with it, decided to move it on.

Advertised as 'spares or repair' on eBay, the car generated a huge response, including contact from a previous owner who'd spotted the advert. It sold in 3 days to a fast Ford specialist in Nottingham who intended to fix it up and continue to run it; happily, I note it's showing as taxed for 12 months which must be a good sign.

I might well regret selling in years to come when ST170s undoubtedly go the same route as all other performance Fords and become hugely valuable; maybe I gave away my pension pot! On the other hand, I was able to experience a car I'd always admired for very little outlay. With the weather cooling and autumn well on its way, my thoughts turned to a car for winter. Something nice and warm and perhaps a bit more sensible. I have something in mind which fits the bill perfectly, but more on that next time.



Who are the Queens of the Queensbury Mountains?



Linzi Sorenson - QQoM Communications officer explains.

Queensbury Queens of the Mountain CC (QQoM) is an all-female cycling club which aims to encourage more women to get out on their bikes. We have members who are aged from 17 to over 70. We are an inclusive, friendly bunch of encouraging and supportive women with a healthy appetite for cycling, and cater for the road riders, the gnarly mountain biker and everything in between.



Believed to be the highest cycling club in the country, QQoM asserts that cycling in fresh air surrounded by beautiful scenery is the best form of meditation and our vision is to promote women's cycling from beginner to professional level. We've seen our membership grow this year due to the rise in interest with cycling during the pandemic.

One of our most popular rides for members of the club is our monthly Saturday social that stays mainly on Spen Valley Greenway, a disused railway that was converted into a tar-macked walking and cycling trail. Not having to worry about motorised traffic is a wonderful thing as a cyclist and, even on the busiest of days, negotiating with pedestrians, dogs and horses is easier than potholes, gutters filled with all kinds of rubbish and, of course, vehicles. So why, many motorists are sat there asking, do cyclists not use the cycle lanes where they are provided?

Well, the reasons are numerous: there can be a lot of stopping and starting as the cycle lane crosses a junction that wouldn't be a concern when on the road, and this slows down the cyclist's journey but also adds to the anxiety as there can be so many directions traffic

could come from to check it's safe to cross; many purpose-built segregated cycle lanes pass closely by busy bus stops where waiting or disembarking passengers need to be negotiated; the condition of the cycle paths can be quite poor as, while there may be fewer potholes than on the road, they're often littered with loose gravel, glass and lots of painted lines or studs which are slippery when wet.

I want to share an account of a member of our club cycling to work at a Leeds hospital along the CityConnect route from Bradford, as I think it sums up the situation in one event. Our club member, who is an ICU nurse, had never ridden the route before because, despite being a fit, experienced cyclist, after a 12-hour shift that long a cycle ride can be too much, but on this occasion she was going in for a shorter shift and the weather was good. As she cycled along, she slipped several times on the gravel in the cycle lane so chose to move onto the smoother road surface. At a set of traffic lights, a lorry pulled up alongside her and the driver shouted at her to get back in the cycle lane. She shouted back to explain why she was back on the road and burst into tears; it can be quite intimidating being a small cyclist next to a big wagon. The lorry driver suddenly apologised, his tone softened and said of course she must ride where she feels safest. I share this to illustrate two points: the perception of cyclists and the state of the cycle lanes. There seems to be a growing number of motorists who just dislike, some angrily despise, cyclists regardless of who they are and how they cycle, and feel that cyclists should not be on the road especially if there is a cycle lane to use, and in some cases will try and demonstrate the point by deliberately driving close to the cyclist or shouting at them to make them fearful. Once a cyclist is then seen as a human being, it can so change the perception. Every cyclist is a human being. Yes, some do stupid things like running red lights, cycling the wrong way down a road or riding without lights in the dark (I should note here that even other cyclists hate this behaviour, not just motorists)

but every cyclist, like every motorist, is just trying to get from A to B as safely and quickly as possible. The difference is the cyclist is more vulnerable because they're not encased in a whole lot of metal. Many cyclists also drive so they know how it is to be stuck behind a cyclist for a few seconds until it's safe to pass, but they also know what it's like to feel a car or a bus or a lorry pass inches away from you or at high speed (or worse, both) and so don't do it. They know how easily a pothole could take out a cyclist who may need a bit of room in case of a last-minute manoeuvre, they know only too well how a car door can be flung open at the wrong moment, so when they are behind the wheel of a motor vehicle they show the respect to a cyclist that they would like.

We'd like nothing more than to travel around on safe, traffic-free routes, but know that we're a long way off countries like the Netherlands and Denmark and for now are just trying to share the roads that were designed to be used by all road users. It's going to take some compromise on all our parts to make it happen and some excellent civil engineers and developers to get it right, but we're ever hopeful.



Meet the tutor – Colin Clark

Leaving school at 16 in 1967, with more interest in sport than academia, I started a mechanical fitter/turner apprenticeship with Rowntree & Co, York, serving a 5-year apprenticeship within the company before moving into their Printing and Card Box manufacturing maintenance department. I passed my motorcycle test at the first attempt in 1968 and bought a BSA A7 for £35.

My interest in sport, particularly rugby union, gave me the opportunity while at Rowntree & Co to spend 4 weeks at Outward Bound school in the Lake District, where hiking, climbing and sailing became further activity interests which I maintain to a small degree up to today. In 1978, having married, the opportunity to travel and work became available and I moved out to Israel, living in Bethlehem on the occupied West Bank (Palestine) and working as maintenance manager at the Mount David Hospital for children in Bethlehem. Whilst out there, rugby was also a large part of my social and sporting scene, and I gained representative honours at the 15-a-side code. Great times playing with and against several international players from around the world. The country was a little freer than apparently today.

On returning to the UK in 1981 and as engineering was no longer for me, I took up sales representation and found a real niche in industrial coatings (paint), becoming involved with the construction industry and with many blue-chip companies and projects, including nuclear power stations, structural steel fabrication works, football and rugby stadia, and onshore and offshore oil and gas production, meeting people from all corners of the construction process and making many friends. Entertaining was expected and on one particular day we were able to enjoy the company of several customers while watching The North beat the touring Australian rugby team at Otley in 1988. Changing companies in 1997 still within the coating industry but changing the customer base, fire protection became a specialisation until 2008 when I took voluntary redundancy and early retirement.

My love of rugby union took me down the coaching route after finally giving up taking the hits at the age of 40. I was fortunate enough to be involved with North Yorkshire District RFU and Yorkshire RFU to coach for several years many of the District and County age-group squads at U16s, U17s, U18s and through to managing the Yorkshire U20s squad to the U20 National finals at Twickenham. During this time I enjoyed a few seasons with the North of England U16 player selection and England U16 age-group selection talent identification. It was extremely satisfying seeing many players developing, with several becoming full-time Rugby Union Premiership and Championship players through the process. I also coached at a local independent school on a part-time basis during their rugby season 4 days a week, and spent 10 seasons working with York St John University men's rugby union squads.

On the motorcycling front, my early years were on British bikes culminating with the one that got away – my [BSA DB32](#) 350cc Gold Star – can you believe it? Bought for £90 and sold for £130. I dipped in and out of motorcycling, never seriously, until achieving a lifelong ambition in 2005, buying a BMW R1150 RT on eBay.

Riding the bike back to York from Bishop Stortford, I realised the roads were a much more dangerous place for a motorcyclist than in my early years. That was when I found advanced rider training and went down the IAM route, meeting the young and ambitious Jon Browne (now one of WYG's Diploma holders). Jon enthused me with his natural manner, once having to give me and the bike a push start when it stalled in John Smith's car park when doing figure-of-8 training plus smooth controlled stopping. (Do you remember the Uber waggon, Jon?)

Rugby continued to get in the way, and after failing my IAM test I eventually found a RoSPA group in East Yorkshire. Their coaching was much more to my liking and marrying my own thought processes. It was not until the Advanced Riders North Yorkshire (ARNY) group started that I finally took the RoSPA Test achieving a Bronze on a really wet day and being very disappointed. One month later, I re-took the test gaining Gold, which I have continued to maintain since. ARNY then asked me to become a group tutor. My rugby commitments had diminished so this became my latest challenge and one which has become a thoroughly enjoyable experience. Moving on to an Advance Tutor I looked for a new experience, and to satisfy my inquisitive nature I applied for the IAM test and obtained a First Pass. Continuing to seek a challenge or affirmation that my riding standard is kept to a high level, I followed the IAM Masters programme in 2014, having to travel up to the North East Durham area to take the test. This 2-hour ride test on unfamiliar roads takes the format very similar to a RoSPA test. I found the Masters Mentoring programme a challenge, taking me out of my comfort zone, and I learnt much from the mentor and about myself and riding techniques, resulting in passing the test with distinction.

In 2017, I attended a Biker Down course at Tadcaster fire station, meeting up with Jon Browne again and I applied to join West Yorkshire Group. After taking a tutor assessment ride with Pete Fenlon and an associate, I was accepted into the group. All part of my personal and professional development ethos. I continue to look for areas that can be considered a type or style of CPDs in order to try and keep informed with modern or different methods. Fortunately my sporting background and contacts do help particularly in the training, coaching and tutoring spheres.

Unfortunately, this year's motorcycling tutoring and personal trips have had to be curtailed due to the COVID-19 restrictions. This prevented my partner Maureen and me from taking our planned tour through Germany, Czechia, Hungary, Romania, Slovakia and Poland, taking around 6 weeks and something in the region of 6,000 miles. We can, however, look back on previous tours with fond memories. We are being positive and have taken a chance on booking a short tour back to one of our favourite areas for 2021, the Harz Mountains in Northern Germany. We do hope to extend the trip given a change in the environment.



CAR TUTORS WANTED

West Yorkshire RoADAR are looking to increase membership to a more diverse group of associates wishing to improve their driving and riding so if you know anyone who wishes to join please give them details of our group.

In order to train this potential new influx, the group needs more car tutors. If you are a gold standard driver, have some spare time and want to improve your own knowledge, you could become a group approved car tutor.

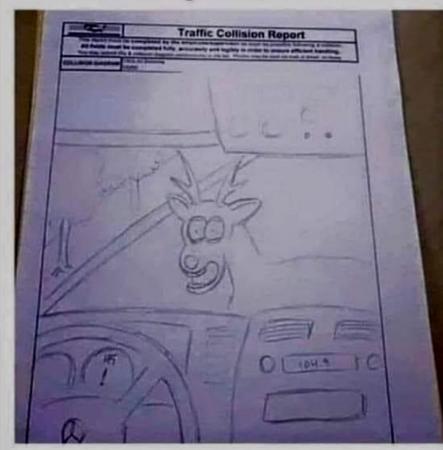
You can contact our group car training officer for more information.

Mike Bell 07836 227834 mfb999@hotmail.com



The driver of this car in Tennessee, had a lucky escape when it left the road, struck a fence and the guy line to the electric pole. She was rescued by the fire service after two hours of being suspended from the high voltage power cables. There was no damage to the pole or electricity supply and the driver was not under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

When the insurance company wants a diagram of the accident



Advanced Drivers and Riders

Passed RoSPA Advanced Driving Test

NO CAR TESTS HELD
Drivers

Passed RoSPA Advanced Motorcycle Test

NO BIKE TESTS HELD
Riders

Have you looked at our group website recently?

Does it need an upgrade? Is it user friendly?
Perhaps you are a professional or amateur website designer. If so and you feel you may be able to help out, please contact the secretary.

secretary@wyg-roadar.org.uk



Get prepared for Census 2021

Census Day will be Sunday 21 March 2021

Personal Electric Vehicles

Electric bikes, known as electrically assisted pedal cycles (EAPCs), have been around some time now and are perfectly legal to ride on the road without the rider having insurance or a licence, providing the rider is over 14 years of age, and the motor is not more than 250 watts and is not capable of propelling the bike at more than 15.5mph. So it can be ridden wherever a normal pedal cycle can be ridden.

Powered transporters are a more-recent invention with the Segway probably the most well known and now the e-scooter, recently in the press with pressure to legalise their use on pavements. The government classes these the same as motor vehicles as they are mechanically propelled, so the same laws apply. This is purely because there is no specifically designed regime for the powered transporter. EAPCs do not fall into this category as they have their own regulatory framework.



Section 72 of the Highways Act 1835 states it is an offence to ride on, or to lead or draw a carriage on a pavement. The exceptions to this are mobility scooters and wheelchairs, but note that pushchairs, prams and shopping trolleys are not mentioned. More recently, section 34 of the 1988 Road Traffic Act states mechanically propelled vehicles are forbidden from using footpaths, bridleways or restricted byways. Powered transporters are prohibited from using cycle tracks, cycle lanes on roads, or other spaces dedicated for the use of pedal cycles according to section 21(1) of the 1988 Road Traffic Act. Prosecutions under these Acts for the use of powered transporters have been successful.

The e-scooter is likely to change the laws, and already they are being trialled in various cities throughout the UK with exemptions to the laws. There are obvious problems, mainly because of the way they are used and by whom. The primary function of the e-scooter is to provide a means of transport in an urban area to those wishing to travel from one place to another without the need to use a less eco-friendly means of transport or having to walk. Another reason could be it may be more expedient to use a powered transporter.

Mobility scooters are exempt from the restrictions so can be used on a footpath, mainly because of the user's disability but also because their speed is restricted. This is to a maximum of 4mph for class 2 and 4mph on the footpath or 8mph on the road for class 3 invalid carriages. As there have already been accidents in other countries then it would seem the most sensible thing is to restrict the speed of the e-scooter so it could be used on the footpath, which might curtail its use for those wanting to rush about. As regards the use of the e-scooter on a road, then this could and should fall into the same category as the EAPC as there are moves to have them restricted to 15.5mph.

The city of York is one of those currently trialling the e-scooter for a year so let's see how that goes.

