

# SIX P O I N T SIX

October 2012

website - <http://www.colchester-iam.org/>



***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 2012, this includes reports on wheel clamping biofuels and the drop in petrol consumption..

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**

**FRONT PAGE PICTURE**

Pat explaining some of the finer details of manoeuvring with a trailer

**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.

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

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**John Holmes**

**Editor**



## MEETING REPORTS

### August

Our Chairman, Pat Corps shared his motoring knowledge about towing with the group. He started by illustrating with diagrams how to reverse with a trailer and the direction the trailer would take in relationship to the front wheels of the vehicle, and the importance of knowing your vehicle size. We then looked at the different methods of towing, either with a rope, a metal bar which can be spring loaded, or a conventional towing hitch.



We then went into the car park for a practical demonstration by Pat with his Land Rover attached to a trailer. First he reversed to the left out of the parking space making sure the trailer did not jack-knife, he explained that very slow speed was essential because there was a very small margin of error between the trailer turning and jack-knifing once your wheels are on full lock. He then travelled around the car park and carried out a perfect reverse park into the bays, he did have to pull forward at one stage but this was due to the long wheel base of the Land Rover.

# SIX POINT SIX



Back inside we discussed important issues of towing. The nose weight of the trailer/caravan is very important to achieve the correct balance between towing vehicle and trailer, also loading the trailer to balance it correctly. Other factors were discussed such as breakaway cables, how the ball of the tow hitch applied the trailer brakes, use of towing mirrors, trailer electrical connectors and speed limits when towing.





As someone who does not tow on a regular basis I learnt a lot of useful information from the meeting and I am sure that other group members found it very informative as well.



Robert Jezierski

### September

The planned talk to the group on tyres and safety by Christine Joyce of Tyresafe was postponed to another month due to unforeseen circumstances. Pat had to step in at short notice and decided that it had been a long while since the group had seen the police training video Road Craft. After a few technical hitches with the laptop the video played. It showed us how the police use the system to develop their driving skills. They started off with theory training in the class room which was then practiced on the road with an instructor and at the end of the course a test. At the end of the video we had a short question and answer session on what we had seen followed by the raffle draw.



Robert Jezierski



## **DRIVERS NEED MORE INFORMATION ON THEIR PARKING RIGHTS**

Ninety-one per cent of people are unaware that from 1 October they are required, by law, to provide details of the driver of any vehicle wrongfully parked on private land, according to the IAM's latest poll.

Half of motorists are uninformed that consumer rights are different depending on whether a parking ticket is issued by a private company or by a local council.

Knowledge of other changes is also scarce – 89 per cent of people are not aware of the imminent launch of an independent appeals service for those who wish to contest tickets for parking on private land.

Over 50 per cent of people don't know that the DVLA is legally obliged to sell individuals' vehicle license information to private parking operators to allow them to chase unpaid tickets. 72 per cent of respondents think that this is unacceptable, and many believe that it should be in breach of the Data Protection Act.

From 1 October, wheel clamping by private companies will become illegal in England and Wales, yet 33 per cent of people are uninformed of the details of this change and 35 per cent are completely oblivious to it. 91 per cent of people think that this is a positive change.

Other results show:

- 89 per cent of people think it is unfair that there is no limit on how much a private car park can charge for a civil penalty parking ticket
- According to those who have received a parking ticket (10 per cent of respondents), the most likely reason for it being issued is overstaying the time paid for or overstaying the free parking period
- Of those who have been issued a ticket, 50 per cent thought it was unfair, most of whom felt so because they were not aware that they were in an area that required payment
- 60 per cent of people paid their ticket
- Generally, people find parking tickets and the procedures associated with them on private land unfair and unacceptable. Responses show that the majority of people are uninformed about the law surrounding these parking tickets and particularly about the changes due to take place in October.
- IAM chief executive Simon Best said: "The changes this month have been put in place for the benefit of motorists but they need to know who they can turn if



they feel that they have been treated unfairly. The new system has potential to deliver a fair parking system, but only if the industry ensures that the spirit of the legislation is enacted as well as the detail. Any remaining rogue operators must be dealt with swiftly.

- “Road users need to understand the rules of parking in order to abide by them, and industry and government information about the new system is woefully inadequate.”



## **DRINK DRIVING AND CUTS A COCKTAIL FOR DISASTER?**

The IAM is calling for drink-drive campaigns and enforcement to be a top priority after detailed figures released by the government in September showed increases in drink related deaths and injuries on Britain's roads.

In 2011, 280 people were killed in drink-drive accidents - 12 per cent more than the 250 in 2010. In the same period, the total number of road deaths increased from 1,850 in 2010 to 1,901 in 2011, an increase of 51 fatalities. This means that more than half of the increase in road deaths were alcohol related (30 deaths).

Other drink-driving figures for 2011 are:

- 9,990 reported road casualties occurred when someone was driving whilst over the legal limit.
- 1,570 people were killed or seriously injured in drink-drive accidents, an increase of five per cent.
- Seventy per cent of pedestrians and 71 per cent of cyclists killed after 10pm were over the drink-drive limit. Fifty-eight per cent of car drivers and 43 per cent of motorcyclists killed after 10pm were over the limit.
- 17-24 year-olds are more than twice as likely to be involved in a drink-drive accident as any other age group. They are twenty times more likely to be a drink-drive accident than someone over 60.
- Of the 13,000 drivers found to be over the legal limit after a crash, 40 per cent were more than twice the limit; In the same year, the number of convictions for drink-driving fell to 54,900 from 58,700 in 2010, a decrease of 3,800.

IAM chief executive Simon Best said: "With fewer traffic police on the road, fewer convictions and more deaths, it is clear that it's not just Scotland that needs to have a broad debate on drink-driving.

"With 'beat the breathalyser' pills legally on sale in the UK and the disproportionate number of younger drink-drivers, I'm worried that drink-driving may be losing its stigma.

"We must act now to stop last year's increase becoming a trend through the use of higher profile drink-driving campaigns - and not just at Christmas - backed up with enforcement targeting those drivers who cause death and injury, as well as the distress and grief of friends and family. Drivers need to know that they will get caught if they mix alcohol and driving."





## **IAM RESPONSE TO INCREASE IN ROAD CASUALTIES**

The Department for Transport statistics published 27th September confirm that 1,901 people were killed in road accidents in 2011, an increase of three per cent on 2010 figures.

23, 122 people were seriously injured, an increase of two per cent on 2010 figures.

The numbers for fatalities for bus and coach occupants fell by 22 per cent, 10 per cent for motorcyclists and four per cent for cyclists.

Fatalities for car occupants rose by six per cent and for pedestrians by 12 per cent.

The provisional estimated number of people killed in drink-drive accidents increased by 30 to 280. The provisional number of killed and seriously injured because of drink driving rose by five per cent to 1570.

Drink driving accounts for more than half of the increase in road deaths. Of the increase of 51 people killed on our roads, 30 can be attributed to drink driving.

Failing to look properly was the most significant contributory factor, reported in 42 per cent of all accidents.

IAM director of policy and research Neil Greig said: "The increase in deaths and serious injuries because of drink driving is absolutely shocking. It accounts for more than half of the increase in road deaths. In 2013, we must see a drink driving education campaign, backed up with enforcement, to put an end to these completely unnecessary deaths.

"With last year's surprising increase in deaths and early indications from 2012 that a trend could be developing, the IAM urges the new road safety minister to make road safety his absolute priority.

"Britain has been at the top of the world road safety league, but a combination of public spending cuts and lack of central targets may be putting this in jeopardy. The 2011 figures show that saving lives on our roads can never be taken for granted and with human error still the top cause of crashes, education and training must take centre stage in the future."



## **GOLD STANDARD NEEDED FOR SILVER DRIVERS**

The number of drivers over 90 years old is set to increase by 18 per cent (12,400) over the next five years. By 2017, there will be 82,400 ninety-year-olds driving on the roads. At present, there are 70, 000 drivers over 90.

The number of eighty-year-old drivers is currently 1,049,058, this is set to rise by 22 per cent to around 1,283,000 in the next ten years.

Drivers over the age of sixty-five now make up 25 per cent of licence holders – a figure that is set to rise as more and more baby boomers reach retirement age.

Currently there are 154 drivers over 100 including one 106 year-old and two 105 year olds.

Drivers over 70 are no more likely to cause crashes than any other driver, and are considerably safer than younger drivers, according to research by the IAM. Eight per cent of drivers are over 70 yet they only account for four per cent of all injury crashes.

Currently, motorists are required to renew their licence at 70 and then every three years after that.

IAM chief executive Simon Best said: “Today, over 10 million people can expect to reach 100 so the chances are they’ll be driven around by their 70 year-old children. While their frailty puts them at risk if they are in a crash, that doesn’t necessarily mean that they are a risk to other drivers.

Despite the increase in numbers, we should resist calls for compulsory retests for elderly drivers. The government needs a strategy now on how it is going to manage more elderly drivers and make them more aware of the risks they face. The top priority must be non-compulsory driving assessments available nationwide to help them deal with modern high speed traffic and eliminate any bad habits.

“Better training for GPs and other medical staff is also needed to ensure information and options are clearly spelt out. Finally those nearing retirement need to start planning now for their future transport needs and the inevitable day when they may have to lay down their car keys forever.”



## **MOTORISTS DIVIDED ON CO2 INCENTIVES**

Nearly half of motorists (48 per cent) say they would not consider a more eco-friendly vehicle if Vehicle Excise Duty (VED) tax breaks were increased according to a poll by the IAM (Institute of Advanced Motorists)<sup>1</sup>. Fifty per cent think that it is fair that VED on cars is based on the CO<sub>2</sub> it produces.

Thirty-two per cent think parking permit prices should be based on the size or length of the vehicle (the more space it takes up, the more you pay). While twenty-nine per cent think everyone should pay the same. Only five per cent of respondents felt that the CO<sub>2</sub> emissions the vehicle produces should influence permit costs.

Low Emission Zones (LEZs) are slightly more popular. LEZs were introduced in London in 2008 to reduce pollution from heavy diesel vehicles. Forty-six per cent of drivers think they that they should be introduced for private vehicles, 41 per cent disagree.

Twenty-two per cent of motorists think that driving has no impact on global warming. This is in line with other surveys that show 7 per cent of people think global warming is not happening and seventeen per cent believes it is panic about an exaggerated threat.<sup>2</sup>

IAM chief executive Simon Best said: “Eco-friendly vehicles haven’t got the appeal so much so motorists are willing to pay higher costs in VED to compromise. Motorists aren’t fully convinced of how low CO<sub>2</sub> emissions are beneficial to them, or society.”

“While more can be done to increase awareness about the benefits of eco cars, drivers can do their bit by changing to green driving to help reduce CO<sub>2</sub>. Looking ahead and anticipating hazards will mean less stopping and starting and a smoother journey.”

IAM eco driving tips:

- Keep your vehicle moving for as long as possible, even in traffic queues. This is far more fuel efficient than stopping and starting, so slow down earlier, to avoid braking as harshly and often.
- Stick to the speed limit. This offers a good compromise between economy and getting somewhere. Remember, speed limits are a maximum, not a target.
- Reverse into parking bays. If you do all the manoeuvring with a hot engine you can drive straight off when you come back and warm the engine up more quickly.



- Check your vehicle regularly to ensure it operates efficiently. In particular check the condition of your tyres, and measure tyre pressures when they're cold.
- Remove unnecessary weight, including roof racks, car clutter and heavy items in the boot. The more weight you carry in the car, the more fuel you'll burn.



## HIGHWAY ROBBERY

The cost of learning to drive is greater than the average income of young people, according to road safety charity the IAM. Insurance is still the highest proportion of cost when learning to drive. According to a popular price comparison site, the cheapest insurance quote available to a 17-year-old male driver in full-time employment is £7,868.38. The cheapest quote with a telematics box is £4,464.69.

In 2009, the average full-time salary for 16-17 year olds was £9300 which has now fallen by nine per cent while the cost of learning to drive has not altered. This will result in young people having to rely on their parents or even loan companies to get themselves on the road.

The total cost of starting to drive, £12,345.23, has not changed by more than a few pounds since last year, when the IAM conducted similar research on the cost of driving.

A breakdown of additional costs is: 2007 - 1.1l Kia Picanto, £3000

Theory and practical driving tests, - £106

Provisional and full UK driving license, - £100

Tax and MOT, - £189.85

Average number of driving lessons to pass, - £1081

Fuel and maintenance, - £6002

IAM chief executive Simon Best said: “The expense of learning to drive may affect young people’s chances of getting a job, especially in rural areas where it is essential to get to work, creating a vicious cycle.

“The challenge faced by the government, insurance companies and road safety experts is striking a balance between much-needed experience and manageable costs.

“The IAM is calling for insurance companies to be prepared to respond to fluctuations in earnings, and recognise the value of post-test driver training by rewarding safer drivers with more affordable insurance premiums. It is important for young drivers to do their research and shop around when buying insurance.”



## **BIOFUELS NOT THE GREEN SOLUTION**

Biofuels could cost UK motorists an extra £2 billion per year by 2020 if the government insists on using 10% biofuels in transport fuel, warns research commissioned by ActionAid and Friends of the Earth. More expensive to produce and less green than conventional fuel, an increase in biofuel use could also create the equivalent of an extra 13 million tonnes of UK carbon emissions annually.

Producing biofuel often means burning food crops to make fuel for cars. With almost one billion people hungry in the world, this figure will rise as the developing world loses valuable land to biofuel crops and global food prices are pushed ever higher.

Even the chairman of Nestlé has been outspoken on the subject. “Today 35% of US corn goes into biofuel” said Peter Braback-Letmathe. “From an environmental point of view this is a nonsense, but more so when we are running out of food in the rest of the world. It is absolutely immoral to push hundreds of millions of people into hunger and into extreme poverty, so I think – I insist – no food for fuel.

Biofuels were once touted as the miraculous answer to our energy shortages and fears around climate change. But mounting evidence has exposed this supposedly ‘green fuel’ as the ultimate red herring.

### **The local impact**

Huge government-set biofuel targets in rich countries are providing an incentive for foreign biofuel companies to oust farmers in poor countries from their fertile land.

In just five African countries alone, 1.1 million hectares have been given over to biofuels – an area the size of Belgium. This global land grab is leaving local communities in poor countries stranded, unable to grow their own food or afford the food in their local market. Foreign biofuel companies are routinely breaking promises they make to communities to provide local improvements and jobs.

### **The global impact**

Burning huge amounts of food in our cars has reduced the amount available to eat and subsequently caused global food prices to rocket.

In 2008, food prices rose so dramatically that people rioted in more than 30 countries. Biofuels were widely touted as one of the main causes. ActionAid estimates that an extra 30 million people were pushed into hunger as a result of biofuels during this crisis.



With almost 1 billion people already living in hunger, the UN's Food and Agriculture Organisation is predicting another looming food crisis which will hit developing countries even harder.

### The environmental impact

And if that wasn't all catastrophic enough, evidence shows that most biofuels release more greenhouse gasses than the fossil fuels they were designed to replace. This means that increasing the target for the amount of biofuel that must be in our petrol and diesel will actually make climate change worse!

Despite the rising human and environmental costs of biofuels, governments – including our own – are still spending billions of pounds promoting and subsidising their production. In doing so, they are exacerbating hunger and land grabbing and diverting much needed political attention and financial support away from genuine solutions to tackling climate change.



## **PETROL SALES DOWN**

Petrol sales in the UK continued their steady decline during the first half of this year, the AA confirms from new government statistics. Following a temporary lift in forecourt volumes during the first quarter, caused by panic buying during the tanker drivers' dispute, the drop in petrol retail sales returned with a vengeance in the second.

Petrol sales between January and March 2012 had reversed a long-term fall, up by 119.8 million litres compared to the same period in 2011. However, between April and June, they crashed 496.8 million litres compared to last year's second quarter.

This is despite the tanker drivers' dispute being resolved, pump prices falling away from record highs in mid April and the start of summer motoring.

It was the worst second quarter fall since the credit crunch and the first time since the turmoil of 2008 that fuel stations sold less petrol between April and June than in January to March – substantially.

Retail sales of diesel between April and June reversed a growth trend since 2009, although the size of the drop suggests readjustment in the market after the tanker drivers' dispute.

The statistics from the Department of Energy and Climate Change show that, overall, more than two billion fewer litres of petrol and diesel were sold on forecourts in the first half of this year compared to the same period in 2008. Between January and June 2008, retail sales of petrol amounted to 11,025.46 million litres and diesel 7,954.17 million litres, a total of 18,979.63 million litres. In the first half of this year, retailers sold 8,758.04 million litres of petrol and 7,946.97 million litres of diesel – a total of 16,705.01 million litres.

“A 10.6% fall in petrol sales this past quarter is a huge drop. Whilst we welcome the fact that new cars have become more fuel efficient, this goes nowhere near to accounting for the crash in demand over the past three months and the past five years,” says Edmund King, the AA's president

A fall of 2.27 billion litres in UK fuel sales over the first six months of this year compared to the same period in 2008 has got to bring some sense of reality to the fuel market and government. However, we have seen the fuel industry trying to squeeze more money out of shrinking customer demand, as was the case when wholesale diesel was cheaper than petrol in early spring but drivers and businesses were forced to pay 5p a litre more.





**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.

As at 23<sup>rd</sup> July there was one associate awaiting an observer to come free

**Would all associates taking the test please let their observer know what the test date is and let me 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







**C O N G R A T U L A T I O N S**

**Brian Davies**  
**Associate co-ordinator**



## CONTACT DETAILS







Colchester Group of Advanced Motorists - President: Ralph Young

<b>COMMITTEE</b>			
<b><u>Chairman</u></b> Pat Corps			
<b><u>Deputy Chair</u></b> Vicky de-Vries			
<b><u>Honorary secretary</u></b> Robert Jezierski			
<b><u>Membership secretary</u></b> Heather McCabe			
<b><u>Honorary Treasurer</u></b> Robert Murray			
<b><u>Associate/Observer</u></b> <b><u>Coordinator</u></b> 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> Louisa Davenall</p>			
<p><u>Catering</u> Jane Wood</p>			
<p><u>Shop &amp; 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*

It is a requirement for associates to attend training sessions to enable them to be familiar with advanced driving techniques and skills, prior to, and alongside their observed drives. It is also important that those of you who have already passed your advanced test attend, to further your skills as an advanced driver

<b>2012</b>	
<b>October 16th</b>	Group meeting training night followed by Observers training
<b>November 20th</b>	Group meeting – details to be finalised
<b>December 18th</b>	Group meeting training night on corners and bends followed by Observers training
<b>2013</b>	
<b>January 15th</b>	Group meeting – Chairman’s quiz
<b>February 19th</b>	Group meeting training night followed by Observers training
<b>March 19th</b>	Group meeting – presentation by Autoglym
<b>April 16th</b>	<b>Group meeting training night followed by Observers training</b>
<b>May 21st</b>	Group meeting – details to be finalised
<b>June</b>	<b>Group meeting training night followed by Observers training</b>
<b>July</b>	<b>Group meeting including AGM– details to be finalised</b>

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