

Open Roads

ROADAR NORTH-EAST

Special points of interest:

- Welcome to the eighth issue of "Open Roads".
- News flash: Peter passed his test
- News flash: Tutoring resumes

WELCOME TO OPEN ROADS

This is the latest issue of the "Open Roads" newsletter for RoadAR North-East members. Its YOUR newsletter, and we would welcome any input that you may want to suggest.

Maybe a quiz page, or a facts and figures area, meeting dates, or events locally or nationally that you may be interested in?

All this and more can be incorporated into the newsletter but for it to be a success it needs input, not just from me but from everyone.

Each issue will have some offers on for all riders and drivers, so please watch this space.

But come on you all must have some tips or anecdotes on riding, or even a favourite ride, I would love to hear from you for your 5 minutes of fame in the newsletter.

News Flash

Peter passed his test! Your esteemed Secretary and Newsletter Editor has taken his test and got a solid Silver, which although is not gold, it is a working point to get there, if and when I have a tutor.

Tutoring resumes: You should already know that RoadAR have given permission for us to resume tutoring both on motorcycles and cars, provided tutor and tutee are satisfied its safe, and appropriate safety measures are in place. **For further information click the "covid" link on our website.** If you wish to continue or re-start please talk to your tutor or our driver training secretary. Or contact us via the website.

No meetings for now: Due to the virus our meetings were suspended at rather short notice in March this year, and while the situation is improving the committee has decided to leave things as they are until the AGM so that we can see how the control of the virus proceeds, and whether HM government guidelines are still affecting us. Meantime we rely on our website, email and (as a last resort) telephone to keep you informed.

"Words from the webmaster"

Our website <https://roadar-northeast.org.uk/> is currently in development, so there may be occasional teething problems. It has a page with some useful links - including a link to apply for your test! There is a public folder, and also a folder of "member" documents that you may find useful or informative. To access these you will need this very secure password - **northeast**

If you have suggestions for additional documents you would find useful, or for the website, please let me know. John Errington webmaster@roadar-northeast.org.uk

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Safety tips for driving in the dark

Driving in the dark can pose extra challenges, so stay safe with these tips.

There's no doubt that driving in the dark is more dangerous.

A 2017 survey by ROSPA revealed that 40% of all collisions occur in the hours of darkness. And 20% of serious accidents on motorways and monotonous roads in the UK are caused by falling asleep behind the wheel. The main reasons behind this is because of reduced visibility and increased difficulty in judging speed and distance. This isn't helped by reduced street lighting. Research from Confused.com reveals that over a third of the UK's street lights are dimmed and 12% are switched off completely, making driving at night even more difficult.

Top tips for safer night driving:

- **Eye health:** It's vital to have your sight checked regularly as this will show up any underlying eye problems such as cataracts or glaucoma that may affect your night vision. Never wear dark or tinted lenses for night driving.
- **Keep windows clean** to avoid increased glare and condensation.
- **Don't dazzle others** - dip your lights when faced with another road user.
- **Use your lights** –help drivers see you in twilight by turning your headlights on before sunset and keeping them on for an hour after sunrise.
- **Be aware** that other road users may behave erratically, so be prepared to give them more space.
- **Watch out for pedestrians**, especially near pubs and clubs around closing time.
- **Allow more time** for your own journey, so you're not driving under pressure.
- If you can, dim your dashboard lights and reduce reflections and avoid reducing your night vision.

When should I turn on my headlights?

The Institute of Advanced Motorists advises turning your headlights on before sunset and keeping them on for an hour after sunrise so it's easier for other drivers to see you in twilight.

Make sure all your exterior lights are clean and working properly and keep your interior lights turned off.

And although it's always important to **make sure you can stop within the distance you can see to be clear**, after dark this is especially the case.

Coping with headlight glare

On rural roads, drive on full beam whenever possible but dip your lights when faced with another road user to avoid dazzling them.

“And if you're dazzled by an oncoming car then avoid looking at the headlights,” urges driving instructor Colin Baker.

“Keep your attention on the left-hand kerb and try to keep your speed steady. Avoid driving along at 50mph, dropping to 40mph when there's oncoming traffic and then speeding up again. It makes it very confusing for drivers travelling behind you. It's better to aim for a speed you can maintain such as 45mph and sticking to it, even if there are times you could go faster.”

Clear your windscreen

Make sure your car windows are clean, inside and out. Dirty windows will increase glare from other vehicles and are more prone to steaming up.

Study the road ahead

Read the road ahead for signs of oncoming drivers – glimmers of light at the top of hills and at bends could be the headlights of other vehicles, giving you prior warning.

And watch out for pedestrians and cyclists – after dark they can be more difficult to spot, especially if they're not wearing reflective clothing.

Take regular breaks

It's always advisable to take regular breaks when driving long distances, but this is even more vital when you're driving overnight.

Stop for a rest at least every two hours and drink strong coffee to keep yourself alert.

<http://roadar-northeast.org.uk/>

**R O A D A R N O R T H -
E A S T**

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Please send any inclusions for the “Open Roads” newsletter to the Secretary at the following email address:-

secretary@roadar-northeast.org.uk

We are the local group of RoSPA Advanced Drivers and Riders (RoADAR); a team of volunteers promoting safe and more rewarding Driving and Riding through improved skills.

As one of over fifty regional groups throughout the UK, we provide the training and support you need to pass the RoADAR Advanced Driving or Riding test, and become a full member of the national RoADAR organisation.

We are a non-profit organisation whose members pay a small annual subscription to cover the running costs of the the group. Training for members is free.

Everyone involved in the group participates on a volunteer basis. The Driving and Riding tutors give up their time for free to pass on their valuable skills and knowledge.

This picture of the poppies is displayed as a mark of respect to all those who have already given the ultimate sacrifice in these testing times. Sadly this includes our valued tutor Phil Graham, and member Peter Stainsby.

These poppies were photographed at Burdon Rise, near Ryhope.
(if you have a problem with that then contact me directly—PO Secretary)

