



The Association of British Drivers

PO Box 62, Chislehurst, BR7 5YB; Tel: 020-8467-2686; Web: www.abd.org.uk

Press Release – ABD London Region

For immediate release
17 November 2006

Richmond's New Parking Charges Miss the Point, says drivers' group

Richmond council has hit the headlines today by announcing they will charge residents more to park outside their homes if they own 'gas guzzling' cars. The new tax is an attempt to reduce CO2 emissions.

The Association of British Drivers (ABD) suggests that Richmond Council has missed the point. "We believe that charging people for the privilege of parking outside their houses is wrong in any case. To charge them more simply for owning a larger car is doubly so," says Mark McArthur-Christie, the ABD's Director of Policy. The ABD goes on to explain that the most energy is used when a car is manufactured and when it is scrapped, not when it is driven or parked. If Richmond's proposal is implemented, people are more likely to get rid of larger, older cars with many years life left – causing more pollution than if the cars had simply been driven.

In any case, targeting a small minority of car users will not make any significant impact on CO2 emissions. One of the most interesting recent statements from Transport for London in their submissions on the Thames Gateway Bridge inquiry was the following statement: "Private cars constitute only 10% of total UK CO2 emissions, and the position appears to be both under control and improving, largely due to technology". If you assume only 10% of cars are "gas guzzlers" and their owners all moved to smaller cars (with about half the CO2 emissions), then the net impact will be 0.5% of CO2 emitted in Richmond. But of course most of them will not, and many cars are parked off the street so the net impact will clearly be imperceptible.

These charges are obviously not about improving emissions, but simply about raising more money for hard pressed council budgets from local residents.

About The Association of British Drivers (ABD)

The ABD is the leading independent organisation which represents the interests of private motorists in the United Kingdom. We campaign to protect the rights of individual road users and believe that road transport is a beneficial and essential element in the UK transport infrastructure. We oppose excessive taxation of motorists and are against tolls and road usage charging. We also campaign for more enlightened road safety policies. The Association is a "not for profit" voluntary organisation which is financially supported primarily by its individual members. More information on the ABD is available from our web site at www.abd.org.uk

For further information, please contact:

Roger Lawson
ABD London Co-Ordinator
Telephone: 020-8467-2686
Email: roger.lawson@btclick.com

File: ABD_Press001_Richmond_Parking_Charges.doc