

Pensioners' Newsletter - August 2024

News from the South

This issue is tainted in sadness with news of the passing of George Taylor (VPA Committee), Sam Price (Plant Manager) and Nick Reilly (Executive at many GM Plants).

I will remember the tremendous efforts George expended in pension negotiations, the sterling Sam gave in running the Luton Plant and the importance of Nick to the formation of and successful inception of the IBC Plant. They will be truly missed and our sincere condolences go to their family and friends.

Elsewhere in this issue there is an article about the 75th anniversary of the VPA and the presentation of £750 cheques to representatives of 10 chosen charities. Our Committee decided that this was the most appropriate way of recognising this landmark event and judging by the comments of the people receiving the money I think we chose well.

I do not have too much else to write this time except to wish you all well and hope that you stay in good form until our next issue.

Norman McGregor

News from the North

Hi Folks:

As the summer wears on the weather continues to be unpredictable. When there is a couple of days of really warm sunny weather we begin to think "yes summer" only to find the next day it is cold or wet or windy or all three. Still this is England after all.

The June and July socials were well supported and we had two very good entertaining singers on both occasions who appealed to our age group.

In June we visited the Black Country Living Museum. Once more the weather was kind to us. There was lots to see and do and altogether a very interesting and worthwhile trip.

Our July Snowdonia tour was again enjoyed by an almost full coach. We started off at Tweedmill for coffee and some retail therapy, then took the scenic route to Llanberis to visit the slate museum. Again a very interesting and informative visit after which Darren drove us through the Llanberis pass ending up at Betws-y-Coed (wish we had gone somewhere I could spell) for more coffee and shopping. Altogether a perfect day out.

We have booked our spring holiday this time to Scotland, staying at the Waverly Castle Hotel.

This is the Company's newest acquisition which looks very good set in five acres of grounds. We go on April 30 for five days and the price will be £335 or £365 per person, depending on numbers. We will take names and deposits of £50 per person at the August social.

The Christmas Turkey and Tinsel is fast

approaching and full payments can be made in September or October.

Our September trip has changed. It will now be Wednesday, September 18 and the venue will be Bury Market. This is instead of the Nantwich Food Festival. In November we revert once more to afternoon socials starting at 1:00 pm.

Well that's all for now folks so till next time
Cheerio

Dave Williams

Some Very Sad News

In our last Newsletter in June we wrote about the stepping down from the VPA Committee of George Taylor. It is with great sadness that we report that George passed away on 19th July following a very short illness. Our thoughts and condolences are conveyed to George's family and friends.

We have been advised that Nick Reilly, who held the position of Managing Director Vauxhall Motors, at the time of the closure in 2002, passed away on 8th June 2024 at the age of 74.

Also, Sam Price, who was Luton Plant Manager many years ago, passed away at the grand old age of 102 at the end of May. Sam was Director of Manufacturing for GM Hendon prior to transferring to Vauxhall.

Bill Saul

Most of you, especially those on Facebook, will know of Bill who has been on the VPA Executive Committee for 12 years.

Unfortunately, he was admitted into hospital a couple of weeks ago and after having many tests and scans is currently awaiting the results.

Bill will still be active on Facebook and we are sure that you will all join us in wishing him a speedy recovery.

VPA 75th Anniversary – Donations to Charities

The VPA 75th Anniversary event was held on June 25 at Venue 360 (formerly the Brache).

Representatives from each of the nominated charities each gave a presentation explaining their background and what was very evident was the fervour, energy and dedication they displayed. It was, therefore, a very humbling experience for the VPA Committee members present to appreciate how much the individual donations of £750 per charity would benefit the recipients.

All in all an extremely rewarding experience for all concerned and a fitting way to recognise this milestone event. The charities were:

Noah's Enterprise	Visually Impaired People
Luton Foodbank	SNOOSC
Animals at Risk	Caddington Care
Pulmonary Fibrosis Trust	Appledown Rescue
Young@Heart Café	Harefield Hospital

Renewal of Driving Licences

Many of us have reached the age when licences have to be renewed every 3 years. If this is done online, please ensure that you use the official DVLA website which is free. Other sites may charge for the renewal.

If your renewal is not straight forward and medical issues need explanations you may be asked for further information. This will involve additional correspondence with the DVLA who will advise that failure to get information back to them within a certain time frame will result 'in your licence being revoked'.

We are making you aware of Section 88 of the Road Traffic Act states that 'As soon as the DVLA receives your correct and completed application for a new licence and as long as you meet all the Section 88 criteria you may drive. If you are unsure about if you meet the medical criteria for driving, you can check your conditions in the 'Assessing Fitness to Drive' guide for healthcare professionals which can be found at www.gov.uk/dvla/fitnessdrive

Parking Tickets

Getting back to your car to find a parking ticket on your windscreen can feel frustrating. Our guide covers when you can challenge a ticket, and how parking fines work

Key takeaways:

There are 3 different types of parking tickets you are likely to encounter:

- If you do not think your fine is justified, you can appeal your parking ticket
- Parking tickets do not affect your insurance
- Failure to pay your parking fines can result in court action

Types of parking tickets:

Understanding the kind of parking ticket you have received is crucial, as the appeal process can vary significantly. Here is a quick rundown of the traffic penalties you might encounter:

Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN):

The police, council, or the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) can issue an FPN for a variety will typically have 28 days to pay up in England and Wales before the fine increases by 50%. Ignoring the FPN can lead to court action, so it is not something to be taken lightly.

Penalty Charge Notice (PCN):

Local authority traffic wardens are the usual culprits behind PCNs. These notices can also be issued for failing to pay charges like the London congestion fee. It is important to distinguish these from Excess Charge Notices (ECNs), which are a criminal charge and carry different implications.

Parking Charge Notice/PCN:

Yes, it is confusing, but PCNs also refer to notices issued by private companies for parking on their land, such as at a supermarket or hospital. These are not backed by law in the same way and function more like invoices for breaking a

contract. Early payment often comes with a discount, but if you do not pay, you could find yourself facing court action.

Is the ticket justified?

Before you rush to challenge a parking ticket, take a moment to consider whether it was justified. Did you inadvertently break the parking conditions, or did you park without permission on private property? Remember, private companies cannot fine you - they can only claim you breached a contract.

When can you challenge a parking ticket?

It is generally not worth challenging a ticket if you clearly violated parking rules, such as resting on double yellow lines. However, if you have been wronged by faulty technology, misleading signs, or if there were extenuating circumstances, you might have a case. Just be sure to back up your claim with solid evidence.

Know your rights if you are clamped or towed:

Getting clamped or towed adds insult to injury. It is usually a result of illegal parking, invalid insurance, or an untaxed vehicle. Note that in England, Scotland, and Wales, private operators cannot legally clamp or tow on private land - only authorised public bodies have that power. And do not even think about removing a clamp yourself; that is a one-way ticket to a criminal damage charge.

How do I challenge a parking ticket?

First, identify who issued the ticket. If it is an official ticket, start with an informal challenge. If that does not work, escalate to a formal challenge and, if necessary, an independent tribunal. Be warned: appeals do not have a high success rate and can be a hassle, so only go down this road if you genuinely believe the ticket was unfair.

Do you have to pay for a private parking fine?

A private parking fine requires legal backing to enforce payment. If your ticket is from the police or council, you will need to pay it. Private company-issued tickets are a different beast – they are essentially invoices for perceived contract breaches. Ignoring them is not wise, as they can escalate to a small claims court.

How do I challenge a private parking ticket?

First, check if the company is a member of a trade body like the BPA or IPC. If so, follow their official appeals process, which usually starts with an appeal to the firm itself. If that fails, you can take it to the trade body's appeals service. For companies not affiliated with a trade body, proceed with caution and consider seeking legal advice before ignoring their tickets.

Do parking tickets affect my car insurance?

Parking tickets should not affect your car insurance premium, because parking tickets are not a reflection of whether you drive safely. Instead, car insurers look at driving-related factors like speeding tickets.

Tips for avoiding parking tickets:

To keep your windshield ticket-free, here are a few pointers:

- Steer clear of parking on double yellow lines or in clearways.
- Always display your parking ticket or permit clearly.
- Familiarise yourself with local restrictions and never assume disabled parking is exempt from rules.

Dealing with parking tickets can be a real headache, especially when you feel they have been unjustly issued. It is important to understand who is issuing the ticket and the reasons behind it. Ignoring the ticket is not a recommended course of action. Instead, if you decide to appeal, act swiftly, gather your evidence, and follow the proper channels. Remember, knowledge is power when it comes to parking tickets, and a well-informed driver is a well-armed one.

Thursday, June 6 - Brighton

A group of 46 young at heart VPA members boarded the coach and left Luton at 9:00 am, arriving by the seaside at 11:00 am. It was a lovely sunny day, although the sea breeze blew in a tad chilly. Nevertheless our intrepid tourists all enjoyed the day with a substantial number of them partaking of the pensioners' special lunch of fish and chips, tea or coffee and bread and butter, before seeing the various sights at hand. They then boarded the coach for the return journey to Luton at 4:00 pm having had a most enjoyable day out. As usual thanks to Sylvia and Dave for organising it and Andy, the coach driver, for getting the group there.

Thursday, July 18 - Norfolk Lavender Fields and Villages Tour

Due to some last minute withdrawals a group of only 44 left Luton at 8:00 am arriving at the destination at 11:00 am, having lost about 20 minutes due to a lorry delivering bricks blocking one side of the road. How we laughed! We were joined on arrival by our Tour Guide, Lynne, and went on a trip around the villages in the proximity of the Lavender Fields. This focussed mainly around Sandringham with the group getting lots of information from Lynne. All too soon this part of the day ended and we returned to base to be fed a most welcome fish and chips lunch. How often do we say that fish tastes much better the nearer to the sea you eat it? Lynne then departed having given us all a small memento of the day - lavender of course. We then had free time before boarding the coach back to Luton at 4:30 pm. One small aside. I had been telling those around me on the morning coach journey how tasty lavender scones are. With certain appetites truly whetted it is sad to report that yours truly purchased the last 2 in the shop so those appetites were not satisfied. I did feel a little guilty, but only a little!

Singles Golf Championship – June 25

Golf Mexican Scramble at Stockwood Park

The annual VPA Singles Golf Championship was once again held at the Stockwood Park Golf course and once again it was won by a Stockwood Park player. New comer to the VPA golfing group was 15.6 handicapper Dave Conway who played amazingly well to win the coveted IBC Trophy.

The course itself was generally well kept and the recent dry weather conditions meant the ball travelled greater distances than normal, but the grass on the greens was not as finely cut, so making the putting surfaces relatively slow.

For some of the members this did not really deter them from playing a high standard of golf. However, for some of the older players the very hot, sunny and the humid weather did have an adverse effect on their concentration and stamina i.e. some of the 'old sods' have probably reached their sell-by date! C'est de vie...

The event was an 18 hole Stableford points competition and when a player scores 36 points he is playing to his club handicap. This year's champion, Dave Conway, was six shots better than this and amassed 42 points which was 4 shots better than last year's champion (and club mate) Mick Shea.



Jim Heaney, Dave Conway, Mike Roberts

Also playing exceptionally well was Woburn golfer, Peter Johnson, with a very creditable score of 40 points. In third place was VPA golf stalwart, Alan Everitt, with 36 points. In fourth and fifth place respectively was Jim Heaney and Martin Redmond who both scored 35 points.

The nearest to the pin prizes were closely contested and low handicap player Alan Everitt won the 178 yard 7th hole whilst Alan Smith won the 153 yard 14th hole.

Many VPA members started their golfing careers at Stockwood Park and returning after many years later was like having a trip down memory lane. It was easy to reflect when we were young and fit and the golf course seemed a lot shorter with less big trees. Perhaps most important at the Club House the food was just two and sixpence a pint.

How times have changed. Nevertheless, all nineteen golfers enjoyed the VPA event which concluded at the nineteenth hole where they sat down for a well-earned traditional golfers late lunch and for some well-rehearsed banter and

abuse. A raffle was held which ensured that the majority of members went home with a prize.

The next VPA Golf-day is a team event which will be held at the Harpenden Common Golf Club, Harpenden on Thursday, August 15, 2024. All registered players will be sent entry forms by email and any other VPA Club golfers are welcome to join in these events. The contact is Mike Roberts – mikerobertsverulam@msn.com

August Quiz

The subject this issue is Summer Song titles. Can you identify them from their initials and the artists that recorded them:

- 1 HCTS - The Beatles
- 2 (SOT)DOTB - Otis Redding
- 3 LD - Bill Withers
- 4 GV - The Beach Boys
- 5 WAGOASH - Cliff Richard
- 6 WOS - Katrina and the waves
- 7 SOFS - Alice Cooper
- 8 SA - The Kinks
- 9 CS - Taylor Swift
- 10 WS - Harry Styles
- 11 SITC - The Lovin' Spoonful
- 12 IITS - Harry Belafonte
- 13 SN - Olivia Newton-John
- 14 ITS - Mungo Jerry
- 15 LS - The B-52's
- 16 CSTF - Justin Timberlake
- 17 CGYOOMH - Kylie Minogue
- 18 H - Madonna
- 19 R - Duran Duran
- 20 A - Black Lace

All the best with that lot! Some are easier than others. As usual answers in the next issue.

June Quiz Answers

- | | |
|---------------------|----------------------|
| 1 Spice Girls | 2 Harrods |
| 3 Paula Yates | 4 Richard Branson |
| 5 William Hague | 6 Mick Jagger |
| 7 Sweden | 8 Peter Stringfellow |
| 9 Princess Margaret | 10 Safety Pins |
| 11 Delia Smith | 12 Body Shop |
| 13 Cricket | 14 Jeffrey |
| 15 Annabel's | 16 Clothes |
| 17 Tony Blair | 18 Mrs Merson |
| 19 Anthea Turner | 20 Chris Evans |

Upcoming Events in the South

To book trips please telephone Sylvia on (01582) 759851 or write to Mrs S Pemberton, 27 Ryecroft Way, Luton, Beds, LU2 7TU.

A stamped addressed envelope is no longer required. If you use email please provide your email address. Our trip prices do not include insurance. For your own peace of mind please make your own arrangements.

In the event of your late cancellation of a booking you will be required to pay for the coach fare and any event ticket that we are unable to re-sell.

Thursday, August 15 + August 22 - Savill Gardens, Windsor Estate, and Thames Cruise

Visit to these splendid gardens at Windsor where we have lunch before enjoying a 2 hour Thames Cruise with a cream tea

Members £59.00 pp/Non-members £63.00 pp

Thursday, September 19 - Suffolk Punch Centre, Woodbridge

Come and see these magnificent horses in their stables and fields. The trip includes meeting the horses, watching them demonstrate their skill and a horse-drawn hay cart ride. A café is on site selling a variety of food

Members £35.00 pp/Non-members £38.00 pp

Thursday, October 17 - Vineyard Visit at Tenterden, Kent

Sample the fine wines in this renowned winery in Kent and enjoy a tour of the vineyard. We will taste five of their popular wines (soft drink alternatives if preferred). We will stop for lunch en route at a suitable venue where you will be able to buy lunch

Members £36.00 pp/Non-members £39.00 pp

Mon-Fri, November 25-29 - Turkey and Tinsel

A festive 4 night break at the Warners Hotel, Holme Lacey, Herefordshire in the beautiful Wye Valley. The stay will be on half board basis with daily excursions

Members £325.00 pp/Non-members £335.00 pp

Thursday, December 5 - Christmas Cockney Show, followed by a tour of the London lights.

Enjoy the festive fun on board Tereza Joanne at London's Royal Docks.

Includes Christmas turkey dinner with apple pie dessert.

Members £55.00 pp/Non-members £58.00 pp

Wednesday, December 11 - Christmas Dinner and Dance

Come and join us at Venue 360 for this annual festive celebration.

Evening includes a three course festive meal and live music.

Members £35.00 pp/Non-members £38.00 pp

Upcoming Events in the North

Thursday, August 22 – Bridgnorth and Down Inn for lunch

Leave Club 9:00 am £20 pp

Wednesday, September 18 – Bury Market

Leave Club 9:00 am £15 pp (Please note change of date and venue)

Thursday, October 24 – Leeds Trip

Leave Club 9:00 am £15 pp

Monday, December 2 – Turkey and Tinsel, Cliffe Norton Hotel, Tenby

Rooms still available

Wednesday, April 30, 2025

Five day hotel staying at the Waverley Castle Hotel, Melrose, Scotland.

£335 or £365 pp (depending on numbers)

£50 pp deposit required at the August social

In Memoriam

Barrett, Anthony Colin, IBC
Died 1.6.2024, Aged 86, Retired 1999

Beamish, Phillip, Vauxhall
Died 22.5.2024, Aged 71, Retired 2006

Buckley, Gerard, Vauxhall
Died 5.7.2024, Aged 88, Retired 1990

Bullman, Jean Elsie, Vauxhall
Died 11.6.2024, Aged 88, Retired 1995

Collins, Colin Michael, IBC
Died 1.6.2024, Aged 78, Retired 2003

Considine, Michael, Vauxhall
Died 6.6.2024, Aged 91, Retired 1988

Cooper, Maureen Edna, Vauxhall
Died 6.7.2024, Aged 85, Retired 1995

Cowing, Michael John, Vauxhall
Died 30.6.2024, Aged 90, Retired 1998

Cross, John Alan, Vauxhall
Died 8.6.2024, Aged 90, Retired 1997

Davidson, Natividad, Vauxhall
Died 22.4.2024, Aged 82, Retired 2004

Dunne, John Joseph, Vauxhall
Died 19.3.2024, Aged 86, Retired 1993

Frost, Valerie Elizabeth, Vauxhall
Died 19.6.2024, Aged 91, Retired 1989

Graham, William Thomas, Vauxhall
Died 15.6.2024, Aged 91, Retired 1997

Gray, Kenneth, Vauxhall
Died 12.6.2024, Aged 86, Retired 1993

Greenwood, Derek, Vauxhall
Died 20.5.2024, Aged 91, Retired 1989

Impey, Robert Eric, Vauxhall
Died 23.5.2024, Aged 78, Retired 2005

Jacques, Joan Margaret, Vauxhall
Died 11.4.2024, Aged 85, Retired 1996

Jones, Allan, Vauxhall
Died 1.6.2024, Aged 89, Retired 1999

Kirk, Raymond Leslie, Vauxhall
Died 19.6.2024, Aged 82, Retired 2001

Lais, Abdul, Vauxhall
Died 15.6.2024, Aged 66, Retired 2013

Lee, Peter James, Vauxhall
Died 3.6.2024, Aged 88, Retired 2000

Matthews, John, IBC
Died 29.6.2024, Aged 85, Retired 1994

McPherson, Thomas, Vauxhall
Died 22.6.2024, Aged 87, Retired 1992

Murray, Paul, Vauxhall
Died 4.6.2024, Aged 62, Retired 2018

Nicholas, George, Vauxhall
Died 25.6.2024, Aged 78, Retired 2002

Nichols, Sydney Arthur, Vauxhall
Died 14.5.2024, Aged 88, Retired 1989

O'Brien, James, Vauxhall
Died 28.4.2024, Aged 87, Retired 2002

Packer, Robert J., Vauxhall
Died 3.5.2024, Aged 82, Retired 2005

Pettigrew, James Geoffrey E., Vauxhall
Died 26.5.2024, Aged 73, Retired 2013

Reilly, David Nicholas, Vauxhall
Died 8.6.2024, Aged 74, Retired 2012

Rolls, Clive, Vauxhall
Died 11.6.2024, Aged 84, Retired 1998

Simpson, John Richard, Vauxhall
Died 3.7.2024, Aged 82, Retired 2000

Tavener, William Walter, IBC
Died 18.6.2024, Aged 77, Retired 2003

Tookey, William Francis, Vauxhall
Died 3.7.2024, Aged 87, Retired 1998

Tranter, Peter, Vauxhall
Died 26.5.2024, Aged 71, Retired 2006

Tumalty, Terrence Michael, IBC
Died 30.5.2024, Aged 78, Retired 2003

Williams, Glen Garfield, Vauxhall
Died 12.6.2024, Aged 74, Retired 2002

Williams, John, Vauxhall
Died 11.7.2024, Aged 90, Retired 1998

Williamson, Alan Peter, IBC
Died 22.5.2024, Aged 90, Retired 1994

Wrighton, William Herbert, Vauxhall
Died 20.5.2024, Aged 80, Retired 2000

Contact Information

VPA South

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Sylvia Pemberton (for trips only)
01582 759851

VPA North

Dave Williams
0151 608 8701

VPA Website – Southern/Northern Plants

<https://www.vauxhallpensioners.org>

Facebook

www.facebook.com/groups/VauxhallPensionersAssociation

Pensions Enquiries

Aviva:

Defined Benefit Solutions
PO Box 3331
Norwich NR1 3WH
Telephone: 0800 1584 194
Email: bpainc@aviva.com

Rothesay Life:

Rothesay Life
PO Box 545
Redhill
Surrey
RH1 1YX
Telephone: 0800 916 8090
Email: pensions.helpline@rothesaypolicy.com

Aon:

General Motors (VML) Pension Plan
Aon, PO Box 196, Huddersfield, HD8 1EG
Tele: 0330 808 5226
Email: GMPensions@aon.com

Employee Fleet

0151 350 3250

Email: employeefleet@stellantis.com

Welfare Fund

07460 171565
Email: vauxhallwelfare@vwcharity.com
Website: www.vauxhallwelfarefund.org

If you have a story you would like to tell, then please get in touch with Norman McGregor
Email: normanmcgregor3@gmail.com

The views expressed in this Newsletter are not necessarily those of the Company.