

## **Breath test drama blows Winepot off the road**

**Withit Without, Friday:** The Winepot got breathalysed today. It's a source of relief to everybody in the village that for a year at least she will be grounded, piped-down, confined to barracks and no longer a potential cause of death on the roads.

According to the landlord at the Pie & Strumpet, who boasts the ear of the local constabulary, she was four times over the limit, a measure which if administered to most of his customers would leave them clinically dead.

Anyone with a sense of justice will appreciate the irony, as the Winepot is a better driver drunk than sober, though neither extreme would merit a mention in the Encyclopaedia of Perfect Motoring.

When that white rust bucket of hers turns into Wizard's Foot Lane heading for the house beyond mine, I keep well out of the way. She is so small that her head barely comes above the dashboard and she's forced to peer drunkenly at the road through the top of the steering wheel.

Engaging the gears is a game of chance. While in theory it can be any one of six including reverse, in practice the engine is only occasionally connected to the wheels which leads either to a screaming engine, kangaroo jumps or persistent stalling. Progress from A to B is inevitably erratic.

I've never seen the Winepot less than three sheets to the wind at any time of the day or night. Even before the morning sparrow first passes wind, she's frequently too drunk to unlock her car yet alone get in and start the engine. On these occasions she has been known to stand in the middle of the road, hands raised to heaven with her waif-like body wavering like a blade of grass in the wind.

After dark she gets lost and staggers around the back of the houses trying all the doors. When she finds one open she is inclined to enter and shout 'where's the party' which frightens the cats and terrifies the children.

My doors are as a result always locked and I guard against her nocturnal prowling by moving my dustbin from one place to another. As she well beyond ascertaining precisely where it is, she tends to crash into it and fall over which makes a splendid racket.

This is invariably followed by a stream of profanities and then silence as she lapses into unconsciousness and sleeps it off unaware that she's lying in my discarded detritus, a foul and fetid mess that by morning renders the Winepot into something unfit even for landfill.

Today's drunk-in-charge allegation has been a disaster waiting to happen and hopefully their worships will fine her at least the equivalent of two cases of gin and pack her off to be dried out by a raft of odious shrinks and social workers.

While the village of Withit Without is buzzing with the news, the inhabitants are missing the key question: who grassed the inebriated old bag? Not one of the neighbours, surely? Don Ravioli, the controversial tycoon wouldn't do such a thing, neither would Peter the Peddler nor Fang the Demon Dentist?

Could it possibly be the Winepot's spouse, Bodge the Builder? Perhaps he thought the bench could be relied on to give her a large custodial and tonic thereby leaving him free to tinker with his beloved motorbikes. I am determined to unmask the fiend, but this may take time.

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