



LAM BUNKER NEWS

Edition 11



Sad News - Grahame Ottewell

Geoff Russell



Geoff Russell one of our wonderful Observers, Trainers and Local Observer Assessor has unfortunately died.

Geoff had been ill for some time and had been having hospital treatment and home treatment. Despite all this he had still been active during the Covid shutdowns producing the Bunker Bulletins and the Training Supplements alongside myself.

Those of you who knew Geoff will know that he was a most generous, warm, wise and humorous person. He brought to the group his working skills of teaching, training and assessing. Geoff put a lot of energy into the group and particularly the training and observing side of things. Geoff and myself would swap material for checking, he was so meticulous. He had some wonderful training ideas and one of his classroom sessions included a cardboard car that he and his wife Glynis had made. Geoff then played the part of the observer wearing his Hawaiian T shirt to show what an observer should not be wearing. He had a magic way of putting things across to associates and trainee observers without telling them off.

Geoff will be missed for many reasons, not least as a genuine friend to a lot of group members including myself.

Weird & Wonderful Facts About UK Roads

Around the world, there are some incredibly strange and peculiar roads, which can make driving in other countries an interesting experience. A lot of drivers believe that the UK's roads are much more 'normal' than the roads that many other countries have, but actually, that's not the case. While many of our roads are just plain and boring, we do have some rather interesting roads and road history in the UK...

Wondering what makes our roads special? Then read on to hear the first weird and wonderful fact about our roads.

Swindon's Magic Roundabout has to be one of the UK's most terrifying roundabouts to drive through. You have to see this to believe it.

Made up of 1 central and five satellite mini roundabouts, each connecting to the next, the



Magic Roundabout is on the map as one of the UK's most terrifying roads. It's hard enough navigating one roundabout, let alone navigating up to five in one succession.

On the upside, because this network of roundabouts is so confusing, traffic moves incredibly slowly, which means that there are hardly ever any accidents, which is a bonus of having such a complex roundabout system in place.

Speed cameras – the facts

Speed cameras are one of the most contentious points of motoring for a great many drivers. Whether you see their benefits or not, you'll have to learn to live with them, so it is advisable to know all you can on the topic to ensure you stay safe and legal.

The first speed camera – or safety camera, to use the official terminology – was installed on the A316 over Twickenham Bridge in 1992. It was a Gatso device, and the trigger speed was set at 60mph: the A416 had a 40mph speed limit. 22 days after being turned on, it caught nearly 23,000 drivers speeding at over 65mph.

Why do we have speed cameras?

Figures from the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) reveal that inappropriate speed plays a contributing factor in 11% of all injuries, 15% of serious injuries and 24% of deaths on the road. Almost 350 people are killed each year on the UK's roads – with over 2,500 seriously injured – simply because drivers and riders travel too fast.

In 2018, exceeding the speed limit resulted in 12% of all fatal road accidents. 177 people died as a result of speeding according to RoSPA, which argues high speeds make a driver less likely to react to what's happening around them. To help combat this, speed cameras are often placed in notoriously accident-prone areas, to have the most significant impact on reducing speed related injuries and deaths.

Where does the money go?

Since 2000, local authorities have been able to keep a proportion of the money raised by speed cameras, to fund regional schemes. This led to the establishment of safety camera partnerships between councils and the police, partly funded by the government - although in 2007, funding for these was reduced, and cut further in 2010, leading many regions to turn off speed cameras.

Can I drive 10% + 2 above the speed limit and not get caught?

Fixed speed cameras have a set trigger for catching people speeding, however, it is unconfirmed what most are set at so it's not worth gambling and assuming they give you 10% - never exceed the speed limit.

Mobile speeding cameras are operated by individuals, so it is up to their discretion to issue you a speeding fine - or worse - if you are over the legal speed limit. The law states that you are liable for a speeding fine as soon as you exceed the limit, so if you're doing 31mph in a 30 limit or 71mph on a motorway, you're breaking the law and could receive a fine.

The National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) recommends giving drivers a so-called '10% plus 2' leeway, to aid police officers in using 'discretion'; however, this is just a recommendation, not the law.

It is well worth remembering this is totally dependent on the officer who catches the speeder, and it is up to that officer whether to fine the offender or not. The best advice is to not speed full stop.

How far away can speed cameras catch you from?

Current speed camera technology allows detailed video and images of drivers to be taken from up to one kilometre away. Most cameras, however, use markings on the road to measure distance over time and determine your speed. SPECS average speed cameras can calculate average speed over distances between 75 metres and 20 kilometres. They appear in sequence on motorways at least 200 metres apart. Advanced cameras capable of capturing images and videos of drivers up to one kilometre away have been nicknamed 'Long Rangers'. A successful trial in November 2018 saw 1,293 speeding drivers caught by Gloucester Police and could trigger a national roll-out.



Number of young drivers plunges to record low



The number of young people qualified to get behind the wheel has dropped to the lowest level ever recorded, with driving lessons and tests suspended due to the Covid-19 pandemic. There are currently just 2.97 million people aged 16-25 who hold a full driving licence in Britain, down from 3.32 million in March 2020, analysis of Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) data by PA news agency reveals.

This is the lowest number of young people on the roads since records began in November 2012 when there were 3.42 million drivers aged 25 and under. The decline is sharper than the fall in the total number of young people in Britain over the same period.

Director of the RAC Foundation, Steve Gooding, said recent rises in the number of people holding provisional licences suggest "the appetite for driving" has not diminished among young people, but they are facing significant hurdles when it comes to passing their test. "Perhaps we shouldn't be surprised by this fall in the number of full licence holders aged 25 and under in a year where the Covid-19 pandemic increased financial pressures for many, meant driving lessons and driving tests had to be suspended, and resulted in more young people being locked down in their family home," he added.

A Department for Transport survey in 2019 found the most common reasons for 17 to 20-year-olds in England not learning to drive were the cost of lessons (41%), buying a car (31%) and insuring it (30%). Fewer than one in five (19%) respondents said they were not interested in driving, while just 12% said the availability of other forms of transport was why they hadn't decided to learn.

Learner drivers waiting to take a practical driving test over the course of the pandemic could also face waits of up to five months even after lockdown, due to a backlog of cancellations.

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Please follow our new page:

<https://www.facebook.com/AdvancedMotoristsLichfield/> and recommend it to FB friends who might be interested. The more hits we can get, the higher the profile.

Our next end of month online meeting is on Sunday 25th April 2021. 10.00am

After the success of our online March meeting where our guest speaker, Margaret Manuell, gave a presentation on 'African safari: early lessons in advanced driving', we welcome all LAM members to join us on the above date for a talk on 'the challenges of getting back into driving after Covid' by Sue White.

An email has been sent to all members with the Zoom invitation. Contact **lichfieldadvancedmotorists@gmail.com** for copy of invitation or details on how to join by telephone.

We would like to hear from you: If you have anything you would like to contribute to the Bulletin then please email to: lamjohnwatson2020@gmail.com