

## Green Paper threatens draconian curbs

The Government's response to last year's controversial, anti-car Royal Commission Report on Transport and the Environment has now been published. Preparation was started by Dr Mawhinney, who, whilst not particularly pro motor-car, nevertheless seemed prepared to listen to the arguments. Unfortunately, the anti-car Sir George Young replaced him, a member of the hard line "Friends of the Earth" pressure group, and it is under his stewardship that the report has now been finalised.

With the certainty of a general election within twelve months, the text has been written very carefully, and the short, "sanitised" version sent out free of charge by the Ministry and by M.P.s seems relatively harmless. The Government is truly worried about alienating a disenchanting electorate by publicly launching an attack on the 30 million or so drivers in this country. This contrasts with Labour's Clare Short who has no such qualms - see separate article.

Read between the lines, however, and the seeds of draconian curbs on your freedom are contained within it. Because the Government is so frightened of the electorate, the proposals have moved on to allowing local authorities the power to set traffic targets, and to introduce tight restrictions on car use.

Regular readers will be all too familiar

with the way planning policy is now being abused to restrict mobility, for example by refusing to allow proper car parking provision in new developments (whether in or out of town), but the report goes much further. The Government, the

### possibilities for institutionalised corruption

report says, is "determined to ensure that [local authorities] have the tools they need" to regulate traffic. It wants to see imposition of congestion charging (urban road tolls), the power given to local authorities to impose tax on the use of non residential parking, and, possibly worst of all, area licensing, by which only privileged people, with special

... continued on page 2

## New A14 camera causes pile-up

### Eye-witness report:

Commuter, Tony Williamson, who travels up the A14 between Cambridge and Huntingdon regularly, recounts his observations of the accident:

"I saw the speed camera being set up one night and so was watching carefully what happened when approaching the site the next day. One driver spotted the camera and slammed his brakes on, despite the fact that he wasn't really speeding, and two or three more who weren't expecting him to brake for no obvious reason piled into the back of him. I was half expecting trouble so was ready to slow down in good time. There was glass all over the calibration marks - it is lucky no-one was injured and traffic was stationary for 20 minutes."

The Association of British Drivers has always suspected that, despite the assurances that speed cameras would only be used against

dangerous drivers in accident blackspots, they would end up in open road locations enforcing arbitrary speed limits and serving little purpose other than to move the whole enforcement system away from the education of dangerous drivers and towards the random persecution of safe and responsible citizens.

This is now happening with a vengeance and, apart from obvious accidents like this one, many more are caused by drivers who live in fear of being penalised for driving at what they know to be a safe speed and hence lose the ability to judge this for themselves.

The ABD is committed to campaign against the misuse of speed cameras and against all other disinformation spread about cars and driving which makes motorists' lives difficult without achieving any positive results.

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### New ABD national telephone no:

**07000 781544**

See back page for details

### ABD at Goodwood Festival of Speed

Location: Goodwood Park near Chichester

Dates: 21st, 22nd and 23rd of June 1996

Tickets: 01243-787766

For details of the event see back page.

Visit us on Stand 210

### Thought for the day

*"The object of taxation is to pluck the maximum number of feathers from the goose with the minimum amount of hissing" - Jean Baptiste Colbert (French Statesman)*

## Green Paper

... continued from page 1

permits would be allowed to drive at all in certain areas.

The possibilities for institutionalised corruption are obvious: civic dignitaries, senior officials, academics, MPs, senior medical personnel and others with the right connections would drive along uncongested streets, whilst the rest of us wait for the bus. It is no accident that the very people who will inevitably exempt themselves from the controls will be the ones who impose them on the nobodies who get in their way.

The Government says that, if there is interest in area licensing, "it would be appropriate to legislate to permit local authorities to implement such schemes".

By shifting the decisions to local authorities, the concept of unhindered access to the nations highways can be destroyed, even the national network made too complicated or expensive to use, without Whitehall or Westminster accepting any responsibility. It will, after all, be your own local council that imposes the restrictions....

The report contains a "Citizen's Charter", but only for bus and underground users. The motorist is a scourge, not a citizen with rights....

### **these policies guarantee the economic decline of Great Britain**

Traffic targets are discussed, but are too politically sensitive for now, so the question is simply left "open" for the time being. Things will be different after the election, and in case you are in any doubt about where the report's sentiments lie, it happily quotes Gloucester's target of reducing traffic to 10% less than its 1995 level by 2011.

Although the report makes it clear that less and less money will be found for road building (and nothing other than the odd by-pass is likely to get built until there is a significant shift in thinking), it comes out against spending too much on a good cheap public transport system, because it encourages people to make more journeys!

Responsibility for the trunk road network is likely to be passed to local or regional level, with potentially serious consequences for the standard of

## Survey results

A survey carried out by the Automobile Association and headlined in the press makes very interesting reading. The results show very strong opposition to measures which threaten motorists' interests; the results were reported in the media as follows, 83% oppose a doubling of fuel prices over the next ten years, 69% oppose limiting households to one car each, more than 75% oppose increasing the cost of parking, only 3% think that road tolls will reduce congestion. However about 33% support road charging in city areas. The survey apparently showed widespread support for improved public transport, 42%.

### **83% oppose doubling of fuel prices**

The ABD has, from the very beginning, been firmly in favour of improving public transport. Our opposition is only to those measures which assault the civil liberties and wallets of ordinary motorists. Provision of adequate public transport, to complement private transport, is very much in the motorist's interest.

### ***Join the ABD - p12***

maintenance, and makes a coherent national road strategy much harder to achieve. But that is probably the intention.

For those of us who want to see freedom and prosperity for this country, for those who enjoy the freedom to drive their cars, for those involved in the manufacture, sale and maintenance of motor vehicles of all descriptions, and for those involved in planning building and maintaining, roads the future looks bleak indeed.

You can be sure that these policies, if carried out will not only steadily erode the freedom and mobility that we have learned to take for granted, but will also guarantee not only the continuation of but also the acceleration of the economic decline of Great Britain towards third world status somewhere in the first half of the next century. Unfortunately, it will take at least ten years for this to become apparent, and most of the country is still not even aware of what is going on.

## The Association of British Drivers

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

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

## UK News Roundup

### Government attacked over Transport Policy

Two reports published earlier this year have criticised the Government for failing to invest in transport infrastructure.

The Engineering Employers Federation, which represents 5000 companies said that the Government's transport policy seemed to be "starting to condone the restriction of transport and travel", and warned that UK's equipment supply base may be seriously damaged, and the UK may lose the ability to manufacture certain types of transport equipment altogether because of the lack of planning in the Government's investment strategy.

#### **transport policy should be based on an efficient road network**

A few weeks beforehand, the employers' organisation, the CBI, warned that both the economy and the environment would be damaged if the Government did not come up with a coherent strategy. It argues that the so-called "transport debate" has obscured the need for decisive action.

It said: "Somewhere in the course of the debate a realistic yet positive approach to transport has been lost, and with it has gone the will to take bold decisions, spend money and implement action.

"This in turn has stemmed from a growing aversion by Government to take the necessary decisions: there are always too many uncertainties about the future, too many interests to offend, too many other spending priorities.

"The result can only harm both competitiveness and the environment."

The Report followed another published by the CBI in February of this year in which the organisation said that Britain had neglected its road and rail links in comparison with its European neighbours.

This latest Report makes clear its wish to see a transport policy based on an efficient road network, but giving business and individuals the option of using other modes of transport like rail.

### Road tolls - warnings and problems

The Centre for Policy Studies, which advises the Government, has issued warnings of mass civil disobedience and technical problems on a large scale if current toll road proposals go ahead.

#### **300,000 incorrect bills p.a.**

A flood of Court cases is predicted in their Report which they claim could lead to the scheme being abandoned, and it could even become a poll tax on wheels with many motorists simply ignoring the law and not paying the tolls.

It points out that the technical hurdles are enormous: if the charges are correctly assessed 99.99% of the time, there could still be 300,000 incorrect bills sent out per year to angry motorists. They also predict that the likely level of accuracy is more likely to be 95% - and 100 million potential violations per year!

There is also the question of who is to finance the provision of high tech on board equipment, which is likely to cost £100 plus per vehicle to install - £2.5 billion to equip Britain's 25 million cars. If this had to be paid for by drivers, many drivers who rarely use motorways could find themselves effectively excluded from the network.

*The consortia are pulling out of the trials one by one - see back page - but we are not out of the woods yet.*

***Sign up a friend - application p12***

### Private sector to manage traffic

Three design build finance and operate (DBFO) road schemes worth £355m have been put out to tender. Private operators have been invited to bid for 30 year concessions to build and maintain roads funded by "Shadow Tolls".

These tolls will be based on traffic flows, measured electronically, and paid to the concession holders by the Government out of public funds. The Government is also seeking to involve operators with experience in the service sector in creating regional control sectors. These centres would collect and disseminate traffic flow data in order to assist in the management of traffic flows.

### Railtrack verdict: Go by car!

Railtrack has told its employees to go by car, not train, on business journeys! Now that privatisation has let in the icy blast of hard economic reality, the cosy world (funded by the taxpayer) of free travel passes has come to an end. Since privatisation Railtrack is required to pay the train companies for employee travel.

Forced to compare the true costs of travel by different forms of transport, Railtrack has told its staff to use cars, not the railway. A memo has been sent to all 11,000 railtrack employees which points out that rail is not always the cheapest option.

Railtrack has calculated that even hiring a car may be cheaper than using the train, especially if two or more staff are travelling together.

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# UK & World News Roundup

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## New survey on driver attitudes

According to Sewells Digest, Autoglass have done a survey of motorists that appears to have asked some of the right questions for a change!

The main finding is that “73% of drivers admit they don't always keep to speed limits and prefer to look at visibility, weather and road type when they judge how fast to go.”

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## Britain is one of the safest places

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This sentence explains in a nutshell why Britain is one of the safest places to use the roads in the World - the majority of drivers respond correctly to the conditions and keep to the spirit of the law, not the arbitrary and discredited letter. If the bureaucrats concentrated on improving these skills rather than trying to suppress them, then road safety would be getting better not worse.

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## Transport ministry at the end of the road

Reports suggest that the Department of Transport is likely to be scrapped after the next election, with responsibility for roads passing to the Department of the Environment. Unsurprisingly, the move is backed by the Treasury which would like to see yet further reductions in transport spending. The budget has already fallen from £6 billion at the beginning of the 1990s, when the Government was pursuing its “Roads for Prosperity” plan, to a mere £4 billion.

The Department of Transport is currently the responsibility of Sir George Young, a known “Friends of the Earth” member. Environmentalist groups have been campaigning for the closure of the Department for some time, because they believe that it will make it more difficult for any sort of coherent roads policy to be followed. The break up would involve returning responsibility for aviation and shipping to the DTI and transferring road planning to the DoE. Road safety would probably be handed to local government.

If you think that the roads programme is in a mess right now, it is only likely to get worse.

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## Los Angeles targets dirty lawn mowers

According to the Californian South Coast Air Quality Management Agency, a single garden lawn mower used for just 20 hours per year belches out as much pollution as a new car driven for 26,000 miles.

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## 20hr lawn mower pollution equals 26,000 miles driving!

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The city of Los Angeles and its environs are home to 1.7 million petrol driven mowers and leaf blowers, and, with all cars there now fitted with catalytic converters, it is the garden tools that are thought to be responsible for much of the city's smog. Power garden tools are believed to emit more volatile organic compounds than all the aircraft flying in the area, for example.

Shops taking in the polluting equipment are to be given “smog credits”, which are tradable and enable businesses to meet statutory emissions limits. Customers are likely to get cash rebates on trading in power garden tools, when purchasing electric or hand replacements.

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## U.S. Senate moves to cut tax on petrol

Whilst our Government, along with much of Europe, condemns us to ever higher tax on petrol, the citizens of the United States can count on their Government and their Constitution to look after them.

Back in February of this year the average price of a gallon of “gas” fell to \$1.14, or about 74 pence, before rising by about 20 cents per gallon by the beginning of May.

The Senate has promised to ease the pain of the higher prices, by working to repeal, or at least suspend, the hated 1993 “gas tax” which adds 3.4 cents to the price of each gallon.

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## Did you know?

A 2 litre Honda Accord that costs £14,405 in the U.K., sells for under £10,000 in the U.S., and a Ford Probe 16v which retails at £17,165 over here costs just £9,000 there?

Similar price differences exist for the Ford Mondeo/Contour, VW Golf and others.

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## Change of address

Please update your address book with new ABD addresses. See page 2.

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## M25 widening to go ahead

Despite the savage cuts in the road building programme, the Government has decided to go ahead with a plan to widen a two mile stretch of the M25 between junctions 14 and 15 (the M4 exit) to 6 lanes in each direction. The section from there to junction 12 (the M3 exit) will be widened to 5 lanes each way.

The Government hopes that the widening, along with the camera-enforced variable limits along that stretch will enable the motorway to cope with the expected growth in traffic along this stretch for at least 15 years.

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## Green cards required in France

Anyone planning a holiday in France this year should note that press reports appeared in the spring of French police stopping British cars and insisting that insurance Green Cards were required.

This is not, of course, correct; under European agreements Green Cards are not a legal requirement. However, for an easy life you may as well ask your insurance company for a Green Card.

## New alcohol limit

Travellers to France should also be aware that the limit for alcohol in the blood has been lowered to 50mg, less than in the UK.

Fines of up to £4000 can be levied and driving licences confiscated.

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## Kent speed trap nets 183 drivers in 1 hour

A speed trap on the A2 near Dover in Kent in March caught 183 drivers in just 1 hour exceeding a 40 mph limit through the site of some road works - that is more than one every 20 seconds. Local police said all would receive penalty notices or face prosecution. The Treasury stands to make at least £7,500 in fines revenue from the exercise.

Labour's Shadow Transport Minister criticised what he called “a culture of speeding”, but no one seems to have asked the question as to whether the limit was set at the right level in the first place. Transport and Road Research Laboratory research shows that motorists will adhere to sensible limits, but will tend to ignore those which are set too low.

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## Labour declares war on drivers

A new Labour Party policy document, thought to have been drawn up by left wing transport spokesperson Clare Short, warns of a harsh new anti-car policy which a future Labour government is likely to adopt. The party wants to "manage car use" - a euphemism for draconian new controls, road tolls, and penal taxation of non residential car parking spaces.

A special tax would be imposed on shopping centre car parks, and an £8 per week tax charge per space on car parks at places of work. The aim is to force drivers to drive much less, and to penalise popular out of town shopping centres.

In addition, road tolls would be imposed on local roads, to make people use public transport. Local authorities would be given powers to introduce the charges to manage traffic in their areas.

The plans also envisage taxing company cars much more heavily. In a move which could seriously jeopardise Britain's resurgent car industry, penalties would be imposed on company car users who could not prove that they had been using their car for business, and the tax structure would be modified to encourage companies to purchase energy efficient vehicles, and then to discourage use of them.

The motorway and trunk road network would be "managed" to favour

freight, business and high occupancy vehicles, although the details on this are not clear.

Labour's thinking is that traffic levels should be stabilised by 2010, and reduced to 1990 levels by 2020. This would undoubtedly have a serious impact on economic growth and on the life styles and living standards of millions of ordinary people.

### an unprecedented assault on liberty

The moves would constitute an unprecedented assault on the liberty and lifestyle of millions, including many of their own supporters, and represent a gift

to the struggling Conservative Party if only they had the vision to realise it or the courage to act on it.

In terms of shopping, the average basket of groceries for a family of four for one week weighs in at about 30kg (66lbs), including drinks. Put another way, that is equivalent to one and a half times the standard airline luggage allowance. Moves to tax shopping centre spaces will simply raise the cost of living.

The proposals would amount to an attack on working people of all classes, especially women, who no longer have the time to shop every day; an attack on families who enjoy the convenience of out of town stores with easy, safe parking close by; an attack on the elderly and disabled for whom cars are often the only source of mobility; an attack on the 850,000 people employed in the motor business in the U.K., and their families; and an attack on some of Britain's most successful retail businesses, employing thousands of people.

If New Labour wants to appeal to the millions of floating voters it needs to win an election, it had better drop the old style socialist desire to force us to live in the way *they* want.

## Britain's Hall of Shame - our rogue cities

Leeds is top of the list of cities for car crime, according to statistics published by Eagle Star. With a 5.5% risk of theft of a vehicle or from a vehicle in a single year, it takes our Crown as the Capital of Crime. Birmingham comes second, with 5.1%, just ahead of Newcastle on 5.0%.

Glasgow and Manchester tie with 4.7%. Aberdeen is the safest city in Britain, with a theft rate of just 0.8%. Southampton is England's safest city with 1.2%, and London scores a remarkably low 2.4%.

## London road pricing postponed

Road pricing in London will not go ahead within the next ten years. A recently published DoT report outlining the Governments traffic strategy for London confirmed that although a road pricing scheme for the capital would be technically feasible and available in about five years, implementing it would not be politically acceptable for some time. The

report indicated that the scheme could yield a revenue of £270m pa and a 15% reduction in traffic levels. The document favoured further parking restrictions and price increases to achieve the required reduction in traffic.

*Other towns may not be so lucky. See "Green Paper threatens draconian cuts".*



### Cuttings request

Relevant cuttings from newspapers, magazines and professional journals will be greatly appreciated. The wider the coverage the better.

Please record the source and date in the margin.

Send information to the Secretary (address on p2).

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## Let's define "speeding"

Sir - I believe you are missing a trick in that no-one attempts to define "speeding".

"Speeding" should be defined as going too fast for the conditions at the time. This could equally be called incompetence, driving without due care etc.

If this is the definition, I agree with all statements of Police and Government such as "excess speed was a contributory factor". Even, possibly "Speed kills" (although it should read "excess speed kills").

Breaking the speed limit is obviously an entirely different matter and can either be a heinous crime or of no consequence at all.

Tim Bishop, Upper Boddington

## Motorists? We're just milch cows!

Sir - There are said to be 24 million vehicles in the UK and with often two drivers for the same vehicle the total number of licence holders is likely to be in the region of 30 million. It is time we stood up to be counted, instead of allowing ourselves to be treated as milch cows for continual extraction of money, and meekly accepting whatever additional charges the Government and Town and Local

## Write for "On the Road"

Do you have memorable experiences of driving abroad you would like to share with fellow members?

Or perhaps you have news of what is happening (or not happening) in your town, village or county.

Perhaps there are just issues you feel strongly about!

Short letters or longer articles - all are welcome!

If you use a word processor and could send a disc as well as a copy on paper this would be appreciated but is not essential; it's your views that count.

The Editor's address and contact numbers are given on page 2.

Councils feel like imposing on us. For example, at Treliske Hospital, Truro, visitors now have to pay for parking before walking almost half a mile to the actual hospital. The charges started at 50p and have since increased to 70p.

From my village there is *no* bus service, *no* train service and a taxi costs at least five pounds *each way*. I have to drive seven miles each way to town and then I am expected to pay parking fees for the privilege of taking my custom to the town - plus a swingeing fine if I overstay my time.

Captain EG Walford, Bodmin

## Radar detectors justified

Sir - Most high mileage drivers know to their cost that the emphasis of the authorities has changed from education to the relentless persecution of safe and sensible drivers for any breach of often arbitrary and unreasonable laws, creating a climate of fear and stress for road users.

In this environment it is becoming very difficult to drive safely and with due attentiveness to upcoming road hazards, as total concentration on avoiding prosecution is essential at all times, whether or not one is deliberately breaking the speed limit. In Berkshire, one of the worst areas for this, child pedestrian injuries rose 15% last year.

I do not yet own a radar detector but I am coming around to the view that this device is becoming an essential aid to safe driving.

Since any public expression of these views is gagged by the media, it is a disappointment to see the AA, which is supposed to represent the views of drivers, taking the side of the politically correct anti-car wing of the road safety lobby by calling for the sale and possession of radar detectors to be made illegal.

Paul Hemingway, Aldershot

## Consequences of Gatso-madness

Sir - While travelling to Heathrow by taxi recently, I noticed that the taxi driver was taking an extraordinary route, very circuitous and indirect. When I asked him why he was doing this he explained that he was avoiding speed cameras. Later on I observed that he was doing seventy in a forty limit. All the other cars near us were doing the same speed. Admittedly this was on a dual carriageway. I said nothing but merely observed.

So the authorities, to satisfy the Ministry of Transport's obsession with speed, scatter speed cameras causing cars to avoid them with roundabout routes and to speed up to make up time. Heaven preserve me - what a mess.

MS Bingley

*Exactly what the ABD has warned of!* - Ed.

## Now FoE infiltrate local govt. too

Sir - In Stafford we have a very active co-ordinator for Friends of the Earth. Some weeks ago he approached Stafford Borough Council, proposing that they employ someone from their organisation to preach Friends of the Earth doctrine to the Council.

It was reported that the Council would form a sub-committee to consider the proposal. This they have done and as a result decided to create the new position of Environmental Initiatives Officer (salary about £19k).

So not only do the Council act on Friends of the Earth proposals, they are now going to employ and pay one of them. I hope that by joining the ABD we can start to get a better deal for the car and driver.

Don Wylie, Stafford

*The newspaper cuttings you sent quote the FoE co-ordinator repeating the hoary old chestnuts about "new roads generating traffic" and "covering the countryside in tarmac". Ed.*

## Recruitment ideas

**Many people agree with our aims, but not enough of them are members! We need more members to lend weight (and cash) to our cause. That is why an ABD flier (information sheet cum application form) is usually enclosed with "On the Road".**

**As well as collaring your colleagues, pestering your pals and enrolling your neighbours, here are some more ideas:**

- When you pay a bill by post, enclose an ABD flier.**
- When you get prepaid envelopes in junk mail, don't bin them, send them back with an ABD flier!**
- One member has even suggested putting fliers under windscreen wipers in car parks. (Hmmm.)**

**If you need more fliers, or have other ideas, contact the Secretary or the Editor.**

## Well done Autocar!

Autocar published an excellent article in the 28th May 1996 edition of the magazine which hit the nail right on the head! Members are urged to buy a copy (for back issues call 01235 534323). The article was headlined:

### “Scandal of the roads death ‘cover up’”

and continued;

“Government has failed to collect accurate road death statistics to support its road safety policy.”

Autocar has provided excellent publicity to a very important issue which members of the ABD have been aware of but which deserves a wider audience. ABD committee members have bought copies of the Government’s annual road deaths statistics report entitled “Roads Accidents Great Britain, The Casualty Report” (RAGB). This report is published annually in the autumn (available from the HMSO) and contains the accident data for the previous calendar year. The issue for 1995 is not out yet and items in the media have indicated that it will show an increase in road deaths. RAGB contains road accident and casualty information drawn from police accidents reports filled out on a standard form (stats19). A specimen copy of this form is included at the back of each issue.

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### no attempt is made to assess causes of accidents

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Unlike other countries, most notably Germany, (the ABD has a copy of the German stats), no attempt is made in this country to assess and collate accident cause information on a national basis. Accordingly the stats19 form does not have a data field for this purpose and the statistical tables in RAGB do not provide the required information.

We in the ABD support government action to reduce road deaths; targeted at high risk traffic situations and not aimed at the vast majority of us who go about our business in our cars in an entirely reasonable way. However a failure to target road safety measures properly is not just unpleasant for car users it is itself an indirect cause of increased road deaths.

For example, by strictly enforcing speed limits in low risk situations such as a motorways in safe conditions, traffic will be diverted both in speed and in volume to other, higher-risk environments and this will result in an increase in accidents, casualties and fatalities. Speed reduction measures are

expensive and should be used only where they will do the most good and not to cause harm though the effects of diversion.

The Government’s £1.7m campaign to publicise the message “kill your speed” is justified by a supposedly scientific analysis based on data derived from the change in US interstate speed limits in the late seventies. The assertion that 1200 lives a year is lost through speeding is no more than a “back of a fag packet” calculation.

Britain’s drivers deserve better than this. The government should spend a small fraction of the vast sums it collects in motoring taxes to revise the stats19 form and collect accurate information on the causes of accidents.

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## Low non-urban speed limits cost lives

Evidence generated by the US Department of Transportation’s Federal Highway Administration in 1992 confirms what the ABD has been saying since its formation: unreasonably low speed limits on non-urban roads are in fact counter-productive in road safety terms.

Measurements of vehicle speeds were taken at 100 sites distributed over 22 states before and after speed limits were changed; limits at some sites being lowered and at others raised. The main conclusions of the FHWA report are:

- Posting speed limits at levels lower than those perceived reasonable by drivers produces *no corresponding decrease in drivers’ speeds* and results in high levels of non-compliance.
- When speed limits were lowered, drivers on average actually increased their speeds.
- At the 58 experimental sites where speed limits were lowered, *accidents increased* by 5.4 percent.
- At the 41 sites where speed limits were increased, accidents fell by 6.7 percent
- When speed limits were raised to those for the 85th to 90th percentile (the speed at or below which 85% to 90% of drivers travelled under free-flow conditions) there was a small decrease in the proportion of drivers significantly exceeding the speed limit.
- Raising limits to correspond with the 85th percentile had an extremely beneficial effect on driver speed limit compliance.
- There were no road safety or operational benefits from establishing speed limits on non-urban roads at below the 85th

percentile speed.

On UK motorways the 85th percentile speed is 85mph.

There are, of course, significant revenue benefits (as, for example, Oxfordshire County Council will tell you) from setting unreasonably low speed limits and vigorously enforcing them.

**The penalty is a 31% increase in fatalities over the previous year.**

References: Report No. FHWA-Rd-92-084, US Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration, Research Development and Technology, Turner-Fairbank Highway Research Center, 6300 Georgetown Pike, McLean, Virginia, 22101-2296.

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## Caravan season

The official government line is that speed is the cause of accidents, full stop. In the face of this blinkered and simplistic attitude it is worth studying, and drawing attention to, actual dangers and causes of accidents.

With the caravan season upon us again, reports of surveys undertaken last year deserve a second look. They revealed that the majority of caravan rigs had potentially dangerous faults.

On the M5 near Exeter, seven out of ten had faults. Another survey on the A38 found that nine out of ten had faults. The most common problems were:

- brakes badly maintained;
- worn tyres;
- wrongly inflated tyres;
- wrongly loaded caravans.

Thus the surveys paint a horrendous picture of rigs being completely uncontrollable in situations requiring even slightly more steering or braking than the normal.

Equally worrying was the complacent attitude of a spokesman for the Caravan Club who said that accidents caused by poorly maintained caravans accounted for just one in 400 insurance claims. This figure was presented to support the contention that there was not a problem.

However if the number of caravans on the road could be compared with the total number of vehicles or, more usefully, the number of caravan miles compared with the total number of vehicle miles, it is likely that a very much less favourable picture would emerge.

So remember, whilst being behind a caravan can be annoying, being in front of one could be much more worrying!

## The objective: to plot every motorway and trunk road camera

The Association has decided to determine the position of every camera site on the motorway and trunk road network. Members will be notified of camera sites initially via On The Road and those listed below are either new or modified since the last issue.

Remember, the scheme depends on *you!*

All members should report (as accurately as possible, of course) the location of camera sites known to them. Use copies of the form printed on a later page, noting all appropriate details such as Town, Road name and a six-figure OS map reference if at all possible.

If you have access to a computer and could supply the information on disc, please telephone the Editor and ask for a template file.

Don't forget, we are concentrating on motorway, trunk and other main roads.

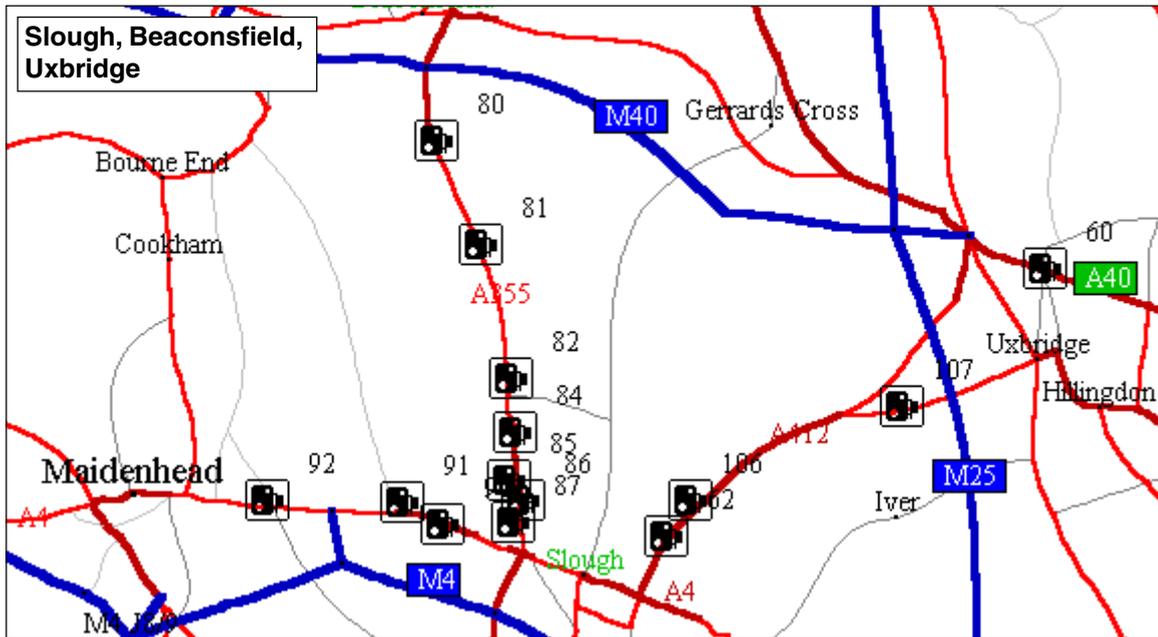
## Camera nightmares come true

*A reader contributes his observations.*

### Speed camera locations - A34, Oxon.

One speed camera has been placed on the Southbound A34 dual carriageway about 3/4 mile south of the junction with the M40. This appears to be triggered by lines on the road like a traffic light camera and there are several sets of lines 'upstream' of the camera which leads me to suspect they are conducting some sort of experiment - possibly to see how many people slam the brakes on when they see a camera. There are no calibration marks painted on the road.

Being in Oxfordshire, I doubt the authorities have our best interests at heart. The council's game of intellectual Cleudo is putting lives at risk in that county and this is being borne out by the statistics. Road deaths for 1995 in Oxfordshire were up from 49 to 64 - a 30% increase - according to FoxFM Radio, where the council bureaucrat blamed drivers for not slowing down or changing gear on bends. I am sure the ABD could offer an explanation for this sudden fall in driver ability if they deigned to ask us!



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

Ref	County	Road	Direction	Location	OS Map Ref.	Limit
60		A40	R	Central reservation after the Hillingdon junction		70
80	Berkshire	A355	S		SU948874	40
81	Berkshire	A355	S		SU955858	40
82	Berkshire	A355	S	Before junction with B416	SU961832	30
84	Berkshire	A355	S	At start of dual carriageway section		30
85	Berkshire	A355	N	Just after bridge at start of dual carriageway section		30
86	Berkshire	A355	S	Just before railway bridge	SU963809	30
87	Berkshire	A355	N	After A4 junction, before railway bridge	SU961806	30
90	Berkshire	A4	W	On dual carriageway section	SU949805	30
91	Berkshire	A4	E	On dual carriageway section	SU942809	30
92	Berkshire	A4	E	Junction (Traffic light camera)	SU917809	
106		A412	R		SU994809	40
107		A4007	E		TQ032826	30

Maps produced in Microsoft Autoroute Plus © 1988-1995 Microsoft Corporation, Maps © Ordnance Survey 1994

## Speed camera locations - A3, W London

Three cameras in each direction have been placed on the A3 going into London on the narrow lane urban section that is still 70mph. The really interesting bit is where the 40mph limit starts as you reach the A308.

There is one inward bound camera that has been there since the start of the 'experiment' which, to my mind is virtually an object lesson in how to site a speed camera. The 40mph limit begins, then there is a camera sign, then a camera, then a set of traffic lights with a right handed 70 degree bend which is only

safely negotiable at around 40. OK, so maybe the camera box is 50yds too early but even I could never develop any righteous anger against this particular device.

Once you have negotiated this bend, the road goes back to a three lane dual carriageway for about a mile before entering Wandsworth. This road is wider and safer than the previous 70mph stretch, but the limit remains at 40mph. The new camera is located right bang in the middle of the best bit of this road, just before the underpass at the A219 junction. A prime revenue generating location. All the new cameras have the calibration marks on the road, but these have never been present at the original location, indicating that the worst predictions about Gatsos have come true - the camera box placed for safety reasons is never loaded because it doesn't earn its keep!

The outward bound location, opposite the revenue generator, is the most actively dangerous speed camera I have ever seen, being hidden behind a road sign at exactly the point where three lanes go into two, just after the A306 traffic lights. The effect of camera induced braking as free flowing traffic merges and hence temporarily reduces following distances is not hard to imagine!

## Speed camera location - A40, Oxon

If the ABD were to have National awards for 'most dangerous' and 'most unnecessary' speed cameras, I would nominate those two on the A3! However, I wouldn't expect to win because of the one on the straight on the A40 just past Witney which is specifically sited to turn safe overtaking into a multiple accident!

## London Red Routes

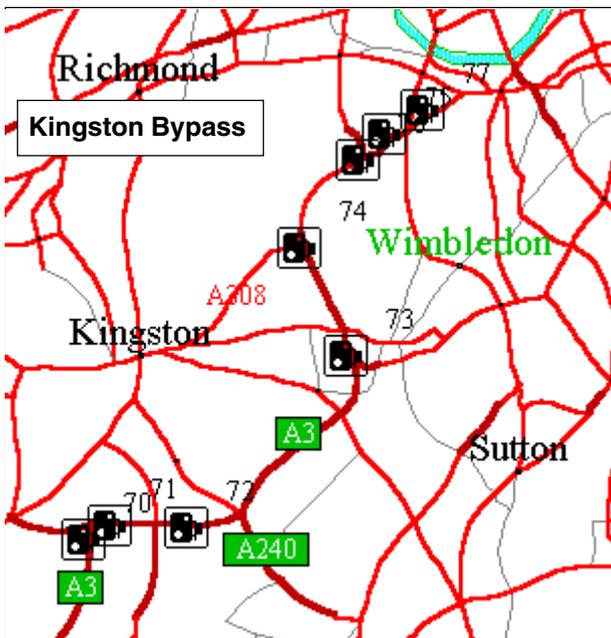
Drivers should note reports that all London Red Routes have been aggressively populated with cameras. We will endeavour to map these, especially the blatant revenue generators, but we depend on our members for information.

### CAUTION!

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

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

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



## Unmarked cars

The following unmarked patrol cars have been reported:

West Midlands, M42:

Vauxhall Cavalier 4dr, dark blue, K645NNP

Oxfordshire, M40:

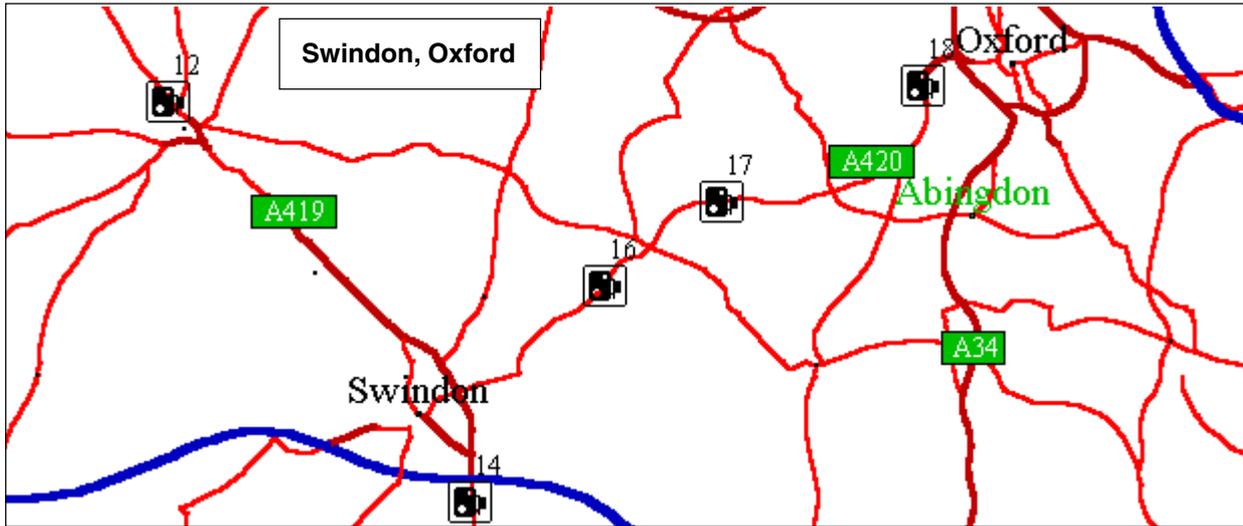
Rover 827 fastback, dark blue, L405FBW

Mondeo, red, rumoured but unconfirmed

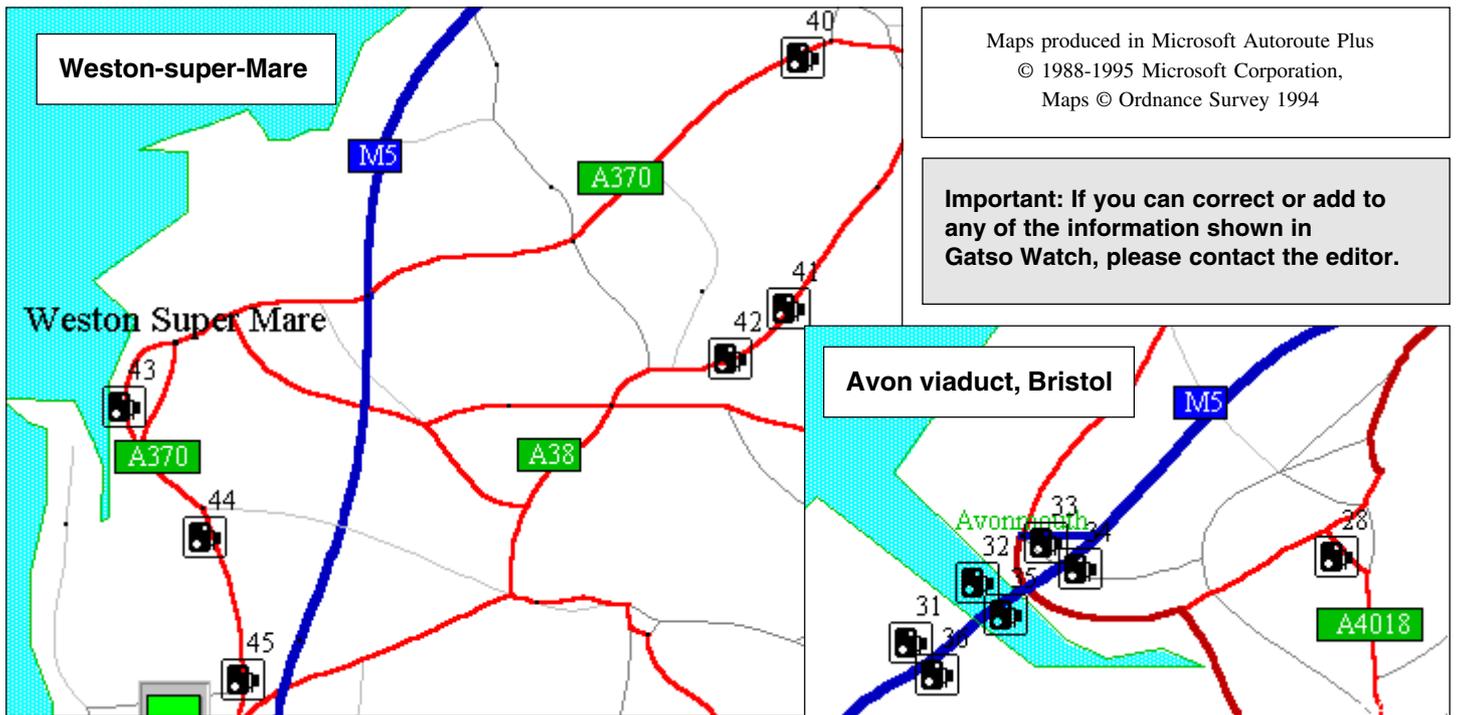
Cavalier, dark red, rumoured but unconfirmed

Ref	County	Road	Direction	Location	OS Map Ref.	Limit
70	.....	A3	.....	NE	.....	70
71	.....	.....	.....	SW	TQ172651	70
72	.....	A3	.....	W	before A243 exit	70
73	.....	A3	.....	N	after A298 junction	70
74	.....	A3	.....	N	just after 40 limit before A308 junction	40
75	.....	A3	.....	E	before A219 underpass	40
76	.....	A3	.....	W	after A306 traffic lights, hidden behind sign	40
77	.....	A3	.....	NE	.....	30

# ABD Gatso Watch



Ref	County	Road	Direction	Location	OS Map Ref.	Limit
12		A417		Stratton nr Cirencester	SP0103	
14		A345		Chiseldon nr Swindon	SU1979	
16		A420		between Shivenham & Faringdon nr Swindon	SU2792	
17		A420		between Faringdon & Kingston Bagpuize	SU3497	
18		A420		nr Cumnor	SP4604	



Maps produced in Microsoft Autoroute Plus  
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 Maps © Ordnance Survey 1994

**Important: If you can correct or add to any of the information shown in Gatso Watch, please contact the editor.**

Ref	County	Road	Direction	Location	OS Map Ref.	Limit
40		A370	S		ST491682	0
41		A38	B			0
42		A38	B			0
43		A3033	S		ST315586	0
44		A370	N		ST336553	0
45		A370	S		ST346515	0
31	Somerset	M5	NE	Between junctions 17 & 18	ST499760	70
32	Somerset	M5	NE	Between junctions 17 & 18	ST518775	70
33	Somerset	M5	NE	Between junctions 17 & 18	ST538792	70
34	Somerset	M5	SW	Between junctions 17 & 18	ST542790	70
35	Somerset	M5	SW	Between junctions 17 & 18	ST519770	70
36	Somerset	M5	SW	Between junctions 17 & 18	ST504759	70
28	Somerset	A4018	B	Bristol 8	ST561772	0

# ABD Gatso Watch

**Camera Notification Form** Please photocopy, complete as fully as possible and send to PO Box 3151, Colchester CO6 3JH

Your name: ..... ABD Membership No.(if known) .....

<b>County</b> <i>Example entries: County, if known.</i>	<b>Road No</b> <i>E.g. A1</i>	<b>Road Name</b> <i>E.g. Great North Road</i>	<b>OS Map Ref</b> <i>Please give this if at all possible! E.g. AB123456</i>	<b>Speed Limit</b> <i>E.g. 60mph</i>
<b>Town</b> <i>If in or near a town</i>	<b>Direction</b> <i>N S E W, Both or Reversible</i>	<b>Location</b> <i>Description of location up to 60 characters.</i>		<b>Category</b> <i>Speed or Traffic light</i>

<b>County</b>	<b>Road No</b>	<b>Road Name</b>	<b>OS Map Ref</b>	<b>Speed Limit</b>
<b>Town</b>	<b>Direction</b>	<b>Location</b>		<b>Category</b>

<b>County</b>	<b>Road No</b>	<b>Road Name</b>	<b>OS Map Ref</b>	<b>Speed Limit</b>
<b>Town</b>	<b>Direction</b>	<b>Location</b>		<b>Category</b>

<b>County</b>	<b>Road No</b>	<b>Road Name</b>	<b>OS Map Ref</b>	<b>Speed Limit</b>
<b>Town</b>	<b>Direction</b>	<b>Location</b>		<b>Category</b>

<b>County</b>	<b>Road No</b>	<b>Road Name</b>	<b>OS Map Ref</b>	<b>Speed Limit</b>
<b>Town</b>	<b>Direction</b>	<b>Location</b>		<b>Category</b>

<b>County</b>	<b>Road No</b>	<b>Road Name</b>	<b>OS Map Ref</b>	<b>Speed Limit</b>
<b>Town</b>	<b>Direction</b>	<b>Location</b>		<b>Category</b>

# ABD Membership Application

## Application to join the Association of British Drivers (the operating name of Pro-Motor)

Title: Mr./Mrs./Ms./Dr./Other (Please specify)	If you have been convicted of any motoring offence within the last 10 years, please give details. (Pro-Motor reserves the right to refuse membership to any persons convicted of dangerous or reckless driving, drunken driving, and similar offences).
Initials:                      Surname:	
Usual First Name:	
Address:	
Postcode:	I/We undertake to contribute such amount as may be required (not exceeding £1 for individual Members or £2 for joint Members) to the Company's assets if it should be wound up while I am/we are Members, or within one year if I/we cease to be Members, for payment of the Company's debts and liabilities contracted before I/we cease to be Members, and of the costs, charges and expenses of winding up, and for the adjustment of the rights of the contributories among themselves. I consent to becoming a Member of Pro-Motor.
Home Tel. No.                      Fax	Signature:
Office Tel. No.                      Fax	Joint member's name:
	Signature:

### Subscription rates

Membership subscription is £15.00 per calendar year if you pay by cheque, postal order etc. First year subscription may be reduced by £1.00 per full month if joining after January.

If you pay by Standing Order the subscription is £12.00 per year. The same amount covers single membership or husband and wife membership.

Members are invited to make additional, voluntary "Fighting Fund" donations all of which will be used for campaigning.

Please make your cheques or postal orders payable to "Pro-Motor" or complete the Standing Order authority below.

Subscription to be paid:	£.....
Voluntary "Fighting Fund" donation:	£.....
Total enclosed/authorised	£.....

### Bank Standing Order Authority

#### Customer and Account details:

Name of Bank: .....

Branch Name: .....

Bank Address: .....

Sort No: .....Account No: .....

Account Name: .....

#### Payee Details

Please make the following payment(s) to :  
**PRO-MOTOR LIMITED**  
 Lloyds Bank, 2 South Parade, Weston-super-Mare, BS23 1JL  
 Sort no: 30-99-51    Account No: 1411943

Amount of payment: £.....

Amount in words .....

Date of Payment(s): .....monthly/annually\* until further notice.

Customer's signature: .....Date: .....

Name in block letters: .....

\* Please delete as appropriate.

### Send to:

Send this *whole page*, with cheque or authorisation for your subscription, to the Secretary at the address below.

Why not request more application forms to enrol your friends?  
 Please send ..... application forms.

How did you hear about the ABD? .....

.....

Mr JL Newby-Robson, Secretary  
 12 Shelford Rise  
 Upper Norwood  
 London  
 SE19 2PX

**Please photocopy and distribute this form as necessary, or request copies of the separate ABD flier and application form from the Secretary or the Editor.**

## The Road and I

*Lance Green, ABD Member, describes key points in his motoring career.*

### Before the Road

I was born in September 1946 with cerebral palsy. I didn't know that then, of course. When I did know I didn't care. Others did though and that has been my real problem. This is not a life history, however. It is a car story. I cannot recall a time when I was not car mad. Throughout my youth I dreamed of a driving licence. There were other, lesser, hopes which my disability prevented - following my Father in to the police force and playing county cricket were two I recall.

Despite my police background, I began to have doubts about the way society was treating motorists. When I was 14 I was old enough to observe the magistrate's court at first hand. Drivers whose actions were not in the least evil were systematically and routinely punished for being in the wrong place at the wrong time. There were half a dozen traps in the road in the area and strangers were falling foul of them time after time. Had these traps been obviously dangerous, much greater care would have been taken. When funds were available, most of these traps were ironed out and the related accidents stopped at once.

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### Drivers were systematically punished for being in the wrong place at the wrong time

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Evidence for the futility of the prosecution and persecution of motorists is given superbly in the late J J Leeming's book "Road Accidents: Prevent or Punish?" (published by Castle). The author was county surveyor of Dorset from 1945 to 1964. The book is the only one I know of which treats road safety on a scientific basis.

### On to the Road

Returning to my own story, I had good eye sight and my reactions were found to be very fast indeed. When I was still 17 I passed my driving test at the first attempt on Thursday 30 July 1964 -the 101st anniversary of Henry Ford's birth. My steed for this deed was a Daf "31" - often described as "specially adapted". The latter annoyed me a little because it conjures up pictures of weird contraptions at enormous expense. In fact, a few switches and the handbrake were moved and a foot head lamp dip switch was fitted.

Fortuitously, my Dad was promoted to Inspector at Abercarn soon afterwards. I was, thus able to drive daily to university at Cardiff, where I obtained a second class BA honours degree in Mathematics and a post graduate university diploma in statistics.

By this time I had formed my unorthodox view on speed limits. Basically, I do not see how one speed has any relevance to an appropriate speed at which to drive - the latter being a product of a multitude of highly variable factors. With all the zest of youth I preached the folly of all speed limits. Of course, I made no progress at all. No-one would even listen to me.

As for my cars, the Daf "31" (the actual contemporary

pathetic name was "Daffodil" but, understandably, this is no longer used) was replaced by an automatic Mini - which was a surprise 21st birthday present from my parents! When I started work as an Assistant Statistician I immediately began saving money for a faster car. We will draw a veil over the unsuccessful attempt to buy a Mark 2 Mini which was to have been tuned by Downton Engineering. Suffice it to say that the car never arrived. So I ended up with a Daf 55 Marathon - which I found decidedly brisk, but very difficult to drive due its heavy steering. It was also noisy and its swing axle suspension could give unexpected doses of oversteer. I was happy with the car, though, once I was used to it. In fact, it was in this car that I passed the advanced driving test - again at the first attempt - on Friday 8 June 1973.

When the Mark 2 Ford Escort was announced I rejoiced to see that the 1600 Sport and Ghia were offered with automatic transmission. 0-60 MPH in the former (in manual form) was clocked at 11.1 seconds by Motor magazine. While the "0-60" is not the whole story, the car was clearly fast enough for me. Remember this was 1975. I took delivery of an Arizona gold model in October that year. It was glorious - not only very fast, aided by a highly responsive automatic, but also a joy to drive with light high geared steering, an unbelievably small turning circle, and chuckable handling.

### 1977

That year sends a shiver down my spine. The period 1975 to 1980 (or any other span straddling the dreaded year) is rejected as a single chunk of time passing smoothly from the start to the end. No: it is a bit before and the remainder after.

On 9 June 1977 I discovered that my right eye was seeing very little indeed. The first eye specialist I went to misdiagnosed the problem. By the time the second consultant discovered the offending benign pituitary tumour and it was removed, the other eye was affected and it was too late. Too late to get me back on the road, that is. Although I meet the legal sight requirements and I still retain my licence; I do not drive at all now.

To try to convince myself that I am still alive I own a 1985 Suzuki Alto FX automatic. I maintain an interest in cars, of course, and it distresses me to see the antics of some environmentalists.

Many of their charges against the motorcar are meaningless and/or devoid of context - eg,

"A car emits x times its own weight of carbon dioxide every ....."

(So what? How much do other sources produce? What proportion of the total is it? Does it matter anyway?)

"Traffic emissions are the fastest growing source of pollution."

(Over what period? British urban air quality has been steadily improving since 1990; so it seems that this criticism is out of date. In any case, transport contributes only 20% of man made pollution. It is also true that cars account for as little as 3.5% of transport emissions.)

Because of the above, of course, I joined the Association of British Drivers. Didn't we all?

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# Motoring in Europe

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## Winter Week in Wolfersdorf

*You may be reading this in flaming June, but cast your mind back to icy January, when George Allinson, ABD member, took a trip to Germany...*

Destination Munich or thereabouts. Duration of trip six days. Purpose of trip - Visiting friends in the picturesque Bavarian village of Wolfersdorf in mid-January.

Crazy? Well, OK if you think so, but my wife and I are addicted and seasoned Europhiles and the car, just an extension of the family. The weather? Cold and mainly dry six years out of seven. But we do carry snow chains and Autobahnen snow monitoring is tackled with the typical Teutonic efficiency expected and respected by German drivers.

Why not fly? Taking the benefit of P&O Ferries shareholders discount and low winter rates viz airport parking charges and the hassle of our hosts providing a taxi service there is not more than the odd Löwenbrau in it.

### Planning the journey

Domiciled in the centre of England, as we are, you lose half a day outward now that the Felixtowe-Zeebrugge ferry service has been cancelled. (Harwich/Rotterdam by Stena Sea Link overnight is good but more expensive). So, we opted for 14:00hrs Dover-Calais and a night stop in a Logis de France hotel on the Franco-Belgian border, booked by fax for ETA 18:00 continental time.

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### make a journey plan... and leave with a full tank

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We find it helpful to make a journey plan giving actual and cumulative distances between main towns, with route numbers and estimated elapsed times. Then we fill in the actual times as we go. Then you can judge whether to 'take it easy' or 'drive like the clappers'. It is also helpful to know from experience your average speed. We allow for 60mph on motorways and 40mph on ordinary roads.

Leave Dover with a full tank of fuel. German petrol is now about 71 pence a litre, French 75 pence, Luxembourg the cheapest. Diesel, of course is much cheaper everywhere than in the UK. Credit cards are now accepted at most German service areas but not most other places. Keep cash in case.

### The journey

We left home at 09:15 on Thursday and, after a pub lunch near Canterbury, booked in at Dover by 13:30. On the road again in Calais by 16:45 continental time we took the autoroute to Dunkirk then the A25 towards Lille. We left at junction 13 looking for signs to Boescheppe (16km). Well, an hour later we did find the Hotel Auberge Du Mont Noir, right out 'in the sticks' and even the locals weren't sure where it was. We were given a warm, comfortable room and moderate dinner, by which time the navigator and I were talking to each other again.

Friday morning 09:00hrs. Temperature minus 6. Foggy. Oh well! Only 522 miles to drive - ETA Wolfersdorf before 19:00hrs. Our route was easy but rather dull and there are prettier alternatives if time allows. By Belgian autoroutes via

Kortrijk, Gent, Antwerp and, touching Holland, down to Aachen by 12:00hrs. At least there are no border controls these days to cause delay. Then the E35 Autobahn to Cologne, always very busy and speed limited to 100-120k. Towards Frankfurt with a lunch stop at Limburg (50 mins). Through Rhineland vineyards, past several beautiful schloss and past Frankfurt where the airport seems to stretch for miles on our right. On to Wurtzburg and through quite hilly and well wooded country to Nurnburg. Then southward to Ingolstadt where Audi cars are made. Unhappily, autobahn traffic on Friday afternoon is just like our M1 and M4, three lanes solid with cars in the

---

### cars in the outside lane... cruising at well over the ton

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outside lane often cruising at well over the ton. Yes, even in the dark and the rain! Well at least they invented ABS. We were more than happy to leave the autobahn 33km south of Ingolstadt and drive quietly through several villages the 16km to Wolfersdorf. The rows of hop poles standing as sentinels along the lanes as the promise of next summer's activities.

The porch lights and drive gates of our hosts were a most welcome haven from a long but uneventful day's driving. Time 18:30, average speed 66mph.

### Time for relaxing

Three days is all too short a time and sight seeing was not really part of our programme. However, Wolfersdorf is only 20km from the lovely old town of Freising. It is a shopping town for the surrounding villages with a market and modern shops. It also has an interesting history at least back to the 12th Century with many old buildings. We visited a museum of local artifacts and the Baroque cathedral with superb frescos typical of Bavarian churches.

On the Monday we booked a conducted tour of the BMW factory in Munich. This on the site of their original factory, produces over 600 cars each day. The well organised tour took over two hour and to me, a car buff, was fascinating.

To anyone planning a longer stay, Munich is a lovely city full of interesting history and culture. Do visit the Deutsches Museum, said to be the largest technical museum in the world. Also Schloss Nymphenberg, Schloss Schleissheim and the Alte Rathause in the Marien Platz.

### Time to return

We regretfully said our goodbyes on Tuesday morning (08:30hrs) taking the same route back with destination a hotel near St Omer (excellent). Journey time with stops: 10 hours; dry, uneventful, but still very cold. Average speed, precisely 66mph!

Wednesday morning saw us supermarket shopping prior to boarding the ferry at 12:00hrs to Dover and, so, home again by late afternoon.

So. Crazy, you say? Well, for around the price of a Budget Winter break in a British hotel, we had enjoyed superb company, good food and vino. We had relived the delights of Bavarian culture and countryside and returned with enough Duty Free until the next time.

Pity about the BMW though. It was the wrong colour.

# Motoring in Europe

## How to win friends and influence people...

*Chairman, Brian Gregory settles in and makes new friends.*

Recently, my new European location resulted in my having occasion to travel by road from Calais to the outskirts of Düsseldorf and back again. The outward journey (as far as the outskirts of Düsseldorf) was accomplished uneventfully enough in some three-and-a-quarter hours. Finding my hotel took another two-and-a-half; but that's another story.

The return journey started at 3:30pm on a Friday afternoon in Ratingen. Having braved the traffic jams on the German Autobahn westbound toward Venlo and Eindhoven in the Netherlands, all went reasonably well until I reached Antwerp at around 5:30pm: to be engulfed in a one hour crawl round the Antwerp ring.

Then it was clog-down (like everyone else) along the E17 toward Ghent, Ostend and ultimately Calais. There did seem to be one significant difference between me and the other (mainly Belgian) drivers on the road that evening: they all seemed to be possessed of a death wish.

While I tried valiantly to preserve my 2 to 3 second following distance, these kamikaze jocks were slipstreaming preceding cars at 150kph [*that's just over 90 for us Brits, Brian!*] prior to Damon Hill style overtaking manoeuvres usually undertaken (perhaps a very apt term, under the circumstances!) without the benefit of any prior indication.

The following day (Saturday) my wife and I received a visit from our landlord, a very pleasant man who now lives and works (for a division of ICI) in Paris. I had arrived in the middle of the visit having picked up the children after school. (Yes, in return for having Wednesday off, French kids attend school on Saturday morning; a crazy system that seems to me to achieve nothing but to deny parents the benefit of a Saturday morning lie-in).

During the conversation our landlord asked how I was settling in. I observed that the only serious difficulty I was encountering was getting used to local driving habits, and went on to recount my experiences of the previous day.

I then noted that in view of the crazy motorway antics of the Belgians, I could almost understand why the French were reputed to have such a low opinion of them; fairly soon after which he and his wife departed.

It was at this point (while removing my wife's hands from around my throat and her knee from my groin) I discovered that my landlord and his wife are Belgian.

*Nice one Brian!*

## UK motorway speed enforcement? - Only if you're British

*Your intrepid Chairman returns to the UK road network.*

My new European rôle recently necessitated a one-day "flying visit" to Teesside. Having surveyed the available travel options, I opted once more to brave the Belgian motorways (no problem as far as Zeebrugge on a weekday afternoon) and to travel overnight Zeebrugge - Hull.

Arriving early in Hull the following morning, the journey along the M62 and on up the A1 and A19 to Teesside was quiet and uneventful.

Having weathered the slings and arrows of discussions with the company's IT Department (apologies to any ABD members of that particular discipline) and delivered the presentation which had been the original reason for my visit, I set off back for Calais via Dover at around 3.30pm.

It was an instructive experience, driving a French-registered Vectra 2.0i 16v the length of the A1 from Boroughbridge to the M11 and on round the M25 and along the M20, cruising (traffic conditions permitting) at a steady 140-145kph [*There you go again, Brian, you mean just under 90!*].

The local traffic enforcement officers were totally uninterested. "Why?", you are naturally asking: "Speed Kills", after all, doesn't it? Well the answers are: "Very Simple" and "No!" respectively.

Taking the questions in order, the reason I was not harassed during my journey is that it is administratively very difficult to collect revenue from foreigner (in contrast to a British national) who contravenes our speeding laws. The cost involved therefore outweighs the benefit to the Exchequer. Our "unfailingly honest" politicians and civil servants are well aware of this fact.

That is the nub of the issue. Our motorway and motorway class dual-carriageway speed limits are set for revenue-generation, not road safety purposes. The revenue motive is at the heart of the systematic and tyrannically oppressive campaign of persecution to which the British motorist has been subject since the passage of the 1991 Road Traffic Act.

It is a scientifically proven fact that unreasonably low speed limits result in a high level of non-compliance - and thus the potential for significant revenue from speeding fines - as well as elevated accident rates compared with roads subject to realistic speed limit policies.

It is our job to ensure that these facts become very widely known: the sooner the British motorist stands firm and refuses to bow down to State intimidation, the better for him and for the country as a whole.

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## Asthma mistreatment responsible for over 1000 deaths annually

Many chronic asthma sufferers are dying unnecessarily through the application of incorrect treatment régimes, it was reported in *The Times* on February 7th of this year.

Asthma was stated to be the only preventable disease for which deaths in Europe and America have risen over the past 20 years.

The Chairman of the Global Initiative for Asthma, Dr Romain Pauwels of the University of Ghent, suggested that 100,000 lives, 60 to 70 percent of the c.150,000 asthma deaths globally per annum, could be prevented if modern treatments were administered.

In the 1980's patients were told only to switch to anti-inflammatory steroid inhalers when bronco-dilators were failing to control the illness. Latest medical opinion suggests that inhaled steroid use prevents lung damage; while bronco-dilators do not.

The Harvard Medical School's Professor Albert Scheffer believes that "inhaled anti-inflammatory drugs offer the best hope for a future free of asthma".

London based consultant chest physician, Dr. Martyn Partridge believes that: "Giving bronco-dilators is like painting over rust or putting a plaster on a boil. It does not treat the underlying condition".

In view of these comments, the alarmist, totally discredited comments of some "environmentalists", seeking to link road traffic emissions to 1000 to 2000 UK deaths per annum might well be better directed at the medical profession in a large proportion of cases.

### PRIVATE MEDICINE

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

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

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

Brian Sealy-Clarke  
11 Glenross House  
107 Belsize Road  
London  
NW6 4AJ

Tel 0171-624 2971

For further information.

## Fuel cell technology promises clean green cars by 2010

German company, Daimler-Benz has developed a fuel cell powered MPV which can reach 70 mph, and predicts a mass produced version by 2010.

The system works by allowing hydrogen, sourced either from a hydrogen rich fuel or in pure compressed form, to mix with oxygen from the air. The chemical reaction releases energy, and, if pure hydrogen is used, the only "exhaust" product is water vapour.

General Motors, BMW and Mazda are known to have been working on similar systems, but the main barrier to production at present is cost.

## Smoking - the real cause of breathing difficulties?

Research at Bristol University, under the direction of paediatrician, Professor Jean Golding indicates that smoking by pregnant mothers may lie behind breathing difficulties experienced by their children. The study covers 14,000 mothers whose children are now aged 4 to 5 years.

Children of mothers who smoked throughout pregnancy had a 50% risk of experiencing breathing difficulties in their first six months. If the mother gave up by the 34th week of pregnancy the risk reduced to 47%. And if she gave up by the 20th week the risk improved to 40%. This compares with an overall risk of 20%.

The message of the researchers was that pregnant women should give up smoking as soon as possible, but that it was never too late to give up. The research also provides further evidence that breathing difficulties in children should not be attributed automatically to vehicle emissions.

Conclusive research findings showing that there is no statistical correlation between levels of vehicle emissions and breathing difficulties such as asthma have previously been reported in these pages.

Yet we still hear "environmentalists" and, worse, supposedly informed and objective journalists, perpetuating the myth that "cars cause asthma". Be sure to write to or telephone any journal, radio programme or TV broadcast which ignores the facts.

## Traffic News

### Support grows

Some interesting correspondence appeared recently in *The Daily Telegraph*, Saturday Motoring section. A Reading shopkeeper wrote to complain that the local council's anti-car attitude was damaging his trade. The *Telegraph's* columnist, "Honest John" followed the letter with some brisk remarks of his own.

In another recent edition, advanced driving instructor, Paul Ripley wrote: "the primary purpose of speed cameras should be to increase safety rather than prosecute speeders to bring in revenue".

Yet another, well-balanced article on children and road safety (where Britain has a poor record: 17th in the international league table despite being 2nd in overall road safety) explored the causes of accidents involving children. Award-winning writer, Andrew English referred to the "simplistic" attribution of speed as *the* cause of accidents. He referred to the expense (£14m so far) of the "Speed kills" campaign and bemoaned the lack of proper identification and recording of the causes of accidents.

Familiar themes, which it is good to see receiving objective treatment in the mainstream press.

### Watch this space

*Are there any budding cartoonists out there?*

*The Editor seeks a contributor who could pen the occasional sketch to add a little light relief to this publication.*

## Association's Annual General Meeting

The ABD's Annual meeting was held at the Plough, just by the M25/M40 interchange at Denham Village, Buckinghamshire, on Saturday 13th April. We were particularly pleased to welcome a number of new faces to the meeting, and do hope that many more members will feel able to come in the future...your views count!

Jonathan Newby-Robson's appointment as Company Secretary was confirmed, and Steve Dommett was appointed a Director of Pro-Motor. Our auditors will continue to be Maxwells of Bridgwater, Somerset.

A move to increase our subscription to £15 from January 1997 was approved - the first rise since the Association of British Drivers was formed in 1992 - but the fee will be held at £12 for those paying by Standing Order.

Many members actually pay more - in some cases considerably more - than the minimum subscription. In addition, many expenses are not claimed by active members, but fighting a campaign *is* an expensive business, so if you can help us by providing money or expertise your contribution will be welcomed.

It was acknowledged that the fight to protect our freedom to drive our cars will be long and hard. We must carry on. We are here for the long haul....

### Date of next meeting

**Note for your diary: Our next meeting will be at The Plough, Denham on Saturday August 17th at 10.30 am.**

## ABD in the media ...

### ... BBC2 Top Gear

Julian Rowden, ABD environmental spokesman, appeared on BBC2 TV's Top Gear on Thursday 14th March 1996. Julian was interviewed by Jeremy Clarkson and was given the opportunity to put forward the rational case for the motor car. The programme dispelled many of the myths of impending environmental doom put about by the green movement, anti-car anti-freedom local authorities and Government officials. Jeremy Clarkson made many of the points which we cover in our newsletters, and we are very grateful to him for inviting us to take part in the programme. Top Gear has not only been broadcast nationwide, but also beamed across Europe by satellite.

### ... Meridian TV

Julian also took part in the Meridian Audit - The Transport Debate, which viewers in the south of England could see on Wednesday the 8th May on Meridian TV, the ITV contractor for the South East of England.

The discussion was hosted by Roger Bolton and dealt with the issue of gridlock and possible solutions to the problem. Julian had several opportunities to put across the pro-car case, particularly highlighting the freedom of choice angle. In fact he well and truly upstaged representatives of some of the other more senior motoring organisations present! Again, we express our sincere thanks to Roger Bolton and his team for their kind invitation.

### ... Auto Express

A press release issued by Chairman, Brian Gregory was used by Auto Express in March in a feature on speed and safety. Paul Hemingway, ABD spokesman for Road and Traffic issues has been asked to write a piece for a forthcoming article on "traffic calming".

## NMA - kindred spirits

ABD senior members have made contact with the National Motorists Association (of the USA). The NMA is the organisation that successfully campaigned against the US National Federal Speed Limit (55mph). OTR readers will be aware the federal speed limit was scrapped last year leaving the US states free to set their own limits for the first time since the early seventies. Many of the mid west states have subsequently raised their state limits to 75mph and Montana has abolished the limit altogether during daylight hours.

The NMA is ten years older than the ABD and much bigger. The NMA can be checked out on the internet on [www.motorists.com](http://www.motorists.com). We in the ABD have developed our ideas and our organisation completely unaware of the existence of the NMA until now. ABD web surfers will be astounded by the similarity in the rhetoric and general approach taken by the NMA in comparison with ABD. Uncanny!

The NMA can be contacted by snail mail at the address below:

U.S. Mail:  
National Motorists Association  
6678 Pertzborn Road  
Dane WI  
53529-9989

## Action checklist

Members often ask, "What can I do to help?" Here are a few ideas:

- Write personally to your MP.
- Write to your local press to protest about anti-car proposals by local government.
- AA and RAC members should write to these organisations asking what they are doing to support their members' interests and to combat anti-car propaganda.
- Write to the BBC and other national media whenever emotive, anti-car sentiments are presented as "fact".
- Enrol more members! You should find a membership form inside this issue. 'Phone or write to the Secretary for more copies.
- Do you have skills, or access to facilities, which could help run the ABD? Write or 'phone to let us know.

**Apathy is our main enemy. Many news media present anti-car viewpoints as though they are held by the vast majority of citizens. We need to show that this is not the case!**

**Do not think that your actions will be a waste of time. There is already evidence that Government and organisations like the AA are taking our views on board.**

**Keep up the pressure!**

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## Pro-Motor News

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### Chairman on the move

ABD Chairman, Brian Gregory has completed his relocation to Calais, France. This is a business-related move and he retains full involvement with the Association. Indeed his experiences driving regularly on the roads of Europe will no doubt enable him to comment with even greater authority on the UK motoring scene. Details of his new address are given in the ABD information panel on page 2.

His move was a key factor in the committee's decision to hold regular meetings at Denham, Buckinghamshire instead of Derby. Details of the first meeting at the new venue are given elsewhere. We do hope to welcome members for whom these meetings are now much more convenient.

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### New ABD 'phone no: 07000 781544

Brian's move was also a catalyst in the decision to obtain a national telephone number for the Association. The new telephone number is: 07000 781544.

Using this number you should be able to contact an ABD committee member at any reasonable time. However, as your committee all have to earn a crust you may sometimes get an answering machine! Please leave a message and we'll get back to you asap.

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### Electronic mail

An increasing number of members have an electronic mail address and your Committee already find this an excellent way to keep in touch.

Disseminating urgent information to members by e-mail is currently under consideration. If you would like to be contacted in this way please let us know your e-mail address.

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### ABD to attend Goodwood Festival of Speed

The Association has taken a stand at the Goodwood Festival of Speed, to be held at Goodwood near Chichester, West Sussex at the weekend of Friday 21st, Saturday 22nd and Sunday 23rd June 1996. Gates open at

9.00am daily. ABD members will enjoy an excellent day out and will be able to meet committee members on the stand.

Tickets are available in advance, by telephoning 01243 787766, and can be paid for by credit card. Book before 7th June for advance ticket offer, full prices will be charged after this date.

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### Visit us on stand 210

The Goodwood Festival of Speed is now Europe's most successful historic motor racing event and a great social occasion on the motor sport calendar. So it promises to be a memorable weekend.

This year, the Festival features the "dream teams" of racing history. You will see Ferraris, Mercedes-Benz, BRM, Porsche, Aston Martin, Maserati, Alfa Romeo, Ford and Matra, amongst others.

Some indication of the excitement of the event is given by the following quote from Martin Brundle: "You're going through an avenue of trees and the echo is quite amazing. Halfway up the hill there's a very quick chicane and you focus on a big flint wall. You have to watch your step through there."

**Do come along and see us, as well...!**

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## Three Cheers!

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### Triumph over continuous licensing

#### a story of successful campaigning

In mid 1994, the Government announced its intention that Vehicle Excise Duty would be raised continuously on all registered vehicles to prevent evasion, which they estimated was costing £160m per year. This, of course, would have no effect on most people, but those enthusiasts with several cars off the road either stored or dismantled for restoration would be financially crippled.

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#### a storm of protest was unleashed

The classic car clubs, supported by their section of the motoring press, unleashed a storm of protest which the politicians responded to by passing the buck to the DVLA at Swansea. A consultation document was duly produced suggesting a complex process for issuing off road licences for fixed periods for a small admin fee. Eventually, this, too, was scrapped in favour of the system many in the classic car movement had

suggested in the first place - if your tax runs out or you cash the disc in, you have to sign a declaration that your car is off road. Complete victory - and they gave us a present as well - no Road Tax (sorry, Excise Duty) on cars over 25 years old. Howls of protest from the eco-terrorists, delight for a few people who enjoy a few miles a year in old cars.

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#### organised and determined lobbying works

The message is clear - organised and determined lobbying works. We live in a democracy and if a reasoned argument is put forward by enough people "they" have to listen.

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### Toll Co's quit

Excellent news broke in February and March, that half of the consortia who were to have taken part in tolling trials on the M3 had backed out of the project. This led to the DoT cancelling the trials planned for summer 1996. (*Details inside.*)

However, the Department intends that trials *will* start in spring 1997. A spokesman maintained that in any case the consortia had

only pulled out of the trials due to development problems, they have not left the project completely.

*Perhaps only half a cheer.*

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### Camera evidence inadmissible

Motorists prosecuted on the basis of enhanced photographic evidence will be able to challenge their convictions following a recent landmark case. Magistrates ruled that photographs taken by a camera on the M25 in Surrey which had been enhanced by operators in order to read an otherwise indecipherable number plate could not be admitted in evidence. The solicitor acting for the defendant, a businessman who had been prosecuted for travelling at 70 mph in 60 mph zone, was reported to have said, "It is like taking a statement and tidying it up later because you don't like it. The final picture looked like a box brownie." The charge against the businessman was dismissed. Following the judgement, a spokesman for the RAC was reported to have said:

**"These pictures are now of dubious legal value, so every single motorist fined for a camera speeding offence is entitled to ask for a review of their case."**