

SIX POINT SIX

December 2011



Pat Corps – Vicky de Vries - Brian Davies –Barry Alexander – John Holmes - Colin Turner - Jane Wood – Robert Murray – Ron O’Hare – Clive Purrett – Rob Wilson – Heather McCabe



***The Colchester Group of
Advanced Motorists***

affiliated to The Institute of Advanced Motorists





EDITORS NOTES:

Welcome to the October edition of Six Point Six of 2011

Just a reminder that if anyone has any motoring stories they wish to include in the magazine; please E mail articles to me or any other committee member who can forward it for you.

If anyone requires any IAM merchandise please contact Ron O'Hare

A WARM WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS

Benjamin Conway

FRONT PAGE PICTURE

The approach to North Station roundabout, one of the pictures put forward for the revised website

WHY IS IT CALLED 6.6?

Did you know at 30 miles per hour you are travelling at 6.6m every half a second? This means if it takes you half a second to react, you have travelled another 6.6m – that is why **planning is better than reacting**. 6.6 magazine's title reminds readers of this fact.

There are a couple of changes to the training nights, December's is now severe weather and car preparation, brought forward from February as it is more relevant and the item on roundabouts is now February. One piece of good news is that we seem to have the small hall for the quiz night, last years in the council chamber was quite cosy

Driving to London a few times in the last few weeks it is becoming very noticeable that a large number of people are all driving about the same speed no doubt obeying the 70 mph speed limit but also conserving fuel.

The Colchester Group of Advanced Motorists is a Registered Charity - No. 1049474 and is affiliated to the Institute of Advanced Motorists Ltd.

DATA PROTECTION ACT 1998: Colchester Group of Advanced Motorists advises members that their personal details; name, address and telephone number, are held on computer. Members are assured that these details will be used only for Group administration purposes and will not be passed on to any third party.

The views and opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the individual writers and do not necessarily reflect those of the Colchester Group of Advanced Motorists or the Institute of Advanced Motorists Ltd.

Although I may be going under half a mile an hour faster when eventually catching them up there is a very long queue to overtake.

I also had a long drive to Teeside and back recently, going up during the week, as you would expect took at least half an hour longer than the return on Sunday. The number of cars was similar but the big difference and where the time was lost was the lorries overtaking each other

John Holmes
Editor





MEETING REPORTS

OCTOBER

October's meeting was held in the Council Room with no refreshments or raffle as conditions are cramped. We had a de-brief on the manoeuvres which Pat had devised for the August meeting and agreed that it should be repeated in the near future. We then watched a DVD on the hazard perception test that learner drivers have to take alongside their theory test before they can put in for their practical test. The problem we found was that as advanced drivers we were spotting the hazards far too early and thus missing out on the points. We agreed that a learner driver would find the test difficult. It was an interesting exercise, as the majority of the people present had not seen the hazard perception test before, so we all learned something!

Vicky de Vries

NOVEMBER

What's the difference between an altered vehicle with a welded chassis and one with a bolted on bit? At the meeting where Julian Fincham-Jacques explained the inner workings of the DVLA, his expertise was evident. He gave useful insights into the future of the licence disc, problems with vehicles on trailers, and why Swansea is not the only DVLA shop in town: Ipswich DVLA has much to recommend it too.

By the way, a vehicle with a welded chassis requires a "Q" plate for sure.

Jonathan presented us with lots of impressive statistics. He showed us what an excellent job the DVLA does, and gave examples of some of the tricky enquiries his department fields from the public. He also revealed the disturbing extent of criminal activity associated with vehicles, and how the DVLA and others are tackling this. There were some lively questions and answers towards the end of the presentation, which showed that he has to return to us again next year with further interesting news and information.

Jonathan told us that the DVLA aim to return driving licences and vehicle registration details within three days. This IAM member, having just moved house, can confirm that this really happens.

Clive Purrett



Julia Fincham-jacques advising on DVLA's key purpose



Heather McCabe, our new membership secretary receiving her certificate from Pat for passing the test



Clive Purrett, our new secretary receiving his certificate for passing the test



Rob Wilson receiving his certificate from Pat for passing the test.

Rob is our new Webmaster and committee member; who is busily creating a new website. We will be featuring our new website in the next edition of this newsletter



DRIVE ON -A SEMINAR FOR THE OLDER DRIVER

November 3rd 2011

This seminar was held in Acton for members of the University of the Third Age (U3A), Sudbury Branch. The presenter was Colin Muddimer, a member of our IAM Group. We, the committee were asked if someone would attend so I went along to see what it was all about. I was provided with a name badge and took a seat at the back as part of the audience.

Various teaching methods were used, not only 'chalk and talk' but also participatory exercises both individual and in small groups utilising a work- booklet designed by Colin. There was a relaxed atmosphere with opportunities to test our reactions and our eyesight.

The general emphasis of the seminar dealt with the potential problems encountered by older drivers such as deteriorating vision, slower reactions, and effects of medication and loss of confidence. A wide range of topics were covered including observation, roundabouts, speed, and signalling.

The seminar, which lasted three hours, was well received by the audience five of whom approached me afterwards to learn more about the IAM.



SIX POINT SIX



A STICK ON BADGE IS SO MUCH EASIER



Quick Quick! Pliers! Anything! Got to get rid of this institute of advanced motorists' badge before the tow truck arrives!

Courtesy of Classic car buyer magazine



THERE IS A CURE FOR THE SUMMERTIME BLUES

The IAM is calling for the end of British summer time because accident rates increase when the clocks go back in October. Research shows that changing the system could save up to 80 lives each year on Britains roads.²

An IAM poll of more than 2000 motorists last winter found that 65 per cent would support a double summertime system moving the clocks forward by one hour throughout the entire year, while still putting the clocks forward in spring and back in autumn.

There are 17 percent more pedestrian road casualties in November than the monthly average. This sharp increase is likely to be partly attributed to the winter clock change*.

There is also an increase in the number of motorcycle accidents in November 41.8 per cent higher than the normal monthly average and 73 per cent higher than in February*¹. Numbers of casualties stay relatively constant but the rate per billion miles dramatically increases in autumn.

IAM chief executive Simon Best said: "Changing the current summertime system would save lives. Children especially are more likely to be out and about after school and an extra hour of daylight will make them more visible.

We want to see a three-year trial of the new daylight system. If the trial period proves the new daylight hours to be a disadvantage, it is clear that the current system should be reinstated. However with convincing evidence of the potential benefits, it seems only right that we pilot a new system."



EUROPEAN MOT RULES A ROAD SAFETY DANGER

The IAM's latest poll shows that 60 per cent of motorists think that a car's first MOT should continue to be carried out after three years. Twenty-nine per cent think we should move to a European system.

A new European Union directive sets down a minimum requirement for a vehicle roadworthiness test – the MOT – with the first test when the car is no more than four years old, and subsequent tests no more than two years apart. This is known as the four-two-two cycle. Most of Europe uses the directive's minimum requirements of testing.

The UK has a more stringent cycle of testing – the first test when the car is three years old, followed by annual testing – a three-one-one cycle. Despite this, 27 per cent of three year old cars in the UK fail their first MOT test*. In France, where the test cycle is four-two-two, six per cent of cars fail the first test at four years old.

People are generally confident about the MOT test, with 63 per cent believing the test will always pick up potential dangers with the car or bike. Thirty per cent believe garages are not independent enough to conduct MOTs, 26 per cent think that garages deliberately find things wrong in order to get money out of them, and 40 per cent think there is no consistency between garages in the way they do the test. The IAM believes these concerns should be addressed through a review before the government considers any changes to MOT testing.

IAM chief executive Simon Best said: "In a time when people are struggling financially, the MOT seems to be one cost they are happy to pay. The IAM is wary of abandoning our well-established and accepted cycle of MOT testing. The poll suggests that most motorists are happy with it.

"But the question needs to be asked, why are so many cars in the UK failing at only three years, and why does France have a much better pass rate at four years? Before any change to the system, the government should commission a review to assure motorists that MOT tests are safe, reliable and consistent. The test should be for the benefit of road safety – not the garages that carry it out."



CHANGES TO LONDON'S LOW EMISSION ZONE

Drivers of older diesel engined camper vans and a host of other older vehicles including minibuses face having to spend thousands of pounds on new exhaust systems if they want to drive in London from January.

The changes to London's low emission zone were announced by Transport for London (TfL) back in 2007. Until now TfL's Low Emission Zone has restricted only those driving bigger, mostly commercial vehicles into London but from 3rd January 2012 it will also affect the owners of larger vans campers and minibuses first registered before January 2002. Larger motorhomes first registered before 2006 will also have to comply. The rules affect diesel engines not petrol and exclude any vehicle first registered before 1973 as they are considered to be historic which means the iconic early VW camper is in the clear

If you have such a vehicle you will need to have a particulate filter added to the exhaust system or pay £100 or £200 charge for every day you drive in London, if you don't you will incur a £500 fine.

Vehicles affected include commercial vehicles and horseboxes between 1.205 and 3.5 tonnes gross vehicle weight, camper vans above 2.5 tonnes and minibuses with more than eight passenger seats. It is aimed at vehicles deemed not to meet the Euro 3 emission levels that came into force between 2001 and 2002. The larger vehicles registered before 1st October 2006 are also affected they are aimed at the Euro 4 compliant engines.

The zone includes almost all of greater London, most urban areas within the M25 including Heathrow airport but not the M25 itself. Owners of older motorhomes who live outside London will not be able to visit the two main London campsites at Crystal Palace or Lee Valley without paying the £100/£200 charge.

Many camper van owners are querying why they have been included in the rules when taxi drivers are excluded. Most camper vans are only driven a few thousand miles each year. Research carried out in 2010 found that London taxis are responsible for more than a fifth of all particulate pollution in central London. Yet under TfL rules existing black cabs don't require particulate filters and will only be taken off the road after 15 years.



HOW TO MAKE YOUR WAY THROUGH THE FOG

IAM chief examiner Peter Rodger said: “Fog is one of the most difficult conditions to drive in. Ensure you are prepared so that you can carry out your journey safely, and allow lots of extra time for the trip.”

Rodger offers tips for driving in the fog:

- Before setting off, clean your windows and windscreen and ensure all your lights are working.
- When you're ready to leave, switch on the dipped headlights. Use front and rear fog lights if visibility is less than 100 metres.
- Use your windscreen wipers on an intermittent setting to clear condensation.
- Switch the heater or air conditioning on and leave it running to keep the inside of the glass clear.
- Slow down and keep enough distance between yourself and the vehicle in front make sure you can stop safely within the distance you can see clearly.
- Fog is not the same density all the time – it may get thicker, slow down if it does.
- Brake gently but earlier than usual so your brake lights warn drivers behind.
- At junctions, wind the window down and listen for traffic.
- Take high-viz clothing in case you have to leave the car.

Rodger said: “Don't underestimate the effect fog has on your visibility. Adjusting your driving to the weather conditions will help you to become a better driver.”

To help drivers stay safe this winter, the IAM has launched a new website, drivingadvice.org.uk, with traffic updates, weather forecasts and tips on how to drive safely in winter.

Tips cover rain, snow, ice, fog and wind – everything you can expect in a typically unpredictable British winter.



SOME IAM WINTER TIPS

PREPARE YOUR CAR FOR WINTER

IAM chief examiner Peter Rodger said: “Now is the time to give your car a health-check before winter conditions take their toll. Bad weather can strike quickly, and more severely than you expect, so it’s really important to be ready.”

Mr Rodger suggests some easy tips to prepare your car for winter:

1. In a UK winter you are more likely to encounter wind and rain, so make sure your windscreen wipers are in good condition and that you clean the inside of the windscreen regularly
2. Do a proper check of your vehicle - particularly the tyres - top up your washer fluid and make sure last year’s ice scraper and de-icer are up to the job
3. The legal minimum for tyre tread in the UK is 1.6mm, but for optimum safety start looking for replacements if the depth is below 3mm
4. Check all your lights
5. Pack an emergency kit, including a warm coat, high visibility jacket, some food and water, a good pair of boots, de-icer and scraper, a torch, a spade and a mobile phone with a well-charged battery. Remember to store your emergency breakdown number.

Mr Rodger said: “Many roads are still pot-holed after last winter so having a well-maintained car, and paying particular attention to your tyres, is going to be extremely important.”

HOW TO START YOUR CAR IN THE BLEAK MIDWINTER

IAM chief examiner Peter Rodger said: “If the weather is really bad, think about whether you really need to make the journey before travelling. If so, ensure you take out the time to prepare your car for your trip.”

Rodger offers six tips to avoid seasonal car problems:

1. Don’t switch on the engine until you are ready to go; a modern car does not need to warm the engine up. Do not put the engine on if you need to run the heater/demister before you move.
2. Clean your windows inside and out – a dirty screen will cause the windows to mist up much quicker.
3. Clean any snow off the car’s roof and bonnet as well as windows.
4. When you get in the car make sure all the extra electrical things are turned off before you try starting it (lights, heater, etc).



5. When you're ready to go, switch the engine and heater on (air con if you have fitted, it keeps the screen dry) so that the windows don't steam up.
6. Use the "ice" setting if your car has one.

Rodger said: "Spending time to prepare your car for the weather conditions is important so that it copes well throughout your journey. Now is the time to check the battery and that your screen wash is the antifreeze version

ACCELERATE SAFELY THIS WINTER

IAM chief examiner Peter Rodger said: "Power and acceleration are no good without control. This is especially true when drivers are faced with cold, wet and slippery conditions."

Rodger has six tips to ensure you remain in control:

1. Be aware of the way your car applies power to the road. As acceleration shifts weight from the front to the back of the car, the wheels of front wheel-drive cars will spin more easily in wet and icy conditions.
2. Accelerate smoothly and maintain a safe speed particularly in wintery conditions – remember the speed limit may be too fast especially when conditions are poor.
3. Make sure you're in the correct gear before overtaking and use as much power as is safe bearing in mind your car's abilities, the speed limit and the road conditions.
4. Changing your use of the accelerator is a good way of slowing down, without ever needing to touch the brake. When you can see traffic slowing up ahead, ease off the power in advance instead of driving up behind it and breaking as you arrive. This will reduce the amount you have to brake and save fuel.
5. When approaching bends, reduce your speed, but ensure you maintain a constant speed and a smooth line through the bend. As you drive out of the bend, you can increase the power. If it's slippery, leave accelerating until you are straightened up properly.
6. On level ground or downhill you should be able to start from stationery without using the accelerator in a modern car – just lift the clutch carefully, and then very gently apply power once you are moving. When the roads are icy, this can be a useful technique.



HISTORIC VEHICLES MOT EXEMPTION REVIEW

As part of the Reducing Regulation agenda, the Government is proposing to exempt pre-1960 manufactured vehicles from statutory MoT test

We consider vehicles manufactured prior to 1 January 1960 to be of historic interest. The purpose of this consultation is to invite views on proposals to exempt these vehicles from the statutory MoT test in GB.

The estimated 162,000 pre-1960 manufactured vehicles make up less than 0.5% of the approximately 32.7m licensed vehicles in GB that are required by law to have a MoT test. Two-thirds of pre-1960 manufactured vehicles are driven less than 500 miles a year.

Pre-1960 manufactured vehicles are largely well maintained by their owners. The initial MoT test failure rate for these vehicles in 2009 was less than 10%, whilst the initial MoT test failure rate for post-1960 manufactured vehicles was over 30%.

The Goods Vehicles (Plating and Testing) Regulations 1988 already exempts unladen pre-1960 manufactured Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs) from the roadworthiness test.

Option 1

Exempt all pre-1960 manufactured vehicles from the statutory MoT test as allowed under Article 4(2) of the EU Directive 2009/40/EC. The inclusion of all categories of vehicles will make the MoT test requirement match the unladen pre-1960 manufactured HGVs, which are already exempted from the roadworthiness test under The Goods Vehicles (Plating and Testing) Regulations 1988. This is our preferred option.

Option 2

Exempt all pre-1945 manufactured vehicles from the statutory MoT test as allowed under Article 4(2) of the EU Directive 2009/40/EC. Under this option, vehicles manufactured between 1945 and 1959 will still be subject to statutory MoT test.

Option 3

Exempt all pre-1920 manufactured vehicles from the MoT test as allowed under Article 4(2) of the EU Directive 2009/40/EC. Under this option, Vehicles manufactured between 1920 and 1959 will still be subject to statutory MoT test.

The consultation period began on 3 November 2011 and will run for 12 weeks concluding on 26 January 2012.



ASSOCIATE INFORMATION

As soon as there is an observer free to take you on, you will be contacted and your first drive arranged. While you are waiting to start the practical side, please read your copy of PASS YOUR ADVANCED DRIVING TEST. This will mean that when you do start you'll have a good idea of what's involved. If you want to ask any questions please feel free to give me a call, otherwise I am usually at the group meetings and will be happy to talk to you there.

Would all associates taking the test please let their observer know what the test date is and let them and/or myself know the result. You may think HQ Test Examiners keep us informed, but it is not part of their brief so we will not know otherwise. Many thanks.

Could all Observers notify the membership secretary when they first take their Associate on a drive.

Our list of Observers

Pat Corps *	Louisa Davenall
Ralph Young*	Vicky de-Vries*
Brian Davies	Sarah Woodcock

*DENOTES SENIOR OBSERVER

CONGRATULATIONS

Rob Wilson passed his test on 1st October his Observer was Vicky

Marc Buckingham passed his test his Observer was Ralf

Brian Davies
Associate co-ordinator





CONTACT DETAILS

Colchester Group of Advanced Motorists - President: Ralph Young

COMMITTEE			
<u>Chairman</u> Pat Corps			
<u>Deputy Chair</u> Vicky de-Vries			
<u>Honorary secretary</u> Clive Purrett			
<u>Membership secretary</u> Heather McCabe (from end October)			
<u>Honorary Treasurer</u> Robert Murray			
<u>Associate/Observer</u> <u>Coordinator</u> Brian Davies			



SIX POINT SIX



<p><u>Webmaster</u> Rob Wilson</p>			
<p><u>Newsletter Compiler</u> John Holmes</p>			
<p><u>Events co-ordinator</u> Barry Alexander</p>			
<p><u>Minutes secretary</u> Colin Turner</p>			
<p><u>Catering</u> Jane Wood</p>			
<p><u>Shop & Raffle</u> Ronald O'Hare</p>			



EVENTS

All evenings are for all members and associates these will be held at:

Marks Tey Parish Hall
Old London Road.
Marks Tey,
Colchester
CO6 1EN

*All meetings will be held in the small room
except April and June which will be held in
the council chamber*

Associates looking to take their advanced test must attend training evenings. It is also important that those of you who have already passed your advanced test attend, to further your skills as an advanced driver

2011	
December 20th	Group meeting training night on severe weather and car preparation followed by Observers training
2012	
January 17th	Group meeting – Quiz Night
February 21st	Group meeting training night on local roundabouts followed by Observers training
March 20th	Group meeting - Speed Awareness presented by Tony Clarke, Regional Group Coordinator (Region 7 – South)
April 17th	Group meeting training night on the system followed by Observer training
May 15th	Group Meeting – More stories from the DVLA presented by Julian Fincham-Jacques
June 19th	Group meeting training night on practical manoeuvring followed by Observer training
July 17th	Group Meeting - a talk by Bob Gosden (Ipswich IAM examiner) on the Advanced test preceded by the AGM and finished off with fish and chips.

All meetings start with tea and coffee

Training nights start at 7:30 and may include a raffle; followed by Observer training at 9:00

Other night's doors open at 7:30 for an 8:00 start and include the buying of raffle tickets