

## “Home Zones” - thin end of the wedge

The “Home Zone” campaigners ultimately want 55 on the motorway, 40 on A roads, 20 on unclassified roads and all places where it is now 30 or 40; and 10 on all “residential” roads. Everything they do works towards this. The purpose is not to improve life for children but to make life unpleasant for drivers and so force them on to public transport. The children are just a convenient excuse for Transport 2000 and their ilk.

Also, note who it is who heightens fear amongst parents about their children’s safety. Instead of being encouraged to teach them road safety, parents’ anxieties are whipped up by the government’s campaigns to blame drivers (apart from themselves, of course) and, to quote Yoda in Star Wars, “where there is fear there is hatred”!

At the root of all of this is more a fundamental desire to restrict travel rather than any altruism towards residents. Unfortunately, various groups have climbed on board this bandwagon, not realising the full implications to their own freedom.

Another interesting fact is the low proportion of fatalities amongst these children who are run down by cars - 133 out of 17000. Do the DETR themselves not say that 5% of children hit at 20mph are killed? That would mean 850 fatalities! They must therefore, almost all, already be hit at much lower speeds than this. So why should the roads be safer if people are forced to do 10mph? Will they not be more dangerous as children fail to pay attention to vehicles?

## Drivers are resolute

**Britain’s drivers won’t give up their cars, according to a recent survey.**

Drivers want motorway speed limits increased, they want fewer speed cameras, and they don’t want charges for driving into inner cities, according to a survey carried out for independent direct insurance operation, People’s Choice.

People’s Choice surveyed nearly 1000 motorists with interesting results. These include:

- 71% of drivers do not think motorists should be charged to drive into inner cities in an attempt to reduce congestion.
- 44% of drivers wanted higher motorway speed limits.

Even if public transport were cheaper, cleaner or safer, 15% of drivers would never use their car less.

The managing director of People’s Choice, Philip da Silva, said “Our findings show that British motorists want to keep on driving.”

“Even if public transport improved, 77% of drivers would still use the car to do their weekly shop, and 65% still want to drive to visit friends and relatives.”

### New address, phone or e-mail?

Please notify the Secretary.  
(See page 2 for details.)

## The Eco-Alternative

The Economist magazine dug up some interesting facts in an article about the effect of the car on the 20th century. In particular, it notes that in New York in 1900, horses deposited 2.5 million pounds of manure and 60,000 gallons of urine on the roads every single day. On average 15,000 dead horses a year had to be cleared from the streets.

The American science fact and fiction magazine, Analog, has reported that in American cities at the turn of the last century, horse dung either polluted the roads as a slurry or, in dry weather, dried and was pounded into a powder by horse traffic. It then became airborne, depositing itself everywhere including on food. It was also inhaled resulting in inflammation of nasal passages.

In Victorian cities in England, road crossing cleaners were employed to remove horse dung where the gentry chose to cross the road.

In the 1840s, annual casualties in London from horse drawn traffic accidents were higher than they are now for the whole of the UK with its larger population and higher volumes of traffic.



Illustration by Philip Berkin

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It has been estimated that riding a horse is fifty times more risky than riding a motorcycle.

There is no suggestion that owning and riding horses should be taxed or legislated into oblivion. These facts merely illustrate how the authorities have got the “problems” of the car totally out of perspective. The car is almost entirely clean, safe and beneficial compared with more primitive forms of transport.

## “Save the day” loses

Some environmentalists call for a “save-the-day” strategy to “stop global warming,” saying it is better to be safe than sorry. Such a position seems logical until we stop to think: Immediate action wouldn’t make us any safer, but it would surely make us poorer. And being poorer would make us less safe.

Researchers have found a close relationship between a nation’s standard of living (its wealth) and many measures of public health and safety. Wealthier societies are able to invest more in things that ensure safety, such as guardrails on highways, vaccines against diseases, and safe drinking water.

Simply put, wealthier is healthier.

The “save-the-day” strategy will definitely make us poorer, to the tune of hundreds of billions of dollars each year. If that money is no longer available to purchase safety-enhancing devices, plainly we will be less safe as a result of our efforts to “stop global warming.”

**When contacting the ABD, always consult page 2 of OTR. These details are subject to frequent change.**

### Hot air

A report on [www.newscientist.com](http://www.newscientist.com) claims that the country making the largest contribution to the greenhouse effect per head of population is French Guiana.

It appears that a reservoir created for a sustainable, renewable, and generally right on hydroelectric plant contains a submerged forest. The rotting vegetation emits a large quantity of CO<sub>2</sub>, but more importantly, a significant quantity of methane, a far more potent greenhouse gas. The article suggests that hydroelectric installations are potentially more significant than burning fossil fuels in greenhouse gas terms.

## International News

### US drivers fight back

*Our correspondent in the USA reports:*

Having spent the last few days in Houston, where incidentally the frantic road building programme is enough to make you weep, I noticed in USA Today (national coverage) a full page report headed 'Aggressive ticketing has drivers feeling trapped.' The page includes the NMA's list of the exact location of 50 speed trap sites. The article also includes advice on how to challenge speeding tickets by contacting helpful lawyers via [www.speedingticket.net](http://www.speedingticket.net). Speed trap warning sites are said to cropping up on the internet with increasing frequency.

The AAA (42m members) monitors the income statements of towns to check whether they raise more than 25% of their revenue from speeding fines. They also warn drivers to avoid certain towns altogether because of their strict speed enforcement policies. In contrast, nine states have banned or severely limited the use of speed traps.

At least there appears to some public and objective press debate on the issue in the US.

## Conference Report

### Speed Review Seminar

An ABD representative attended the above DETR seminar, held in London on 15th September. The purpose of the seminar, according to John Plowman, the DETR's Head of Road Safety and Environment, was firstly to examine the main issues that have emerged from the review, secondly to consider the policy dilemmas that have been identified and thirdly to take account of delegates' views. He stressed that it was not intended to draw final conclusions at the seminar and written submissions were welcome until the end of September. The aim is to complete the speed review later this year and feed the results into the Government's road safety strategy.

The keynote speaker was Lord Whitty,

the Minister for Roads, who summarised the issues as he saw them. He got off to a bad start by stating that "Speed is a major factor in accidents." He went on to say that, as well as safety, we have to look at the economic dimension (i.e the impact of increased journey times from lower speeds) and, ominously, the need to consider climate change. He said that speed management would play a significant role in meeting the UK's goal for reducing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. He also mentioned the desire to reduce noise and to encourage more walking and cycling.

He then ran through the questions posed in relation to speed in different areas. In urban areas, he felt that an increase in the 30 mph limit was difficult to justify on safety grounds, but should the limit be lowered or the existing one enforced more vigorously? Should there be a lower limit in residential roads and, if so, how are they to be defined? How would lower limits affect emissions and noise?

### Limits must be understandable, appear sensible and be consistent

On country roads, he referred to the calls by the CPRE and others for lower limits to 'protect' cyclists, horse riders, etc, but noted that the majority of injuries are to vehicle occupants. He also noted that village residents want lower speeds but are opposed to ugly traffic calming features. He made the valid point that reckless drivers break the law and would continue to do so if the national limit were lowered. A blanket reduction in the speed limit would lead to inappropriate limits on some roads. Limits must be understandable, appear sensible and be consistent, with more publicity for the reasons for speed limits. Drivers should also be given better information, e.g. by speed activated signs on the approach to hazards (as piloted in Norfolk) and there should be better signing of limits and cameras.

He summarised by saying that speed limits need to be right and there has to be a balance between safety, the economy and wider Government objectives. Motorists must not be excluded from the equation as they are also pedestrians, cyclists and residents at various times - demonising drivers is not acceptable (hooray!). He then spoke about the new arrangements for funding speed cameras and the opportunity they would give for installing more cameras in dangerous locations - but they must be used for improving safety, not raising revenue! Pilot schemes under the new funding arrangements will start next year.

The next speaker was Heather Ward of University College London, on speed and the quality of life. She stated that the car provided the benefits of freedom, independence, convenience, privacy and security, status and enjoyment, but then went on to say that the

## The Association of British Drivers

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disbenefits were death and injury, air quality, noise, vibration, severance of communities, effects on health, damage to property and injury to animals. She claimed that reductions in the speed and volume of traffic would lead to reduced stress and anxiety (for whom?), fewer casualties, better air quality, more exercise and more social interchange. She then went on to ask what is appropriate speed? She said that different groups in society had different views on this, i.e. residents and 'vulnerable' road users want restrictions on drivers, drivers themselves want more information and better training. She believes that resolution of these conflicting views will enable the Government and highway authorities to decide on appropriate levels.

Marie Taylor of the Transport Research Laboratory gave an interesting talk on the role of speed in road safety. She said that the TRL has done some extensive new research into the relationship between speed and accidents and a major report is to be published later this year. The research has looked at this relationship for different types of road and has found that the "1 mph average speed reduction equals a 5 per cent accident reduction" is too simplistic to apply to all types of roads in all circumstances. She acknowledged that inter-relationships are very complex and it is difficult to isolate the effects of speed from other variables. Her conclusions in a nutshell are that the relationship between speed and accidents is much more pronounced on roads with low average speeds already, e.g. in town centres and on residential roads, than on roads with high average speeds, such as motorways and rural A-roads. She also says that the distribution of speeds is important and targeting the fastest drivers would have the greatest effects on accident rates. From all this she believes that it should now be possible to predict accident changes more accurately as a result of changes in speed and speed management policies and the greatest potential is in reducing accidents in urban rather than rural areas.

Iain Todd, Head of the Vehicle, Environment and Taxation Division of the

DETR, talked about the environmental effects of speed. He focused on three areas: greenhouse gases, air quality and noise. On CO2 emissions, he said that 40 mph was roughly the optimum speed for minimising fuel consumption and thus CO2 output. He estimated that strict enforcement of the 70 mph limit would save from 0.4 to 2.8 million tonnes (Mt) of carbon per year (apparently the national output is 168 Mt, of which 38 Mt is from transport). On air quality, he did at least recognise the dramatic improvements that have taken place since 1990, with emissions now down to 60 per cent of 1990 levels and set to fall to 20 per cent of those levels by 2010, despite increased traffic flows. He acknowledged that the relationship between speed and emissions is not straightforward, with different pollutants behaving differently. Driving style and smoothness of traffic flow is at least as important as speed. On noise, he said that transport noise affects many people, that the Government's strategy is "less well developed", but reducing speeds produces noise benefits.

## **demonising drivers is not acceptable**

Tom Worsley, Head of the DETR's Highways, Economics and Traffic Appraisal Division, spoke about the economic effects of changes in speed. The objectives of transport policy are not all compatible in economic terms. He pointed out that most transport investment in the last 150 years has been aimed at reducing travel times. Increased travel times would have an impact on the economy - the current value of time saving is estimated at £3.15 per hour for non-working time (all modes).

In summing up the morning session, Richard Allsop, Professor of Transport Studies at University College London, admitted that speed brings benefits in shorter travel times, from which everyone benefits to some degree. He then went on about the costs in terms of accidents and quality of life. He claimed that drivers under-perceive the costs they bear and do not bear any of the costs to society in general. He believes that casualty reduction is not the only safety benefit of reduced speeds but 'danger reduction' should also be assessed. He revealed his true colours by saying that, even if the economic disbenefits of reducing speeds exceed the benefits, we should still go ahead!

The first speaker in the afternoon was Steve Stradling of Napier University, who is a psychologist and talked about changing drivers' attitudes and behaviour. It is a pity that he has such an anti-driver bias, as he is a very amusing speaker and a good choice for the after lunch spot. As an example of his style, he was explaining that a high proportion of persistent speed 'violators' are in the higher socio-economic groups: "We're not talking about scroats and toe rags here!" He

concluded that the top targets should be young and inexperienced drivers and those who drive as part of their work. He also recommends the random retesting of a sample of drivers.

David Silcock, a consultant, described the results of the AA Foundation's research on what makes drivers speed. The conclusions, not surprisingly, were that drivers choose the speed that feels right to them, even though it is often over the speed limit. Most speeding occurs on 30 mph roads which are wide, straight, with good visibility and little frontage activity (where the speed limit is obviously too low!). Some drivers quote the inconsistency of speed limits between similar roads in different areas as a reason for ignoring speed limits. He asked why we should manage speeds? He came up with three reasons - to address specific crash site problems (reasonable), to address a network wide, speed-related crash problem (not proven), and to create an equitable use of road space as part of an integrated transport strategy (politically correct nonsense!).

The last speaker was Inspector Ian Bell of Lancashire police, who started badly by referring to the role of enforcement in reducing the 'carnage' on the roads. He did, however, admit that enforcement could not stand alone and there is a role for engineering and education. He said that the public must have confidence in police procedures. Apparently police enforcement equipment is being evaluated for use in 20 mph zones. Naturally, he was enthusiastic about Gatsos and said that the police were disappointed that owner liability was not allowed in imposing speeding penalties! He referred to the new digital camera technology and the 'controlled motorway' system of variable speed limits, as applied to part of the M25, which he expected to be extended to other motorways. He also referred to the new funding mechanism for speed cameras, to be piloted next year, but believed it would only apply to NEW speed and red light enforcement. Strangely, he made no mention of 'Operation Victoria'.

In the various question and answer sessions, Marie Taylor referred to the Suffolk policy of blanket speed limit reductions and said that, whilst speeds had been reduced, they were nowhere near the new 30 mph limits. Mayer Hillman, that well known anti-car fanatic, wanted the term 'accident' removed from the vocabulary and 'collision' used instead. He suggested that the lives of drivers were less important than those of vulnerable road users!

Trevor Magner of the British Motorcyclists Federation made his usual plea for the real causes of bad driving to be addressed, rather than focusing on the single issue of speed. As expected, this fell largely on stony ground, but Steve Lovegrove, a traffic division superintendent with Staffs police, felt that speed enforcement was just tinkering with the symptoms, not the root cause of accidents - the standard of driving is

appalling and we need to look at driver skills. In the long term, this would be more effective and economic than enforcement and engineering. Perhaps he is a contact we should cultivate.

On the subject of speed enforcement thresholds, Ian Bell said that they were on ACPO's agenda and there was a desire to reduce them closer to the posted limits. In his summing up, Roger Peal, Head of the Road Safety Division of DETR, raised the issue of speed limiters and asked delegates to consider their acceptability - to which we must give a resounding no!

## Conclusions

From the tone of the day's proceedings, our representative came to the view that the most likely outcomes of the Government's speed review are as follows:

In urban areas, the general 30 mph limit is unlikely to be changed in either direction, but it is likely to be targeted for increased enforcement and there will be further extension of 20 mph zones in town centres and residential roads, with yet more traffic calming. There does seem to be genuine concern, however, about the inconsistency of speed limit application between different highway authorities, so more rigid guidelines could be on the way.

In rural areas, the motorway speed limit is unlikely to be lowered because of the adverse effects on the economy. It is unlikely to be raised either, even though it is admitted that there would be little effect on safety by so doing. Minimising 'greenhouse' emissions and noise will be used as the excuse for retaining the limit and enforcing it more rigorously.

The 60 mph limit on rural A-roads is unlikely to be changed, but there may be a national 'hierarchy' of rural roads, with B-roads and more important unclassified roads being reduced to perhaps 50 mph. 'Minor' rural roads, possibly identified by the lack of centre line markings (think of the abuse that could be perpetrated there!) would be subject to a 40 mph limit. Some sort of universal 'village' demarcation, with a 30 mph or possibly 20 mph limit, could be introduced along similar lines to the French system.

Whatever the eventual outcome, we are going to be worse off!

## ITP Report

### Bikes not wanted on trains

Train operating company, Northern Spirit, has refused to take any more than two bicycles at once on its trains. It claims that this is due to lack of space.

Eight people who had planned to go by rail to start a coast-to-coast cycling holiday, were forced, after the railway company's decision, to make the journey by car, taking four cars in all.

## More rail failure

A fan of American classic cars tells us:

"I have just driven to Castleford, a few miles south of Leeds, in my 1961 Chrysler Imperial. A 19ft, two and a quarter ton, chrome laden, big finned, American dinosaur with 6.75 litre V8 engine capable, on a good run, of 14mpg and a contender for the title of "most uneconomical car in the U.K.". I had to drive slowly (not more than 55 mph) because the engine is in need of a rebuild and I did not want to risk further damage. Why Castleford? Because there is a specialist American car firm there which can do the repairs. The journey time to Castleford was three and a half hours including a half hour stop at a service station. On the way I listened to a little music on the radio and enjoyed the drive. Total cost of fuel £38.25.

"The return journey was by train. This involved three changes, cost £58.40 and took four and a quarter hours. As luck would have it, the trains were punctual. Instead of the radio, from Leeds to Kings Cross, I had the pleasure of listening to the howling of the three brats on the other side of the carriage firing a cap pistol and terrorising the unfortunate au-pair who was accompanying them.

"How I wish John Prescott had been there with me."

## Letters



Sir - Two articles have recently appeared in the media which I, as a driver and a parent, find very disturbing.

The first concerns the proposed "Home zones" with 10mph speed limits. The rationale they give for this proposal is that "It will make the streets safe for children to play in." Do we really want our children to believe that streets are safe places to play? Which streets? Try telling a child that he need not pay heed to the traffic outside his house - and then wonder why he attempts to cross a main road without looking. "Let's play football on the M25" if you'll excuse the sarcasm - although the traffic on the M25 moves at about 5mph anyway.

So we'll have the streets full of kids who know nothing of the dangers, coupled with a bunch of inattentive drivers who believe that

they are driving perfectly safely at 10mph and cannot possibly hurt anyone - a recipe for disaster. Added to this is the strong possibility of truly bad drivers on these "safe" streets - joyriders doing 50mph who will regard the chicanes and humps as challenges, drink drivers (who will always be around no matter how hard the police try to get rid of them - do kids have to pay for this with their lives?) and criminals doing high speeds with the police in pursuit. Emergency vehicles will also somehow have to negotiate these streets.

To make matters even worse, a lot of these "home zone" streets will probably be through roads used by a lot of traffic simply because there are no viable alternative routes. The councils have shown themselves to be very adept at creating intolerable congestion on through routes with their bus lanes and "traffic calming" measures, and then closing off the resulting "rat runs". While discussing this subject I was asked whether I would "rather have some idiot driving past my house at 60mph", to which I replied that I wouldn't like idiots driving past my house at ANY speed.

The second article is about a new super speed camera which is currently undergoing trials. This camera system records every vehicle registration and their average speed over a mile, which means that it's going to become virtually impossible to escape prosecution and a lot of drivers are going to be banned.

The trouble is, a lot of these drivers who will lose their mobility and possibly their livelihoods are the best drivers we have around, while those who barely give a thought to their driving (I'm a good driver 'cause I stick to the speed limit) will get to stay on the roads.

Driving demands a lot of thought and concentration - to drive safely, to allow others to drive in safety and to minimise the causes of traffic congestion. It is extremely difficult to maintain this sort of concentration for very long while doing a speed well below the optimum for conditions, so a lot of drivers simply switch off. I would personally risk a few fines rather than increase my risk of having an accident.

Incidentally, I have not had an accident for twenty-five years now, although I did have a few serious accidents (in which, thankfully, nobody was seriously hurt) in my younger days. (I am now 47 years old)

In my opinion these developments should be fought against, and the best way of doing this is to make as many people as possible aware of the issues. To this end, I have a few suggestions.

One is an extensive media campaign. I for one would be more than happy to contribute an amount in excess of my subscriptions in order to cover this. How would your other members feel?

Another is for members to "spread the word" about the ABD and what it stands for to as many other people as they can. I am

### Speed Limits - How they are set and your Right to Object

**The ABD has prepared an informative Action Pack which sets out in detail the process by which Local Authorities set speed limits, and the rights that every member of the public has to object to the imposition of new or reduced limits. The pack costs £5 to non-members, but is available free to members. Please send a large sae, stamped (26p) to: The Editor, PO Box 3151, West Bergholt, CO6 3JH.**

amazed at how few people I've spoken to have even heard about the ABD.

Keep up the good work

Peter Hattingh, Bristol

### "Home Zones"

Sir - The "Today" programme, 4th August, featured "Home Zones". A BBC reporter interviewed a mother, child and a representative of Transport 2000. During the interview, the phrase "reclaim the streets" was used.

This report was delivered with the usual BBC bias - the Transport 2000 woman quoted the 'progress' made in Holland and said that there was so much to do here. At no point was any counter argument given, nor was any spokesman from any other organisation present.

I take a very dim view of this, it obviously gives credence to "Reclaim The Streets".

Tony Mott

Sir - The idea of removing the kerb and turning the whole road into a glorified pavement has some merit on a cul-de-sac with off road parking, but to do it on a through road with on street parking is lunacy.

Telling small children they have right of way over cars then removing the kerb, stopping at which is key to all childrens road safety education, and allowing them to run out from behind parked cars is the worst thing for children since the pied piper!

Of course, the motivation is to make life unpleasant for drivers, not improve the lot of children.

Nigel Humpaway, Worcs

Sir - One of the greatest concerns for motorists is the idea that they will be held totally responsible for any accident in which they may be involved in such a "Homezone".

My working day revolves around driving amongst many residential estates, where children (often infants) are let loose with a total disregard for traffic.

I worry that they are already not given

correct road safety education, so let them loose in a "Homezone" street with priority and how will they differentiate out on a "real" road?

Noel Shaw, Barnsley

### Reactions to SVDD

Sir - I have just found your web site and must congratulate you as being one of the few organizations who seem to be concerned with the growing misery of car drivers!

It seems that this country believes it can impose a 'Police State' on our roads in its aim to further victimize the average motorist. It appears no longer good enough to put cameras near schools and other areas where they can be justified, now there is a policy of 'blanket policing' which is more aimed at earning revenue.

What concerns me more is that this technique will not fine bad drivers. I believe there is a big distinction here - a person driving at 80mph on the motorway with good spacing and a clear road is not risking themselves or anyone else. A person doing 60mph (under the speed limit) is at more risk by travelling too close to the car in front or lane swapping and undertaking. So, what is it going to be? Are we to tolerate further infringements of our civil liberties like this or are we going to take action now before it's too late by means of a formal protest.

The same, incidentally applies to the UK policy of fuel price increases! I am astonished that the UK population does nothing (apart from the truck drivers) to make the government reduce tax on Petrol and Diesel. As a frequent visitor to the US, I am more than aware that if their gas prices go up by just 10 cents a gallon they protest. Why can't we do the same here?! Are people really that apathetic?

Steve Larkins, via email

Sir - The next phase in unnecessary speed reduction is being actively pursued in Suffolk.

As you all know, a couple of years ago

they (councillors) ignored best practice and imposed 30mph speed limits all over the place and have continued the anti-car bias.

Now they are reaping the 'benefits' in that the number of road deaths in Suffolk is now 27 as opposed to 24 this time last year. The last death was a pensioner who was crushed by an HGV. This death obviously brought out the rabid councillors who say in the local press that they want 100% more funds (10 million) from central government to:

- 1) spend on road maintenance
- 2) create more traffic calming schemes
- 3) install lots and lots of cameras.

So, instead of acknowledging that lowering of speed limits causes more deaths (as mentioned by a Suffolk Coroner), they flip the other way and tighten the screw further - my predicted nightmare scenario. This screw tightening will of course cause more deaths, screw tightening, etc. etc.

BTW, the pensioner was on the pavement in Ipswich high street and the lorry was a Co-op delivery vehicle - no speed, just a well known danger spot, where HGVs sometimes have to mount the kerb. Another reason for shopping out of town - HGVs and pedestrians never mix!

Some other death stats:

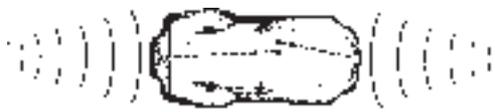
1) at least 3 didn't wear seat belts - this figure was true when the death total was only 11 earlier this year - it may be higher now 2) another death on the 'coroner' road 3) a Police motorcyclist died when hitting a tractor 4) at least one death on a series of sharp bends on the A14 - a true accident blackspot that doesn't even have shell grip!

Michael Jeffreys

### J2J Enigma

Sir - There must be some way we can capitalise on J2J's public assertion that he's trying to reduce congestion, pollution and global warming, when all around him, local authorities are spending like water on schemes specifically designed to increase these

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problems, viz:

1. A massive increase in white-hatched central strips down reasonably straight roads (particularly in the Sussex/Surrey/Hampshire areas that I frequent), designed to strongly discourage overtaking when it would otherwise be perfectly safe to do so;

2. Other white-hatched areas which used to be filter-lanes off main roads (the A287 between Farnham and the M3 being a classic example), so that cars turning off now have to slow down within the main line of traffic instead of to its side, so that everyone else has to slow down as well (these hatched areas are even worse than the central-strip ones, since the former are at least bounded by dashed lines rather than solid ones, making crossing them at least a theoretical possibility);

3. The frenetic competition between every village worthy of the name to have more (and more ridiculous) "traffic calming" measures than their neighbour, usually on totally bogus or non-existent "safety" arguments. My home village has recently been transformed by a mini-roundabout, a chicane, a dozen or so new signs, side-road splays being closed off, etc.. My correspondence with the highway authority seeking a rationale for this crazy expenditure, and what methods they intended to adopt to judge whether it had been a success elicited the response that "An estimate was made that there could be a 20% reduction in casualty levels" (my italics) with no supporting data whatsoever. They declined to suggest how they intended to judge whether the scheme has been successful. So long as such schemes can be adopted by local pressure and not thwarted by wider national considerations, they will eventually be universal (everyone wants a 20mph limit outside their own front door: everyone wants to be able to speed past everybody else's)

4. Totally arbitrary and unrealistic speed-limits outside built-up areas (and for that matter within them). A new stretch of "country" road in Sussex/Surrey/Hampshire seems to be thus afflicted every few weeks (and have you noticed how the 30mph or 40mph signs are ever more garish and obvious, whilst the corresponding derestriction signs are often hidden behind a tree?)

5. Speed-humps - the additional pollution and fuel consumption (to say nothing of wear and tear) caused by all this braking and accelerating must be enormous

6. Traffic lights apparently designed to stay green until an approaching vehicle is detected, and then switch to red.

Congestion increases when there are more vehicles occupying a given road-space at a given time. For a given amount of road-space and a given number of travelling vehicles, it follows that the longer they take on average to complete their journeys, the more congestion there'll be. So why is J2J actively encouraging (or possibly totally ignorant of) the measures being taken up and down the country to thwart his plans?

David Argent

## Police hypocrisy

Sir - I was following a Police Panda car through Wantage earlier this evening. Within a 30mph limit it was being driven considerably and carefully at speeds fluctuating between 20 and 40mph depending on the conditions. I was surprised how much this angered me.

If such people exist within Thames Valley Police why is their voice not heard? We know there are contacts within TVP who have similar views to ourselves so why can they not express their concerns? I understand why they may be reluctant to argue their case in public, but surely there's some mechanism for such a discussion within the Force.

Damon Green, Berks

## Campaigning

### ABD on the move

Recently a member wrote to a car magazine about the ABD. The letter was published but unfortunately the address details given for the ABD were wrong. As a result enquiries (and new members) may have been lost.

The contact details for the ABD are subject to *frequent change* so it is vital that members *always refer to the latest edition of OTR* where up-to-date details can be found on page 2. This is particularly important if you are writing to magazines.

If you have any ABD leaflets or other literature that you hand out, please ensure that the details are up-to-date on all copies.

## Pro-Motor News

### Meetings

The next ABD meeting will take place on **October 9th 1999** at 11:00. The meeting scheduled for November 6th will now take place on **December 4th 1999**. Both these meetings are at The Heritage Motor Centre, Banbury Road, Gaydon. Agendas will be available nearer the dates.

### Legal help required

The ABD is receiving increasing numbers of pleas for help in unfair speeding prosecutions. At the moment we don't have a register of solicitors who are able to help with such matters, so the time has come to address this.

If you know of anyone who would be able to help drivers fight such prosecutions, contact Chris Medd (see p2).

## Urgent: ABD address changes

The contact details for the ABD are subject to frequent change. Always refer to page 2 of the *latest edition of OTR* before contact the ABD or giving contact details to others.

## ABD T-shirts

ABD member, Colin Gardom, is now screen-printing T-shirts to help promote the group. They are top quality T-shirts with a small ABD logo printed on the front, and the logo, web-site address and telephone number on the back, along with the slogan 'Don't let them drive you out of your car'.

Colin has kept the price down to £10.00 (or £10.50 for XXL), including P&P. Please support the ABD by buying one of these - we're not making any money out of them, but they will help to publicise us. Colin can't accept credit cards, but if you send a cheque (made payable to Timeprint and Promotions) he will endeavour to get your T-shirt to you within 14 days of your order being received.

ABD T-Shirts, 39 St Mary's Gate, Chesterfield, Derbyshire S41 7TH. Tel 01246 230005

## Web sites

Visit <http://www.heartland.org> and select "Environment Corner". There you will find some good stuff, including:

*"Our civil and economic liberties would also suffer from the Kyoto Protocol. The treaty is a license for governments to monitor, tax, regulate, or ban virtually any activity, since all of them consume energy or produce greenhouse gas emissions."*

Which, of course, is just what our control freak bureaucrats want.

Michael Fabricant, MP for Lichfield has a web site. In a recent article he wrote, "and John Prescott is taking the nanny state - with his fight to the death against car owners - to new extremes." The URL is:

<http://www.solnet.co.uk/fabricant/index.html>

See, in particular:

<http://www.solnet.co.uk/fabricant/n04699.html>

There is an organization called "Nederland-Mobiel" with a website at

<http://www.nederland-mobiel.nl/>

They have a link to the ABD site, and a Dutch Motorcycle Action Group, amongst others. They appear to be a pro-car political party. Do we have any members who speak Dutch and could check it out?

The website of the Heartlands Institute in Chicago contains a downloadable Acrobat document called "Instant Expert's Guide to Global Warming" the description of which begins: "Much of what is reported about global warming in newspapers and on television is wrong". Visit

<http://www.heartland.org>

and select "Environment Corner"