

# SIX P O I N T SIX

October 2014

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



An associate practicing parallel parking



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

*affiliated to The Institute of Advanced Motorists*



## **EDITORS NOTES:**

Welcome to the August edition of Six Point Six for 2014.

This edition contains articles about regulations pushing fuel economy, Dartford tolls and concerns over possible issues with new process for checking taxing.

The committee is always on the lookout for people who can give interesting talks at one of our meetings. If anybody knows of anyone who can give a talk or have any suggestions for the subject of a talk then please contact any committee member

## **A WARM WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS**

Simon Barry, Ian Sach and Nicola Machin

### 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.

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.

**John Holmes**  
**Editor**



## MEETING REPORTS

### AUGUST MEETING

The August training night took place in the Parish Hall car park and was overseen by Deputy Chair Robert. It was an occasion to practice manoeuvres and featured parallel parking and reversing into bays. Fortunately the weather was dry and bright, bit chilly, but ideal for the meeting.

It was disappointing that only 2 Associates were able to attend. May I take this opportunity to remind Associates that, as stated in 6.6, attendance at these meetings is mandatory but, of course, ultimately it is your time.

It really is in your interest to attend, you could be missing an important chance to improve your driving skills and, also, we like to see you and chat. Perhaps next time.

Brian Davies  
Associate co-ordinator



### SEPTEMBER MEETING

This was a welcome return of Essex Tyres who gave an instructive presentation on the construction of tyres.



He explained that one of the reasons a tyre will blow is following damage to the side wall - possible causes - kerbing vehicle or pot holes etc. The canvas strings can become broken and therefore a weak spot. Bulges on tyres are usually indicative of this kind of damage.

He spoke about the need to fit directional tyres correctly as their design is to propel water away from vehicle. Directional tyres can be rotated front to back although not

really recommended but definitely not side to side or corner to corner as used to be the practice. He told of the advantage of driving on winter tyres which are made of a softer compound and so obtain grip better. They can be used all year round but as softer are not so hard wearing and so not advisable especially as currently they are an extremely expensive option. He said prices seem to be coming down due to the large number of Polish/Ukrainian/etc visitors to UK who are demanding them in the winter as it is illegal in those countries and other Eastern Block countries not to use winter tyres in winter months.

He explained why it is not possible to re-cut ordinary car tyres (tread too thin) safely. Tyres for lorries and heavy vehicle usage may be done with caution. He said that to repair a tyre which has a puncture in side wall is illegal because the canvas threads might be damaged enough to cause a side wall blow out when under pressure on the road, but some disreputable fitters do still carry out these repairs. He told how to tell if a car tyre has been illegally repaired, ie the side walls. There is often a small patch (approx 1" diameter) on outer edge of the tyre that is smoother than the rest. Often the pattern on tyre is no longer uniform. He mentioned the pressures required on Lorry and Heavy vehicle tyres was enough to kill someone and so tyre fitters treat puncture repairs with extreme caution as the escaping air can propel them bodily several feet and in extreme cases can cause internal injuries.



Will Davenport receiving his certificate from Pat



## CO<sub>2</sub> LIMITS PUSH CREATIVITY

You know the feeling; your fuel gauge has been on red for miles and all because you were determined to wait for a filling station with the “right” diesel price. Now you are regretting it and creeping along to save fuel. Worse you are dipping the clutch on downward slopes in the hope that gravity will save a few precious drops and prevent the ignominy of running dry. We’ve all done it but now “coasting” – as it is called when you disengage the clutch and freewheel – is set to become more mainstream. It is one of a number of technological options being considered by manufacturers as they try to find new ways of meeting stringent new regulations set by the E.U., requiring makers to meet a rigorous set of average CO<sub>2</sub> emissions standard across their entire fleet of vehicles.

Figures from the international Council on Clean Transportation show that the average emissions of new cars have already fallen from 160g/km in 2006 to 132g/km in 2012, a drop of about 17 percent. Manufacturers must already comply fleet rating of 130g/km by the end of next year, a target that most firms expect to meet. However European rule makers have specified a target of just 95g/km by 2020.

The regulations mean only 95 per cent of new cars have to hit the 2020 targets. However all new vehicles will have to comply by 2021. The drop from the 2015 target to the 2020 target is an average reduction in fuel consumption of about 27 percent; Autocar believes this will be a serious challenge.

The magazine has identified what it believes are the top five new technologies that will propel the average family car to achieve output figures of well under 90g/km and fuel efficiency levels of more than 300mpg.

The first is coasting technology, likely to be rolled out in three stages. The first stage, coasting at speed is already a feature on some models fitted with dual-clutch automatic gearboxes. The next stage is expected to function when a car is travelling below 4mph. The ultimate version will allow transmission decoupling and engine shutdown when cruising at speed, travelling downhill or approaching traffic lights that are about to turn red.

The second solution is a British designed flywheel system, which is used to drive the rear wheels of a front wheel drive car. Currently in testing, it’s thought flywheels could become far more familiar in the next decade because they store waste energy from the engine and then release it, much like an electric motor and battery. Flywheel systems are also about a quarter of the cost of a hybrid, far less complex and much lighter.

Variable Compression Ratio Engines are another solution identified by Autocar, although details are scant.. Varying an engine’s compression ratio depending on the demands being placed on it will lead to “significant advances” in efficiency, say



experts. Manufacturers have also begun previewing electric turbochargers. Audi's for instance uses a powerful fan in the engines induction system that primes the engines turbo, making it more efficient, especially in smaller cars.

Enclosed wheel wells are another answer; while big gains in aerodynamics are hard to achieve with mid size family cars, experts believe enclosed wheel wells might yield major reductions in drag and fuel consumption. Some manufacturers are already directing air across the face of the front wheels to achieve this. The next natural step is to enclose the wheel housing so airflow doesn't get trapped as it travels under the car. It means fitting a "skirt" beneath the car, creating a seal that moves with the suspension.

Advanced aerodynamics are already being used by several manufacturers, but as Autocar points out, manufacturers will have to tread a fine line between meeting CO2 standards and maintain the aesthetic appeal of their cars.



## **DRIVERS ADMIT BEING EASILY DISTRACTED ON UK'S FASTEST ROADS**

RAC warns motorists not to take safety for granted. Drivers' worst habits on the nation's fastest roads have been revealed in new research by the RAC, which shows that motorists admit to eating, drinking and reaching into the foot well while driving on the motorway.

The top five bad habits also include changing a CD and adjusting a sat-nav while at the wheel on the UK's busiest major roads, prompting a call from the motorists' champion to remind drivers to take care at all times and ensure their focus is always on the road ahead.

The survey of 1,600 drivers\* about their behaviour behind the wheel found 57% admitted to opening a bottle and having a drink while driving, 48% said they change CDs, 35% have eaten a sandwich, and almost a third, 29% are distracted by adjusting their sat-nav system. A further 15% even admitted reaching for items in the glove box or foot well at the same time as driving at around 70mph.

While motorists may not believe they are doing anything wrong, their actions clearly go against the Highway Code which states: 'Avoid distractions when driving or riding such as trying to read maps, inserting CD or tuning a radio, arguing with your passengers or other road users, eating and drinking.'

Of the drivers who took part in the survey, by far the worst offenders were the 17-35 age group where 61% say they change a CD in the car and 41% take their eyes off the road to adjust sat-nav systems.

In addition to the distractions from in-car technology, one in 10 respondents has also engaged in a heated argument with a passenger, posing further danger to themselves and other motorway users.

In fact, according to the latest available statistics from the Department for Transport, distraction or impairment accounted for almost 14,000 accidents on British roads in 2012.

RAC technical director David Bizley said: "As a nation we spend a lot of time on the roads and motorways provide vital links for work, business and leisure purposes. In England, they form the heart of the Strategic Road network but account for less than 3% of all roads and yet they carry almost a third of all traffic and two-thirds of large goods vehicle traffic. Driving so many miles a year on motorways, we need to be wary that we do not take our safety for granted.

"Thankfully the number of accidents in the UK remains relatively low, and motorways are statistically the safest of our roads based on the number of accidents in relation to the amount of traffic they carry and the distance travelled, but nevertheless, more people using the Strategic Road Network are killed travelling on motorways than any other road type with deaths exceeding 100 annually\*\*. It is



therefore of paramount importance that every driver is aware of all the potential distractions on a motorway as a small loss of concentration can prove fatal due to the higher speeds involved.

“If motorists fail to appreciate the clear danger they are putting themselves in by eating, drinking and adjusting their gadgets while driving on the motorway, then they need to be reminded that their behaviour is also illegal.

“We all know that in-car technology has enhanced the enjoyment of driving, and in many cases improved safety too, but the most important component in a car is still the person behind the wheel and driving on a motorway requires a driver’s full attention.”

The most common general driving distractions identified in the RAC Report on Motoring 2014 were: tiredness – 46%; passengers in the car talking – 35%; daydreaming – 32%. A mobile phone ringing and looking at hand-held phone were only listed by 27% and 16% of motorists respectively.





## **LORRY SPEED LIMIT ON SINGLE CARRIAGEWAY ROADS TO BE INCREASED**

The speed limit for lorries on single carriageway main roads in England and Wales will rise from 40mph to 50mph, it has been announced by the Government.

The move, affecting heavy goods vehicles weighing more than 7.5 tonnes, will come into force in early 2015.

RAC head of external affairs Pete Williams says: “While it may seem counterintuitive on the face of it to suggest higher speeds create safer roads, there is good evidence from trials in Europe to support the idea that raising speed limits on some roads has helped to reduce accident rates.

“A two-year trial in Denmark has seen speed limits on some rural roads increased from 80km/h (50mph) to 90km/h (56mph). Results there showed that some slower drivers raised their speed slightly, while faster drivers slowed down.

“Although average speeds on the roads remained almost the same, the smaller difference between faster and slower traffic resulted in fewer collisions and fewer deaths, according to police findings.

“They said the move has helped reduce frustration among faster drivers, and stopped them from performing dangerous overtaking manoeuvres.

“The Danish study may well prove to be ground-breaking in years to come but what's needed now are more studies to establish whether this reduction occurs in all instances.”



## **DARTFORD TOLL ROAD CHANGES DELAYED**

Motorists awaiting the launch of a new "cashless" payment scheme used in conjunction with the Dartford River Crossing will have to wait a little longer.

The changes, aimed at making it simpler and cheaper to cross the busy Kent crossing, have now been delayed until late November as further tests are applied to the new system.

Road bosses had originally planned for toll booths at the crossing to be scrapped by around mid-October with a new "free-flow" traffic system put in its place.

But the Highways Agency says the system needs to be thoroughly tested before being introduced, setting it back more than a month.

The agency says that motorists will be given plenty of time to sign up for a pre-pay account before the system is put in place.

This, it is hoped, will help to dramatically speed up the flow of traffic on the road and make it cheaper for those drivers who have signed up - with discounts of up to a third available on every crossing.

Highways Agency project leader Nigel Gray said: "Dart Charge is a massive change for drivers using the Dartford Crossing and it's only right that it is thoroughly tested before being introduced."

The Freight Transport Association said the delay was disappointing "as it may present additional costs to industry".



## **NEARLY A QUARTER 'CONSIDERING NEW CAR'**

Financial confidence among motorists seems to be on the rise with almost a quarter of adults thinking of buying a car in the near future.

According to a survey by Sainsbury's Bank, as many as 23% of drivers are mooting the prospect of buying a new or second-hand model over the next six months.

Some 13% of the 2,058 people questioned said they would opt for a shiny new car - the average buyer admitting they would spend around £15,921 on the most up-to-date 64 plate, released this month.

Meanwhile, those looking at second-hand models would likely spend £6,636, the survey suggests. It is highly recommended that all used models are subject to a car data check before you part with your cash.

This optimistic trend has been evident for some time, with the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders reporting repeated growth in the new car sales market for the past 30 months.

Those wanting assurance over their purchase will be keen to hear that in August, new-car sales rose 9.4% compared with the same month in 2013.

Sales up to the end of August this year, meanwhile, totalled 1.53 million - a rise of 10.1% over the same period last year.

September is traditionally seen as a popular time for car purchases, with around 18% of a year's worth of purchases taking place in this month.



## **PARKING TIPS FOR BLUE BADGE HOLDERS**

The Institute of Advanced Motorists (IAM) has offered blue badge holders in the UK tips on safe and effective parking.

Reversing into a parking bay is much easier and safer than reversing out of one, plus a hot engine means it's better for the environment too.

While it may be tempting to simply loop around into the bay in the supermarket, it is often better in the long run to take the time to pull back into it, assuming that there is sufficient space to do so.

When parking on a street it's important for blue badge drivers to think about the space they need to get out of the car and back into it again, this includes space to access car doors and the boot if necessary.

It is also crucial to park well away from sharp bends or junctions where a parked car may be in the way or out of site until it is too late. This may mean parking further from the destination but it also means more safety.

Parking a little further away from places like supermarkets and shopping centres can also lower the chance of accidental, or even intentional damage in a busy area.

Most blue badge holders know that lending their badge to other drivers is illegal, but it's important that holders tell people who drive them not to use the badges when there is no holder present.

Considering all of these tips can make life a lot easier and safer for blue badge holders.



## **CAR FERRIES 'MORE POPULAR THAN EVER'**

The number of Britons choosing to travel abroad with their car by using a ferry is rising.

More than six million cars were carried on UK ferry routes in the first eight months of 2014 - around one for every 10 people in the country.

This figure is up 1.3 per cent on the same period last year; with 2.77 million cars taken to the continent, 2.47 million carried on domestic routes and over 800,000 taken to Ireland. Before arriving at a continental destination, it's always sensible to have pre-arranged your European Breakdown Cover to protect you in the event of an unforeseen circumstance.

Meanwhile the volume of coaches taken on ferries has increased even more, with 119,580 carried between January and March this year - up 3.6 per cent on the same period last year.

The resurgence of the ferry is a significant new travel trend, according to Discover Ferries director, Bill Gibbons. He says annual passenger counts shot up by a million between 2012 and 2013, to 38 million.

The trend looks set to continue as nearly 28 million people boarded in the first eight months of this year, a 2.6 per cent rise on the same period last year.



## **DIESEL DRIVERS OBJECT TO COST HIKES**

Over three in four diesel drivers say they refuse to pay more in the light of new European anti-pollution plans to penalise them, according to a new poll.

The creation of Ultra Low Emissions Zones (ULEZ) could see motorists in diesel powered vehicles having to pay extra to enter UK cities and towns by 2020.

Diesel drivers feel they already have enough overheads - with road tax, servicing, car insurance and petrol - without having to pay another auxiliary charge, the poll finds.

The zones are being mooted in a bid to improve urban air quality and to avoid EU fines for breaking targets on air pollution.

London's ULEZ, for example, intends to make diesel vehicle owners pay an extra £10 a day for driving inside its limits, in addition to the present Congestion Charge fee.

Mark Carpenter, of Motorpoint, which commissioned the survey, says hitting the drivers of diesel vehicles is not the answer. This is especially so, as they were told they were being environmentally-friendly by buying them in the first place.



## **CONCERN OVER ANPR CAMERA ACCURACY**

Tax discs are now a thing of the past but the new digital system could lead to innocent motorists receiving DVLA penalty notices, according to a new report.

The replacement system will partly rely on camera technology which reads vehicle number plates - but official data reveals up to 1.2 million are wrongly identified every day.

At a conference last week, Home Office and police officials revealed that four errors are made for every 100 number plates read by automatic number plate recognition (ANPR) cameras - the Telegraph reports.

RAC spokesman Pete Williams said: "Motorists clearly have some significant worries about the demise of the paper tax disc with two-thirds of drivers believing it could lead to an increase in non-payment. But this suggestion that one in twenty-five motorists could face an unwarranted penalty notice is further cause for concern and one which needs to be addressed rapidly.

"The DVLA has reassured us that motorists will benefit from these changes but it seems that there is still some convincing to be done."

Around a quarter of the mistakes (27%) involve numbers being confused with letters, while another 25% are due to affixing screws and bolts positioned too closely to the lettering.

Yet another quarter of cases (25%) are caused by broken plates and just over a fifth (22%) are simply because plates are dirty.

There are around 500,000 ANPR cameras in operation looking at 30 million plates a day. This could equate to as many as 1.2 million daily errors in total.

Independent ANPR consultant David Joy isn't sure how the DVLA will enforce penalties when many of them could be incorrect. The former policeman gave the presentation after examining data from the roads of Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire.

The DVLA says all images taken by the cameras will be cross referenced to make sure the models and makes of vehicles involved are the same as those on their records.



## **11-YEAR-OLD DRINK-DRIVER AMONG FIGURES**

Police in the Thames Valley area caught what could be the country's youngest ever drink-driver - a child aged just 11 - newly-released records reveal.

A number of 12-year-olds have also been caught - not only behind the wheel - but while above the legal alcohol limit, in Manchester and Scotland over the last few years.

The shocking statistics show an average of around 1,000 people under the age of 18 have been convicted of drink-driving each year since 2008.

All 43 police forces that responded to Freedom of Information Act requests said they had caught people aged 17 and under drink-driving over the six-year period.

The under-age drink-driving hotspots appear to be Scotland and Greater Manchester, where 718 and 409 under-18s respectively have been apprehended since 2008.

In Hampshire, 276 people under 18 have been caught drink-driving since 2008, with 241 offenders apprehended in Devon and Cornwall, and 160 in Sussex.

The figures, obtained by in-car camera provider Nextbase, show that although the total number of under-age offenders is falling each year the problem has increased in some police areas; including North and South Yorkshire, Kent, South Wales, Cambridgeshire, Cheshire, West Mercia, Northumbria, Staffordshire and Thames Valley.



## ASSOCIATE INFORMATION

As at end of July there was one associate awaiting an observer to come free; as soon as there is an observer free to take you on, you will be contacted and your first drive arranged.

The observed drive is not the only aspect of training, the training meetings are equally important and much essential information is obtained from them. Associates are reminded that attendance at these is mandatory and also demonstrates their commitment to the idea of advanced driving and the Colchester group.

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 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.

### Our list of Observers

Pat Corps *	Louisa Davenall
Ralph Young*	Ian Scott-Thompson
Brian Davies	Sarah Woodcock

\*DENOTES SENIOR OBSERVER

# CONGRATULATIONS







BiLL Davenport who passed in September, his observer was Ian Scott-Thompson

**Brian Davies**  
Associate co-ordinator



## CONTACT DETAILS






Colchester Group of Advanced Motorists - President: Ralph Young

<b>COMMITTEE</b>			
<b><u>Chairman</u></b> <b>Pat Corps</b>			
<b><u>Honorary secretary and Deputy Chair</u></b> <b>Robert Jezierski</b>			
<b><u>Membership secretary</u></b> <b>Heather McCabe</b>			
<b><u>Honorary Treasurer</u></b> <b>Robert Murray</b>			
<b><u>Associate/Observer Coordinator</u></b> <b>Brian Davies</b>			
<b><u>Webmaster</u></b> <b>Rob Wilson</b>			



# SIX POINT SIX



<p><b><u>Newsletter Compiler</u></b> <b>John Holmes</b></p>			
<p><b><u>Events co-ordinator</u></b> <b>Barry Alexander</b></p>			
<p><b><u>Minutes secretary</u></b> <b>Louisa Davenall</b></p>			
<p><b><u>Catering</u></b> <b>Ann Hardwell</b></p>			
<p><b><u>Shop &amp; Raffle</u></b> <b>Ronald O'Hare</b></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, June and November**  
**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>2014</b>	
October 21 <sup>st</sup>	Group meeting training night
<b>November 18<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Group meeting details to be finalised</b>
December 16 <sup>th</sup>	Group meeting training night
<b>2015</b>	
January 20 <sup>th</sup>	Group meeting Chairman's Quiz
February 17 <sup>th</sup>	Group meeting training night
March 17 <sup>th</sup>	Group meeting details to be finalised
<b>April 21<sup>st</sup></b>	<b>Group meeting training night</b>
May 19 <sup>th</sup>	Group meeting details to be finalised

All meetings in small room 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