

## ABD points the way for Chancellor

The ABD urges the Chancellor to look at the whole issue of road user taxation and infrastructure spending, either in the budget or as part of the Integrated Transport Strategy.

We urge him to ringfence Road Tax and Fuel Tax (he can keep the VAT!) for investment in transport infrastructure and the subsidy of operating costs. This would end the status of transport as a cinderella ministry, give us the strategic road and rail network that we badly need to catch up with our European competitors, and leave plenty for improving urban mass transit systems and bringing fares more in line with international averages.

By contrast, the politically motivated, pseudo-environmentalist group Friends of the Earth have claimed that drivers of small, fuel efficient cars are "subsidising" larger cars because all pay the same road tax. They are urging the Chancellor to change this in his budget to penalise larger cars.

But the truth is that the only "large car user" that the average driver is subsidising is the Chancellor himself - whose official Jaguar costs the tax payer £1185 a week. Every vehicle owner pays an average of £1000 in tax every year, and only £280 of this ends up in transport related investment of any kind.

ABD spokesman Paul Hemingway said: "FoE are simply trying to divert attention from the lamentable overall motoring taxation position by setting groups of drivers against one another. It is the old strategy of "divide and rule" - if they can play on the politics of envy to get small car drivers to resent others over a relatively small sum, then it is that much easier to justify yet more financial penalties for the driving population as a whole. This, not genuine transport improvements, is what they want."

Hemingway continued: "With congestion on the roads supposedly costing British Industry £19bn a year, this investment would have a very short payback time in purely financial terms. The benefits in terms of quality of life and the environment would be a bonus."

**Thought for the day**  
*"Those who like laws and sausages should avoid learning how each are made." - Bismarck*

## Drivers determined to stay in their cars

The 1998 Lex Report on Motoring has been published, and includes a MORI survey that revealed that only 7% of drivers in the UK would switch to public transport, even if their journey to work by car took them twice as long as now.

Many said that they would be willing to pay for traffic information systems, if they thought that they could reach their destinations quicker.

There was wide support for more investment in public transport, and even for banning cars from city centres. However, the general conclusion was that most drivers wanted others to catch the train or bus, so that road space would be freed up for themselves.

We wonder whether Jaguar owning Deputy Prime Minister John Prescott was among the respondents - see separate article in this issue about how one of our Government's leading advocates of "getting people out of their cars and onto public transport" slipped out of a train and back into the comfort of his own car when he thought no one was looking!

## FoE spring their trap ...

**and MPs, with a few notable exceptions, are completely taken in**

The Road Traffic Reduction (UK Targets) Bill was debated in Parliament on 30 January.

This is a private members' bill supported by Friends of the Earth, the Green Party and Plaid Cymru. These three organisations put out a four page newsletter on January 5 entitled "Traffic Reduction File 10", designed to canvass support for this bill and to encourage its sympathisers to lobby their MPs in its support.

The press received a copy of this document attached to a press release, and it goes to some length to reassure concerned readers that it seeks to reduce traffic by "policy, not compulsion", and that it is not the intention of the bill to be authoritarian, to ban cars or to forbid people to drive them. It does not, however, rule such things out completely.

However, a very different letter went out to the known supporters of the bill.

The ABD obtained a copy of it, which makes grim reading.

... continued on page 10

Issue 18, Spring 1998

£3.50

## Inside this issue

UK news	p2
Urban road charge plans	p6
Your letters	p7
ABD Gatso watch	p8
Gatso Hall of Shame	p10
Motoring: the Future - a fictitious look ahead	p12
Motoring in the Media - propaganda on BBC and ITV	p14
Welcome, new members	p15
ABD in the news	p15
The Last Laugh	p16

## New ABD postal and Web addresses:

PO Box 19608, London, SE19 2ZW

<http://www.abd.org.uk>

## Anti-car campaign reveals hypocrisy at the highest levels

John Prescott, Deputy Prime Minister, and Minister for the Environment, Transport and the Regions, departed from Scarborough railway station on the 7th February, indicating to local Party officials that he was going back to his home in Hull by train.

However, Mr Prescott, apparently got off the train again just three miles down the line at Seamer Station, where he got into his 4.2 litre Jaguar car to drive the rest of the way.

The ABD does not begrudge anyone a 4.2 Jaguar, least of all the Deputy Prime Minister, but how dare he try to deny the rest of us the freedom of choice which he so clearly enjoys himself.

A few days earlier Ms Angela Eagle, a Junior Environment Minister, announced a Government initiative to get ministers and civil servants to walk and cycle short distances. She tried to show that she was "setting an example", by saying that she had used her ministerial car for only one of her 31 trips out of London - although she admitted that four had been by aeroplane, which is a far more polluting means of travel.

However, it was revealed that she takes her ministerial car from her office in Victoria to Parliament, rather than undertake the 10 minute walk. Her rather lame excuse was that "her diary is so full".

Meanwhile, several Junior Ministers have asked for their official Mondeos to be upgraded to Rover 800s. As usual, the message is "do as we say, not do as we do".

# UK News Roundup

## TRL condemns humps

Humps cause increased braking and acceleration as cars negotiate them slowly and then speed up before reaching the next hump. As a result, humps constitute a serious threat to the environment, causing increases in exhaust pollution of at least 50 per cent and worsening petrol consumption.

Emissions of carbon dioxide had increased in areas blighted by "traffic calming" by as much as 70 per cent, while other pollutants, such as hydrocarbons and carbon monoxide, had also risen sharply.

The study, by the Transport Research Laboratory, also found that claims made by self-proclaimed "traffic engineers" for the environmental benefits of road humps "appear to be at odds with the findings of surveys of residents".

The report mentioned schemes in Kent, where residents were less than happy with the schemes. The report is reminiscent of the disastrous Brantham throttles: installed at great expense to the tax payer, they caused chaos, noise and pollution for several months before being removed (at further expense to the tax payer) at the request of residents. Have any heads rolled? Guess.

*The report entirely vindicates the consistently-held policy of the ABD that "traffic calming" of all sorts is counter-productive and should be removed. Its predictable failure is the inevitable result of a policy born out of an essentially negative, anti-car attitude by the authorities.*

*How long will it take before those in power listen to the voice of reason in all the other areas of interest where a negative, anti-car attitude has been foremost in developing policy?*

## Gatso plague imminent

Dr Strang, transport minister, is proposing to change the rules which currently govern the financing of GATSO speed cameras. At present, local authorities pay for the cameras, and the police pay for the film, whilst the ever growing fine revenue flows straight to the Treasury.

The plan is to give local authorities "the incentive" (his word) to catch and prosecute as many motorists as possible for speeding, by allowing local councils and the police to take a share out of the fine revenue, like a commission system. This would enable thousands of new cameras to be erected right across the country.

So far the Treasury has always opposed earmarking of revenue in this way, but there is great pressure for change.

## Humps + ice = bumps

Evidence of a new danger to road users caused by the installation of speed humps emerged recently in Colchester.

Humps along Collingwood Road remain icy long after the road surface has thawed. So even though they are going slowly, drivers are being caught out. So far there have been two accidents in the road caused by the slippery humps.

One driver who actually had a narrow escape described how she was travelling at five miles per hour, went round a corner and almost hit the bollards at the roadside.

With two schools nearby, there is concern for youngsters walking along the path.

Colchester Council's head of highways Barry Layzell avoided the real issue by claiming that the Council could not grit every road.

## Residents incensed at "traffic calming"

Residents of Castle Vale estate in Birmingham, and local councillors, have called for a U-turn on a traffic calming scheme. The scheme costing £3.2 million has been unanimously called a 'disastrous experiment'.

At a meeting Cllr Stan Austin said residents had expected a few 'sleeping policeman' but had found the roads completely transformed with a confusing one-way system. He went on to express concern for anyone with serious injuries who had to go over the new road bumps in ambulances, amid general concern over access for emergency vehicles.

Contractors working on the scheme have bulldozed verges on which the residents' Housing Action Trust had just planted £36,000 worth of bulbs.

Housing Action Trust chiefs, who are responsible for the project, say a MORI poll showed 24% of residents wanted traffic calming. One resident said "24% voted for this - does that give them the right to do it?".

Birmingham City Council Transportation Department are to carry out a report to investigate stopping the work.

## Advertising in OTR

All advertisements in "On The Road" are placed by members who provide substantial assistance with running the Association. Some of them also offer discounts to other members.

Support the advertisers and you support the ABD!

## The Association of British Drivers

**On The Road** is published by Pro-Motor, a company limited by Guarantee and registered in England under no: 2945728.

For contact details see:  
[www.abd.org.uk/contacts.htm](http://www.abd.org.uk/contacts.htm)

## Car curbs threat to jobs

### Claims senior economist ... and FoE agrees

Mr Michael Hollingsworth, the former chief economist at the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT), warned that 210,000 motor industry jobs were at risk in the UK from the Government's plan to cut traffic.

Sales could fall by as much as 300,000 cars per annum, and production by 100,000 cars if "heavy-handed" restrictions were placed on the use of cars, because people would keep their cars longer, and, in some cases, may not bother to own them at all.

The result would be to increase the trade deficit in automotive products by up to £5 billion per year, presumably because the UK would become a less attractive market, and thus less attractive to investors. The current contribution of the motor industry by way of tax is some £30 billion per annum, and this could also be hit.

The UK already has one of the smaller markets in Europe for cars, in relation to its population, reflecting the low levels of car ownership here. In France, 2,132,000 cars were sold in 1996, compared to 2,025,000 in the UK. In Germany, sales have exceeded 3 million every year for the last five years, with a massive 3.5 million sold last year.

Amazingly, even Friends of the Earth admit that their policies, if implemented, would cost jobs in the automobile industry, though they fail to quantify them. All this is bad news for the two million people in the UK employed in the wider motor industry, and their families.

## Highway robbery, 1998

Roadside emissions checks commenced in Bristol in February. Council employees set up check areas and shoved the measuring device up people's exhausts and issued £60 on-the-spot fines if they failed the test. There were quite a lot of fed up people. Even the RAC were upset by the draconian treatment of the motorists. A spokesman for the council said that since the government had provided no money to conduct the tests, the whole operation was designed to be self-funding.

The Association is in favour of measures to ensure that dirty vehicles (including PSVs) are taken off the road, but this summary treatment of car drivers is unacceptable. The more so when compared with the kid-glove treatment afforded to the assorted vandals, trespassers and spongers who disrupt much needed road improvements.

## Job cyclists to get their come-uppance?

At last Home Secretary, Jack Straw, is to take action to curb the rogue cyclists who flout red traffic lights, who fail to display adequate lighting, who ride on the pavement etc. While such offences could attract a fine of £2500 and up to two months in jail (and certainly would in the case of motorists) the CPS almost never brings a prosecution for such offences. What they are proposing is a £20 fine. Obviously if you use a mode of transport perceived as politically correct, you get off virtually Scot-free - whatever the offence. Seems like a case of too little too late.

## Decaying roads threat to Exmoor National Park

Councillors in West Somerset are viewing with alarm the deteriorating standard of roads on Exmoor, as well as the threat to the local economy posed by the cuts in the road building programme.

Councillors at Winsford, near Minehead, have written to the Exmoor National Park authorities to complain about the deteriorating state of the roads in the National Park, a popular tourist area in the south west. They say that the lack of proper maintenance is causing the roads to become unsafe and, in some cases, almost unfit for normal vehicles.

Blocked drains turn some roads into rivers when it rains, and water freezing in the cracks is causing the surfaces to break up. John Bray, a member of the Parish Council and member of the National Park authority described the condition of many roads as returning to the state they were in before the last war.

The problems are likely to get even worse according to the contractors employed by Somerset County Council. Because of a lack of funding by the Council, Somerset has the dubious reputation of being one of the counties to spend the lowest amounts in the country on maintenance per kilometre of road.

Even more consternation was caused in the area by the publication of a recent report by SATRA which claimed that roads do not bring economic benefits (see separate article). One spokesman from Minehead described the town as being "marooned" because the road links to the area are so poor. The A39 and A358, which form the main routes to West Somerset from the M5, were already considered to be inadequate in the 1930s, and yet survive in almost unaltered form. Holiday traffic has to snake its way through many unbypassed villages and small towns on the route, and there are few places where overtaking is possible. Now angry local residents fear that proper roads will never be provided for them.

## Prescott declares war on drivers

The new Minister for the Environment (or should that be Transport?), John Prescott has ordered the Highways Agency to develop policies to "discourage" car use, and has rejected further major road building as a means of tackling congestion. In truth, the rhetoric has become even more hysterically anti-car, but much of the thrust of policy has been taken over from the former Conservative administration.

Many of the policies being examined are strikingly familiar to those put forward in last year's Consultation Document on Air Quality, including urban road charging and motorway tolls - even though the Labour Party manifesto expressly rejected motorway tolls.

In truth, motorway tolling has been the dream of certain elements of the Civil Service since the mid 1970s. Former Prime Minister, Margaret (now Baroness) Thatcher refused to consider the idea, but it was inevitable that the proponents of tolling would get the scheme back out of the toy box as soon as she was replaced by the weak leadership of John Major. It was therefore inevitable that they would try to sell the idea to Prescott.

In particular, Prescott has attacked the "two-car" family, in a surprising outburst which showed little understanding for the needs and aspirations of millions of households across the country. The "second car" has liberated women in particular, and any decline in ownership of second vehicles would be totally against international trends as well as damaging to our growing car making industry.

Following a short period for consultation (dealt with elsewhere in this issue), a White Paper will be published. We will report further.

### PRIVATE MEDICINE

One of our members is Group Secretary of a Private Patients Group.

The group enjoys a 25% discount from the normal rates.

Should any of our members be interested in joining, please contact:

Brian Sealy-Clarke  
19 Elmstone Gardens  
Cliftonville  
Margate  
CT9 3HA

Tel 01843 295608

for further information.

## Okehampton bypass survey indicates overwhelming support

It is often suggested that road building has become unpopular. However, a survey recently carried out by the Transport Research Laboratory following the completion of the A30 Okehampton bypass found overwhelming local support for the road.

The researchers interviewed 200 local residents, and found that 80% thought that the new dual carriageway was a good thing for the people of Okehampton. Residents reported a fall in traffic noise, vibration and air pollution following completion of the project.

Almost all respondents felt that the road blended in well with the landscape, helped no doubt by the extensive planting of trees and bushes along the verges and central reservation. This reply came despite the reservations expressed by some over the fact that the road intrudes into a National Park. About half thought that there had been sufficient consultation, however, and that the right route had been chosen for the road.

On the negative side, about 86% thought that the road had not been very successful in reducing lorry traffic through the town centre. Opinions were divided about whether the new bypass had been beneficial to trade in the town centre or not. However, some traders have reported increases of up to 50% in their businesses.

Details of the TRL findings have been published by the RAC Foundation for Motoring and the Environment, and we are most grateful to them for supplying details of the findings.

## Anger in Salisbury over decision to scrap bypass

Many residents of Salisbury and surrounding villages were dismayed and angry at the decision to scrap the long awaited bypass that would have relieved the historic city of much of the heavy traffic which currently passes through the city centre.

Local Conservative MP Robert Key fought and won his election campaign on a pro- bypass platform said that so-called "Green" groups had mounted a campaign of disinformation. His views were echoed by John Ellis of the Salisbury Bypass Supporters, who accused the anti-road groups of "hi-jacking" the city.

Mr Ellis also said that the famous water meadows, often quoted by the project's opponents would have been unaffected by the new road. The road would have crossed dry meadow land and passed a sewage works, he said.

The south west of England suffered a bitter blow with the cancellation of the rest of the planned improvements to the patchy and dangerous A30/A303 roads to Devon. Several excellent stretches of high quality dual carriageway are still punctuated with roads little improved since the 1950s.

## Roads go-ahead given

There was better news for the West Midlands, where the long awaited northern relief road was given the go-ahead. This will be a new 27 mile long six-lane Motorway stretching from the M6 at Cannock, Staffordshire and rejoining the M6 at a point south-east of Birmingham.

The new Motorway will reduce congestion on the intervening section of the M6 through the Birmingham/Black Country area, which is currently one of the busiest stretches of road in Europe. It is estimated that up to 75,000 drivers will opt to use the new road each day. No doubt many more would use it if it were not tolled, reducing congestion even more.

The road will be privately financed and subject to road tolls, expected to be around £2 per car. The Midlands business community praised the decision to go ahead with the project.

The final link in the M66 Manchester ring motorway was also approved, a move which was widely supported by business in the north west. It was also seen as vital to that city's plan to host the 2002 Commonwealth Games.

There was good news for Kent, where the plans to widen the A2/M2 motorway were given the green light, as was an extension of the A564 Derby southern bypass. This new road will connect to the M1 at a new junction to be called 24A.

The A13 Thames Gateway road is to be built, linking the Tilbury Docks to the City and to the M25.

The planned improvements to the A40 into London have been scrapped, even though this is one of the busiest routes into the capital, and despite the fact that much of the land needed had already been acquired.

A number of other schemes have been deferred, including the desperately needed widening of the M25 in Surrey. It is generally considered essential that this project should go ahead, if Terminal 5 at Heathrow is approved.

## "Predict and Provide" alive and well ... ... but not for the driver

Government ministers like Gavin Strang are often quoted as saying that the policy of "Predict and Provide" for roadbuilding is dead. That is, instead of working out what roads are needed for our economic wellbeing, balancing this with the needs of the environment, and then undertaking a sensible roadbuilding programme to improve the quality of life of our citizens, we must make do with what we have.

Moreover, motorists are to be vilified, insulted and cowed with politically correct fervour until they accept that their lot in life is to be taxed, obstructed and inconvenienced into using the inadequate, underfunded and hopelessly marketed public transport system that their taxes should have paid to improve but haven't.

**But when it comes to housing, the government PREDICTS that 5.5m new homes will be needed and then begins to work out how it will PROVIDE them, often in greenbelt land.**

Where is the talk of "managing the demand for housing"? Where is the talk of "infinite housebuilding covering the country with concrete"? Where is the "Housebuilding reduction (targets) bill" in the House of Commons? Where is the warning that "the freedom to choose the size of one's household must be curtailed to save the planet"? Who is suggesting that "young people should not be allowed to set up their own home until one has become vacant due to a death"?

Such talk, commonplace in the anti car anti roads camp, would create outrage if it were applied to people's homes. Yet housing takes up far more land than roads; the energy used by homes emits far more carbon dioxide than cars.

ABD spokesman Paul Hemingway said: **"It seems that the Government have been taking lessons in Orwellian doublethink. On the one hand they are railing against the motorist as if doomsday is upon us if repressive measures are not applied to motoring. On the other, they are forging ahead with massive greenbelt housing development without a care. This is hypocrisy, and it stinks. Why can't they work with drivers positively to improve transport problems?"**

# Safety and Speed Issues

## DETR's Big Brother plans

ABD member, Chris Ward has been delving into the DETR web site section on Road Safety Research at [http://www.detr.gov.uk/rvs/rv\\_res00.htm](http://www.detr.gov.uk/rvs/rv_res00.htm). He found that it makes interesting reading:

### Unlawful driving behaviour (S211S)

Drivers' attitudes to speed camera enforcement are being studied to assess the strategies which drivers adopt in response to the use of enforcement cameras. Drivers whose speeds in the vicinity of camera sites have been observed are being surveyed, and assessments will be made at several sites over time, where different camera enforcement strategies are in operation. The aim of the project is to provide information which will maximise the benefits to be obtained from camera enforcement and to give guidance on appropriate deployment strategies.

Contractor: Brunel University Completion date: October 1997

*In other words they are trying to work out how to catch more people.*

### External control of vehicle speed (S180A/VD)

This project will determine the potential for external control of vehicle speed by communication with on-vehicle systems. Speed limiters are already fitted to many HGVs and PSVs to control their maximum speeds. But most accidents take place on lower speed roads, especially for cars. This project is looking at the safety implications of variable speed limiters, controlled by infrastructure at the road side. These are likely to be increasingly proposed for introduction on UK roads, especially as the infrastructure supplied for other purposes such as road tolling could be used for this purpose as well.

Contractor: University of Leeds Completion date: 2000

*Not happy with trying to tell us what speed to do, they are now talking about fitting devices which will actually control the speed of the car.*

## "Speed kills" - a figment of the bureaucratic imagination

Governments on both sides of the Atlantic claim that a third of serious accidents are caused by speed.

Speed control and enforcement has become their primary, often only, road safety tool, justified ad nauseam by this statistic which they admit, when pressed, is a "rule of thumb". At best, therefore, the causes of two thirds of accidents are ignored. The reality, though, is even more alarming:

In some states of the USA, unlike the UK, full accident statistics are available for public analysis.

The US National Motorists Association reports that attribution of accidents to speed varies widely between states, with Florida claiming only 2.2% of all accidents and some 9% of fatal crashes are speed related. A far cry from figures claimed by "safety" groups.

"Car & Driver" magazine went further in a seven page report in September 1996, following its own exhaustive investigation of the US Federal Fatal Accident Reporting System. They calculated that only 3.3% of fatal accidents were caused solely by speed.

The emphasis of road safety policy therefore bypasses the causes of over 95% of accidents and over 90% of fatalities - a fiasco that would not be tolerated in any other policy area.

ABD spokesman Paul Hemingway says: "The only way to establish the cause of accidents is to intelligently examine each one in detail rather than apply simplistic schoolboy statistics to the overall numbers. It is - or should be - obvious that lack of observation, poor hazard perception and incorrect hazard response are the root causes of most of them. Pulling imaginary numbers out of the air to blame speed may suit those looking for an excuse to enforce unpopular and pointless laws, but it doesn't help long term road safety."

Chairman Brian Gregory adds: "These figures simply confirm what common sense tells the thinking driver - that the "Speed Kills" campaign is missing the point almost completely. Far from making roads safer, it is preventing measures to address the real causes of accidents and distracting drivers from the job in hand. It will end in tears."

## Transport 2000 on "Mastermind"

### Specialist subject: "The bleedin' obvious"

It is not often that Basil Fawley and Transport 2000 are mentioned in the same sentence but, buried within one of their publications is a paragraph that brings Basil's famous observation on his sardonic wife Sybil's talents to mind.

The publication in question is called "Streets Ahead" and is described as their "bulletin for local authorities working for sustainable transport". It is full of the usual vitriol against cars and car drivers, and revels in examples of obstruction and inconvenience deliberately imposed on car drivers by some local authorities (Sheffield, Nottingham, Cambridge, Southampton and Edinburgh are specifically mentioned).

"Words like "clampdown", "restraint", "discourage" and "tougher enforcement" litter the four pages of the leaflet, showing what Transport 2000 and their followers in Local Government have in store for us" says Brian Gregory of the ABD. "Driving a car is going to be like staying at Fawley Towers soon."

But wait! West Sussex council did a survey to find out why schoolchildren didn't use the bus. The answers were: cost, slow services and lack of information. (Surprise, surprise, Sybil!) When fares were reduced to 20p for school journeys, a new service (to the school!) was provided, user friendly timetables were printed and distributed and the number of pupils using the bus increased from 30 to 150.

"This is staggering" says ABD spokesman Paul Hemingway.

"How dare Transport 2000 campaign for outrageous restrictions and increased costs to be placed on drivers when such basic marketing of bus services can achieve results like this. Poor public transport, like poor roads, is part of the rip off of the motorist who pays £20bn a year more than transport receives."

The British Driver, unlike long suffering waiter Manuel, will not tolerate being bashed on the head and told he is a "waste of space". Transport 2000 would do well to stress positive solutions to transport problems rather than use them as an excuse to demonise the motorist.



**Contact the Elderly**

### DRIVE AWAY HER LONLINESS

Car Drivers required to drive elderly people to tea one Sunday afternoon a month.

Hosts needed to invite elderly people to tea on a Sunday afternoon once a year.

Volunteers - for more information ring:

FREEPHONE 0800 716 543

Registered Charity No. 244681

---

# Integrated Transport Policy

---

## Local authorities likely to be given the green light for urban road tolls

Proposals to allow local authorities to introduce road charging schemes are almost certain to feature in the forthcoming transport White Paper, along with new taxes on non-residential parking spaces.

Road tolling trials are already under way in Leicester and Cambridge as well as Bristol; three cities which have adopted particularly anti-car policies. In Leicester, talk has been of a £6 per day charge, which officials think would be necessary to bring about a 50% drop in commuter traffic.

The Government has decided that local councils are unlikely to incur the wrath of their voters by charging for access to their own town centre if they do not profit by it. It is therefore likely that councils will be allowed to keep some or all of the money raised. There has been no talk of using the money to reduce council tax bills: it is most likely that the charges will take the form of a massive tax hike, and consequent transfer of power and resources from local people to government.

In Bristol, the charges may initially be raised only during peak hours to discourage commuters, but to allow shoppers in free at off peak times. Experience in Oslo, Norway, shows that following the introduction of modest town centre tolls (to fund a road building programme), most business people continued to commute by car. The number of shoppers driving into the city, on the other hand, dropped by about 5%. Most of them did not change to public transport - they simply did not go at all.

## Parking Tax

*Government plans for tax surcharge for parking spaces*

A car parking space tax surcharge is also on the cards. It would be set nationally, and may start at £100 per year for commuters in the first year, but rising steeply to £600 within a decade. Local councils may be allowed to double the charge, by adding their own local tax on top. Both these taxes would be additional to the tax already levied, since the value of the spaces is assessed when the Business Rate for commercial premises is set. Privately owned spaces at supermarkets, leisure facilities and shopping centres are also likely to be hit by the charges, which are bound to put up the cost of living.

Stephen Joseph, of the vehemently anti-car pressure group Transport 2000, is one of nine advisors to the Government behind the schemes to reduce the 3.5 million work-place car parking spaces, and to curb the further three million spaces provided by retailers. Hospitals would be covered by the charges, so even visiting the sick will be taxable in Labour's Brave New Britain. It is unclear whether businesses will be allowed to absorb the charges on behalf of their staff and customers, or whether they will be compelled by law to pass the charges on.

## How it may work in Bristol

In Bristol the pattern for road tolls is likely to be a ring of three cordons around the city with a charge for crossing each cordon. One study suggested a charge of £16 for one return journey from Weston Super Mare (where many Bristol commuters live) into the city centre - in addition to parking charges in the city. Local people would pay the tolls via an electronic system, but visitors would almost certainly have to use conventional toll booths. So far little thought seems to have gone into the practicalities of setting these up in a way which would not cause congestion, or take up large areas of land.

Bristol, like other cities involved, is alive to the danger that its policies will simply drive trade, growth and prosperity to their less authoritarian neighbours. The city is lobbying hard for the Government to force all towns to introduce the charging systems and parking restrictions that they want to impose on their own communities - something which would, of course, totally undermine local democracy.

It is also unlikely to work, and the most probable outcome is that trade would be pushed to smaller and smaller communities, with a revival of secondary shops and office space in quiet suburbs and small towns as people seek ways of being able to avoid tolls and yet continue to use cars for business and pleasure.

In Bristol, town centre traders are worried, especially with the imminent opening of the massive Cribbs Causeway shopping centre on the edge of the city, just off the M5/M4 intersection. The new centre will house John Lewis, who are closing their store in the lacklustre city centre Broadmead shopping centre, which was built in the austere style of the immediate post war era. Marks and Spencers and many other leading retailers have also chosen to take space at Cribbs Causeway, where visitors will have the benefit of 7,000 free car parking spaces, as well as superb road links to the whole of South West England and South Wales.

Bristol City Council, which for years has tried to make access to the city as difficult as possible for visitors to the city by removing off street car parking spaces and raising city centre parking charges to extortionate levels, are now pleading with the Government to allow them to force the shopping centre to impose heavy charges for car parking at Cribbs Causeway in order to discourage shoppers from going there. They realise that taxation of parking spaces is the key to this, as it could become as unattractive to visit Cribbs Causeway as it already is to drive to the city centre, and are eagerly awaiting the proposals to allow charges to be forced on businesses.

Such is the city's dislike of the out-of-town competitor that there has even been serious talk of closing off motorway access points to force drivers to go to Cribbs Causeway via the city centre. This policy would actually increase traffic congestion in the city, of course, but the true aim is to try to strangle Cribbs Causeway at birth. In this context, it is interesting to note that the council specifically does *not* want good public transport links to the new shopping area.

If the city chooses to go ahead with anything like the schemes currently being hatched - and consider in all of this that all the new charges may be imposed without any further investment in public transport - then the likely outcome is for the city to go into a gradual economic decline, with increasing economic activity at the city's fringes. This would happen despite all attempts to prevent it by refusing planning permissions. Small and medium sized businesses will be able to occupy the many existing commercial buildings on the fringes.

Others will relocate to other towns where access is freer and easier. The danger is that probably ten years will pass before the scale of the relative decline becomes evident, by which time enormous damage may have been done. Ironically, it may also accelerate the electronics revolution, with more and more people avoiding travel to work and to the shops altogether: they will simply work from home for at least several days a week, with shopping done via the Internet, and delivered to their door.

These changes are likely to be embraced enthusiastically by businesses, who can reduce their need for expensive office and retail space, be it town centres or anywhere else. The terms "Hot desking" and "Hotelling" - new jargon for small offices available by appointment for home-based staff when they need them - have already entered the vocabulary in the commercial property world, and anti-car policies may well cause this way of working to become established much more quickly than would otherwise have been the case.

The biggest danger in all of this, perhaps, is that, as the anti-car lobby see how people adapt their lives in all kinds of subtle ways to avoid getting into the strait-jacket they want us all to wear, they will seek to impose yet more taxes and controls. Government will revel in it, of course, as the tax they can collect will rise steadily, and all without breaking their Manifesto pledge not to raise income tax rates. We may be at the start of a vicious circle of ever increasing avoidance leading to ever more controls - the route to enslavement.



## ABD subscription rates

Sir - I think, as Treasurer, I should respond to the letter by Don Wylie in the last issue of OTR about the level of our subscriptions.

You will be aware that this is a topic which has been discussed at several of our recent meetings and there is no doubt that Don has a point in that the greatest drawback for us, at the moment, is lack of funds. We have always been faced with the catch 22 situation that we need more members to create more funds in order to attract more members. The final goal is to have sufficient funds to be able to become more effective in the face of the huge resources available to the anti-car factions.

At the moment approximately one third of our membership pay their subscriptions by standing order. This may cause a little extra work when these are set up but saves a huge amount of work thereafter. It is most welcome and those of us who look after that side of things are enormously grateful. To change all these standing orders would be a mammoth task. In addition I seriously believe that we would lose a significant proportion of those members. For this reason alone I would oppose any move to change our subscription level.

I would not be opposed to a proposal to increase our membership subscription at some future date but it would have to be for NEW members joining after a certain date - presumably after an AGM.

As you so rightly pointed out in your note to Don's letter, a considerable number of people pay in excess of the £12 or £15. Some pay substantially more. As an example recently the monthly banking amounted to £1934 in subscriptions but a further £904 in donations to the fighting fund. It is this latter sum which makes it possible for us to keep our heads above water.

I think the other factor we should consider is that, apart from a quarterly newsletter, we offer very little tangible to our members by way of return on their money. What they get is a lot of hard work and representation. This is all done by the various members on a purely voluntary basis and the only costs are for things which cannot be avoided (postage, printing etc) - as members will see in the accounts. It would be too much, in my view, to ask members to stump up more once they have joined.

I would much prefer to ask each member to go out and get one more member than ask them for extra cash.

Hugh Bladon (Treasurer)

The views expressed by readers are their own and do not necessarily represent ABD policy.

Sir - In issue 17 of On the Road, A D Wylie suggests that the ABD isn't charging a high enough subscription rate. While I can fully understand his reasoning behind charging a higher rate, I don't think it would be a good idea at all, quite the reverse.

Since I joined the ABD a couple of months ago, I have told various friends of my membership. As a member of the IAM and a couple of classic car clubs, these people are (in the main) motoring enthusiasts rather than mere drivers. The problem is they still ask just what do you get for your £15? They don't realise that I'm paying the money so my voice can be heard.

Surely the whole point about a group such as the ABD is that it has a large membership so it can claim to be representing a large number of people; this is what gives the organisation credibility. The problem is by putting the cost of a subscription up, people will be deterred from joining, just what the ABD doesn't need.

Richard Dredge, Worcs

Sir - I have always opposed the Gatso speed camera. The principle of photographing a car and then at a later date trying to fine the supposed driver always seemed a violation of basic rights. Any detection of crime must clearly identify the offender and be seen to be fair and just in its operation.

Yet daily in the UK, the fundamental principle that someone is "innocent until proved guilty" is being eroded in situations where the results can significantly affect an individual's livelihood.

The authorities have always trivialised motoring offences and through this attitude safety concerns too, are seen as unimportant.

Courts and solicitors often tell offenders that it is better to plead guilty for reasons of economy than to fight the case. Gatso victims are told to pay up as it's cheaper. Even in cases where there is doubt, car owners pay the fine.

I know of three cases which clearly show that the law is failing UK citizens. The people involved are ordinary working men who toil hard for their families. Their attempts to fight injustice and stand up for what is truly a moral principle are an example to us all.

Andrew P Hill, Dubai

*The first of Mr Hill's three cases is published in this issue on page 10.*

Sir - By the time the public do realise that they've been conned, we'll have all been shepherded into a compound with 'Arbeit macht frei' or similar over the gates!

James Cadle, Bucks.

## Dates for your diary

ABD meetings have been planned for 4th April, 6th June (AGM), 19th September and 7th November 1998. All meetings are to take place at The Heritage Motor Centre, Banbury Road, Gaydon, Warwickshire CV35 0BJ. The venue is situated just off J12 of the M40. Meetings generally commence at 10.30 am, with a break for lunch. All members welcome. Dates and venue subject to change.

Also, do not forget the Goodwood Festival of Speed: 12th - 14th June 1998.

## New ABD postal and web addresses:

**PO Box 19608, London, SE19 2ZW**

**<http://www.abd.org.uk>**

**The address for letters and articles for On The Road is unchanged:**

**PO Box 3151, Colchester, CO6 3JH**

## Snippets from the e-mail

Message: Just took a week off for some duck hunting in North Dakota. This is a very laid back state. Speed limit is only 70mph, but not enforced. You can carry your shotgun in your lap. They do require that it not be loaded in a moving vehicle, but I don't think they enforce that either. We're talking a long long way from Liverpool.

Reply: Yeah, and they only seem to get real excited if you're carrying that loaded gun in your lap and swilling down the Jack Daniels straight from the bottle instead of in a civilized manner from a glass (ice water chaser on the side of course), and you're flying that militia flag from the antenna, but only if it wasn't from that particular officer's chapter of the militia.

Having seen the article on your Association in the Evening Standard, I shall be a regular visitor to your web site and maybe a member in the future.

I was made aware of [the] ABD by a news item on News Direct Radio yesterday, about your website and the rights and wrongs of publicising unmarked cop cars. Well, all power to your elbow I say and I'm offering to add to your list, particularly on the Gatsos.

## E-mail address?

Do you have an e-mail address?

A lively correspondence takes place among members. Just notify the Secretary via 100740.2032 @compuserve.com and you'll be copied-in.

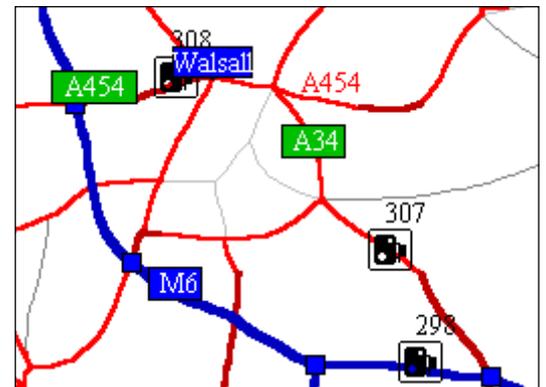
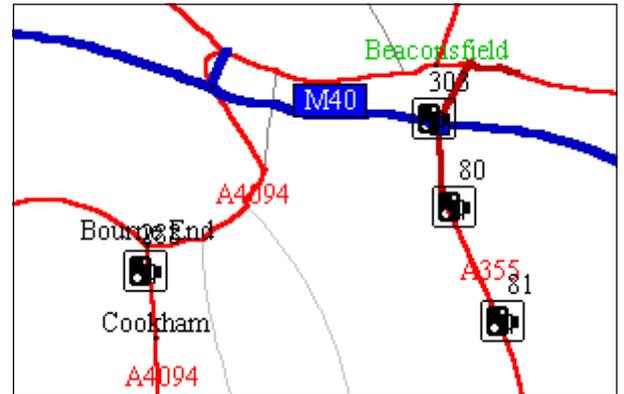
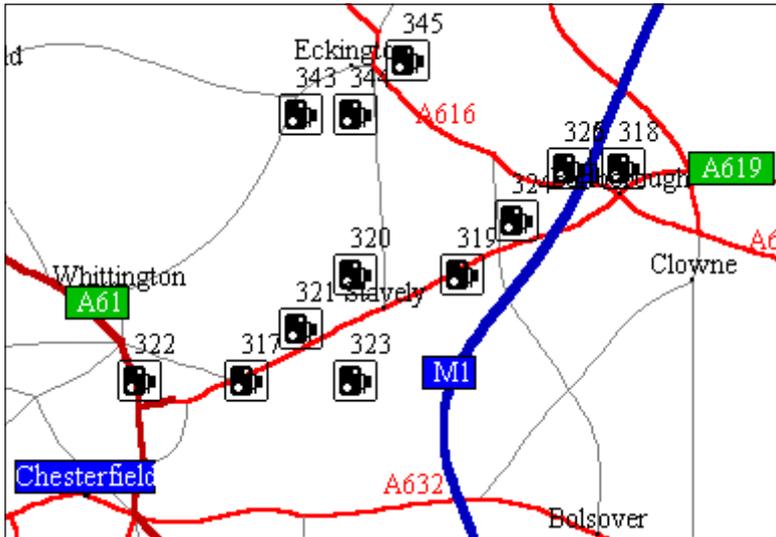
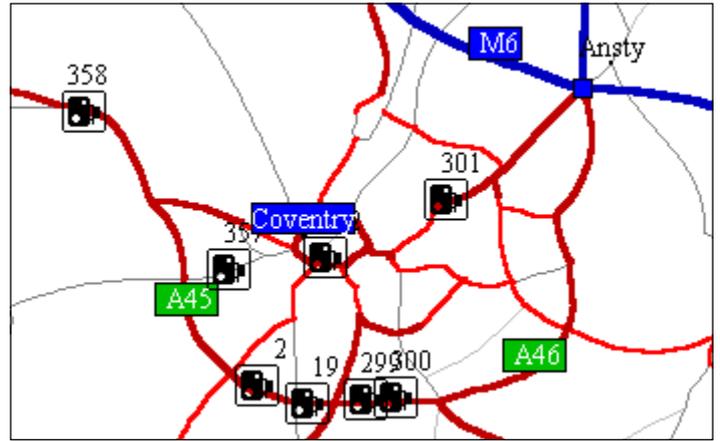
# ABD Gatso Watch

## Caution: Why the ABD publishes Gatso Watch

Members will not need reminding, but "On the Road" is obliged, for other reasons, to mention that:

- The ABD does not condone the abuse of speed.
- Drivers should travel at a speed safe for the conditions and with due regard to hazards such as schools.
- Drivers should be able to stop within the distance they can see.
- Drivers should observe the two-second rule.

However, the ABD deplores the abuse of Gatsos and other devices. That is, where they are deployed in locations where the speed limit is unrealistically low.



Maps produced in Microsoft Autoroute Plus © 1988-1995 Microsoft Corporation, Maps © Crown Copyright 85887M

**Important: If you can correct or add to any of the information shown in Gatso Watch, please contact the editor.**  
**The limitations of the current mapping software are all too obvious. If you can suggest a better system, please contact the editor.**

Ref	County	Town	Road	Direction	Location	OS Map Ref	Limit
2	W Midlands	Coventry	A45	B			0
19	W Midlands	Coventry	A45			SP3676	0
80	Bucks	Farnham Cmn	A355	S	Entering built up area near garage	SU948874	40
81	Bucks	Farnham Cmn	A355	S	Down slight hill before double roundabout	SU955858	40
287	Cambs	Huntingdon	A141	N	Half mile after Woodhurst turn on left just after lefthand bend	TL299776	0
288	Bucks	Bourne End	A4094	S	400 yds from the mini roundabout	SU898864	30
291	Somerset	Chard	A358	N	Approaching town from the south	ST323068	0
292	Flintshire	Mostyn	A548	NW	About 100 yds inside 30 limit	SJ159803	30
293	Oxon	Bloxham	A361	N	In centre of village	SP421348	30
294	Warwickshire	Rugby	A426	S	Between bridge and Ford garage in left lane of dual carriafeway	SP496748	40
295	Warwickshire	Rugby	A426	N	Just past police station by telephone & pillar boxes	SP495745	30
296	Warwickshire	Dunchurch	A426	S	By Football/Cricket ground	SP481711	30
297	Warwickshire	Dunchurch	A426	N	After bridge over M45	SP478704	30
299	W Midlands	Coventry	A45 (A46)	R	Central reservation, between junctions for A46 S & N	SP341750	60
300	W Midlands	Coventry	A45 (A46)	R	Central reservation, between junctions for A46 S & S	SP348751	60
301	W Midlands	Coventry	A4600	B	One each side of the Ferodo bridge	SP359796	40

## A web site visitor comments ...

Can I first say that I absolutely endorse what you are doing, I too deplore the 'hidden' tactics of the police. They police by public consent and should understand that.

I wish to refer to the list of cameras and I appreciate your input and would like to add the following comments to your overall picture.

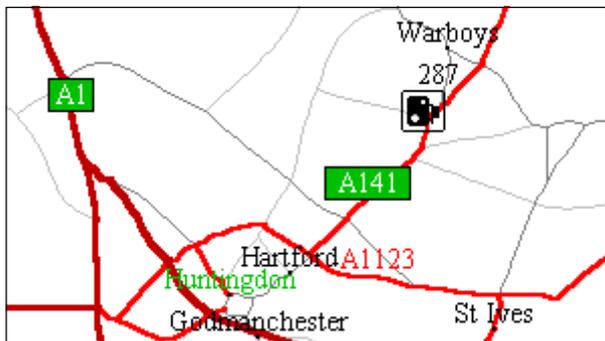
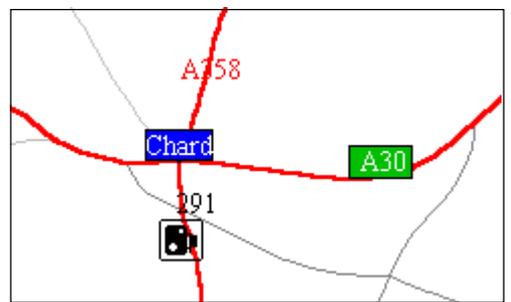
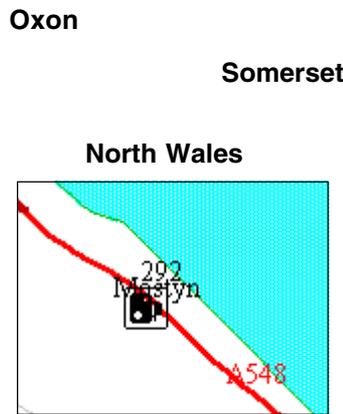
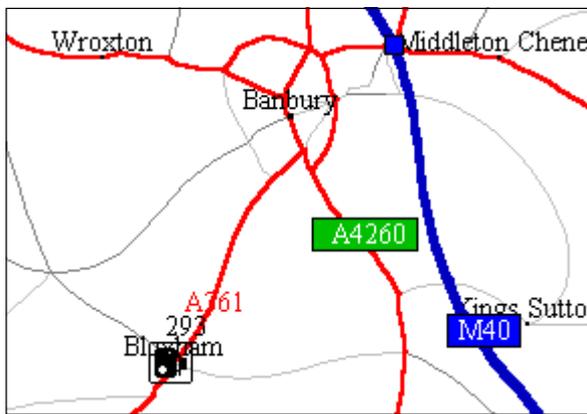
I regularly pass the camera on the A505 in Cambridgeshire just W of the M11 which is listed by you. This camera also caused a dangerous incident recently.

On this occasion I was passing it at night heading East. The camera faces West. I was driving steadily at around 55/60mph when I was overtaken (quite safely) by another car. The road is straight, was clear, the visibility was good. The camera however was triggered by his speed over 60 (albeit in the wrong direction). The flash then went off straight into his

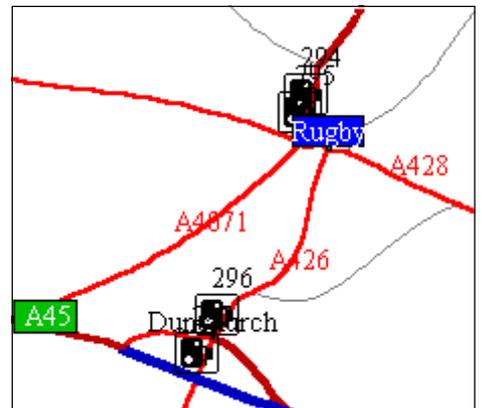
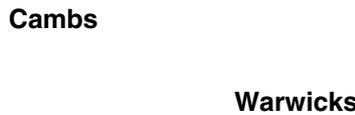
eyes. At point blank range and straight into his face, this blinded the driver and he very nearly lost control. This sort of stupidity is far worse than the speeding it is designed to stop and is an accident waiting to happen.

Secondly I notice with interest that on your list there is a camera on the A10 North of the Melbourn by-pass. This is only a few miles from where two years ago a woman driver was killed by a police car. The woman was correctly waiting at road works when a traffic car 'practising' a high speed chase ploughed into the back of her. At the enquiry it came out that the whole of that stretch of road is used for that purpose; I wonder if the new camera catches them! and do they get let off I wonder?? (The policeman in that case was let off with a fine, he did not even get a ban.)

When the police cease double standards they will get more respect!



**Disclaimer**  
This information is provided in good faith. However the ABD can accept no liability for errors or omissions.



Ref	County	Town	Road	Direction	Location	OS Map Ref	Limit
302 ...	W Midlands	Coventry	A444	B	Multiple, hidden behind bridge abutments	SP332782	40
317 ...	Derbys	Chesterfield	A619	W	Opp. Robinsons Caravans, Brimington	SK410730	30
318 ...	Derbys	Chesterfield	A619	E	c.200yds. further in direction Worksop	SK480770	40
319 ...	Derbys	Chesterfield	A619	E	opp. The Bungalows, Staveley	SK450750	40
320 ...	Derbys	Chesterfield	A619	E	Woodthorpe c.1/4 mile bef. Norbriggs Road opp.school	SK430750	30
321 ...	Derbys	Chesterfield	A619	E	nr. Private Drive, Brimington	SK420740	30
322 ...	Derbys	Chesterfield	A619	W	After Taptan Drive opp. Lansdowne Road, Brimington	SK390730	40
323 ...	Derbys	Chesterfield	A619	W	at Ringwood Ave., opp Blakes Group Vauxhall Garage	SK430730	30
324 ...	Derbys	Chesterfield	A619	E	opp. Middlecroft St., Staveley	SK460760	40
325 ...	Derbys	Chesterfield	A619	W	before Gate Inn nr. B5419/B6419 intersection with A619	SK470770	40
326 ...	Derbys	Chesterfield	A619	E	after Gate Inn nr. B5419/B6419 intersection with A619	SK470770	40
343 ...	S.Yorks	Eckington	B6056	W	Junction with B6052	SK420780	30
344 ...	S.Yorks	Eckington	B6056	E	c.0.5 miles E from B6052 camera	SK430780	30
345 ...	S.Yorks	Eckington	B6056	E	c.1 mile E of 2nd camera	SK440790	30

## Unmarked cars

The ABD is not currently publishing information on unmarked cars in this newsletter or on our web site. This decision was taken after the publication by the London Evening Standard of an article which seriously misrepresented the ABD, sensationalising certain aspects of our activities and failing totally to present the serious side of what we are about.

Following the article we had numerous visits to the web site and of those who sent an email, most supported what we are doing. However we have also opened a dialogue with a representative of the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO). As a result of which the following notice now appears on our web page instead of the list of unmarked cars:

*Following recent press articles it has been drawn to our attention that the list of unmarked cars included some vehicles which were used in genuine police work, and that the publishing of their details here might jeopardise the safety of police officers and the success of their operations.*

*The ABD is an organisation for responsible motorists and has therefore withdrawn the list of unmarked cars and, at the same time, entered into discussions with the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO).*

*The ABD remains absolutely opposed to the imposition of unrealistically low speed limits particularly the 70 limit on motorways and dual carriageways and the unnecessary extension of 30mph limits. Not only are such limits unnecessary, they can actually be counter-productive to safety.*

*The ABD is also opposed to the enforcement of these unrealistic limits by any method (camera, unmarked car or other means) designed to catch out drivers who are driving safely but merely happen to be in breach of the inappropriate limit. The criminalisation of ordinary people going about their lawful business in a safe and responsible way is totally unacceptable in a free and democratic society; as is the raising of revenue by this means.*

*The present, highly unsatisfactory situation arises as a result of the combined effect of actions by national government, local government and the police. However, the ABD believes that entering into a constructive dialogue with one of these key players, in the shape of ACPO, is a hopeful start in the move towards a sensible, safe and acceptable regime of speed limits on our roads.*

We will keep members posted as to the progress of this strategy but in the meantime would welcome your views on the issue.

## Gatso Hall of Shame

*Not only is Big Brother technology and bureaucracy being used to criminalise drivers proceeding safely, it is being used shamelessly and blatantly to punish people who were not even driving the vehicles allegedly caught by cameras. No less than three cases have been brought to the attention of the ABD; this is the first.*

## You previously owned the car, sir, so you are guilty

A colleague here in Dubai sold his car to a dealer just before he left the UK about 18 months ago. The dealer took the whole registration card and gave him a receipt. A cheque was paid into his bank account as further proof of the sale. Several months later a "Good Morning Sir, you've been nicked by Gatso" was forwarded by the tenants who were renting his UK property. All of the documentation was still in

England but he wrote to the police with the dealer's name and address together with the date of sale.

Several months later he returned to the UK. The old tenant had fallen out with the agent and had not been forwarding the mail. Among the large batch of post was a second Gatso fine plus various items of correspondence from the Police. There was also a complaint from his new tenants that they had been harassed by the Police who were looking for him. He rang the relevant Police Station and was asked to call in for an interview.

At this stage a solicitor was consulted who advised him that the police might prevent him from returning to Dubai. It transpired that the Dealer had gone into liquidation and his previous vehicle was still in his name.

On the advice of his solicitor he returned to Dubai, and a full letter was sent to the Police along with photocopies of all the evidence. However, our friends in blue then called on his tenants twice in the early hours of the morning to arrest him. The result was that the tenants quit the property leaving his UK residence empty with no letting income. There was no apology from the police for their behaviour!

How much longer must people endure such blatant miscarriages of justice? Real villains never register a car in their own name anyway and always get away scot free. We have a situation which erodes the basic human right of being innocent unto proven guilty and in a modern democracy this should not be allowed to happen.

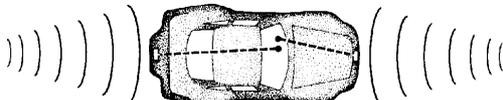
## Latest trick

### Beware the boys in (Pickfords) blue

Please note the latest dodge spotted on the A626 near the village of Marple in Derbyshire. This road, much of which used to be 60mph, is now mainly 30mph with some 40mph stretches. A dark blue Pickfords style furniture van was parked on the offside, facing the traffic flow. Driving along muttering darkly to myself about why this perfectly good (and safe) road at 50, 60, and even 70mph in some locations was now down to such a ludicrous 30mph; I came at the van from behind, so its open rear doors disclosed the contents: police radar.

It was a Derbyshire Constabulary Speed Control vehicle disguised to look like a furniture van! Now I understand why the road is so cynically underposted: it's a nice little earner. Beware unliveried furniture vans. How long, I wonder, before they start carrying fictitious livery and/or appearing to be broken down - both types of deception have been used in Oz.

**▼ RADAR DEFENCE SYSTEMS ▼**


For the very best advice on purchasing a portable or installed radar/laser detector speak to the experts...

 **01555 772001**

*Ask for a Free Information Pack! 20% Discount for ABD Members!*



**ABD**  
MEMBER

Network Ltd • 6 Malplaquet Court • Carlisle  
South Lanarkshire • ML8 4RD  
Tel 01555 751707 • Fax 01555 751666  
E-mail network.ltd@dial.pipex.com

# Campaigning

... continued from page 1

## FoE's trap for you

The letter sent by Friends of the Earth to their supporters was headed: "Four Years Hard Work: Now We Spring The Trap". It continued:

*"Enclosed is road Traffic Reduction File No 10. It springs the trap that you have all worked so hard for over the last four years. All your letters; your phone calls; all your lobbying have set this trap. Every response you sent us we filed; every shift you achieved we noted; every promise, every commitment we recorded.*

*"But a trap is most effective when properly sprung. In the run up to the Second Reading of the bill on 30th January we must snap this trap shut as hard as possible. We have this opportunity now to make all this work really bite, and bite hard."*

To hear the language of the wicked and cruel gin trap used with such relish under the logos of environmental groups is shocking enough, but it begs the question of who is in the trap.

This bill is designed to defuse opposition. Its aims seem laudable, are far in the future and are so generalised that few individuals could feel specifically threatened by it. Its wording is full of platitudes and reassurances which make it seem harmless. Supported by a determined minority, too boring to publicise, too non threatening to incite opposition, it stands every chance of slipping quietly onto the statute books. But who is in this trap they talk about?

The answer is simple. The ordinary driver. The media and opinion formers. The very mother of Parliaments itself. This bill is designed specifically to set legally binding targets for traffic reduction and to allow open ended measures to achieve them. It is being railroaded through Parliament by a minority pressure group as part of a co-ordinated, ruthless and devious campaign against the car and its use by those ideologically opposed to the freedoms it brings. It is potentially the most repressive piece of peacetime legislation passed in Britain this century, and it must be stopped.

## "Traffic calming" forum

If you thought that the people who dream up "traffic calming" schemes were essentially negative, mean-minded and ignorant; obsessed with doing everything possible to annoy, inconvenience and cause discomfort to road users, you are absolutely right.

The following excerpt, placed by a Speed Hump Implementation Technician on a Compuserve forum admits the truth:

*"I am interested in the connection between the level of discomfort (hence choice of speed) and vertical acceleration when driving over a speed hump.*

*"In some literature [sic] the conclusion is that a speed hump, which causes a maximum vertical acceleration of 0.7 G at (optimum) design speed, makes most road users go below the (optimum) design speed.*

*"However, my hypothesis holds that changes in the vertical acceleration (i.e., the acceleration differential) when driving over a speed hump have, in all probability, a greater influence on the level of inconvenience than on the maximum value of the acceleration."*

Note the cold and detached determination to seek a design which will cause even more discomfort. It smacks of the unbelievable callousness of a mediaeval torturer.

## ABD replies to consultation documents

Over the past few months, the ABD has prepared official replies to three Government consultation papers:-

1. Integrated Transport
2. The Role of Trunk Roads in England
3. The Highway Code.

Although a few details of the ABD's responses have been published in On The Road, some readers may want to read the full texts, which run to between 12 and 14 pages each. We are therefore making them available to all members (and non members). In order to cover the cost of producing copies we have decided to charge a modest fee of £3-50 (members price) or £5-00 to non-members, per document. Please apply, with a cheque made payable to "Pro-Motor" for the requisite amount to Stephen Dommett, PO Box 3151, Colchester, CO6 3JH. Please state which documents you would like to receive, and supply a C4 (A4-sized) envelope, stamped (39p) and self-addressed. Please allow 14 days for delivery. Money received will go towards the campaign fund.

## Goodwood Festival of Speed

The ABD will once again be present at the Goodwood Festival of Speed. This year the event takes place on the 12th, 13th and 14th of June at Goodwood Park, Goodwood, Chichester, West Sussex.

All members are very welcome to drop in and meet us at our tent, and helpers will be particularly well received. The event is great fun, with many beautiful cars put through their paces or on view. Tickets can be purchased in advance; indeed, on the Sunday, only advance ticket holders will get admission. The Hotline number is 01243-787766, or fax on 01243-755005. Tickets are £8 on Friday the 12th, £15 on Saturday the 13th, £25 on Sunday the 14th or £40 for the whole weekend. Under 12s get in free if accompanied by an adult.

We look forward to seeing you there!

DIRECT  INSURANCE

### ABD Members' Scheme

Preferential rates with all leading Insurance Companies  
for

Motor - House Buildings & Contents - Travel

Our associated company offers:

Life Assurance - Pensions - Savings

**\*PLUS\***

**25% of first year commission donated to the ABD**

For a no-obligation quotation tel:

**0345 573075**

Hours of business: Mon-Thur 8.30 - 7.30; Fri 8.30 - 5.30; Sat 9.00 - 4.30

# Motoring: A glimpse of the future

## Red Wire

by Lance K Green

It was a relief that the administration was done. No paper was involved now; and it was simple just to tap the appropriate combination of keys and allow the computer to check the input and send it to where it had to go. More of the same would arise later; but for now it was complete.

Brian Barber stood up and walked out of his small neat office and into the main service area that occupied the major part of the garage. His two junior mechanics were doing routine maintenance on a five year old Vauxhall Corsa and a VW Golf. Another four cars were waiting to be attended to. His foreman (for the want of a better job description) was explaining the intricacies of electronic braking systems to the more comprehending of his two charges. Brian walked out of the open main door.

Just as he stepped outside, an obviously new white Ford Escort XST was driven into the yard. A nervous young man in his late twenties emerged from the driving seat and ambled forward. He must be doing quite well to afford such a car at his age, BB mused - not quite a high flier, but lucratively employed for sure.

"Are you Mr Barber?"

"'Tis I" replied Brian who enjoyed the occasional excessive grammar.

"Could we just have a word?"

They both walked into the little office, and BB sat down. The stranger shut the door furtively behind him and was waved into a tubular steel constructed upright chair. The young man seemed even more nervous now. Brian sought to put him at ease.

"Nice car you have there ... an enthusiasts' car."

The other nodded.

"I want you ... er ... I would like you to fix it..."

BB looked straight at the visitor facing him. He assessed him curiously. The chap was tall and had short fair hair. It was not skinned - just conventionally short. He wore a pair of grey trousers and socks and black shoes. The top button of his white shirt was unfastened. A brown round neck pullover was his outermost garment. The gap at the neck of the shirt was filled by a well tied cravat. Was he trying to appear casual?

Brian interrupted.

"You'd better take it to an approved Ford dealer. I wouldn't want to invalidate your warranty, would I? We don't have a franchise here..."

The young man squirmed. "No, no, I mean..." He looked around cautiously. "Well, you know the power is limited by law..."

BB interjected again. "The Road Traffic Act 2005 limits the power to weight ratio..."

"Yes, yes.... well I was told that you could cut a red wire that would restore the power."

"You think that, by making an adjustment to the carburettor, I can bring all the old power back?"

"Well, yes... actually I was told you could cut a red wire and all would be well."

BB sighed.

"Someone has been leading you up the garden path!"

Brian picked up a little used ball point pen and made garden path motions.

"Do you seriously believe that the Ford Motor Company is going to build in a whole wodge of unlawful power only to remove it until I come along and cut a red wire to put it all back again? There is no such wire - red or any other colour. And if there were a wire, it would be highly illegal for me to cut it. I run a respectable garage. I have kids to feed and a mortgage to pay. I couldn't possibly indulge in red wire cutting."

BB paused for breath.

"But I was given you name..."

"Who gave you my name?"

"Don Talisman"

"I am going to have to have a word with him. I'm afraid Don is indulging his lively sense of humour - for which, I may say, he is famous. Or perhaps the word is notorious."

The stranger looked disappointed. "Is there anyone else who could do it?"

"I am telling you, sir, that there are no red wires; and there is no-one to cut them."

The nervousness left the young man opposite Brian Barber. He sat bolt upright in his chair, glared at BB, stood up, and walked briskly back to the yard. BB followed him, watched him get into his car, start it, and drive it out on to the road. Only when the car was completely out of sight did Brian turn back into his garage.

"Bah!" He shouted at his three employees. "Some enthusiast! He thinks cars still use carburettors!" His three employees looked up at him and smiled dutifully.

BB marched straight into his office and picked up the phone. He did not bother to

shut the door behind him. BB punched in the required digits and waited half a minute for the 'phone to be answered. When it was, there was no malice in BB's voice.

"Don! You've been sending me some dodgy characters! That bloke in the white XST - he's from the Old Bill or the Ministry of Transport or the Department of the Environment or the Ministry of Silly Walks or whatever!... Yes!... Well he is. See you around, Don."

BB smiled broadly to himself, picked up a tool, and walked across to the waiting cars. He opened the bonnet of the Peugeot 407 Coupe and looked carefully in to a place close to the back of the gleaming three litre V6. Reaching in with practised skill, Brian cut a red wire. Then he sat in the driving seat and pushed home the security stick. The engine started immediately. A single prod on the accelerator revealed an engine freed from its constraints and bursting with power as it was designed to do.

BB repeated this process with the Nissan Almera GTI and the two BMWs.

"Power well and truly restored."

BB was speaking to no-one in particular; but his youngest workman - no doubt eager for a break in the routine - ventured:

"Um ... Would you like me to ring up the owners and tell them that their cars are ready?"

BB looked at his immature mechanic steadily. Then he smiled. BB's face was rarely without a smile for long - and his smile was usually broad.

"No, no, leave it till half past four this afternoon. If you tell a punter that his car will be ready in five minutes, and then ask him for a hundred pounds sterling, he thinks he's been done. But tell him that it might just be ready tomorrow afternoon, and he'll pay up willingly. Tricks of the trade, lad, tricks of the trade..."

BB headed toward his office. He opened the door and, before walking in, he delivered his Parthian shot.

"The Road Traffic Act 2005? It's evil; but it's very profitable!" ☺

## HAVE YOU BEEN INJURED IN AN ACCIDENT? WE CAN HELP

You may be able to claim compensation.

PARDOES have a specialist team of solicitors experienced in Personal Injury Claims

**FOR FREE INITIAL ADVICE contact:**

**Guy Eskill, Elaine Potter or Mark Hollidge on 01278 457891**

You may be entitled to Legal Aid or we may be able to pursue your claim on a conditional fee basis "No win, No fee"

PARDOES SOLICITORS 6-9 KING SQUARE BRIDGWATER SOMERSET TA6 3DG  
TEL: 01278 457891 FAX: 01278 429249

## Royal Commission on environmental pollution attacks car again

In an astonishing and unprecedented move the Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution has followed up its controversial Report, published in 1994, by demanding that the Government should take action to cut car use.

It tries to justify its action by claiming that action is needed to improve air quality, yet air pollution from traffic has fallen 30% in five years - just as the Commission predicted it would when its Report was published.

The Commission calls for higher taxes on larger engined cars, especially 4-wheel drive vehicles, a doubling of the price of petrol and road tolls, as well as the introduction of expensive permits for heavy goods vehicles - although British hauliers already pay the highest taxes in western Europe. Also proposed were further attacks on company cars although it is thought that the tax rates now reflect the true value of the benefit, and although this could lead to lower car sales, thus slowing down the cleaning of our air.

## Tree planting projects to absorb carbon dioxide

Several organisations are now promoting reforestation as a way of offsetting Carbon Dioxide emissions, since plants absorb and "lock up" the gas and release oxygen into the air.

Amongst them is the International Fund for Carbon Sequestration, which was set up by the International Automobile Federation (FIA), which is the governing body for world motor sport. The Fund has contributed \$50,000 this year to finance tree planting in the Mexican state of Chiapas. The FIA reckon that this will provide sufficient forest cover to absorb an equivalent amount of Carbon Dioxide to that emitted during the whole year's Formula One race programme.

Even in the UK, such projects are feasible. Future Forests of Somerset, who are involved in a similar project calculate that even if 6 million trees per year were planted in this country for the next 30 years we would only reach the same level of broadleaf forest cover as there was at the beginning of the Century.

A mature oak tree contains about 3 tonnes of Carbon, roughly equivalent to the amount of Carbon produced by a year's driving in a typical family car. In theory, planting a

modest woodland of 50-70 trees should be sufficient to offset a lifetime's motoring for many people.

However, some environmental groups believe that it would be better to prevent further destruction of the existing forests, especially tropical rain forests. Deforestation is reckoned to be responsible for one-fifth of all man-made Carbon Dioxide emissions - far more, on a world-wide basis, than is produced by the use of cars.

Some scientists claim that man made emissions of Carbon Dioxide may cause the world's temperature to rise, although the theory remains unproven.

## Peugeot's clean Diesel

French car manufacturer, PSA Peugeot-Citroen plans to start manufacturing a new type of diesel engine from the autumn of this year. It uses a new type of direct fuel injection, known as "Common rail", which will cut fuel consumption by 20%, as against the company's existing XUD units.

The new engines will weigh 22 kg less than Peugeot's current designs, yet produce 50% more torque and 25% more power. They work by injecting the fuel into the combustion chamber at very high pressure through a single fuel line.

Emissions of Carbon Monoxide will be slashed by 40%, and Particulates by 50%. Carbon Dioxide emissions will fall by 20%.

Particulates are the only exhaust emission so far proven to be harmful to human health in normal concentrations, and are a feature of diesel engines. Petrol engines produce almost no Particulates.

With progress on fuel economy at this level, there is no reason why cars should not be able to cut Carbon Dioxide emissions by 20% in line with Government policy without any need to cut traffic levels whatsoever.

## Prescott gives go-ahead for out of town supermarket - on air quality grounds

In a heartening display of common sense, Environment Secretary John Prescott has allowed Safeway to build a new out of town superstore on the site of a former bus depot on the edge of the environmentally obsessed city of Bath.

Safeway had been trying for years to get permission to build on the site, the first of three public enquiries having been heard six years ago. After failing to secure consent to build after the first two attempts, Safeway applied again for planning approval. Bath City Council predictably turned them down, and the supermarket chain appealed yet again.

The City Council repeated its tired old mantras about 'pollution from cars', but their argument back-fired. It was conceded that vehicle miles driven in the city were likely to fall by 700,000 if the development went ahead, as a result of shoppers in the city's northern and eastern parts being able to visit a local out of town superstore, rather than driving to a more distant shop.

Interestingly, John Prescott referred to a new circular on 'Air Quality and Land Use Planning', which makes air quality effects a material consideration when determining planning applications. In a poacher turned game keeper approach, he decided that allowing the scheme to go ahead would be beneficial to Bath's air quality.

We congratulate Safeway on their determination to succeed, and John Prescott on his pragmatic approach. A classic case of everyone winning - apart from a few blinkered and sour local politicians and their officers.

## Delta Computer Services

*"Making the most of IT"*

- Consultancy
- Training for computer users
- Documentation authoring and design
- Application development: database, spreadsheet, publishing and mailing systems etc.
- Uninterruptible power supplies (UPS)

☎ 01206 240120 <http://www.deltacom.co.uk>



---

# Motoring in the Media

---

## A week in the assassination of the car

by Don Wylie

Starting on Tuesday 27th January at 7.30 am, Central TV screened the penultimate episode of a six part series about the pressures, pitfalls and perils of travelling to work on the notoriously busy stretch of the M6 known as the Birmingham Box.

At 8.00 pm the same day, Central TV showed their programme 'Police Camera Action', with footage of the very worst standards of driving and some horrendous accidents.

An hour later, Channel 4 transmitted the last in a three part series about road casualties. They quoted statistics to show that every day 2,000 people in the world die through traffic accidents, and went on to examine the role of crash investigators who have to answer the question 'what happened?'

On Friday 30th January, on BBC Radio 4's infamous 'Today' programme, John Humphrys was once again trying to rubbish the car in the introduction to the debate on the Green Party/Friends of the Earth's Traffic Reduction Bill, due to have its Second Reading in the House of Commons later that day. Who should be invited, but Glenda Jackson, who put on a performance worthy of an Oscar when she tried to convince listeners that "public opinion is turning on the car" as a justification for taking drastic measures in respect of congestion, pollution and traffic reduction (does she even believe this herself?). All would be revealed in the forthcoming White Paper on the much vaunted 'Integrated transport Policy', to be announced in May, she said. She left the definite impression that whilst it may still be legal to drive a car, it was now sinful and scandalous to own and drive one. Bob Dawson of the AA was given a few moments to defend the motorist, when he lamented the lack of cash being made available for roads.

The week ended with the Money Programme on BBC 2 on Sunday night. The programme opened with a documentary from Nottingham in the early morning, when people were preparing for work. Interviews were carried out with employees of the drug company, Boots. One person left his home by car to pick up a colleague, encouraged by a scheme which encourages car sharing among staff. A second employee, one of the sales managers, preferred the flexibility of starting early and finishing in time to spend time with his family in the evening. Car sharing would not allow him to do this.

The Transport Controller, a Mr Paul Carse, complained that delivery times for his vehicles were being affected by congestion, caused in his view by the volume of traffic. He favoured road charging, although there was no detailed analysis as to whether the cost of the charges to his company's own delivery fleet might not equal or exceed the cost of congestion. He did not even mention that if road charges were levied, the greatest benefit would be achieved if the toll money was actually invested in further road building.

The report was followed by a studio discussion about the role of the private motorist, attended by the obligatory 'Friends of the Earth' rep, Roger Higman, a Professor from the London School of Economics, and Chris Magowan of the Retail Motor Industry Federation. The debate followed predictable lines, with Magowan asking for more of the £28 billion of tax revenue paid by motorists every year ploughed back into roads and the LSE Professor favouring more powers for local authorities to regulate traffic, and charge for road use.

Unforgivable though, from a programme supposedly dedicated to economic issues, was the final scene showing a car being driven to a scrap yard, insinuating that the car's days were now numbered. Perhaps the programme's producers should reflect on the lives of the two million people in the UK and their families who work in the auto industry - now the country's largest manufacturing industry.

## World In Action in a jam

Granada TV broadcast a programme on traffic jams on Monday 6 January. Paul Hemingway watched it and reports as follows.

It is true that traffic jams do exist, and are in many cases worse than they actually should be. However, the programme apportioned blame mainly to the individual motorist (apart from giving governments stick for building roads!). It then went on to imply that the only way to improve things was to place restrictions and increased charges on drivers, who were portrayed as not paying their way in society.

This view is very one sided. The following balancing facts were not presented at all, and put a totally different complexion on the cause of traffic problems:

- Drivers contribute some £28bn annually in tax but only some £6bn is spent on transport.
- Britain is projected to have the lowest length of motorway for its land area in the EU by 2010.
- Rail fares in the UK are at least double the international average.

Clearly, a root cause of transport problems in the UK insofar as they are worse than other European countries is a failure by government to invest motoring taxes in transport infrastructure of all kinds.

What was particularly worrying about the programme was the way it pitted professional politicians and lobbyists like the very articulate and forceful (but wrong!) Steven Norris and Lynn Sloman against a selection of ordinary drivers who were consequently made to look ignorant and foolish. It is a pity they did not invite anyone on to put the other point of view who could look after themselves in a discussion with these people.

From the ABD's point of view, few of us would commute by car into central London every day. I for one can and do use public transport when I have to travel there, or arrange to travel at a less congested time. However, I notice whenever I do use vastly expensive public transport to do this, it is usually full to capacity. How, then, are these car drivers supposed to use it?

It is unacceptable to place restrictions and additional costs on motorists who have already paid for their journeys many times over whilst failing to undertake the most basic marketing activity on public transport and so making no effort to get it to meet the needs of the travelling public of the 90s not the 50s.

The roads into London have always been congested - it is not a new phenomenon. Public transport is the most sensible way to access a city centre like London for a single purpose return journey, but it is wholly inadequate to undertake any journey with an orbital component - and such journeys are very much a feature of modern suburban working patterns. There is no credible alternative to the car for such journeys.

The road featured in the programme was the A40. Steven Norris rather arrogantly stated that he had cancelled the widening scheme near the Hanger Lane Gyratory because "it would simply move the traffic jam a few miles closer to London." That statement completely ignores the enormous benefits the scheme would have on those who happen to live, work or require to travel orbitally through this congested section; people whose welfare he had the effrontery to cite in support of this cancellation.

The only local resident interviewed to support the cancellation was a cycling priest who was depicted "mixing it" with cars on the narrow dual carriageway. If the scheme had gone ahead, he could undoubtedly have had a pleasant cycleway to travel on, separated from a proper three lane road.

The benefits of this type of road improvement can be clearly seen in the other A40 section featured - the new bypass of the Hillingdon crossroads. This road, described on the programme as a misguided leftover of previous policy removed a dreadful bottleneck and transformed access to and local traffic levels in huge areas of Ruislip,

## Welcome, new members

A very warm welcome to all our new members, and congratulations on joining the UK's leading motorists' lobby group!

## Giving you value for money

In the absence of any real attempt by the established motoring organisations to protect the interests of their members, it seems to have been left to us to fight the battle for Britain's 36 million driving licence holders. The AA recently appealed to the Government not to penalise motorists too much in the forthcoming budget, on the grounds that the AA "did not want to become a channel for their members dissatisfaction". But surely that is precisely why the AA was set up. It is sad that a body, once proud to stand up for motorists, is now anxious not to have to raise its head above the parapet.

By contrast, *the ABD has never been afraid to say what others won't say.*

Many of you have asked what we do with the £15 subscription (£12 from those of you who pay by Standing Order) that we receive from you, so here is a brief summary of some of the ways in which your money is used to further our cause. The ABD is an entirely independent body, funded by subscriptions and voluntary donations from members.

We work hard to keep our costs to an absolute minimum, and while many members spend hours of their time on ABD matters, none of them receives any payment for doing so. In addition, many members spend money on postage, copying, travel, books and other publications without reclaiming the expense from ABD funds.

... continued from previous page

Uxbridge and Hillingdon. I know - I worked in Uxbridge at the time. It also bypassed the Master Brewer Traffic Lights, one of the worst accident blackspots in the country (so much so that it was chosen for the very first "red light" camera set up in 1988). This new road has therefore undoubtedly saved many lives.

Finally, the way that road safety was linked to the issue of congestion was also a matter for concern. The programme showed a mother taking her children to school. She said she used the car for a one mile journey that the narrator said could be walked in five minutes (really!) because she was afraid to walk as her youngest had no road sense. And yet none of her children were strapped in the car, as far as could be seen! Her statement beggars belief, but is a product of government safety policy:

- First, she had been told that children's pedestrian safety is the responsibility of the car driver rather than the parent and

However, running a campaign is not cheap, especially when we are up against huge and wealthy vested interests: local and Central Government, academic researchers paid for by the tax payer, an anti-car media, and rich pressure groups, many seemingly dedicated to using their might to drive you out of your car. Our largest single cost is for printing stationery and postage.

We are members of the Parliamentary Advisory Committee on Transport Safety, for which an annual fee is payable, as well as the American National Motorists Association (NMA), with whom we share information. The NMA successfully lobbied for the removal of the Federal 65mph speed limit.

We arrange general meetings about five times per year, as well as one Annual General Meeting. Although we have negotiated a free conference venue, and all members pay their own travel and meal expenses, we make a point of notifying *all* members of the meetings, which involves postage and printing costs. To save money, minutes of these meetings are automatically sent only to those who attended (but are available on request to all members). *All members are most welcome to attend meetings - the ABD is your organisation.*

Arranging a tent at Goodwood Festival of Speed - to attract new members, and to act as a "shop window" for the ABD - is costly, and we also fund attendance at relevant conferences, such as the SERA ("Labour Environment Campaign") conference on Integrated Transport Policy, attended by ABD Chairman Brian Gregory and ABD Roads and Traffic Spokesman, Paul Hemingway, last autumn (see winter issue of On The Road for a write up of this controversial event).

later the child. Worse, the speed of the car is portrayed as all that matters.

- She therefore does not take responsibility for her child's safety whilst walking and equip it with reins or a firmly grasped hand. The child will never learn road sense and thus be at higher risk when older.
- She is encouraged to see the car as the enemy of the pedestrian rather than realise the truth, which is that a responsible, attentive pedestrian has nothing to fear from normal traffic.
- She then equips herself with a car and again fails to take responsibility for her children's safety inside the car - once a person is encouraged to blame others for threatening their safety as a pedestrian, that attitude will easily pervade their behaviour when they are driving.

Little blame can be attached to this woman for her attitude - it is a predictable consequence of the flawed road safety messages she has received from the authorities.

The national telephone line has to be paid for, as does our PO Box, and we now lease a photocopying machine. More office equipment is likely to be purchased to make our organisation more efficient.

The membership subscription fee is deliberately set low to ensure that anyone who wants to join us can afford to do so. The threat to mobility posed by anti-car policies is greatest to those who are not wealthy - and the ABD is committed to protecting the interests of *all* motorists: rich and poor. However, the demands on our resources are such that voluntary contributions are always welcome, and many members have been very generous indeed.

The ABD prepares audited accounts which are copied to all members once a year, before being submitted to the Annual General Meeting for approval.

## What the ABD is doing for you

### The ABD In The News

The ABD has enjoyed unprecedented success in gaining media coverage in the last few months.

Articles included a major feature in Autocar's 31 December 1997 issue, in which a whole page was devoted to the history, aims and ethos behind the ABD, including interviews by the magazine's editor Coram Williams with Roads and Traffic Spokesman, Paul Hemingway, and ABD marketing specialist Mark McArthur-Christie. The article included full details of our address and membership subscription fee, and led to many new members joining us.

**Top Gear** presenter, Quentin Willson praised the ABD in an article published in the Daily Mirror newspaper's motoring section on the 16th January. That article led to literally hundreds of new membership enquiries within a matter of days - we apologise to any new member whose membership pack was delayed due to the huge demand at that time!

On the 13th January, the **London Evening Standard** published an article about us highlighting our views on the inadequacy of British motorway speed limits.

Paul Hemingway was quoted again in **The Independent** newspaper on the 29th January, in the front page lead story. When asked about a proposal to use revenue from traffic fines to fund public transport initiatives, he said: "it sounds like something out of Eastern Europe - being told to pay more taxes for road space we have already paid for. Why not spend more of the £26 billion the motorist is currently taxed?"

Environmental Spokesman Julian Rowden received a quarter page coverage

---

# Pro-Motor News

---

## ABD in the News *(continued)*

for the ABD in the regional newspaper, **The Western Daily Press**, on the 9th February, when he argued for the individual's right to choose how they wished to travel. Julian said "there [is] a lack of understanding of the central role of the car, and a growing movement to control drivers. There are less motorways and trunk roads in this country than in many other European countries, and yet our public transport is in a worse state and more expensive than elsewhere."

Julian appeared on **HTV's "The West this Week"** programme on the 12th February, where a short interview with Glenda Jackson, Britain's Minister Against the Car, was followed by a ten minute discussion lead by HTV presenter Richard Lyddon with Veronica Palmer (Director General of the Confederation of Passenger Transport), Cllr Helen Holland (who chairs Bristol's Planning and Transport Committee) and Julian, who spoke on behalf of the ABD. The programme was about Bristol's road tolling experiments.

Other media coverage has included reference to ABD views in **Autocar** on the 26th November (motor taxation) 10th December and 4th February (Friends of the Earth and the Road Traffic Reduction Bill - which we described as "one of the most draconian pieces of legislation ever proposed by a minority pressure group" - see separate article), and 11th February (the blood alcohol proposals).

The ABD was mentioned in **The Daily Mail** on 24th January, when Paul Hemingway was quoted on Government proposals to make life difficult for parents who drive their children to school, and in the January/February edition of "Driving" magazine, (a publication for driving instructors), who noted the emphasis on improved driver training adopted by the ABD in our response to the Integrated Transport Consultation document.

Letters from the ABD have been published in **The Daily Telegraph** and **The Times** newspapers and in **AutoExpress**, and articles have appeared in **Performance Car**, the **Surrey and Hants Star**, the **Somerset Express and Star**, the **Somerset County Gazette**, and in **Small Business News**.

Paul Hemingway has spoken for the ABD on **Talk Radio** on two occasions, and also on **London's News Direct Radio**. Julian Rowden has spoken on **BBC Radio Bristol**.

## FACTS

The ABD is represented on the Parliamentary Advisory Committee for Transport Safety ("FACTS").

Members Hugh Bladon and Paul Hemingway are our representatives, and attend meetings on our behalf. These meetings are attended by Government Ministers, where they have the opportunity

to seek to influence the debate on such key issues as speed limits and penalties.

Our past contributions have been acknowledged by PACTS, and we are particularly pleased to work with the British Motorcycle Federation, who are also represented.

## Internet News

Worth a visit is the British Antarctic Survey site reference the global warming issue:

<http://www.nerc-bas.ac...blic/info/iceshelf.html> <http://www.nerc-bas.ac.uk/public/info/iceshelf.html>

The ABD now has its own domain name and can be found at <http://www.abd.org.uk>

## Government Consultations

Following the official responses to the Government's consultation documents on "Air Quality" (1996), "Integrated Transport Policy", and "What role for Trunk Roads in England?" (late 1997), the ABD has responded to the consultation document on the Highway Code.

The Government will shortly be printing its White Paper on the Integrated Transport Policy, and the ABD intends to prepare a response to that as well.

## Talk to Bath IAM

Responding to an invitation from the Bath Group of the Institute of Advanced Motorists, Hugh Bladon (himself an IAM member), Paul Hemingway and John Lyon gave a talk at their February meeting.

Hugh Bladon gave a short introductory talk about the history of the formation of our Association, our membership, aims and objectives. He then handed over to Paul who was the main speaker for the evening.

In the previous week the local paper, the Bath Chronicle, had published an article about this meeting saying that the ABD was sending three spokesmen to rubbish the Green stance on motoring. There were close on 100 members attending the meeting but as a result of the advanced notification there were also about ten people whose interest in motoring was not positive.

To his great credit Paul not only managed to cope with the endless absurd interruptions from these intruders but stayed on track with his talk which exposed the lies and half-truths put out by our opponents on issues such as global warming.

After a short break for refreshments, John Lyon took over and gave a talk on his side of motoring with stories of his experiences and giving his full support to the ABD. The 'brain deads' tried to have a go at John also but got nowhere.

John took questions on his subject matter and then Hugh and Paul took questions on the whole range of motoring issues in an open forum which could easily have gone on

for a lot longer than time allowed.

Hugh has since received a letter from the events organiser and part of this read : "...I believe they (the audience) enjoyed the experience and were impressed by the stout defence of the principles supported by the Association of British Drivers. Paul, who clearly thrives on controversy, handled the emotive outbursts very well and put his arguments across clearly and concisely. .. I would be grateful, indeed, if you could pass on the Group's thanks to Paul and John on my behalf".

Hugh's feeling is that it would have been better in some ways to get rid of the jobs at the start of the meeting but it is Paul's opinion that these cretins did us more good than harm by the absurdity of their 'arguments'.

## Press Releases

Conservative MP Christopher Chope had clearly referred to one of our Press Releases before speaking in the debate that preceded the vote on the Traffic Reduction Bill in January of this year, and his comments regarding the tactics of Friends of the Earth were reported in Hansard - the official record of Parliamentary debates. See separate article in this issue.

## Plans For the Coming Months

As well as continuing our campaign of Press Releases, and preparing a response to the Integrated Transport Policy White Paper, the ABD has agreed with ACPO (The Association of Chief Police Officers) that we would open a dialogue with them. We hope to arrange this in the coming weeks, and will provide more information in due course.

The ABD will be present at the Goodwood Festival of Speed, 12 - 14 June at Goodwood Park, Goodwood, Chichester, West Sussex. See page 11 for details.

---

## The Last Laugh

---

### The DETR Logo



Last issue we pondered the deeper meaning behind the new DETR logo and invited readers to consider this important issue. Member, Martin Nicholas came up with:

"Beware, slippery politicians ahead" and a suggestion for the DETR's real name: the "Department for Extracting Taxes from Road users".

*Yes, and the logo represents them wringing us dry.*