

## MOTORING MATTERS by Anthony Goodwin

### PEUGEOT'S LATEST 308CC

I decided not to follow the trend set by Peugeot when they launched this car and so did not drive it around in the nude! For those of you who didn't know, when they launched the car in London they sent out 308 people in nude suits to join the daily rush hour. This was all to do with the new technology within the car which includes a first-of-its-class Airwave Neck Heating System – heat scarf. In just 20 seconds you can go from the refined interior of the coupé to the open-air exhilaration of the cabriolet. Roof up or roof down you can rest assured that you will never have to compromise on performance. The innovative Neck Airwave Heating System diffuses warm air through the head rests, protecting the head and neck from the cold.

We had the top of the range GT model with a 2.0 HDi (135bhp) engine on road test. For those of you who are saying a diesel in a Cabrio - you must be mad, I say don't knock it until you try it. I couldn't believe it was a diesel most of the time and neither did anyone else that was staring at the car. It certainly got some looks, especially as I went down to Bournemouth for the weekend in it, luckily the sun was shining and I could have the roof down most of the time. Something else that made it a looker was the colour. We had it in Mocha, which is a dark black brown metallic with gold speckles.

As for safety features, it has got loads, it is the only car in its class to have a 5 star Euro NCAP result. You are protected with up to six safety airbags, including side head airbags which are built into the head restraint – making the 308CC the only car in this segment to have this innovative technology. The tough, robust structure is designed to shield you, dissipating the energy of front and side impacts, whilst intelligent seat restraints



**Bond, the original all-female, multi-million selling electronic string quartet, have applied their unique sound to one of classical music's most popular and iconic works - Vivaldi's Four Seasons. The modern interpretation of the Baroque masterpiece has been recorded by Bond exclusively for Peugeot to mark the launch of their new 308 CC.**



take the cabriolet's safety to new levels. The 308CC can also detect any risk of rollover and protect you from it in less than a blink of an eye. Extractable hoops create a passenger survival cell with windscreen pillars, cocooning you from the impact. Meanwhile the Electronic Stability Programme (ESP), fitted as standard across the range, adds an extra layer of safety. Electronic Brake Force Distribution and Emergency Brake Assist keep the car stable in emergency conditions. All the safety features also means the insurance group for the GT is 11E which is great for a car like this.

Now for a bit about how it drives; roof up it drives as well as the standard 308 with great cornering. Put the roof down and it is still great, they have worked hard on the drive when you put the roof down. There is very little of that shake you can get from convertibles. I decided to try on the motorway with the roof down and I can report that it is just as good with the roof up or down at motorway speeds, with the wind break up you hardly even notice the wind. Our test model had an auto gear box, I do enjoy an auto with the roof down its makes cruising and posing so much easier! On the motorway and A roads it kicked down easily and made over taking a breeze.

Optional extras available include electric seat pack, Peugeot connect Navigation with Bluetooth and vision pack xenon directional headlights. There is a large extras list but if you go for the GT version you get most of them included.

Prices are good too. The range topping GT HDi Auto model comes in at £25,795 with the base model coming in £19,995 for the 1.6 VTi Sport. As for the road fund licence, the 1.6 HDi is 138 Co2 so that's £120, with the version we had coming in at 185 Co2 so its £175. Included in the price you get 3 year Peugeot warranty and 1 year's roadside assistance.

### DEALERS WANT VEHICLE SCRAPPAGE EXTENSION

The National Franchised Dealers Association (NFDA) has requested a meeting with Government to discuss an extension of the Motor Vehicle Scrappage Incentive Scheme. The NFDA is the trade association for new car dealers, and sits under the umbrella of the Retail Motor Industry Federation (RMIF), the trade association for the whole retail motor sector.

This scheme has been a great success, with 38 manufacturers taking part. Allied Vehicles, Bentley, BMW, Chevrolet, Chrysler, Citroen, Daihatsu, FIAT, Ford, Honda, Hyundai, Isuzu, Iveco Ltd, Jaguar, Kia, Land Rover, London Taxis International, Mazda, Mercedes Benz, MG Motor, Mitsubishi, Nissan, Perodua, Peugeot, Porsche, Proton, Renault, Renault Trucks UK Ltd, Rolls Royce, SAAB, SECMA UK, SsangYong, Subaru, Suzuki, Toyota, Vauxhall, Volkswagen & Volvo have now taken a total of over 165,000 orders for new vehicles across the UK since the Budget announcement, covering 23rd April to 2nd August. "To say the scheme has been successful since its introduction would be a mass understatement," says Paul Williams, NFDA Chairman. "But with the retail economic climate still fragile and an increase in VAT scheduled for 1 January 2010, an extension of the initiative is vital. Further, our research tells us that

as these sales are purely incremental, the VAT earned on them has made it a self funded scheme. Indeed, if VAT were to increase Government could be in receipt of a surplus."

Rob Laidler, Sales Director for LTI, said: "Around 20% of our sales across the UK have been under the scrappage scheme, it has been extremely successful. The bulk of these sales have been from London and the West Midlands. Interestingly, most of those sales are to owner drivers rather than fleets. It would seem that for many the incentive has come at a time when their own taxi is due for annual plating and so they have considered buying new. Even more interestingly many of these taxi owners have vehicles which they bought new and have been running ever since." The old taxis are scrapped under the scheme, making the taxi fleet newer and more environmentally friendly. Interestingly, LTI have found that most of their new sales have come from owner drivers who bought their taxis new over ten years ago, rather than fleets, with many of these thinking about changing their vehicle at the annual overhaul. Current estimates within the motor trade are that the scrappage could run out in the next few weeks as it has far exceeded expectations.

### PARKING PAYMENTS BY PHONE

Cab drivers, along with other motorists, are told that paying for parking by phone makes their life easier. But apart from the drawback of having to have a mobile phone to make the call, another happens where rival phone parking services are provided in neighbouring areas. This is especially problematic in London, where there are 33 different councils. London Councils are trying to address the issue in the capital, suggesting setting up a single local rate contact number and one point of registration for all councils offering phone parking.

There are currently two main mobile phone parking payment suppliers in London, RingGo and Verrus, each contracted by several boroughs. However, both firms have questioned the need for a central hub. Last year Cobalt Telephone Communications, the company behind RingGo,

developed a parking telephone hub which it says connects to all the mobile payment operators in London. London Councils said that significant data sharing questions still need to be resolved. The 'hub' concept is being developed by London Councils and the board of Partners in Parking (PiP), a joint procurement organisation comprising several London boroughs and Transport for London (TfL).

London Councils' transport and environment committee chairman Mike Fisher said: "We want to make it quicker and easier for drivers to pay for their parking in London. Rather than searching for the right change to put in the machine, motorists can simply call in or text their location and pay by credit or debit card. A single system means motorists would only need to register their details once."