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**News Release**

4th April 2016

**Stop in the Name of the Law!**

Motor law and personal injury specialist at Andrew & Co LLP Michael Pace is warning drivers involved in car accidents not to break the law by failing to stop or report it to the police.

Michael says he has represented a number of people lately who, having been involved in an accident, have unwittingly committed an offence and as a result have ended up being prosecuted.

“Failing to stop after an accident, report an accident or careless driving or inconsiderate driving can all result in penalty points (endorsements) on your licence and a hefty fine,” said Michael.

“The law is quite harsh for people who commit the first two offences. The penalty points start at five points for each offence and, subject to the circumstances, can be as high as 10 points!

“If you are charged with driving without due care and attention you could receive anything between three and nine penalty points, depending on the seriousness of the offence.

“It is worth remembering that if you get 12 or more endorsements on your licence within three years, you will be disqualified from driving for six months which could have a devastating impact on your career and home life.”

So, what should you do if you have an accident? Firstly, Michael says you must stop as soon as possible. If you cannot stop for safety reasons, you must find a place to turn around and then go back to the scene of the accident.

Having stopped you are expected to consider the situation. If you have hit an unaccompanied parked car, you should knock on a few doors of nearby houses to try to find out who the owner is. If that’s not possible, leave a note on the windscreen saying who you are and how you can be contacted.

If you have caused damage to a sign or other 'street furniture' such as a barrier, you must also stop and then decide what to do next.

If you have hit or been hit by another car, then having stopped you must give your name and address to the other driver and expect them to do the same.

If for some reason you cannot give your details to anyone because they are not there you must then call the police and report the accident as soon as is practicable. Usually you can do this on your mobile phone while still at the scene. Failing everything else, perhaps because you are injured, you must report the accident to the police within 24 hours at the most.

If you have managed to exchange your particulars with the other person, there is no need to report the incident to the police.

Michael concluded: “The message is, if you have been in an accident and are unsure what to do, report it to the police and always get the name of the person you spoke to.”

**Ends**

**Notes to Editors**

* [Andrew & Co LLP](http://www.andrew-solicitors.co.uk) is one of the longest established independent law firms in the East Midlands, having been set up in 1832.
* It offers a comprehensive range of legal services to private individuals and businesses across a wide range of sectors including renewable energy, agriculture, personal injury, conveyancing, charity and not-for-profit, family and employment law.
* Andrew & Co has 60 staff based at its offices in on Nettleham Road in Lincoln and Kirkgate in Newark.
* This new release is not legal advice; it is intended to provide information of general interest about current legal issues.

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