

On The Road

The journal of the Alliance of British Drivers

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ABD merges with Drivers' Alliance to form The Alliance of British Drivers

A new strengthened organisation to fight for drivers' interests has been formed. A formal agreement to merge the Association of British Drivers with the Drivers' Alliance (DA) was announced on 24 October.

Both organisations promote the interests of motorists and campaign against road pricing, unjustified levels of taxation, draconian policies on parking and private vehicle use. We support more enlightened road safety policies and more investment in road infrastructure. The merged body will be called the Alliance of British Drivers (ABD) and will continue to fight for the fair treatment of ordinary road users.

The Association of British Drivers was formed by Brian Gregory who has been Chairman since 1993 – although as related on p4, he has now handed over the reins. The ABD has fought many successful campaigns in the interests of road users – for more information on this and much more, log on to www.abd.org.uk.

The Drivers' Alliance was formed in 2008 by Peter Roberts to campaign against road pricing. His greatest success was the collection of over 1.8 million signatures on an e-petition against national road pricing; there's more information about this online at www.driversalliance.org.uk.

Commenting on the merger, Brian Gregory said: "This new organisation, which will combine the membership and leadership of the two bodies, will strengthen our presence on the national scene and enable us to campaign more effectively. The economies of scale achieved from a larger membership base will also help our operational efficiency and fund raising. We sorely need a stronger body to campaign for the rights of road users and the merger will give us just that."

Peter Roberts added: "The freedom to reach your place of employment, your family and friends is under threat. The costs associated with owning and running a car is considerable and much of this cost is down to taxation, parking charges and congestion charges. As drivers, we individually contribute around £1300 every year to the Treasury and it's about time we had the roads, bridges and facilities we already pay for.

"The Drivers' Alliance and the Association of British Drivers have worked together to defeat road pricing and congestion charging but the threats to driving are not going away. We need a strong and independent group to argue for a fair deal for drivers and this union will provide that voice."

OTR 106

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The next issue of *On The Road* goes to press on Monday 10 December. Contributions deadline is Monday 26 November.

The Association of British Drivers has been incorporated as a company limited by guarantee (Pro-Motor). It makes sense to keep this protection as the basis of the Alliance of British Drivers (which will be known as the ABD).

Peter Roberts has already become a director, and members and supporters of the Drivers Alliance will be invited to transfer to ABD.

The marketing materials will be changed as soon as possible, and we hope to have a new and simpler web site (based more upon the DA approach) as soon as possible. But we expect to retain all the old ABD research material available for members' access.

If Members of the Association of British Drivers have any questions on this matter, please contact any of the directors.

•The ABD will be holding an open members' meeting at the Heritage Motor Centre in Gaydon on 23 March. Please come and offer your suggestions, but especially your help, in moving the Alliance forward.

To join the ABD
call us now on
07000 781 544



The ABD campaigns for:

- Improved road user training
- Real transport choices
- Investment in Britain's roads
- Honesty on transport issues

ABD joins forces to defeat Bristol workplace levy

A notable success was scored when the ABD joined forces with the Taxpayers' Alliance, and Bristol Federation of Small Businesses (FSB), forcing Bristol City Council to scrap its plans to introduce a workplace parking levy. Effectively a stealth tax on parking spaces at workplaces, so far only Nottingham has introduced this iniquity. It requires employers (or worse still, employees) to pay for every bay over 10 spaces ranging from £185 in the first year to £385 in year five, with no guarantee prices won't rise even further.

The tax will deter economic growth; indeed we hear that many workplace parking slots in Nottingham have now been roped off; in sinister fashion, enforcement is carried out by roving CCTV vans looking for offenders.

Bristol FSB coordinator Guy Kingston took the initiative by fiercely condemning the anti-



business nature of the proposals in a series of radio TV and press interviews. TPA's grassroots organiser Andrew Allison (who spoke at the ABD's AGM this summer) invited us to add our support.

Very quickly the joint campaign gained momentum and the council started to backtrack; six weeks before our planned protest day, the council website announced that the relevant committee would no longer meet.

Andrew upped the ante with ever more strongly worded condemnations of the scheme; the public, sensing that they had a champion on their side weighed in with their support.

Once underway, we never let up; even while I was on holiday in New York, I answered Andrew's request for quotes for an upcoming PR. It drew valuable support from Bristol North West MP Charlotte Leslie (3rd from right top picture), the Freedom Association's Simon Richards, Mathew Sinclair (the TPA's CEO), the FSB and others.

Just 24 hours before our planned protest day the council announced the scheme had been scrapped. Thus the protest day - cue bright and sunny weather - become a celebration.

You will already have read in the report from our AGM that cooperation with like-minded individuals and groups can bring results for Britain's hard-pressed drivers - this is a perfect example of what can be achieved. Bristol is a



notorious anti-motorist council and this victory represents the first real dent in its armoury.

Great credit must go to ABD south west member Bob Bull - who as long ago as 2010 first publicised the short-sightedness of the scheme and kept up momentum on the issue.

Many thanks as well to national committee member Ian Taylor who provided much-needed back-up on this issue and who made the journey to Bristol with me; Ian is pictured 4th from left back row.

We've learned since our victory that the proposed rapid bus transport system between Bristol Temple Meads station and city centre, which would have taken up large amounts of road space, has been scrapped - so a double victory for the campaigners. And we still need your help opposing city-wide introduction of 20 mph limits. So if you live in the south west, please contact Brian Macdowall (details on back page).

Help Bristol get moving, win £5k

Bristol's Federation of Small Businesses (FSB) is proving to be a driving force for good. In an effort to improve mobility around the city it has launched an 'Are you the new Brunel' competition to inspire new, especially innovative ideas, to solve transport problems in Bristol. Isambard K Brunel was, of course, the famous Victorian engineer who designed the Clifton suspension bridge used to advertise Bristol to the rest of the world. Full details are on www.newbrunel.org.uk. The ABD is joining forces with the FSB to inspire responses to the competition. FSB chairman Guy Kingston explained the rationale in a joint PR:

"We keep getting told that our economic recovery depends on the small business sector. But the grand projects we hear

about often overlook small business needs. A plumber can't do his rounds on a bendy bus and organic veg boxes can't be delivered by bike. Independent shops close when nearby free parking spaces are lost. "Consultants need to be able to drive to meetings and park. Time wasted in traffic jams and trying to find parking spaces is a real drain on our economy. Public transport solutions may be useful for certain sections of the commuting public, but for many small businesses they are never going to be fast enough or convenient enough".

The ABD, through a generous benefactor, is putting up the prize money for a novel parking solution to benefit Bristol and all ideas will go

to the new mayor and current council.

The competition seeks to involve those invariably ignored by the political process (i.e. the general public) and get them to think in a positive way. Guidelines make it clear that any idea for say, new bus lanes, would have to have a very strong supporting statement to earn a prize.

The competition is open to all, so ABD members can enter for a chance to win the main prize of £5000. Your response is limited to 2000 words, does not require great technical expertise and need not suggest vast infrastructure changes. So why delay? You can help Bristol provide a much-needed alternative to parking enforcement, traffic calming and other problems that blight our towns. And you may win!

You can donate any amount to the ABD's fighting fund at any time. Just contact the membership secretary (see p16) for more information...

ABD meets with Whitehall's decision makers



The ABD maintained its growing dialogue with decision makers, by obtaining another meeting with the Roads Minister to lobby for a fair deal for drivers. A meeting was arranged prior to the September reshuffle, but unfortunately was cancelled at short notice due to Parliamentary calls on the Minister's time.

Undeterred, our lobbyist rep Brian Mooney moved quickly to secure a meeting with DFT's Jessica Matthews, Head of Road Safety in the UK, and Tricia Hayes, UK Roads Director; her role includes a wide range of responsibilities, including the Highways Agency and anything related to road pricing. Tricia proved to be bright and positive and we made a solid first impression.

Then-Chairman Brian Gregory argued forcefully that UK drivers, in paying almost a billion pounds a week in taxation, are oversubsidising public transport therefore to impose road pricing would be a callous disregard for public opinion. The DfT acknowledged how influential Peter Roberts' petition had been in scuttling government plans.

Brian argued it would force traffic onto unsuitable roads and clearly discriminate against

lower income groups. We were referred to the PM's statement in May over road pricing; that is, that it must have a new source of financing for new roads. It was also stated that they won't toll existing roads; the word 'tolls' was emphasised rather than road pricing...

Brian pressed for ring-fencing of funds, pointing out that if only 60% of the annual £50bn tax take was used, it would result in a significant improvement in the quality of poor road surfaces, especially potholes. Ring-fencing has already been suggested on Conservative Home, the website reflecting views of rank and file Tory supporters, rather than cabinet ministers.

Although we were told that it isn't on the horizon at present, we will continue to press our case for ring-fencing instead of road pricing. The idea is gaining credence - *Local Transport Today* magazine is often a sounding board for public transport, and an article *Treasury warms to ring-fencing* was published in a recent issue.

Next we discussed the A14. Improvements

were scrapped when the government took office; we were told the £1.4 billion cost was equal to 14 other projects. This route remains strongest candidate for "tolling" (their words). Details are sketchy at the moment, but a blueprint would include new local roads running parallel to the A14 being provided, to offer drivers an alternative.

Our strongest response was reserved for proposals to make careless driving a fixed penalty offence on the say of a police officer. Our roads and traffic expert, former highways engineer Malcolm Heymer, cogently argued this would lead to a huge uptake of awareness courses, as drivers seek to avoid risking a losing appearance at magistrates' courts.

Judging careless driving by fixed penalty is wholly unacceptable; it's too serious an offence. We were assured criteria would be in place to prevent vexatious cases; we will report back when a decision is made

We also asked what's happened to raising the motorway speed limit to 80 mph; the jury is still out. Malcolm gave out a copy of our consultation responses with a supporting study into accident causation factors by independent Canadian researcher Al Gullon; it made an impressive handout and underlined the seriousness of our credentials.

We were pleased to find them favourably disposed to raising the speed limits for HGVs on single carriageways to 50mph. We informed them this is a win-win situation for everyone, reflecting the vast improvements in vehicle design and fleet driver training that have taken place over the last 50 or so years.

We urged them to get this item approved by ministers as soon as possible; judging by official announcements from the DFT

since our meeting, it seems likely a recommendation to increase this limit will go ahead.

We then handed over to new member Steve Haley. Steve is the author of an excellent book *Mind Driving*, available through our website, and founder of the Skilldriver road safety project.

He presented his idea for drastically improving driver education with a set of proposals to successfully evaluate risk and hazard assessment. This was clearly the highlight of the meeting; everyone became increasingly hooked on his ideas to radically improve drivers' hazard awareness. For more on Steve's ideas, see a fuller article overleaf. Steve has already set things in motion to follow up what was a very productive meeting; the aim is to meet up again with Hayes and Matthews early in 2013.



Want to get more involved? There are plenty of ways you can help the ABD to move forward. Just check out page 15 to find out how

abd *action*

The DfT wants to bring in a wider range of fixed penalties, which is likely to prove a disaster for drivers. *Malcolm Heymer* explains why.

Why 20 is *not* plenty

There are now frequent calls from 'road safety' fanatics for 20 mph speed limits to be imposed on all suburban roads, even major "A" roads that run through towns and cities. But the historic evidence is being ignored. Before 1930, Great Britain had a blanket 20 mph speed limit across the whole country. But road deaths in the year before this limit was abandoned were about 7,300 compared with about 1,900 in recent years. They also fell in the years immediately after 1930 whereas they had been rising before.

So the moral is surely that wide area speed limits are ineffective in reducing road traffic accidents and that simply putting up signs without road engineering or other measures will have negligible impact on casualties. That is exactly of course what the Department of Transport used to say.

No doubt there were some people who ignored the increasingly unrealistic 20 mph limit back in 1930, as there are some today. But the ABD has always argued that speed limit setting should be based on the 85th percentile of free flowing traffic speed which has been demonstrated to be both the safest speed and the one that encourages compliance.

The ABD might not oppose local 20-mph zones in residential streets where traffic speeds are already near that limit or can be engineered to be so (without speed humps). But expensive wide-area, sign-only schemes are not likely to be cost-effective and will have a negligible impact on actual traffic speeds, as has been well

documented. Money is being wasted on such schemes which could be much better spent on other road safety measures.

Let's have a halt to the polemics from 20-mph supporters, and get some real science back into road safety.

ABD (former) Chairman Brian Gregory had this to say:

"As with most pet road safety ideas proposed by amateur enthusiasts — speed humps, speed cameras, etc — there is little attempt to collect scientifically sound evidence of the benefit of such ideas. No proper controlled, "double-blind" trials are undertaken. The enthusiasts rely on the strength of their rhetoric and the use of selective data to make their case. Don't be fooled by these methods but look at the facts. And remember that all road safety schemes should be cost justified because if there are better things to spend the money on, then that is where the limited funds should be spent."

Road traffic fatalities in Great Britain from 1926 to 2010 are given on pages 5/6 of the report entitled "Reported Road Accident Statistics" from the House of Commons Library (see www.parliament.uk/briefing-papers/SN02198). The increase in the years of World War II is known to have arisen from people driving in the black-out without lights.

More information on the 1930 Road Traffic Act (which abolished all speed limits for cars) and the preceding 1903 Act which set a 20mph speed limit is online at tinyurl.com/3o2sz2s and tinyurl.com/cd32gvg

Qualified driving instructors needed

Disabled Motoring UK is the charity for disabled drivers, passengers and Blue Badge holders. In April 2011 the organisation changed its name from Mobilise to Disabled Motoring UK, to better reflect the people it campaigns for.

Now, the group is looking for driving instructors who teach people with disabilities. If that sounds like you, or you know of such an instructor, please contact Disabled Motoring UK, which is asked constantly for details of driving instructors to teach people with disabilities. The group intends to set up a database of instructors around the country so that it has up-to-date information to pass on to callers.

Driving instructors would register with Disabled Motoring UK for inclusion in its database – totally free of charge. If you would like to be included in this project, please contact Marta or Janet on 01508 489 449. Alternatively email info@disabledmotoring.org using 'Driving Instructors' as the subject.



New chairman for the ABD

Since the merger of the the Association of British Drivers and the Drivers' Alliance at the end of October, the Directors have accepted the resignation of Brian Gregory (pictured on the far right), the Association of British Drivers founder Chairman. As a result, the ABD has appointed as Acting Chairman, Campaigns Director Brian Macdowall (pictures on the right)



and mould it into a fighting force - is now on.

Brian Macdowall said: "As a relatively new member of the national committee, I have focused primarily on campaigns to raise the ABD's profile. This has led to getting meetings with ministers and MPs as patrons amongst other achievements. I acknowledge the considerable help received to date, but there is still much to do to become more effective and this will affect the way we campaign".

Brian Gregory remains a Director. 'Brian Mac' welcomed the appointment of the Drivers' Alliance's CEO, Peter Roberts, to the new board: "Peter brings a wealth of experience, skills and contacts to the new group and is well placed to assist its growth."

The chance - to take on a new organisation

The ABD will be holding an open members' meeting at the Heritage Motor Centre in Gaydon on 23 March and you are cordially invited to come and offer your suggestions, but especially your help, in moving the Alliance forward.

In particular, we are looking for people, whether or not they have specialist skills, to sharpen our focus so we get the best returns for the hard work we do on behalf of Britain's drivers.

Brian Mac knows from meeting members that there is talent out there; but there is also plenty of support available for volunteers. We will be in touch between now and March, but in the meantime we'd like to hear from you. If you've got something to say about the merger, or you'd like to get involved, please contact Brian Macdowall, whose details are on the back page.

A day with the Global Warming Policy Foundation

The ABD sometimes teams up with other organisations where areas of mutual agreement exist. Our first affiliation was with NO2ID, while there have also been informal collaborations with the Taxpayers' Alliance, National Alliance Against Tolls, SafeSpeed and now FairFuelUK. For most of the last year we have also been affiliated to Repeal The Act, a campaign to repeal the Climate Change Act 2008. This group in turn co-operates with the Global Warming Policy Foundation, and as a result we have had invites to a number of very interesting meetings and heard – and in one or two cases spoken briefly to, several prominent and qualified climate sceptics, including Richard Lindzen, Matt Ridley and Ian Plimer.

On 13 June I attended the 2012 annual lecture of the GWPF held at the Royal Society in London. The meeting was introduced by Dr Benny Peiser, who introduced Professor Dr Fritz Vahrenholt. He was one of the fathers of Germany's environmental movement, studying chemistry and starting his professional career at Germany's Federal Environmental Protection Agency in Berlin and the the Ministry of the Environment in the state of Hesse. In 1990 his party, the SPD, chose him as environment senator in the city-state of Hamburg. In 1998 he joined the Board of Directors of Deutsche Shell AG, responsible for renewable energy, founding the wind energy company Innogy.

He was a Greenpeace member who supported the IPCC line until 2008, when he found out just how their reports were edited. After delving further he changed his mind and now doubts their integrity. He has investigated the so-called 'hockey stick' for himself and found it to be falsified. His book *The Cold Sun – Why*

the climate catastrophe will not happen was published in Germany earlier this year.

Dr Vahrenholt said that forecasts of increased windiness turned out false. He presented the correlation of sunspots to the North Atlantic Oscillation, found to be linked to windiness. Were the climate models wrong? Warming occurred since 1880 but stopped after 1998. Why? CO2 increased since 1750 – with increased solar activity. The IPCC assertion that CO2 was the major driver of climate was wrong – CO2 and temperature were only in parallel between 1977 and 1998. CO2 continued to rise while temperature did not.

Over 2000 years, natural cycles were visible, of about 1000 years each (called Bond Cycles), which involve solar activity and cosmic rays. Eric the Red's house in Norway (its remains!) are still more frozen than they were in the Medieval Warm period, so it's not that warm now. The IPCC refuses to acknowledge Bond Cycles – it says that it's unable to "replicate" findings – even though others have done just that, worldwide. Observation of historic events correlated very well with the strength of solar cycles. The last century was one of high solar activity – the current cycle is weak – heading towards a new Maunder Minimum.

The IPCC claims that irradiation only changes by 0.1%, but other radiation is more volatile, UV from a few to 70%, cosmic rays up to 50% – but the IPCC doesn't investigate that. Solar magnetic fields influenced interaction of cosmic rays, partly responsible for occurrence of clouds. That aspect was under investigation at CERN. Cosmic rays decreased over the 20th century; now going up again. Another 60-year cycle is the Pacific Decade Oscillation, which affects climate but is not recognised by the IPCC.

Climate change policy is driven almost exclusively by CO2 emissions. Reduction policies would achieve nothing without China and other developing nations joining in – which they will not.

He spoke of the German energy system – renewables are not so sustainable because of cost and the way they over or under-produce (at the wrong time) without storage capacity. The indirect costs of renewables renders them uneconomic.

The best and most economic method of power storage is hydropower pump storage, but to bridge the number of windless days if targets were met by 2038, 230 times today's pump storage would be needed. Only a fraction of required new grids have yet been built.

In summary, he said that given time our energy system could be transformed in a sensible way. There is no need for a "hustled angst-driven" energy policy. However important renewables might be, they can never be 100% sustainable. Conventional power stations would be needed too.

As usual, it finished with questions: How could rational debate be communicated? The Czech ambassador asked about nuclear. Why no audit of renewables? Is there a market for shale gas – and why are the Greens so against it? Why no carbon tax – simpler than trading and regulation.

In reply he said that those in business have a duty to be transparent, keep people better informed and regain trust. The nuclear option is still there, but unlikely to be used in Germany. He gave some costs on renewables – which were variable and always changing. Renewables companies are starting to falter as they realise their plans might not be economically viable. There is a market for shale gas. The USA is exploiting it and from being a net gas importer to exporter. Poland intends to exploit it. Britain has reserves that could replace diminishing North Sea reserves. A carbon tax could be done and it would be simpler – but to fund renewables would need to be sky high – probably beyond many people's ability to pay.

In conclusion, Lord Lawson said the science is important but not everything, and not certain – GWPF focuses on more general policy and its effects. Computer models used to forecast climate are over-simplified and don't take everything into account. Professor Vahrenholt is a real scientist who went by findings and was prepared to change his mind in accordance with the results.

Ian Taylor

ABD keeps up the pressure

We haven't been letting the government off the hook over the potential hive off of the roads for which we've paid several times over. To mark the party conference season, we sent a letter urging complaints to MPs. It seems to have had a good response - including publication in a paper circulating in Patrick McLoughlin's Derbyshire constituency (tinyurl.com/bpy9d2w)

Other sightings include Oxfordshire (Cameron country), Liverpool (Maria Eagle country), Merseyside, Cheshire,

West Yorkshire, Newcastle, Sunderland, Birmingham, Kidderminster, Sussex (Brighton/Lewes - Norman Baker country), Kent, Somerset, Bristol – and those are just what we know about. London is not directly impacted as it has little HA road.

This means that we hit at least two of the first three areas the Highways Agency is considering for 'route based strategies' - read: looking at selling road pricing to the public. Target areas are A1 by Newcastle, M62 (Manchester to Leeds) and parts of the A12/A120 in Essex. Separate initiatives have been taken with regards to the latter.

below average

The makers of average speed cameras claim impressive results for their products, but as *Malcolm Heymer* points out, the claims don't withstand scrutiny

A sign of our influence came during the summer when the ABD was invited to supply a speaker for the latest Westminster Environment, Energy and Transport forum to make the case for increasing the motorway limit to 80mph. As Roads and Traffic spokesman for the ABD, I took up the challenge, supported by Campaigns Director Brian Macdowall and lobbying rep Brian Mooney.

The Westminster forums are an ideal platform for government to obtain feedback on its initiatives, by inviting views from academics industry reps and others. This is the first time we'd been invited to address such an audience.

I had a tough brief deputising at short notice for Brian Gregory and up against Geoff Collins, Sales and Marketing Director of average speed camera manufacturers, Vysionics, who naturally made the case for retaining the present limit on environmental, safety and cost grounds. Vysionics is the company that has taken over Speed Check Services, which produces SPECS average speed cameras. I anticipated (correctly) that Collins would talk up the benefits of SPECS systems for enforcing motorway speed limits, so he did some research into the casualty reductions that have been claimed to result from these cameras.

I started on the Vysionics website itself, where a press release from September 2011 states: "DfT data proves average speed cameras really do work, delivering 73% KSI reductions." That figure is backed up by a table of data from 15 SPECS installations (below).

I'm always suspicious of claimed casualty reductions shown as percentages only, without quoting the absolute numbers involved. The likelihood is that those numbers were very small and the reduction to zero could easily have happened by chance. Nevertheless, the first scheme listed, the A14 Huntingdon to Girton, is a section of road I know quite well, so I decided

to investigate the claimed KSI reduction in detail. This was made easier by the press release quoting a DfT website from which site specific information can be obtained (www.dft.gov.uk/publications/speed-camera-data).

The DfT website provides links to individual camera partnership sites, where data on individual schemes can be found. I followed the links to the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough website, where I found the following table of collision and casualty data for the Huntingdon to Girton scheme – a 12-mile dual carriageway section of A14 west of Cambridge.

The SPECS system became operational on 1 February 2007. I discovered that the three-year before and after periods taken for the analysis of the scheme's effectiveness must have been 2004-06 (yellow) and 2008-10 (pink) respectively, as the after total of 19 KSIs does indeed represent a 64.2% reduction from the 53 recorded in 2004-06.

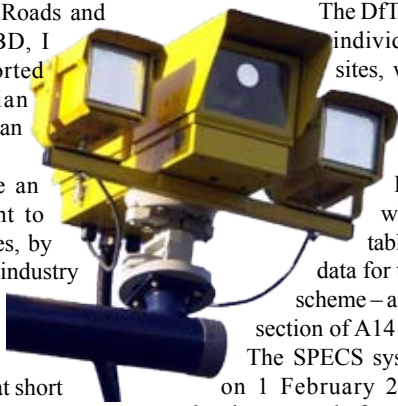
An examination of the table, however, shows that those three 'before' years saw the highest number of KSIs in any 3-year period within the 22 years covered. This suggests that the before period had an abnormally high incidence of KSIs, especially in 2004 and 2005. Part of the reduction, therefore, must be due to regression to the mean – a return to the long-term average after an upward 'blip' in accidents.

The financial crisis broke in late 2007 (surely 2008 – Ed), so the before period represents the final three years before the economic downturn began. Casualty rates have been found to fall much faster during a recession, and not just as a result of lower or even negative traffic growth. Another part of the reduction, therefore, must be due to long-term trend. Official DfT casualty figures show that, over the UK as a whole, the total number of KSIs in 2008-10 was 18.6% lower than in 2004-06.

But it doesn't stop there. A few years ago I attended a Highways Agency seminar

in Cambridge on the problems of this section of the A14 and the plans for resolving them. I learned that the road suffers an abnormally high level of rear-end shunts, when traffic slows abruptly for no apparent reason. This is probably due mainly to the high volume of traffic, coupled with the frequency of minor junctions and accesses, many of which have substandard or non-existent acceleration and deceleration lanes. The Highways Agency planned to install matrix information signs to warn drivers of hold-ups ahead (these have now been in place for at least two years).

Another cause of traffic slowing suddenly is, of course, when a driver brakes on seeing a speed camera. Since well before 2004, the section of A14 that now has SPECS cameras had an assortment of spot-speed cameras, Gatsos and Truvelos, along both carriageways. How many of the accidents that occurred in 2004-06 were



Year	Collisions			Casualties		
	KSI	Slight	Total	KSI	Slight	Total
1990	11	38	49	12	62	74
1991	11	22	33	14	39	53
1992	14	34	48	19	53	72
1993	8	33	41	10	55	65
1994	15	24	39	15	58	73
1995	17	60	77	18	108	126
1996	13	50	63	15	90	105
1997	11	52	63	13	82	95
1998	8	49	57	9	96	105
1999	10	74	84	12	122	134
2000	17	79	96	20	135	155
2001	13	75	88	14	140	154
2002	11	68	79	11	116	127
2003	5	77	82	6	122	128
2004	17	63	80	23	112	135
2005	19	68	87	20	138	158
2006	9	73	82	10	111	121
2007	7	65	72	8	111	119
2008	4	51	55	4	73	77
2009	5	52	57	6	89	95
2010	7	55	62	9	97	106
2011	9	46	55	9	86	95

actually caused by those cameras? Why would the Highways Agency go to the considerable expense of removing those cameras and substituting a SPECS system unless the spot-speed cameras were part of the problem?

So how much of the 64.2% reduction in KSIs can actually be attributed to the SPECS scheme? We simply don't know. Regression to the mean and national casualty trends, especially since the start of the economic downturn, must account for a significant proportion of the reduction. The removal of the previous speed cameras will probably have contributed as well. Whatever 'benefit' the SPECS system has brought – if any – will be much less than the headline figure suggests.

I do not personally know the other sections of road listed in the table. If other ABD members know any of those roads, including other factors that might have contributed to the reduction in casualties, such as engineering improvements introduced along with the SPECS systems, please let me know and I will see if it is possible to analyse the figures more closely (malcolm.heymer@abd.org.uk).

Site Name	Installed	Change KSI
A14 Huntingdon to Girton	2007	-64.2%
A228 Isle of Grain	2007	-78.6%
A46 Farndon	2002	-56%
A52 Bingham	2006	-80%
A52 Holme Pierrepont	2006	-59%
A52 Radcliffe on Trent	2006	-84%
A52 Saxondale	2006	-74%
A610 Nuthall Road	2000	-54%
A631 Gringley on the Hill	2005	-90%
A631 Scaftworth	2006	-100.00%
A6514 (Ring Road) Nottingham	2002	-53.00%
B6004 Oxclose Lane	2008	-100.00%
B6004 Arnold Road	2004	-73.00%
Edwards Lane, Nottingham	2004	-49.00%
A616 Stocksbridge Bypass	2002	-81.3%
		-73.06%

mind driving

Stephen Haley, founder of Skilldriver (www.skilldriver.org), and *Mind Driving* author, aims to cut road casualties with a new approach to driving, which focuses on the critical 'thinking skills'.



Whatever you define hazards to be, and how you control them, determines how safe you are. Hazard 'perception' is a first step, of course. But it's not about hazard control. And even when drivers are excellent at spotting hazards, they often respond late. Effectively, just watching as the danger rises. And while it grows and becomes more obvious, it is also getting harder to fix. So one of the 'thinking skills' in Mind Driving is designed to change how we think about hazards.

When asked 'What is a hazard?', most drivers talk about something they could point to through the windscreen. And the Hazard Perception Test is the same, asking candidates to click on hazards they see on the screen in front of them.

But this allows drivers to remain detached until the hazard forces itself on them. And the eventual actions are then more urgent, more sudden and harsher than necessary. They are also likely to require other drivers to react more strongly too.

Let's ask a different question; 'Is ice on the road dangerous?'. To this one, most drivers instinctively and quickly say "Yes, of course it is". But crucially, some will then add more thoughtfully something like: "But really, it depends how you drive on it". And this is a giant leap, because it injects the role that drivers play in making their own danger – in almost every case. It explains that we carry the level of danger with us into any situation. The actual danger only exists because we are there.

This points directly to the most important thing about hazards, which is that part of every hazard is you. But it's nothing about 'blame'. Instead, this is a very good thing, because it follows quite naturally that this is what gives you control.

Being part of the hazard is what allows you to change the outcome. And to think about doing that from the earliest possible moment. So although these two short sentences make a very simple point, they can dramatically change how drivers think. They also put in place an essentially different learning process, that builds a more meaningful grasp of hazards. A range of tangible benefits come from this, confirmed in workshops with driving instructors and trainers over the years, and they naturally reduce driving risk:

► Drivers develop a more involved sense



of hazard, to replace the traditional view of something which is just 'out there'

► Hazard control is triggered much sooner, and creates a more proactive rather than reactive driving style

► Because actions are taken earlier, they are lighter and safer - and also easier for surrounding traffic to absorb

► Skills are built in preventing danger, rather than just coping when it arises

► Drivers feel more responsible for the dangers they put themselves into

► Anticipation and planning are improved as drivers have a more specific reason for thinking ahead

► Drivers think more about creating their own situations, rather than simply receiving what happens to be there

► Self-reflection is greatly increased, which reinforces responsibility and motivates further learning.

The points overlap, of course, and develop over time. But it's a lot to come from what is basically one simple idea. And shows how powerful such 'thinking tools' can be. Especially in leading drivers to make voluntary changes that lower risk. And, in addition, is the superior learning process that this sort of thinking brings too, which creates a more effective understanding of how danger works in practice.

Mind Driving is a broad set of thinking skills like this. And they work together. If we genuinely want drivers to adopt the aim of 'Safe driving for life', they need the proper tools to achieve it.

The great Green con

Green Isn't Working. The Climate con will cost you. That was the title of the latest Repeal the Act meeting held at Portcullis House, Parliament, on 31 October to mark Climate Fools Day 2012 – the 4th anniversary of the UK parliament scoring a world first by passing a law against nature. Malcolm Heymer and Ian Taylor attended from the ABD.

Piers Corbyn, the 'alternative' weather forecaster spoke about this year's dramatic weather, why it's symptomatic of an approaching "Little Ice Age", plus why the theory of climate warming has failed and is pointing the world in the wrong direction.

The Rev Philip Foster spoke at some length on why and how the climate change/global warming policies are a tax con and don't work even on their own terms. On the massive economic costs of CO2 policies, he highlighted soaring gas and electricity bills, the madness of wind farms, solar panels and carbon capture, along with the insanity of burning food (biofuels) as world food

prices rocket – while there are abundant shale gas and other sources of fuels to meet energy needs.

The BBC's cover-ups were talked about, along with the way they promote their own brand of CO2 warming fraud. This included one case when *Newsnight* boss Peter Rippon (of Jimmy Savile fame) and science editor Susan Watts created falsified sound bites from Obama's inaugural speech in 2009, to propagate their own brand of climate change policy. The BBC had been invited to attend the meeting to defend its position. It didn't.

The question and answer session proved lively – this time Ian Taylor got a word in, commenting that while it's very difficult to engage the public in the science aspect of the climate debate, they would take more notice of the economic argument - especially if and when energy and fuel became unaffordable and insufficient power capacity put out the lights. Someone replied that at this point it would be a bit late for effective action...

abd 20

Autumn marked the 20th anniversary of the first ABD activists' gathering in Derby. These are some of the events of the early years, with remarkable similarities to the present...

Our opponents didn't get everything they pushed for first time round, so some current initiatives have a familiar ring. However it's amazing how right ABD has been proved on the big issues - and several chickens are now coming home to roost.

OTR became regularly published in 1994, when Britain had a Conservative government (well, sort-of). Transport Minister Roger Freeman appeared on TV's *Your Shout* proposing that all cars were fitted with speed limiters. ABD Chairman Brian Gregory opposed, arguing forcefully for an increased and variable motorway speed limit – something that works well abroad and is now belatedly being considered here.

Environment Secretary John Gummer confirmed the government's PPG13 planning guidelines, marketed as "putting the heart back into our towns and cities" and "increasing transport choice" – although it actually meant less parking in towns and less choice. The current government is having to undo years of damage and has formally buried PPG13.

Transport Minister Steve Norris was a great fan of urban road pricing; the media reported that one of the key 'benefits' would be in meeting EU air quality standards. However, years later when he stood for London Mayor, he had become an opponent of the C-charge. It's ironic that London has air quality contraventions inside the charge zone, and the 'improvements' like more buses enabled by the charge are probably a factor!

The government then took around £22bn a year from drivers and spent only £5.5bn on roads. However, Transport Secretary Brian Mawhinney wanted motorway tolling, with the extra revenue supposedly ring-fenced for improving tolled roads.

The Transport Select Committee spoke out against the tolling proposals, due to likely diversion of traffic to local roads and the risk of more accidents and casualties. Tolling became a hot potato; in 1995, an official report on road pricing taking three years and £3m to prepare was withheld from public scrutiny. The government announced trials and a bidding exercise, but half of the consortia involved pulled out of the M3 trials in 1996.

The Centre for Policy Studies, trusted Government advisers, warned of mass civil disobedience and technical problems on a large scale if the proposals went ahead. Apart from the perception of a poll tax on wheels, it had reservations about start-up costs and billing accuracy, with the prospect of 100 million potential violations per year! So it's interesting that in the *Fuel For Thought* report this May, three researchers from the Institute of Fiscal Studies observed that drivers had not historically been a militant group, but are now increasingly resentful, and warned of mass discontent.

Worried about the unpopularity of road tolling, ministers formulated an alternative plan for a Road Fund – paid for by increased fuel duty - for a newly privatised Highways Agency to spend. The plan was originally devised by those friends

of the driver, the AA.

The 1990s hatched ideas broadly similar to some being mulled now - Sir George Young, the next Transport Secretary (and member of Friends Of the Earth), considered moving ownership of our main road network into the hands of public or private corporations.

A controversial report (*Royal Commission Report on Transport and the Environment, RCRTE*) had called for spending on motorways and other trunk roads to be reduced by half, and that all roads should pass to local authority control, thus abolishing trunk roads altogether.

In its response to RCRTE, the Government wanted local authorities to have the tools to regulate traffic, welcoming the imposition of congestion charging and non-residential parking taxes, like the recent Nottingham Workplace Parking Levy.

The strangest proposal was for local authorities to consider 'area licensing', by which only privileged people, with special permits, would be allowed to drive at all in certain areas. By shifting the decisions to local authorities, the concept of the national network would become redundant, and Whitehall and Westminster would wash their hands of responsibility – tones of the 2011 Cook Report. Unsurprisingly a Citizen's Charter was proposed, but only for bus and underground users.

By 1997, government excuses for motorway tolls had stretched to increasing the cost of motoring to persuade more people to use public transport.

Sir George could only find the money for four bypasses, but a record £60m was thrown at local 'road safety' schemes, mostly involving deliberate obstruction of motorists, rather than better engineered bends and junctions that were badly needed. £79m was also thrown at promoting cycling, walking and public transport, with 'parking restraint' and 'traffic management'.

Apart from road tolling, the 1990s saw a proliferation of ANPR cameras. The Public Service Minister, Roger Freeman, was keen on developing computer networks linking government databases and enabling the widespread sharing of confidential information between departments. Civil liberties watchdogs like NO2ID and Privacy International would be quick to spot similarities with some of the initiatives later proposed stealthily by New Labour (in the Coroners and Justice Bill, dropped after an outcry) and the Coalition.

Just like today, Britain's hauliers got a rough deal in 1995 – not content with merely charging higher fuel duty and HGV VED than continental competitors, the government actually agreed to let five other EU countries levy an extra £980 a year charge on the heaviest foreign vehicles to use their roads – while exempting their own operators.

The ABD's first major conference in 1994 featured Paul Everitt, now of SMMT, but then of the British Road Federation. He highlighted the neglect of urban roads, with 20-30% more defects than 10 years before (13% more for trunk roads). He reported that 15% of motorway inside

lanes already needed reconstruction, and a further 23% would do so within the 5 years. In 1996 he identified more than 1600 miles of trunk road and 600 miles of motorway in need of urgent maintenance.

After successive cuts in the roads budget, 1997 saw two reports heavily criticising the lack of infrastructure investment. The Engineering Employers Federation, complained that transport policy was "starting to condone the restriction of transport and travel", and warned of damage to the sector and the UK economy. The CBI also warned of damage to competitiveness and called for a transport policy based on an efficient road network. It criticised that government for its spending priorities, its inaction and sensing too many interests that might be offended.

Lawrie Haynes, the Highways Agency chief, admitted that routine preventative works had been under funded, indicating that this would lead to a great increase in repair and reinstatement costs and disruption to road users in future years. The warning was recently echoed by the National Audit Office and Parliament's Public Accounts Committee. He was reported to have said: "On the A14 trunk road through East Anglia, a 50mph advisory speed restriction had been put in place because funds are not available to deal with ruts in the road surface". He estimated delay costs of £6.6m a year.

Drivers could be forgiven for getting the impression that established motoring organisations like the AA and RAC would no longer act to protect their interests for fear of losing out on potentially lucrative contracts. After Police duties became privatised, such organisations took over the manning of the traffic control monitors, emergency phones and the management of some vehicle breakdown services. Even so, Edmund King (then of the RAC) had to note that sections of the motorway were becoming death traps due to lack of maintenance.

In 1997, an unpopular government met its end in a landslide election defeat; interestingly it had stuck with motorway tolls in its manifesto, whereas Labour's ruled them out. The next issue of OTR had the headline: *Labour adopts Tory transport policy*; many people think that the reverse happened in 2010.

The new Labour government had adopted most of the Conservatives' bankrupt transport policies – but with even more emphasis on appeasing the green lobby. Many 'tax and control' proposals had been worked on and backed by the Civil Service for years, including motorway tolls, which Labour had said it opposed. New Transport Secretary John Prescott then ordered the Highways Agency to develop policies to discourage car use. As the war against the motorist intensified, the ACPO called on magistrates to impose driving bans on anyone exceeding a 30mph limit.

The story since is familiar. It seems that some politicians will never learn, even from others' mistakes, but such is the pent-up public feeling, that they will repeat them at their peril.

soapbox

What's on the mind of Chris Medd, OTR editor. This issue; French motorway lane discipline, why trains are rubbish and why 20mph limits won't make our urban streets any safer.

A friend recently had to get from Luton to Worcester by train – a journey which takes around 90 minutes by car. But thanks to the need to change trains no fewer than four times, his journey was scheduled to take him 3.5 hours – except not everything went to plan of course. He missed his connection and had to wait an hour for the next train. As a result it took him three times as long to complete his journey by train than if he'd taken his car. Recently I needed to travel from Birmingham to London, but driver shortages and a £120 return ticket price soon got me reaching for my car keys. And we're criticised for driving too much!

For years I've been enjoying regular trips to mainland Europe, especially France. Ever since I started driving there I've been struck by how good French drivers' lane discipline is, but not any more it would appear. Where drivers used to automatically tuck into lane one after completing any overtake, now they just sit in lane two for mile after mile, even if the nearside lane is empty. It's only over the past year or so that standards have dropped noticeably – and it's in this period that speed cameras have become much more common on Gallic roads. Coincidence?

Motorway tolls could help maximise the CO2 reduction benefits of high-speed rail by "encouraging motorists to switch to the services", according to a new report by high-speed rail champion Greengauge 21. CO2 reductions could also be achieved if new development is focused around high-speed rail stations, the stations are located in city centres, and freed-up capacity on the conventional railway is used to its full potential, particularly for freight traffic. The report was commissioned by the CPRE,

the RSPB and the CfBT and sponsored by the Association of Train Operating Companies, Siemens and SYSTRA. So the result could have gone either way then.



Living Streets, previously known as the Pedestrians' Association, is urging TfL not to "blame the victims" after pedestrian fatalities on London's roads rose by a third in 2011, compared with the previous year. A TRL report into pedestrian fatalities has shown that in the five years to 2010, 37% of collisions were attributed to pedestrian-only factors. In the study of 198 fatalities in the capital, 96 of the pedestrians were not looking properly and, in 19% of cases, were not crossing at a crossing facility. In more than a third of cases the pedestrians were impaired by alcohol, while the police identified exceeding the speed limit as a cause in only one eighth of fatalities. Most interestingly though, introducing 20mph speed limits was recorded by the police in only two of the 198 deaths as something that would have prevented them. Meanwhile, Living Streets has said that pedestrian education shouldn't be a priority. Instead the group is advocating the introduction of widespread 20mph limits because they're "the most effective measure to avoid needless deaths". Really? Based on what evidence?

Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council is to replace the national speed limit (60mph) on many C and unclassified roads in part of the borough with speed limits of 30, 40 or 50mph. The council says the reductions are justified because its recent review of speed limits on A and B roads has left many lower standard C and unclassified roads with higher limits. No chance of raising a few pointlessly low limits on the main roads then?

A press release sent out recently headlined Game-changing moment for electric cars informs us about the installation of rapid charging points at three motorway services that can deliver an 80% charge in approximately 30 minutes to a Nissan Leaf. Dale Vince, founder of Ecotricity, one of the project partners, claims: "With charging times so vastly reduced, you'll be able to drive an electric car from London to Birmingham and fill up the battery along the way, in a time not too dissimilar to filling up a petrol car." Except you don't have to stop to refuel every 100 miles with a conventionally powered car...

The ABD has had an email from Neil Davies of Caddick Davies solicitors; contact Neil on 0151 222 4436 for more:

On our blog (tinyurl.com/agfwmhd) there are details of defective variable speed limit signs on the M42/M6 junctions 7-9 gantry. This is a potentially significant issue, as the cameras in question are particularly prolific and tend to result in the detection of offences well in excess of the speed limit, as the camera effectively drops the speed from the motorway limit (70mph) to 60, 50 and 40mph.

Chris Medd

The Independent Transport Commission has launched a new project to investigate the fundamental motivations that underpin the journeys we make. The project, entitled *Why Travel?*, is being undertaken by the ITC because, it says, "It is clear we still understand too little about the motivations that underpin travel, in spite of its critical importance for our whole way of life and our future.

"Conventional transport studies focus on the demand aspect of travel, rather than the underlying motives, and the Commission believes that it is time to address the scope of this problem which has major implications for future transport planning and strategy.

"Too often transport is considered in isolation from other areas of study. We have therefore commissioned this new research to investigate why we travel, using insights from all fields of human knowledge."



Research will involve work in 12 areas (biology, theology, the mind, exploration, philosophy, tourism, economics, literature/art, anthropology, ecology, sociological insights and technology). ITC chair Simon Linnett explained: "Our goal is to engage the public in thinking more deeply about

the reasons behind our travel and the questions this raises. In the light of the themed workshops the ITC is looking to develop the research in multiple directions, including the creation of an interactive website and a television series."

The ITC says that whilst travel is essential to the functioning of the global economy and a "rich source of happiness," it is a major generator of carbon emissions, is the cause of more than a million road deaths and can blight our cities. This is why the research will ask "whether we can satisfy our desire to travel without making so many journeys... can we experience the thrill of travel while reducing the risks?"

The ITC is funded by various companies in the transport sector including Arup, Network Rail, Heathrow, FirstGroup, Go-Ahead, Balfour Beatty, Arriva, British Airways and Peter Brett Associates. Good to see they're spending our money wisely.

The Government wants to introduce a fixed-penalty system for careless driving, but if the manner of driving is not worth prosecuting by summons, why invent a fixed penalty for it? It's either bad or it isn't. Careless driving, and indeed dangerous too, is often based on the subjective and hostile opinion of non-expert witnesses. I cannot think of any other imprisonable offences where expert evidence is not required and where all other witnesses are not just purely witnesses of fact, but opinion.

If there are specific bad driving habits, define them, create a specific law and prosecute by fixed penalty by all means. What we must not do is create a catch-all offence for lazy police officers who are not prepared to prosecute when they see bad driving on a subjective basis.

Also, with respect to speed awareness courses, I've discovered that there is no legal framework whereby police, having acknowledged an offence, can then wheel and deal with it to the advantage of private companies who run these lucrative courses. Who has given the police the authority to ignore an offence on payment of money to privateers?

When these courses are taken, £5 of the fee is retained by Road Safety Support Ltd, set up by ACPO Ltd (look under the RSS Ltd label at www.driveeastmidlands.com for more). This company exists to provide 'expert' evidence for the prosecution of drivers who dare to deny a speeding offence. The £5 is just the retainer but the company will claim massive costs against the driver in addition should he lose his case. This is a further deterrent against pleading not guilty. Do the police employ such firms against other criminals?

Keith Peat

Claims that drivers with speeding convictions have more accidents may stem from research carried out by Steve Stradling at Napier University. Stradling is supposedly an 'expert' in driver psychology and behaviour but, having seen him talk at several conferences/seminars, he clearly despises drivers!

I suggest there are two reasons why drivers

The Government recently announced proposals for investment in the A14 in Cambridgeshire. It involves tolling and the DfT claims there will be a new bypass to replace the existing road around Huntingdon, upgrades along the A14 and "two new roads on each side of the current A14 immediately north of Cambridge for local use".

Let me guess; the new roads for local use will have weight limits to force lorries onto the tolled part of the A14. The road signs will also try to push people onto the toll road, as they do with the M6 toll; come up the M42 and follow the signs to Lichfield and you'll end up on the toll road, as there's no indication that you can stay on the M42 and then go on the A446.

Unless they can force traffic onto the road I can't see any company being interested in

Give us a quote

"If a camera followed me on my bike, it would be bound to find me breaking the law somewhere, including riding the wrong way down one-way streets. It's the inescapable reality of riding a bicycle."

Jon Snow, President of the Cycle Touring Club

with speeding convictions are more likely to have accidents than those who do not. Firstly, drivers with higher annual mileages are more likely to have been caught speeding and to have had accidents. This is simply a reflection of exposure to risk in both cases. High-mileage drivers are more likely to cover at least a part of that mileage on roads they are unfamiliar with, so will not know where the speed cameras are. They are thus more likely to be caught than those drivers whose mileage is restricted to roads with which they are familiar.

The second reason is that drivers who have a history of speeding convictions are probably less observant than those who have not – they fail to notice the police car behind them, the yellow-painted Gatso or the mobile scamer van. Drivers who are unobservant are also likely to have more accidents because they fail to notice the potentially dangerous situation in front of them. Thus it is their lack of attention/observation that is the cause of both their speeding convictions and their accidents – it isn't their speeding itself that causes their accident involvement.

Of course, any driver can be caught out occasionally and get a speeding ticket. Everyone breaks speed limits sometimes, and those who say they don't are either lying or deluding themselves. Just because someone hasn't been prosecuted for speeding doesn't mean they have never exceeded a speed limit, which appears to be what insurance companies are saying.

Malcolm Heymer

In our recent PCC elections we could choose between five candidates, including one from UKIP with six commitments, one of which was to "support a campaign to pull down speed cameras" – so I voted for him.

No matter who is elected, one of their major

investing, as the M6 toll has been a licence to burn money and no-one was interested in building the proposed M4 toll round Newport. Drivers still won't use the A14 toll, of course; they'll go back to using the roads they used before the A14 was built.

The DfT's release acknowledges that the A14 is "strategically crucial", but they're planning to discourage drivers (especially hauliers who find it "vital not only for international road traffic using the port of Felixstowe") from using it. Greening bangs on about "innovative and imaginative solutions to tackling long term congestion". Well here's an innovative and imaginative solution – upgrade the A14 and do the other works using some of the money we give you in tax every year. How's that for an idea?

Chris Lamb

roles is "meeting the public regularly to listen to their views on policing" – I'm not aware anything like this currently exists. There's nothing yet to indicate how this will happen in practice, but presumably this must include road policing.

I wonder what the reaction would be when presented with the view the Police may be perverting the course of justice by allowing drivers to be diverted from the justice system to speed awareness courses for their own gain.

Bernard Brewer

The do-gooders have recently been bleating about how learner drivers shouldn't be able to take their test until they've got at least a year's experience under their belt. The assumption is that those who pass quickly could never be safe behind the wheel.

I passed my car test in just over six months (and subsequently got my Class 1 HGV, IAM car and artic, and IAM instructor badges). That Maureen woman off the TV took years to do it and eventually managed to scrape through at the nth attempt. Which of us has a better natural understanding of driving, and which of us do they reckon shouldn't have been allowed to pass the test when they did?

Alan March

I picked up a Fiesta hire car in Spain recently. Flicking through the menus on the computer brings up something called 'Ford Economy', which unbeknown to me was rating my driving. On a two-hour mainly motorway drive I got 5/5 for anticipation, 2/5 for speed and 1/5 for gears (presumably for not lugging it around everywhere in a ridiculously high gear). I'm guessing I zeroed it when I zeroed the fuel consumption readout at the start of the journey.

There seems no way to disable the function. This is only a basic Fiesta, so I assume all Fords with trip computers have this? It's a bit concerning as presumably this analysis could be used following an accident.

Has anybody come across this? I wonder how it assesses speed as without GPS reference it cannot tell what the limit is. If an IAM member is getting 1/5 for gears I despair what sort of info insurance companies are sent by such systems.

Dave Razzell

The Highways Agency has issued a consultation (tinyurl.com/d6pyhhe) on introducing ATM on the M25 between junctions 5 and 7. The briefest of glances at the page reveals this must surely be the most obviously sham consultation yet. They've obviously already decided to do exactly what they've done elsewhere, so responding would be a complete waste of anyone's time.

But then isn't that the new definition of

Does the membership secretary have your current contact details – including a correct email address? If not, please send an update ASAP!

A transport planner recently claimed to me that "there isn't any strategic planning any more. Councils can just do what they want." I began to explain that this was far from the case when the example of the Bath lorry ban was brought to my attention. This is a case where a city of some 90,000 people situated on a trunk road – the A46/A36 – has simply decided that it doesn't want large trucks through the city and requires them to go somewhere else.

Bath and North East Somerset (BANES) Council is trying to impose an 18-tonne weight restriction as an 'experiment' lasting 18 months, to prevent trucks crossing the River Avon in Bath. This effectively severs the existing trunk road in two. Lorries will have to find another way of crossing the river, and that will involve a diversion.

The trouble is that the diversionary routes are likely to be through a number of towns and villages in Wiltshire and Mendip District, as well as through other areas of Bath that might not want the trucks. The 350 or so large lorries that travel as through traffic on the trunk road across Bath every day would have to negotiate the streets of country towns and traverse other small and unsuitable bridges to get over the river.

Bradford-on-Avon, despite a weight limit and a cohort of 'lorry watchers' from the town noting down existing offending vehicles, is dreading a big increase of very large lorries 'off piste'. Staverton, on another small bridge, is wondering whether it can quickly impose a weight limit to direct the trucks away; Westbury worries about the effect on its Air Quality Management Area

and the thought of more large lorries going through residential areas.

In 2011 the Highways Agency's position was that the proposal was detrimental to the function and operation of the Strategic Road Network. The Wiltshire Freight Quality Partnership complained, as did the adjacent local authority – Wiltshire Council – and local MPs. Although the plans were initially approved, the DfT blocked this – but you can bet BANES won't let it drop.

Large lorries are unpopular wherever they go but are part of our way of life. It must be very tempting for one local authority to block the flow of trucks in one place with the hope that they will go somewhere else. This flight into 'localism', however, denies the real and essential need for strategic cross-border planning. In the example here, the Bristol/Bath to South Coast Study, which reported in 2003, proposed new signage for HGVs at the South Coast ports and on the motorway that directed them away from Bath and Wiltshire, showing that other more suitable routes might be longer but use less fuel. This kind of action required real cooperation across a wide area and somehow never happened.

'Pass the Lorry' may be a politically useful move for a given councillor in a given authority to play. But with each council potentially a player, and each wanting to reduce the impact of lorries on residents and improve air quality, passing on the problem of lorries becomes illogical. Wider area strategic planning is essential. Without it, small pieces of a puzzle may look complete but the picture as a whole remains in disarray.

Tom Court

'consultation'? We've decided what we're going to do but regulations (yawn) dictate that we have to look as though we are asking people. Perhaps we should launch a competition with a prize for anybody who can find a road safety consultation where the final outcome has been changed as a result of responses.

Simon Moore

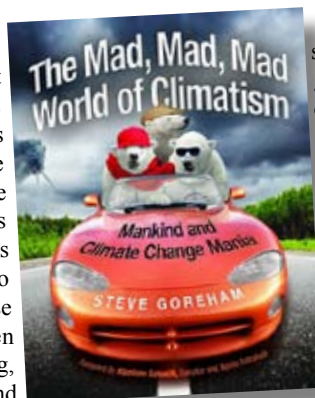
Bristol City Council is looking at introducing blanket 20mph limits – which are likely to prove just as safety-negative there as they have in Portsmouth, despite claims by the latter to the contrary. Speed limits have little effect on most drivers unless they're enforced 24/7, so artificially low limits tend to increase speed variance, conflicts between vehicles, unwise passing, tailgating, lane changes, aggressive driving, and occasionally even road rage. Also, some drivers divert from more main roads where enforcement for revenue is more likely, using minor routes that are inherently more risky.

Such a move will also give a false sense of security to pedestrians and cyclists who will believe that traffic is coming at about 20mph, when most will still be doing about 30mph. Many pedestrians and cyclists are likely to pay

less attention to approaching traffic and thus take more dangerous chances in traffic.

There's the fiscal dimension too, as areas that set artificially low speed limits will deter drivers; businesses in Bristol will lose custom as a result.

Peter Morden



readable and I thoroughly recommend it.

Ian Taylor

I read in OTR105 about the Cardiff councillor who wants to create a car-free suburb; is this such a bad thing? People moving into this new development will know exactly what they're getting, whereas now drivers are being squeezed out of their existing towns and cities.

OTR glossary

- **ACPO**: Association of Chief Police Officers
- **ANPR**: Automatic Number Plate Recognition
- **Brake**: Vocal anti-car group
- **CfBT**: Campaign for Better Transport (previously Transport 2000)
- **CPRE**: Campaign to Protect Rural England
- **CPS**: Crown Prosecution Service
- **DfT**: Department for Transport
- **DVLA**: Driver & Vehicle Licensing Agency
- **EC**: European Commission
- **ECHR**: European Court of Human Rights
- **FoI**: Freedom of Information (Act)
- **FTA**: Freight Transport Association
- **Gatso**: Speed camera that measures a car's speed at a single fixed point.
- **IAM**: Institute of Advanced Motorists
- **IPCC**: Inter-Governmental Panel on Climate Change (pushes man-made CC view)
- **ISA**: Intelligent Speed Adaptation
- **KSI**: Killed or Seriously Injured
- **LTP**: Local Transport Plan
- **MART**: Manchester Against Road Tolls
- **NAAT**: National Alliance Against Tolls
- **NIP**: Notice of Intended Prosecution (usually a speeding ticket)
- **RHA**: Road Haulage Association
- **PACTS**: Parliamentary Advisory Council on Transport Safety (of which the ABD is a member)
- **PCN**: Penalty Charge Notice
- **Scamera**: Speed camera
- **SPECS**: Speed camera that measures a car's average speed between two or more points.
- **TfL**: Transport for London
- **VAS**: Vehicle-activated sign

But how vehicle-free can a modern town be? Residents will want their dustbins emptied, be accessible to emergency service, utilities and delivery vehicles. The mere act of moving in, will require a van/truck of some description. Will friends or relatives not be allowed to drive in?

Will people let public transport timetables dictate when they can come and go? But of course I expect taxis will be allowed in (same as everywhere else), which allows smug anti-car fanatics to piously claim that they do not own a car. Green nirvana or white elephant, time will tell, most probably in our favour.

Terry Hudson

My usual transport is a powerful modern large estate with excellent brakes and no shortage of safety tech. But recently I've been driving an array of city cars and superminis, which have invariably been surprisingly capable of sitting at motorway speeds for long distances – at which point they have so little left in reserve that they're in danger of becoming a liability. Simply moving into lane three can be a nerve-wracking experience, with fast-moving traffic hurtling up from behind. Those who are critical of young drivers and their death rates should spend some time at the wheel of a decade-old city car and see how they fare...

Steven Beaumont

in brief...

► The DfT has attributed the rise in road deaths in 2011 to a milder winter, which encouraged more people to drive. Road deaths rose 3% in 2011, but fatalities dropped 17% between 2009 and 2010 – the highest fall ever recorded. It believes this drop was partly the result of the harsh winter in 2010, which reduced traffic levels and encouraged drivers to take extra care. During the four winter months of 2011 there were 81 more road fatalities than in the same months of 2010. During the remaining eight months of the year, which were not affected by extreme winter weather, there were 30 fewer fatalities in 2011 than in 2010.

► The DfT is developing proposals to trial 80mph speed limits on some sections of motorway "under certain conditions". The DfT has told MPs it's considering criteria for identifying suitable sections of the motorway network to trial an increased speed limit. Its deliberations include "what, if any, changes to enforcement requirements may be required".

► Fines for drivers of all motor vehicles caught without a breathalyser kit, will be implemented in France from March 2013. The fines were due to be enforced from 1 November 2012. It's now mandatory to carry a breathalyser kit and the €11 fine will be applicable to all road users, except those on mopeds. Single-use breathalyser kits are fine; the legal limit is 50 mg per 100 ml of blood, lower than the UK's 80mg limit.

► One in eight drivers has suffered car damage as a result of poor road maintenance, according to Britannia Rescue, which obtained responses from 143 local authorities across the UK. It found that 54,000 compensation claims have been made for vehicle damage over the past two years. The data says that the authorities paid £4.8m in compensation in 2010/11 and 2011/12. Over 1.1m drivers claim they've broken down as a result of neglected roads. The most common damages included punctured or damaged tyres and problems with suspension.

► Calor has decided against switching 30% of its delivery vehicles to biodiesel after a review found this would reduce the reliability of its fleet. Calor estimated a switch to 30% biodiesel would reduce CO2 emissions by around 6000 tonnes per year. However, a review showed the move would also increase the cost to Calor's customers and would adversely affect vehicle reliability, particularly during periods of cold weather.

► Supporters of 20mph speed limits are taking their campaign to the EU. They want the Commission to make 20mph/30kmh the default limit for urban and residential streets, with local authorities able to make exemptions. The campaign is being championed through the new European Citizen's Initiative – a feature of the Lisbon Treaty – under which a petition has one year to gain a minimum of one million signatures across at least seven EU countries. The Commission is not bound to act on any proposal but must give it serious consideration. Visit www.30kmh.eu for more.

Fuel tax record high

The latest figures from the House of Commons Library show that for a typical litre of petrol costing 138.3p, 81p goes to the Treasury in fuel duty and VAT. Drivers of diesel cars are typically paying 143.2p for a litre, of which 81.8p is tax – close to a record for this year. The Commons Library, which is politically neutral, tracks data on fuel and produces regular reports for MPs on prices and tax levels. The library reports that overall, British fuel duty is the second-highest in the EU, with our diesel being the most expensive in the EU, "despite relatively low pre-tax prices", according to the report. Petrol prices are the fourth-highest in the EU, after Greece, the Netherlands and Italy.



Better roads promised

At the recent Conservative Party conference in Birmingham, Transport secretary Patrick McLoughlin promised a bigger road programme to ease congestion on England's road network. He said: "We need a wider programme for roads that will address the neglect of the Labour years. There's too much congestion, not enough new schemes. It's madness and we are going to sort it out." McLoughlin announced the allocation of £170m to fund 57 pinch point schemes on the Highways Agency network. The Government is considering setting up a similar scheme for local authority roads.

Tolls coming for the Blackwall Tunnel?

Tolls could be introduced on the Blackwall Tunnel to part-fund two new crossings of the Thames. TfL has launched a consultation on providing additional river crossings in East London at two locations:

► A £600m Silvertown road tunnel, close to the Blackwall Tunnel, connecting the Greenwich peninsula with Silvertown

► A £150m ferry at Gallions Reach, linking Thamesmead and Beckton, or a new tunnel or bridge at the same location (also estimated to cost about £600m)

TfL says a Silvertown Tunnel could relieve congestion at the Blackwall Tunnel, with the former catering for mainly local trips and the latter carrying most long-distance traffic. The Silvertown Tunnel would have good access to the A12 and A13 on the north side of the Thames. On the south side, northbound traffic would enter the tunnel via a new spur branching off from the existing Blackwall Tunnel approach road. The earliest the Silvertown Tunnel could be opened is 2021.



A Gallions Reach ferry would replace the existing Woolwich ferry and could be in service by 2017. The new ferry would have capacity for 300 vehicles an hour in each direction – double the capacity of the Woolwich ferry. The new ferry service would cross the Thames on the alignment of the aborted Thames Gateway bridge.

Insurance scams cost £400m per year

Crash for Cash fraudsters are "gambling with the lives of UK motorists" and costing honest policyholders nearly £400 million every year, according to a report published by the Insurance Fraud Bureau (IFB). The 'Crash for Cash' phenomenon sees criminal gangs deliberately causing crashes with innocent motorists and faking accidents across the UK to make fraudulent insurance claims.

Fraudsters make money from the crashes by submitting exaggerated claims including personal injury and loss of earnings, car hire and damage repair, even claims for bogus passengers. The financial consequence is that every honest policyholder picks up the collective bill for the fraud through increased premiums.

Established to clamp down on criminal gangs masterminding 'Crash for Cash' scams, the IFB links one in seven personal injury claims (69,500) to organised fraud in its new report *Crash for Cash – putting the brakes on fraud*. The report urges members of the public to blow the whistle on Crash for Cash fraudsters by calling the Cheatline – powered by Crimestoppers – anonymously, on 0800 422 0421. According to the IFB:

► 1 in 7 personal injury claims are linked to Crash for Cash scams.

► 1 in 12 people would consider taking part in Crash for Cash.

► 40 Crash for Cash gangs are currently under investigation across UK.

W Mids loses scammers

All West Midlands fixed speed cameras will be turned off from 1 April 2013, with only mobile camera enforcement after then. Some fixed site cameras could be re-activated if a way can be found to fund their conversion from wet film to digital technology. There are more than 300 fixed site speed camera housings in the conurbation; Birmingham City Council has commissioned a study to cost the transition from wet film to digital technology.

West Midlands Police uses four mobile camera vans, but with no fixed camera sites operating, there will be no enforcement during the hours of darkness as the digital cameras used for mobile enforcement only work in daylight – although two infra-red mobile digital cameras may be purchased.

The decision to cease using wet film cameras will spell the end for camera enforcement of red light traffic signal infringements. There are currently four such sites in the conurbation but there's no type approved digital camera for traffic signal enforcement.

HGV tolls coming

The DfT is pressing ahead with plans to charge HGVs, and aims to start charging hauliers from April 2014 – a year earlier than planned. The Department has rejected calls for a distance-based charge to reflect the costs imposed by lorries on UK roads, saying this is not possible while fully offsetting the costs for UK hauliers under European law.

The scheme is designed to ensure that foreign hauliers make a contribution to the cost of providing the UK's roads and is designed to be revenue-neutral for most UK hauliers. Around 6500 vehicles will face additional annual costs, of up to £50. The DfT says it plans charges of up to £1000 a year, on a sliding scale based on the weight of vehicles over 12 tonnes.

BANES backs down on parking charges

Backlash from traders and politicians has ended proposals to introduce charges in car parks in Bath & North East Somerset that may have generated £300,000 a year.

The authority's U-turn, which Councillor Roger Symonds, of the ruling Liberal Democrats, said demonstrated its ability to listen, came about after widespread opposition during consultation over budget plans.

As a result, parking will continue to be free in Batheaston, Chew Magna, Midsomer Norton, Paulton, Peasedown St John, Radstock, Saltford, Timsbury, and Wellow.

The council is also reviewing the situation in Larkhall, where its charging plans

Brighton's revolt

Shopkeepers on the main road out of Brighton say the future of their businesses is in jeopardy after new parking charges cut trade by 25%. On-street parking fees in London Road doubled in April from £1.70 to £3.50 an hour and from £3 to £6 for two hours.

"Quite a few businesses are hanging on by a thread since the parking charges were implemented," said Ann Townsend, chairman of the traders' association. "The last six months to a year has been devastating - trade has dropped 25%," said butcher Graham Maides, owner of M & B Meats. "To try to cure it, we went into the delivery side of this and now they have stuck two yellow lines on the pavement and I can't even load and unload outside the shop."

One in seven parking tickets issued in Brighton and Hove have been ripped up after being challenged. More than £1 million worth of fines have been cancelled in the past two years by council officials after angry drivers refused to pay them. 31,517 tickets were quashed in 2010 and 2011 out of the 225,000 that were issued.

Dartford's steep fines

Motorists using the Dartford crossings will have to pay a penalty if they forget to pay on the day when the new free-flow tolling regime is launched in autumn 2014. Motorists will be able to pay by phone, text message, online and at retail outlets, or with an account. The toll will rise by 20% for motorists paying the day after they use the crossings. After that, motorists face a £70 penalty charge, reduced to £35 if paid within 14 days. If they fail to pay within 28 days the charge rises to £105.

The Government is retaining a discount for local residents. The DfT is consulting on the plans and has launched a separate consultation on enforcement regulations for charging schemes established under the Transport Act 2000, including the Dartford Crossing. The consultation closes on 28 January.

unleashed a volley of criticism from shopkeepers and local councillors, and a site in South View Road in East Twerton, and it is likely that the car parks there will also remain free. Plans for charges in Royal Victoria Park are not affected.

Symonds, the cabinet member for transport, said: "We are a listening council and the messages that the cabinet heard about abolishing free parking in many car parks were very clear."

Larkhall councillor Dave Laming said he had persuaded Symonds of the damage parking charges would do to local traders, as the city's chamber of commerce warned that public-sector cuts could damage the local economy.

in brief..

► The CBI is urging local authorities to prioritise road improvement schemes in town centres to relieve congestion and boost economic growth. "As the primary route of travel within towns and cities, improvements to the road network are the main priority," says the CBI in a new report on ways to boost local economic growth. "Road improvements in town centres should be prioritised in local transport strategies to relieve congestion and free up growth."

► The DfT is to seek views on the balance of power in transport policy between the EU and the UK. A call for evidence will be invited in the spring, alongside a separate call on the balance of environmental policy by DEFRA. The exercise is part of the wider review of the balance of competences being led by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. It comes as pressure grows on the Government to negotiate a new deal with Europe.

► The government should set minimum safety levels to roads as part of its review of the ownership and financing of England's strategic road network, the Road Safety Foundation says. The call came as the Foundation's latest EuroRAP survey showed that simple engineering measures had led to "extraordinary cuts in road deaths and serious injuries". However, only 1% of all roads analysed in the annual survey qualified as 'improved', with statistically significant reductions in casualties over a decade.

► The AA has backed in principle the Government's plan to make careless driving a fixed penalty offence. But the organisation says police officers must have to stop the driver after seeing the offence, rather than sending a fixed penalty notice in the post. The AA also seeks a better definition of what constitutes careless driving, criticising the current proposal to include errors such as using the wrong lane on a roundabout. "There does still seem to be a suspicion among the motoring public that measures like this are designed to catch them out and make money, rather than make roads safer."

► Motorists in Tewkesbury, Glos, were left furious after traffic wardens put tickets on cars stranded in the floods. Officers handed out the £50 fines to drivers for "parking illegally" after they were forced to abandon their vehicles. One said: "There's nowhere to park and yet the traffic warden told me she was not allowed to use discretion or common sense."

► Wales Online reports that Cardiff City Councillor Ralph Cook has said that Council officers have been asked to examine the merits of introducing congestion charging. The charge would apply at peak times and Cook is promoting the idea of only charging "out of town" motorists, suggesting a rather large cordon surrounding the city to capture long distance commuters. The purpose of the charge is apparently open, with one suggestion that it could help pay for maintaining the road network, which would mean a reduction in council tax, or pay for improved public transport.

in brief...

▶ Hundreds of local authorities have been banned from accessing the DVLA database, for not using it properly. Councils trawl the database to find the addresses of motorists refusing to pay parking fines, among other things. But the DVLA regularly checks for security and other breaches. It has temporarily banned 294 bodies since 2009, including local councils, Sussex Police and TfL. In addition, 38 organisations have been permanently banned over the same period, including local authorities such as Camden, Southwark and Brighton & Hove.

▶ David Davies has been appointed executive director of PACTS, replacing Robert Gifford who has retired after leading the organisation since 1994. Davies is currently senior committee specialist at the House of Commons transport committee, a post he has held for five years. He has also worked for the Audit Commission, TRL, Arup and Birmingham City Council.

▶ Toyota has scrapped plans for a mass market all-electric city car, saying it had "misread the market". Toyota's decision came just days after the House of Commons transport committee expressed doubts about the Government's electric car strategy, questioning its value. Toyota vice chairman Takeshi Uchiyamada said: "The current capabilities of electric vehicles do not meet society's needs, whether it may be the distance the cars can run, or the costs, or how it takes a long time to charge."

▶ The Lib Dems have rejected a proposal that central Government should drive the introduction of 20mph limits. Delegates at the Lib Dem conference voted to reject a proposed policy calling for the DfT to require the introduction of 20mph limits on all residential roads over a 10-year period, with a target of 10% of roads converted each year overseen by a minister. Instead, they amended the policy to state that, while the normal speed limit on residential roads should be 20mph and not 30mph, this should be overseen by local authorities without DfT interference.

▶ Camden is considering introducing a borough-wide 20mph limit. Head of transport strategy Louise Bond said: "The primary consideration is whether or not we include main roads, as many minor roads in Camden are already 20mph." Neighbouring Islington is already set to implement 20mph limits on most main roads, but the Met has told Islington a 20mph main road limit would not be enforced. Bond claims there would be "no noticeable change in enforcement" as existing 30mph limits are rarely enforced.

▶ The number of accidents on Somerset's roads, where speed was a factor, dropped by 31% last year, despite fixed cameras being turned off. Figures show 109 accidents between April and December 2011; there were 159 such incidents in the same period in 2010. Only mobile cameras have been used in the county since 1 April 2011.

Highways Agency gears up for tolls

The Highways Agency has issued a tender for 'back office' systems that will give it the capability to manage road user charging schemes across the road network. The core purpose of the tender is the procurement of a free-flow road charging system for the A282 Dartford Crossing – the bridge and two tunnels that carry M25 traffic across the Thames to the east of London.

But the tender notice states that the back office processing system to manage

the Dartford charging scheme must be "scalable". Furthermore, the appointed contractor must be willing to supply software licences for use by the Secretary of State; Highways Agency; Design, build, finance, and operate (DBFO) companies; and any other contracting authorities (such as other highway authorities). This will allow the wider application of "software used in the delivery of this contract ... in relation to other road user charging and/or tolling schemes that may be separately procured".

Average motorway speeds drop

Driver are cutting the speeds they drive on motorways even as ministers consider allowing them to speed up, research for the RAC Foundation and PACTS suggests. The RAC Foundation director Stephen Glaister and PACTS executive director Rob Gifford, commenting on their paper highlighting growing compliance with both urban and motorway speed limits, say: "The demand for higher speeds seems less significant than politicians had thought."

The two organisations have published an analysis of speeds in free-flow traffic conditions measured at a sample of 96 automatic traffic counters that are published by the DfT. Dr Kit Mitchell's



analysis identifies that the percentage of cars exceeding the speed limit on motorways declined from 57% in 2003 to 49% in 2010, a better rate of compliance than in 1997, when it stood at 54%.

Taxes "inadequate"

Motoring taxes cover at most a third of the costs imposed on society by car travel at, according to an analysis by the Institute for Public Policy Research. The IPPR says that the 5.7p/km motorists pay in fuel duty and VAT only partly accounts for the externalities of car travel, which the think-tank identifies as 15.5p/km, although it adds that even this could be an underestimate. The analysis was conducted for a report that scrutinises and rejects the claim that there is a "war on the motorist".

The report highlights that the total costs of traffic due to excess delays, accidents, poor air quality, physical inactivity, noise impacts and greenhouse gas emissions are estimated to be £43-56bn a year. Moreover, this does not include "many costs that are difficult to estimate including severance of communities, degradation of landscape and the opportunity cost of land," it says, urging the Government to update its accounts of the external costs.

Given these external costs, the IPPR urges the Government to "make every effort to avoid further delays in fuel duty increases," which will cost the exchequer £13.9bn in total over the five years from 2011/12.

England needs targets

England will soon be the only part of the UK without road safety targets following the Welsh Government's publication of a draft road safety delivery plan. The Welsh Government says there is "national and international evidence that points to success" of road safety targets. Taking the 2004-2008 average as a baseline, it therefore proposes by 2020:

▶ A 40% cut in people killed and seriously injured

▶ A 25% cut in motorcyclists killed and seriously injured

▶ A 40% cut in young people (16-24) killed and seriously injured

Explaining the choice of targets, the Government says there is a "hugely disproportionate" number of young people injured on the roads, particularly in cars, compared to other age groups. In 2011 16-24 year olds accounted for 11% of driving licence holders but 23% of casualties. Meanwhile, motorcyclists accounted for just 1% of all road traffic in Wales in 2011 but 39% of those killed or seriously injured in traffic accidents.

Stay informed

Social media

Keep abreast of ABD-related news, and what the ABD is up to on a daily basis, by following us on Twitter (twitter.com/TheABD) or 'liking' us on Facebook (www.facebook.com/associationofbritishdrivers). Please retweet or share one of our updates occasionally to help promote us to your followers or friends.

Forum

You can discuss issues with other members by registering on our online forum. The forum is split into both topics and regions, so whether your concern is a particular topic such as speed limits, or something happening in your local area, you can easily find other members to advise and assist you. Full details of how to register can be found on the members' website.

Website

The main ABD website (www.abd.org.uk) is available to everyone, and there's a members' site at members.abd.org.uk – both contain mountains of information on a diverse range of subjects, with dozens of links to other websites which may help you in your research. Log on to find out more or email the ABD webmaster – Chris Ward – at website@abd.org.uk

OTR on iPad

If you have an iPad and want to read OTR on it, it's easy. Once you've downloaded OTR from the members' site, just drag the OTR file to the 'Books' Library in iTunes, then sync your iPad. OTR will appear on the 'PDFs' collections page in iBooks.

OTR in cyberspace

OTR31 onwards are now available as PDFs, which you can obtain from Chris Medd or download from the ABD website.

Speed limit objection packs

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 current members. Please send a large SAE (30p) to:

**3 Wheatcroft Way
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Norfolk NR20 3SS
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Help out

ABD publicity material

If you'd like copies of any ABD literature please contact Susan Newby-Robson (details overleaf), but please don't over-order as printing costs are high.

Affiliated organisations

The ABD runs an affiliation scheme, allowing groups which support the ABD to formally recognise the work we do. Overleaf is a list of the groups currently affiliated, along with contact details for Terry Hudson, the affiliations contact. If you're a member of an organisation which you think should support the ABD, please let Terry know and we'll endeavour to sign them up.

Complain

Object about proposals for traffic calming and speed limit reductions. Few people do, which is why they happen.

Facebook

Follow us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/associationofbritishdrivers where you can comment on posted articles, find out about press articles you can comment on, and by sharing some of our updates, encourage your friends to support us too.

Fighting fund

The ABD has a fighting fund to which you can donate any amount at any time. You can also donate by standing order if you wish to give a regular sum. Please contact the membership secretary for more information; she'll send you the relevant form to fill out.

Joint memberships

These are free and help us to increase the size of the group easily. If your partner/spouse isn't a joint member, please sign them up if you can – just contact the membership secretary to do so.

Local/regional contacts

Have you been in touch with your local co-ordinator recently? Advise them of anything local you see, find out how you can help campaign locally. You can find out their details on the members site (<http://members.abd.org.uk>). If there's no local co-ordinator for your area, perhaps you can take on the role – more details on what is involved can be found on the members site.

National committee

The ABD's national committee is always keen to increase its effectiveness, which means getting more members involved. An ability to function effectively and diplomatically in committee email discussions across a wide range of issues is essential, and ideally, after an acclimatisation period, new recruits would eventually become a media spokesman too. There are usually around four committee plus (up to) two members' meetings each year, which you'd ideally be able to attend. If you reckon you could get involved, just contact Brian Gregory (brian.gregory@abd.org.uk), Brian MacDowall (brian.macdowall@abd.org.uk) or Bob Dennish (national@abd.org.uk) and they'll do the rest.

Twitter

Follow us at <http://twitter.com/TheABD>, where you can stay up to date on what's happening. Find out about press articles you can comment on and retweet our posts to spread the word. You can also use Twitter to update us on things you see, if you make sure we're following you. If you're in Essex, Herefordshire, Kent, North Wales, North West, Rutland, Scotland, South West of England, Staffs, Surrey, Sussex, Warwickshire or the West Midlands, we have a local Twitter account too: <http://twitter.com/TheABD/local>

Write to the press

Take the time to reply to anti-car articles and letters in the local press. Not only do you get to respond to information already published, but you may be able to get a debate going – and could even become a local point of contact.

Contact your MP

Write to your MP regularly, reminding them of their duty to stand up for drivers. MPs are listed by name & constituency on the Parliament site (parliament.uk/directories/directories.cfm). Many MPs have their own email, but if you use the Parliament webpage to email them, it's involved. It's often better to check their constituency website (if they have one) for contact info. Make sure you state clearly you're a constituent to get priority in a reply. Conservative ministers are listed at conservatives.com

national & regional contacts

We are always pleased to hear from members who can offer support or need help. But remember that the ABD is a voluntary organisation – funded only by its members' subscriptions – and is staffed by unpaid volunteers who do their best to help members. **So please, no phone calls after 9pm!**

Affiliated organisations

▶ *American Automobile Club*
▶ *BMW Car Club*
▶ *CIPS (Choice in Personal Safety)*
▶ *Citroen Car Club*
▶ *Driver Awareness*
▶ *Jaguar Drivers' Club*
▶ *NO2ID*
▶ *Parkingticket.co.uk*

▶ *Professional Drivers' Association*
▶ *Renault ClioSport Club*
▶ *Repeal the Act*
▶ *Safe Speed (safespeed.org.uk)*
▶ *South East Lotus Owners' Club*
▶ *Subaru Impreza Drivers' Club*
▶ *The Independent Porsche Enthusiasts' Club*
▶ *Triumph Stag Enthusiasts' Club*

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