



# NETWORK

## December 2023

**A networking tool providing information for Activists and other interested parties**

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**[Acknowledgments: George Legg. Lembit Opik. Colin Brown. Steve Mallet. J C Quinton. FEMA. ACEM. Julie Sperling. Plus anyone else I've forgotten]**

## EDITORIAL

During the past couple of weeks I was alerted to an article in The Guardian written by Jillian Ambrose:-

<https://www.theguardian.com/business/2023/nov/25/race-to-get-uk-electricity-grid-ready-for-net-zero> which has the eye catching title:- 'It's like buying an iPhone and not having a cable': UK's bid for net zero in the balance due to grid 'blind spot' | Energy industry.

I have to emphasise this is not my usual reading genre but for research purposes needs must! Do I pretend to understand the technicalities? Absolutely not.

A couple of quotes from the piece, I felt, had particular relevance: "As well as more clean energy, Britain needs miles of extra cable to carry it. But a global shortage of components and skills means efforts to meet climate targets will go down to the wire".

"From next year, engineers will need to roll out more than 100km (62 miles) of electric cabling every day until 2040 if the government hopes to power the UK towards its climate goals, according to new data."

Now, I'm just an ordinary creature of average intelligence but.....

- a) can someone tell me where all this electricity is going to be generated from?
- b) where all the raw materials are going to come from?
- c) has anyone calculated the carbon cost of cables, pylons, etc., etc.?
- d) if oil is required, as I'm reliably informed, to cool extremely high powered underground cables to stop them overheating how is this environmentally friendly if we're told fossil fuels should be discontinued?

Before you inundate me with answers to these questions, please don't (though please feel free to write a piece for Network if you wish). Why not, I hear you ask.

Well, for one thing those who set these so called goals never look at the whole picture and calculate the cost to the environment overall. They are mostly scare mongering without considering all the science.

Its just goals, knee jerk reaction, goals, knee jerk reaction, goals, knee jerk reaction - unachievable goals in most instances but, hey, who cares as long as, internationally, Governments look as though they're are doing our bit.

For centuries worldwide governments have treated their voters (if you're lucky enough to live in a country that allows you to vote) as if they are all thick as a plank ..... and so it continues. We all know the planet is changing and has been since it was created but the answer is not knee jerk stupidity.

I'm fed up with seeing those who set themselves up as 'passionate environmentalists' whizzing round the world lecturing the rest of us. I saw an interesting post a few weeks back - two pictures - the top one was Greta Thunberg when she lectured the UN saying 'you've stolen my childhood'. The bottom picture a young African child saying 'don't worry Greta I'm digging your cobalt out as fast as I can'. Whatever your views - at least look at the whole picture and don't be a hypocrite.

Not going to waste any more time on this subject - if you feel inclined read the article for yourselves it'll make you think.

Onto far better truly motorcycling issues.

I'm an avid viewer of Richard Osman's House of Games on which they often have a set of questions "Where is Kazakhstan?" Well, now I know courtesy of a little map in an article from FEMA written by Askar Ismailov.

Why is this relevant?

In Kazakhstan they are experiencing a huge revival of motorcycling, riding, bikers, clubs and it makes a lifting read. Makes me want to go there.

Post soviet era Kazakhstan has gone from virtually no leisure activity time to a flourishing increase in a motorcycling community with many motorcycle clubs hosting events.

It's a huge country and having had only access to the industrial Ural there is a now high demand for quality motorcycles from Europe and American factories.

It makes a good read. Definitely want to go and join that scene.

That's all for now and for this year. January edition will be later than usual due to the festive season. Enjoy.

Ride free, AG

**For the next edition please send copy to [aine@mag-uk.org](mailto:aine@mag-uk.org) by 25<sup>th</sup> December with the subject heading:- Network**

## **POLITICAL REPORT – COLIN BROWN AND LEMBIT OPIK**

The Motorcycle Action Group's Political Unit, Lembit Öpik, Colin Brown and Michael Armstrong, all attended the Motorcycle Live event in Birmingham's NEC. It was a good opportunity to see what riders and the industry are focussed on. Here they report on this and the other matters of interest in MAG's campaigning work.

**MAG is only motorcycle rights organisation with a stand at NEC**

Reflecting the status of the Motorcycle Action Group in defending riders' rights, only MAG has an official stand at the annual Motorcycle Live event in Birmingham's National Exhibition Centre. Colin was on point for the entire event, with both Michael Armstrong and Lembit Öpik also making appearances.

The presence of MAG was hugely appreciated by riders, a large number of whom signed up for MAG membership. Colin also oversaw the Motorcycle Crime Reduction Group stand, which he did as a favour to that group, and also because MAG has been the most active organisation in regard to trying to reduce motorcycle crime.

Lembit and Michael had an excellent meeting with Bikesure, the insurance company of choice for MAG, with that firm's representative, Grant Varnham, reaffirming the warm and professional relationship between the two organisations.

Well done and big thanks to all who participated in the running of the stand, and the outreach work with other groups and individuals at the NEC.

### **MAG gets place at the table in Freedom Association Council**

In a further expansion of MAG's influence in the UK, Lembit Öpik was appointed to the Council of the libertarian Freedom Association, which is dedicated to fighting cancel culture and oppression of civil liberties. This also means they oppose the remorseless attack on road users' rights on the fake climate emergency agenda.

The announcement was made at the Freedom Association Annual Conference in Central London the Autumn. It means we can build strong links with fellow travellers who share MAG's commitments to raise the profile of campaigning and the rider's perspective on the authoritarian regime being imposed by the old political parties on the travelling public.

To find out more about the Freedom Association, follow this link:<https://www.tfa.net/>

### **Net Zero Big Zero**

Last month, Lembit reported on the continuing decline of the fortunes of those attempting to force Britain into achieving net zero carbon dioxide emissions by 2050. Now, Lembit reports that the attempts to stop the UK from emitting carbon dioxide has taken another turn for the worse, with the apparent reversal of similar plans in other European countries. For example, Germany has now backed out of its attempt to become a green grid nation, with the reopening of coal fired power stations in the face of an energy crisis. Other countries have also sought to water down their net zero commitments.

Lembit says the main motivator is short term: politicians have woken up to the fact that the public are simply going to refuse to tolerate the decline and fall of their way of life and standard of living for the sake of reducing CO2. As such, the net zero agenda is foundering, not because of high science, but rather, on the basis of practical living.

Colin and Lembit are responding to every consultation and raising the matter in every meeting they can, in the interests of staving off the possible banning of the sale of new ICE motorcycles. "I don't think they'll be able to implement that anyway," adds Lembit. "Judging by the offerings at the Birmingham Motorcycle Show, the manufacturers haven't really gone wild about replacing their petrol machines with electric ones. I expect the policy to crumble

shortly after the next General Election.” In the meantime, the Political Unit asks you to contact your MP and demand they oppose the sales ban on new ICE road vehicles. Let us know how you get on.

### **Mystery deepens over Luton Airport car park fire**

If you watch the news, you'll have seen that in early October 2023 Luton Airport was totally closed after a car park was ruined by a massive vehicle fire. News reports implied an electric vehicle (EV) had been directly responsible, when its batteries overheated and exploded, causing an uncontrollable incendiary situation. But within hours, the story was change, with suggestions an internal combustion engine vehicle had caused the fire. However, once again, the suggestion as its battery was at fault.

Lembit Öpik, MAG's Director of Communications and Public Affairs, has researched the subsequent information. It turns out a 'mild hybrid' may have been responsible. A vehicle model with a known risk of spontaneous combustion appears to have caused the conflagration. In other words, it seems that a semi-electric vehicle was to blame, though the authorities have been strangely reticent to confirm or deny this.

We doubt that they will be able to conceal the cause of the fire for much longer. But the longer they delay, the more likely it is that the cause was an electric vehicle of some description. We'll let you know once we find out.

### **Transport Reality Summit**

The cross-organisation movement known as Transport Reality met again to make strategic plans for the implementation of our fight-back against the reversal of the threatened ban on ICE vehicles in the UK, and other restrictive policies that harm the rights of road users.

While some elements of the discussions are confidential, it's fair to say that the overall plan is very much on course, and the people involved in the group have a clear common purpose to end the persecution of vehicle owners who pay vast amounts of tax to the Government.

### **More trouble for Sadiq Khan**

It appears that there is increasing evidence to show that there is now massive public resistance to discredited Mayor Sadiq Khan's support for his anti-road-user policies, including the suffocation of road space in favour of cycles, and the introduction of a vastly expanded Ultra Low Emissions Zone (ULEZ).

He has to an extent become iconic of virtue signalling nonsense to many. Lembit can confirm that even local authority officials are openly deriding Khan's antics on road use.

MAG asks you to write to politician to tell them what you think of the ULEZ expansion and the other road restrictions he and his people seem intent on introducing. He has to get re-elected next year, so we have six months to make this a central issue of the Mayoral candidates' election campaign.

## **Bike Theft More Progress thanks to MAG**

The Leeds Fight Motorcycle Theft meeting saw more progress in the fight to get the issue raised up the political agenda. The West Yorkshire Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime offered to lobby the National Police Chiefs Council, and Association of Police and Crime Commissioners behalf of riders if we can formulate two or three “big asks”.

This and similar offers are being made publicly in meetings, all recorded on film - and we will be exploiting them. Colin also uses the face time with PCCs and DMPCs to push for support in opening further doors in other parts of the country. Colin is now in negotiation with other PCCs to set up more meetings in the new year, and we are hopeful that we will soon be able to bring good news for riders in London, the epicentre of UK motorcycle theft.

Colin is also working hard to bring the Motorcycle Crime Reduction Group out of the shadows and turn it into a body that delivers results rather than hot air. Colin often expresses concern that the group spends too much time discussing what cannot be done rather than what can. It is always complex to get such a broad group with diverse motivations to be active, but Colin is not holding back.

The MCRG had a stand at this year’s Motorcycle Live Show, only because Colin offered to man it for the full 9 day show. An update of the MCRG website to bring it into the 2020’s with up-to-date advice and data was intended to be complete by the show, but has been delayed. More importantly though, Colin is pushing for the group to formulate a set of “big asks” that will massively impact theft figures and then to actively campaign for them. MAG is opening doors and lines of communication, now is the time to exploit them.

Colin is keen to hear any and all suggestions on the broad national-level solutions that you as riders want to see delivered. Please get in touch with Colin via MAG Central. ([central-office@mag-uk.org](mailto:central-office@mag-uk.org))

## **Licencing - the big push stalls**

Despite the loud calls for reform of the licencing system being made by the MCIA with their “Licence for Net Zero” campaign, a Ministerial Roundtable Meeting scheduled for 4<sup>th</sup> December fell victim to yet another Cabinet Reshuffle. The meeting has been indefinitely postponed until the new Minister for Roads has got his feet under the table. One thing that you can be sure of is that new Government Ministers are not chosen for their knowledge and expertise required to meet their brief. We will therefore once again be back to the beginning, trying to explain new concepts to yet another set of Ministers with no interest in motorcycling.

MAG is deeply concerned about the MCIA framing for their licence reform campaign. We all want reform, but tying that reform to a Net Zero agenda which seeks to limit and reduce all use of private motorised transport seems to be asking for trouble.

DfT officials seem intent on sitting on their hands between now and the next General Election, so Colin is not expecting rapid progress on any of the backlog of motorcycle related issues that we need the Department to move forward with. Colin met senior DfT officials on the day of the reshuffle, and it is clear that any existing work schedules were being put on hold while everyone waits for the dust to settle, complains that nothing can happen over the festive season and then debate when the General Election will actually happen. If, like Colin, you have low tolerance for delay and obfuscation, the coming months are likely to be painful.

## Every Letter Counts

Writing to your MP may seem pointless at times, but Colin can assure you that it is not a waste of your time. For example, Rob Duesbury wrote to his MP, Tim Farron, as part of the Resurface Our Roads Campaign. That letter led to a meeting for Colin with the former Lib Dem leader at Portcullis House. Colin was able to discuss the ROR campaign and wider points on the Lib Dem approach to transport policy.

The recent announcements of an £8.3bn investment strategy to resurface the road network are a welcome development, though this still falls well short of the £14bn that is actually needed. Colin discussed with Tim Farron how the money will be split between local authorities, and the transparency that will be expected of the councils in terms of how they spend the money.

Broadly the money will be split as follows:

- £3.3bn for local authorities in the North West, North East and Yorkshire and the Humber
- £2.2bn for local authorities in the West Midlands and East Midlands
- £2.8bn for local authorities in the East of England, South East, South West and, for the first time in 8 years, London

Importantly the announcement included the following statement:

“To increase transparency and ensure the £8.3 billion leads to an increase in the number of roads being resurfaced, local authorities will be required to publish information on their websites on a regular basis explaining how they are spending the funding in their area.”

If you care about this issue, please write to your local councillors and ask for full details on how the money is being spent – there is no formal ring-fencing so scrutiny is important to ensure the money does not get diverted into vanity projects. We need every penny spent on resurfacing roads and none diverted to cycle lanes, 20mph limits or LTNs.

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## NOTICE

**MAG Central Office will close around 12:30pm on Friday 22nd of December 2023 and reopen at 9am on Tuesday 2nd January 2024.**

# MAG PRESS RELEASE

## **MAG calls out lethargy on electric motorcycle charging infrastructure.**

**The Motorcycle Action Group (MAG) has repeated warnings that the needs of motorcyclists are being ignored in charging infrastructure provision. Riders are being urged from all angles to ‘go electric’ at this week’s Motorcycle Live show, but MAG shows that the needs of riders are not considered when it comes to charging infrastructure.**

Soon after the publication of the Government’s UK electric vehicle infrastructure strategy in March 2022, MAG warned that the interests of motorcyclists were not adequately covered. Twenty months later MAG has taken the opportunity to explore charging facilities for motorcycles at the Birmingham NEC and found them to be inadequate. In a video released by MAG the provision of charging infrastructure for motorcycles has been examined in some depth.

Despite being home to one of Europe’s largest EV charging facilities, the home of the Motorcycle Live Show has admitted that there are no dedicated motorcycle charging facilities on site. Free motorcycle parking is offered in Hall 1 for the duration of the show, but with no charging points. The main car parks have a tiny number of charge points, none dedicated for motorcycles, and the BP Pulse facility is accessed via front-facing ANPR camera-controlled barriers.

MAG’s Director of Campaigns & Political Engagement, Colin Brown, said:

“It is ironic that, at the UK’s premier motorcycle show, where the future of motorcycling is displayed and promoted, the basics of charging infrastructure are so shockingly sub-standard. We pointed out to the Government that despite our efforts to raise alarms in the consultations, the strategy seemed to ignore the interests of motorcyclists. Well over a year later, speaking to infrastructure providers it is clear that the needs of riders are yet to enter the conversation. I am not aware of the existence of a single dedicated, public motorcycle charging bay in the country. If anyone knows different – please let me know.”

MAG’s National Chair, Neil Liversidge, said:

“We are implacably opposed to the Government’s policy to wipe out the internal combustion engine. That does not mean we are opposed to electric motorcycles – they will be part of the future of motorcycling. But the relative significance of that role should be determined by the riders, not the Government. We will campaign just as hard for riders’ needs to be considered in the charging infrastructure as we do for riders’ interests in all other areas. What is clear to me, is that the Government want to force us to buy electric bikes, but cannot be bothered to create even the pretence that they intend to make those vehicles a viable option.”

ENDS

*Contact MAG at 01926 844 064 or [central-office@mag-uk.org](mailto:central-office@mag-uk.org)*



## Notes:

MAG's press release from March 2022 "Electric vehicle infrastructure strategy inadequate for motorcyclists" - <https://mag-uk.org/electric-vehicle-infrastructure-strategy-inadequate-for-motorcyclists/>

MAG's video on motorcycle charging infrastructure:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PKeuiBC5yJg>

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## Following up, Medway Anti Bike Theft Public Meeting.

It's already 7 months since we held our successful Anti Bike Theft Meeting, but here at North Kent MAG we realised if we rested on our laurels it would all be pretty pointless. At the meeting the Kent Police Crime Commissioner had promised Councillor Gulvin of Medway Council some funding for upgrading existing motor cycle parking in the town.

Shortly after this, in the local elections, the administration in Medway changed from Tory to Labour.

We promptly contacted Councillor Gulvin's Labour successor (Tris Osbourne) to alert him to the 'free money' on offer...with the Council heading for bankruptcy surely this was an opportunity too good to miss?

A few automated e-mail replies later and no progress, we had to change tactics.

In Medway there is a group called 'Local Authority' which is an independent news and current local affairs watchdog. They were organising their own version of the BBC's 'Question Time' with local politicians on stage at the MidKent Campus in Gillingham. On the panel of four local politicians were Councillor Gulvin and Osbourne, a chance too good to miss. We submitted our questions in advance and arrived at the venue unfashionably early so that we could get front row seats. It was really well run event and every seat taken. Eventually the Chair asked the panel 'Is motorcycling in Medway in a good place'?

To our astonishment Tris Osbourne announced that he would be putting in bid for extra funding to upgrade motorcycle parking. Mine was the 1st hand raised in the audience and explained that we'd emailed him on this very subject weeks before but received no reply. After some discussion it turned out that he had been acting upon MAG's advice but no one at the Council had bothered to reply to us. We explained that we had a meeting with the Kent PCC Matthew Scott and Police Chief Inspector Trevor Jenner arranged for late October to review progress on motorcycle theft. We stressed it would be good to make his application for funding ASAP to demonstrate to the PCC and Police that the Council were as committed to the project as MAG are. A few days later we got confirmation from Councillor Tris Osbourne that he'd secured £2000 to put in extra locking bars at 5 motorcycle parking bays. Not exactly a 'Euro Millions Rollover' amount but we'd kept up the pressure and held the Council and PCC to their word.

Onwards to the meeting with Police and PCC. We approached this meeting armed with conflicting Fol theft stats obtained from Kent police, the alarming figures (from Colin Brown) that 20% of KSI were on stolen motorcycles MAG's record of setting up a string of successful anti bike theft meeting across the Country since our March meeting and finally, the funding to improve secure motorcycle parking.

We arrived at the meeting police HQ, Gillingham early and met with Police Chief Inspector Trevor Jenner, who was also early and went off to the conference room for what was a very successful follow on meeting.

- The crime reduction grant of just over £2000 had been awarded to the council to ensure that all council owned public car parks with motorcycle provision were equipped with secure motorcycle locking points using the preferred MAG option for securing motorcycles.
- The discrepancies in Freedom of Information were discussed and how a motorcycle theft is only when a motorcycle is actually taken, a break-in to a garage with a motorcycle but the motorcycle not taken was a break-in not theft. Kind of makes sense, a motorcycle theft must include the motorcycle being taken.
- It was explained how Medway police were putting more beat officers into the area and that the number would increase in a relatively short time scale.
- We talked about how other areas were talking about motorcycle focus groups and that they would be contacted to see if that model could be used in Medway.
- My Community Voice, a web based site that allows the public to receive information about policing in their area and gives ways to pass on intelligence. This is now used by half the countries police forces to pass information to and from the public.
- In Medway they had set up victim based crime teams, dedicated teams who will investigate crimes, looking for evidence including CCTV. These officers will maintain contact with the victims at least month by email or phone until the case is closed because it is solved or closed through lack of evidence.
- A contact was given to contact the local crime prevention shop/events to highlight motorcycle security issues.
- Applying to the Community Fund for money to buy and give out more motorcycle security devices, we make the bid and Police Chief Inspector Trevor Jenner will endorse it.

On a positive note, the police did arrest two people for motorcycle theft in the Gillingham area and the theft rate dropped considerably immediately, indicating that motorcycle thefts could well be down to a very few people.

Not all of these points were a result of the public meeting we held about motorcycle theft in the area but the meeting did highlight the need for something to be done. All of the above will hopefully lead towards Vision Zero Motorcycle Thefts and open dialogue between all the parties involved in the future to move things forward. A big thanks to Police Chief Inspector Trevor Jenner for open frank discussion and explanations.

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**VIDEO**

[Rowan Atkinson may act the fool as Mr Bean but he is, in actual fact, an excellent serious actor not to mention a thoroughly educated and great bloke. When the following crossed my desk I thought I'd search for the original article and here it is. For Electric cars read electric vehicles].

## ROWAN ATKINSON: Our honeymoon with electric vehicles is over so, for now, my advice is to hang on to your old petrol motor

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By [ROWAN ATKINSON](#)

**PUBLISHED:** 01:09, 8 June 2023 | **UPDATED:** 02:24, 8 June 2023

I love electric vehicles — and was an early adopter. But increasingly I feel duped.

Sadly, keeping your old [petrol](#) car may be better than buying an EV. There are sound environmental reasons not to jump just yet.

Electric motoring is, in theory, a subject about which I should know something. My first university degree was in electrical and electronic engineering, with a subsequent master's in control systems.

Combine this, perhaps surprising, academic pathway with a lifelong passion for the motorcar, and you can see why I was drawn into an early adoption of electric vehicles.

I bought my first electric hybrid 18 years ago and my first pure electric car nine years ago and (notwithstanding our poor electric charging infrastructure) have enjoyed my time with both very much.



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**Electric motoring is, in theory, a subject about which I should know something. My first university degree was in electrical and electronic engineering, with a subsequent master's in control systems.**

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Electric vehicles may be a bit soulless, but they're wonderful mechanisms: fast, quiet and, until recently, very cheap to run. But increasingly, I feel a little duped. When you start to drill into the facts, electric motoring doesn't seem to be quite the environmental panacea it is claimed to be.

As you may know, the Government has proposed a ban on the sale of new petrol and diesel cars from 2030. The problem with the initiative is that it seems to be largely based on conclusions drawn from only one part of a car's operating life: what comes out of the exhaust pipe.



Electric cars, of course, have zero exhaust emissions, which is a welcome development, particularly in respect of the air quality in city centres. But if you zoom out a bit and look at a bigger picture that includes the car's manufacture, the situation is very different.

In advance of the Cop26 climate conference in Glasgow in 2021, Volvo released figures claiming that greenhouse gas emissions during production of an electric car are nearly 70 per cent higher than when manufacturing a petrol one.

How so? The problem lies with the lithium-ion batteries fitted currently to nearly all electric vehicles: they're absurdly heavy, huge amounts of energy are required to make them, and they are estimated to last only upwards of ten years.

It seems a perverse choice of hardware with which to lead the automobile's fight against the climate crisis.

Unsurprisingly, a lot of effort is going into finding something better.

New, so-called solid-state batteries are being developed that should charge more quickly and could be about a third of the weight of the current ones — but they are years away from being on sale, by which time, of course, we will have made millions of overweight electric cars with rapidly obsolescing batteries.

Hydrogen is emerging as an interesting alternative fuel, even though we are slow in developing a truly 'green' way of manufacturing it. It can be used in one of two ways. It can power a hydrogen fuel cell (essentially, a kind of battery); the car manufacturer Toyota has poured a lot of money into the development of these.

Such a system weighs half of an equivalent lithium-ion battery and a car can be refuelled with hydrogen at a filling station as fast as with petrol.

If the lithium-ion battery is an imperfect device for electric cars, concerns have been raised over their use in heavy trucks for long distance haulage because of the weight; an alternative is to inject hydrogen into a new kind of piston engine.

JCB, the company that makes yellow diggers, has made huge strides with hydrogen engines and hopes to put them into production in the next couple of years.

**(file image)**



## **JCB, the company that makes yellow diggers, has made huge strides with hydrogen engines and hopes to put them into production in the next couple of years**

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If hydrogen wins the race to power trucks — and as a result every filling station stocks it — it could be a popular and accessible choice for cars.

But let's zoom out even further and consider the whole life cycle of an automobile.

The biggest problem we need to address in society's relationship with the car is the 'fast fashion' sales culture that has been the commercial template of the car industry for decades.

Currently, on average we keep our new cars for only three years before selling them on, driven mainly by the ubiquitous three-year leasing model.

This seems an outrageously profligate use of the world's natural resources when you consider what great condition a three-year-old car is in.

When I was a child, any car that was five years old was a bucket of rust and halfway through the gate of the scrapyard. Not any longer. You can now make a car for £15,000 that, with tender loving care, will last for 30 years.

It's sobering to think that if the first owners of new cars just kept them for five years, on average, instead of the current three, then car production and the CO2 emissions associated with it, would be vastly reduced.

Yet we'd be enjoying the same mobility, just driving slightly older cars.

We need also to acknowledge what a great asset we have in the cars that currently exist (there are nearly 1.5 billion of them worldwide).

In terms of manufacture, these cars have paid their environmental dues and, although it is sensible to reduce our reliance on them, it would seem right to look carefully at ways of retaining them while lowering their polluting effect. Fairly obviously, we could use them less.

As an environmentalist once said to me, if you really need a car, buy an old one and use it as little as possible.

A sensible thing to do would be to speed up the development of synthetic fuel, which is already being used in motor racing; it's a product based on two simple notions: one, the environmental problem with a petrol engine is the petrol, not the engine and, two, there's nothing in a barrel of oil that can't be replicated by other means.

Formula One is going to use synthetic fuel from 2026. There are many interpretations of the idea but the German car company Porsche is developing a fuel in Chile using wind to power a process whose main ingredients are water and carbon dioxide.

With more development, it should be usable in all petrol-engine cars, rendering their use virtually CO2-neutral.

Increasingly, I'm feeling that our honeymoon with electric cars is coming to an end, and that's no bad thing: we're realising that a wider range of options need to be explored if we're going to properly address the very serious environmental problems that our use of the motor car has created.

We should keep developing hydrogen, as well as synthetic fuels to save the scrapping of older cars which still have so much to give, while simultaneously promoting a quite different business model for the car industry, in which we keep our new vehicles for longer, acknowledging their amazing but overlooked longevity.

Friends with an environmental conscience often ask me, as a car person, whether they should buy an electric car. I tend to say that if their car is an old diesel and they do a lot of city centre motoring, they should consider a change.

But otherwise, hold fire for now. Electric propulsion will be of real, global environmental benefit one day, but that day has yet to dawn.

- **First published in The Guardian.**

[ROWAN ATKINSON: Our honeymoon with electric vehicles is over so hang on to your old petrol motor | Daily Mail Online.](#)

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***And, as regular readers will know I have been bleating on about Hydrogen (besides other fuels science can provide us with) for ages so here's an interesting article:-***

Is green hydrogen the missing link in pollution-free fuels?

<https://airqualitynews.com/fuels/balance-of-power-is-green-hydrogen-the-missing-link-in-pollution-free-fuels/>

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# FEMA

## In Memoriam: Rene Hilbert, One Of FEMA's Founders

October 31, 2023



Rene Hilbert from Luxembourg, a true friend of motorcycling, has passed away. He lost his life in the middle of October in a motorcycle accident in Iran, when he was hit by a truck.

Rene was one of the founders of FEM in the late eighties, and he was also one of the persons that were strongly involved in the merger between FEM and EMA in 1998. After that he was a member of the FEMA Committee for many years, where he represented LMI Luxembourg. Beside that he managed his job for Luxembourg State, where he, amongst other tasks, created the new education system for new motorcyclists.

He loved the long trips on a motorcycle, and he has traveled all over the world, but especially the Far East was his favorite. Rene was very open minded, and he always saw the best side in the people he met. Rene is survived by his girlfriend Anne, who was injured in the accident, as well as his sister and brother in Luxembourg. Our thoughts go out to them.

May he rest in peace.

*Written by Hans Henrik Jørgensen (DMC Denmark)*



Rene Hilbert (r) during a break in a FEMA Committee meeting in September 2004 (photo by Wim Taal).

## Dolf Willigers Retires From FEMA – A True Motorcyclist Says Goodbye

- **FEMA news**

November 1, 2023



Today, 1 November 2023, FEMA's General-Secretary Dolf Willigers (66) officially retires from his job.



Dolf was a volunteer with a Dutch motorcyclists' organisation since 2000, where he was a member of the board from 2006 to 2013 and from 2016 to 2017. He was also an editor of this organisation's member magazine from 2011 to 2014 where he focused on European issues. Dolf represented the organisation as a delegate to FEMA from 2013 to 2015, when he applied for (and got) the job of FEMA's General-Secretary.

In the past eight years we have come to know Dolf as a person that has a deep knowledge of all dossiers concerning motorcyclists' issues. That, combined with his engaging but strong-willed personality, made him well-respected and liked in the European and even global community of defenders of riders' rights, as well as in the community of lawmakers, road safety experts and other stakeholders.

***Please read the remainder of the article here:-  
<https://www.femamotorcycling.eu/dolf-willigers-retires/>.***

***Unfortunately it is not in a format that I can transcribe here. Thank you, Dolf, for all your work and articles.***

## **Swedish motorcyclists: EU scrapping directive restricts individual freedom**

FEMA News: November 13, 2023



Swedish motorcyclists' organisation SMC – a member of FEMA – is strongly critical of the EU's proposal for a new scrapping directive – the proposal wants to solve a problem that does not exist! Just like FEMA, SMC believes that the proposal results in significant restrictions and intrusions on individual freedom for very limited benefits to the environment and climate.

[SMC](#)'s analysis shows that the proposal would have clear consequences for motorcyclists. It establishes additional obligations for motorcycle owners and makes it more difficult to repair your vehicle yourself. Increasing the cost of the recycling process results in a reduced availability of spare parts at the MC scrapping companies.

Within the EU, there are rules on how to collect and scrap cars. Motorcycles and mopeds are exempt from these rules but a review of the End of Life Directive (ELV) is now underway which proposes to include them. SMC has submitted its [consultation response](#) to the government to highlight the negative consequences for motorcyclists. SMC takes a positive view of the ambition to strengthen a circular economy within the automotive industry. Properly designed, it can have positive effects in several areas, but SMC is critical of

whether the EU's proposal for the scrapping directive is the right solution for motorcycles in Sweden.



Wim Taal, FEMA's General Secretary: "Virtually all motorcycle parts can be re-used, through a large network of specialised second-hand part suppliers or by users themselves who swap and change parts with other owners. Parts that are not re-used are recycled through local recycling schemes or sent on by second-hand part shops. There is no evidence of motorcycles being dumped beside the road or otherwise disposed of in an inappropriate manner."

Due to weather conditions, the motorcycle season is very limited in Sweden. According to statistics from Trafikanalys (Trafa), an average of 2,000 kilometers per year is driven by a Swedish-registered motorcycle, which is significantly lower than in many other countries. The motorcycles must undergo a mandatory inspection every two years, and according to the Swedish Transport Agency, they have the lowest percentage of failed vehicles during the inspection. Due to these conditions, 75 percent of the motorcycle fleet consists of motorcycles older than ten years. In other words, motorcyclists take good care of and maintain their motorcycles. According to Traffic Analysis (Trafa), there are 322,817 motorcycles in traffic and 262,712 parked motorcycles in Sweden. Decommissioned motorcycles have the potential to, after an approved control inspection, return to traffic. Any simple repairs may be required and the availability of spare parts enables the individuals to replace worn out parts with genuine and standardized spare parts from motorcycle dismantling companies.

It is important to note that neither the Consumer Purchase Act nor any other consumer protection legislation currently requires motorcycle manufacturers to provide spare parts. This means that there is a need for older motorcycles to have access to original spare parts. If an individual has the opportunity to repair their vehicle and thus extend its life, this can have a positive effect on the global environmental impact of the vehicle.

SMC conducted a survey of scrapping companies specializing in motorcycles and was able to determine that the recycling rate is very high. The county administrations around Sweden state that it is very rarely, if at all, that motorcycles are found in the wild when they are used up.

**SMC's analysis shows that the proposal in its current form would have clear consequences for motorcyclists, some of which could lead to additional burdens for the vehicle category:**

- The proposal establishes additional obligations for vehicle owners: they must deliver their end-of-life vehicles to an authorized treatment facility (ATF), indicate any change of ownership and provide proof of proper treatment of their end-of-life vehicles.
- SMC wants to defend the individual's right to repair their vehicle – which will not be legally prohibited by the proposal, but there may be a significant financial incentive against it.
- SMC is critical of the proposal's impact on the market for spare parts. Here, the combination of fewer used parts provided by individuals, the lack of obligations for ATF to dismantle motorcycles prior to shredding, and the fewer facilities permitted to process end-of-life vehicles together can negatively affect both the formal and informal used parts markets.
- Regarding stolen motorcycles: although there are provisions in the proposal that effectively address this issue, there is room for improvement.

- The SMC's referral also highlights possible unintended effects of the proposal, including higher prices for used and official spare parts and that some old but non-historic vehicles may become end-of-life vehicles due to economic irreversibility.

While it is important to note that historic vehicles are not affected by the regulation, a possible consequence of economic irreversibility could be that some motorcycles would no longer achieve historic vehicle status: if they require repair shortly before they are transformed into a historic vehicle, and if this repair is more expensive than the value of the vehicle at that time, the proposal seems to indicate that the vehicle would be turned into an end-of-life vehicle due to financial irreversibility. SMC believes that the proposal results in significant restrictions and intrusions on individual freedom for very limited benefits to the environment and climate.



In 2020 FEMA [responded](#) to the European Commission's request for feedback, explaining why in our view motorcycles should not be included in a new directive or regulation. If motorcycles were to be included in the scope of the directive, that could mean the end of so-called home recycling. Recycling of motorcycles and motorcycle parts is an inherent part of motorcycle use. Home recycling, where you end the bike's registration and take it apart for re-use of its parts, is a significant part of the motorcycle culture. Home recycling helps to keep bikes on the road with used spare parts, instead of using new parts that must be produced from raw materials.

In FEMA's view, the current Directive succeeded in preventing waste from vehicles, the re-use of parts from vehicles and improvement of the environmental performance of all economic operators involved in the life cycle of vehicles. We can also understand the need to extend the scope of the directive to other kinds of vehicles than cars.

FEMA asked the European Commission to ensure that the possibility of controlled in-house demolition remains possible (as part of a circular economy), either by including it in the Directive, or by allowing Member States to make their own rules and regulations for in-house demolition. FEMA will re-emphasise its position in communication with the EC, since this is not addressed in the proposed Regulation.

FEMA also asked the Commission to ensure that historic powered two-wheelers of value to collectors or intended for museums, kept in a proper and environmentally sound manner, either ready for use or stripped into parts, do not fall within the scope of this Directive. FEMA will re-emphasise its position in communication with the EC, since this is not addressed in the proposed Regulation.

Although FEMA supports the overall goals of the proposed Regulation, we do see the danger for smaller treatment facilities that currently sell used motorcycle parts; they can be overwhelmed by high implementation costs and adaptation to new treatment technologies.

[Click here for FEMA's full position.](#)

Source: [SMC](#). Top photograph courtesy of [pxhere.com](#). This article is subject to [FEMA's copyright](#)

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# The Revival Of Motorcycle Culture In Kazakhstan

• **Blogs**

November 6, 2023

November 6, 2023



When FEMA was approached by Askar Ismailov to talk about the revival of motorcycle culture in Kazakhstan we immediately set up an online meeting. The meeting was very educational and at FEMA's request Askar wrote an article, sharing the wonders of Kazakhstan.

In the heart of Central Asia, the vast and diverse nation of Kazakhstan has been quietly experiencing a renaissance of sorts, centred around the thrilling world of motorcycling. From the early days of the Soviet Union to the present, the country has seen a remarkable transformation in its motorcycling culture. This article explores the historical journey of motorcycling in Kazakhstan, the emergence of motorcycle clubs, and the growth of centres for European and American motorcycle brands.

During the Soviet era, motorcycles in Kazakhstan were primarily associated with utilitarian transportation, a means of efficiently traversing the vast landscapes of this expansive nation. The iconic **Ural** and Dnepr motorcycles were a common sight, primarily used by the military, emergency services, and ordinary citizens for daily commuting. However, recreational motorcycling and the formation of motorcycle clubs were virtually non-existent, as the communist regime had limited space for leisure activities.



With the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991, Kazakhstan found itself in the midst of a period of significant change and newfound



freedom. It was during this time that motorcycle culture began to gain momentum. Enthusiasts began to organize themselves into motorcycle clubs, embracing the spirit of freedom and adventure. One of the earliest and most influential motorcycle clubs to emerge was the Kazakhstan Bikers. Founded in the mid-1990s, this club played a pivotal role in the development of the country's motorcycling culture. They organized rides, events, and even charity runs, raising awareness of the motorcycling community across the nation. Today, Kazakhstan boasts a vibrant motorcycling community, with numerous clubs that cater to a variety of riders, from cruiser aficionados to adventure seekers. Prominent clubs include Chingizkhan MC, Wheels Brothers MC, Road Brothers MCC and many others. These clubs not only foster a sense of camaraderie but also work to promote safe riding practices and community engagement. These motorcycle clubs often host events that attract riders from across Kazakhstan and neighbouring countries. Annual rallies, charity rides, and bike shows have become a fixture on the motorcycling calendar, drawing riders of all backgrounds to celebrate their shared passion.

As the popularity of motorcycling in Kazakhstan has grown, so has the demand for high-quality motorcycles, particularly those from European and American manufacturers. This demand has led to the establishment of specialized dealerships that offer a wide range of models to cater to different riding preferences. Major European brands such as BMW, Ducati, and Triumph have established a presence in Kazakhstan, providing riders with access to top-tier motorcycles. American giants like Harley-Davidson have also made inroads into the market, reflecting the global appeal of these iconic machines.



In recent years, Kazakhstan has gained recognition in the international motorcycling community. The country's breathtaking landscapes, from the boundless steppes to the rugged mountain terrain, have become a sought-after destination for riders around the world. This has led to the organization of international motorcycle rallies and events.

Notable travels such as [Silk Road Adventure](#) and [WildPlaces.Kz](#) bring together riders from various corners of the globe to experience the thrill of conquering ancient trade routes on two wheels. These rallies not only promote tourism in Kazakhstan but also enhance the country's reputation as a motorcycle-friendly destination. With the rise in interest in motorcycling, the need for proper training and education has become paramount. Riding schools have sprung up across Kazakhstan to cater to both novice and experienced riders. These

schools offer comprehensive training programs that cover safety, maintenance, and advanced riding techniques. They aim to instil a culture of responsible and skilled motorcycling among enthusiasts.

Motorcycling has evolved into a lifestyle for many in Kazakhstan. Riders often don distinctive gear and embrace the unique culture associated with their chosen style of riding. Whether it's the leather-clad cruiser riders, the adventurous off-road enthusiasts, or the sport bike aficionados, each group brings its own style and ethos to the motorcycling community. Also, number of riders who are traveling abroad promptly increases. They visit Georgia, Central Asia, Europe, Mongolia, Africa, the USA. The lifestyle aspect is not limited to the road; it extends to events, rallies, and gatherings where riders can celebrate their shared passion and create lasting memories. It's a culture that transcends age, gender, and background, uniting people under the common love for two-wheeled adventure.

**While the motorcycling community in Kazakhstan is thriving and evolving, it's essential to acknowledge the challenges and issues that riders face as they pursue their passion. These challenges not only present opportunities for improvement but also highlight the resilience and determination of Kazakhstani motorcyclists. The main two points need to be mentioned are:**

- **Road Conditions and Infrastructure** which require Investment in maintaining and improving road conditions, especially in rural areas. Also, development of designated motorcycle lanes and parking areas in urban centres.
- **Road Safety and Awareness**, i.e. launching public awareness campaigns to educate both riders and drivers about road safety and the importance of sharing the road responsibly.



The global shift towards sustainability and environmental consciousness has not bypassed the motorcycling world. In Kazakhstan, just as in many other countries, there's a growing interest in electric motorcycles. These eco-friendly and innovative machines offer a new dimension to the motorcycling experience. With the development of electric infrastructure and the availability of electric models from both European and American brands, Kazakhstan is positioned to be at the forefront of the electric motorcycling movement. In 2023, Kazakhstan has been considered for MotoGP. International Sokol race track near to Almaty now is ready for high performance and welcomes riders from all around the world.

Kazakhstan's reputation as a motorcycling destination will likely continue to grow. International collaborations, such as hosting motorcycle rallies and events in partnership with neighbouring countries, will foster cultural exchange and further strengthen the bonds between the global riding community. These events will not only promote tourism but also showcase Kazakhstan's unique landscapes and the warmth of its people. Motorcycle clubs and riders in Kazakhstan will likely continue to play a significant role in charitable and social activities.

Their contributions to the community will become more organized and widespread, improving the lives of those in need and showcasing the positive impact of the motorcycling culture. The journey of motorcycling in Kazakhstan, from its quiet beginnings in the Soviet era to the bustling and diverse culture of today, represents a unique and inspirational story. As the engines continue to roar and the wheels turn, Kazakhstan's motorcycling community looks forward to the next chapter of its extraordinary journey. In the heart of Central Asia, the horizon is limitless, the possibilities are endless, and the road ahead is an open invitation to new adventures and unforgettable experiences.



Written by *Askar Ismailov*

Top photograph courtesy of Ural

This article is subject to *FEMA's* copyright

## Norwegian Motorcyclists: 'Install Motorcycle Protection Where Needed'

- **Member news**

November 23, 2023





Guard rails without motorcycle protection may be a contributing cause of fatal accidents, according to Norwegian motorcyclists' organisation NMCU, and they want the Norwegian Public Roads Administration to install motorcycle protection where needed.



Recently **NMCU** – a member of FEMA -and other organisations and the press gathered in the Ministry of Transport for a press conference regarding the development of the road accidents. The in-depth analysis of fatal accidents in 2022 was presented, in addition to a briefing on the accident situation in 2023.

In the period 2005 – 2022, the accident analysis group **UAG** analysed 2,655 fatal road accidents with a total of 2,885 people killed. The accident picture is dominated by head-on accidents and run-off accidents, which make up 70% of the accidents and 72% of the number of fatalities. Pedestrian accidents are the third largest type of accident. Together, the three accident types account for approximately 85% of all traffic fatalities. In 2022, there were a total of 116 people killed in 105 fatal accidents, of which 85% were collision and downhill accidents.

In the analysis, emphasis was placed on the fact that speed, the influence of drugs and lack of driving skills were dominant. All road user groups are carefully described in the analysis and all factors surrounding fatal accidents are taken into account. Unfortunately, there were 21 people killed on motorbikes in 2022, of which two of those killed did not use helmets correctly. NMCU will study the analysis carefully so that we can follow up with input in the work around accidents with a special focus on motorcycles.



Motorcycle protection on guard rails can be a real life saver (photograph courtesy of PASS+CO).

The Norwegian Public Roads Administration gave a briefing on the situation up to now in 2023. They particularly highlighted the months of August, September and October as months with a high accident burden. September in particular was mentioned, with as many as seven people killed on motorbikes. On motorcycles, it is downhill runs that dominate the fatal accidents, but there have also been some head-on accidents, as well as rear-end collisions.



NMCU notes that in both 2022 and 2023 there are indications that guard rails without motorcycle protection may be a contributing cause of the fatal accidents. NMCU will continue its work and, not least, its meetings with the Norwegian Public Roads Administration to install motorcycle protection where needed.

Source: *NMCU*

Top photograph courtesy of *ayresadventures.com*

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## **EU parliament: driving disqualification should apply in all EU countries**

FEMA News: November 29, 2023



Transport Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) want driving disqualification decisions to apply in all EU member states and for more offences to trigger cross-border investigation.

The European Parliament's Transport and Tourism Committee (TRAN) adopted draft new EU rules to end the impunity of non-resident drivers and improve road safety. Under the current rules, if a driver commits an offence in a country other than the one which issued their licence and loses it, the sanction will most of the time only be valid in the country where the offence was committed and entails no restrictions in the rest of the EU.

**Under the proposed new rules, decisions on the suspension, restriction or withdrawal of a non-resident's driving licence will have to be passed on to the EU country which issued the driving licence, to ensure the disqualification decision is applied across all EU countries.**

MEPs propose the expansion of the list of severe traffic offences that would trigger the exchange of information on driving disqualification. In addition to the proposal by the Commission to include excessive speeding, driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs and traffic offences causing death or serious bodily injury, MEPs add driving without a valid licence offence. "I hope EU-wide driving disqualifications will reduce the number of road accidents throughout the EU by enabling the punishment of reckless driving abroad, and decrease significantly the number of fatalities caused by excessive speeding, drink-driving, and driving under the influence of drugs. As we work towards Vision Zero, we must also raise awareness that driving is about keeping everyone safe on the road," rapporteur Petar Vitanov (S&D, BG) said.

Transport MEPs also revised draft EU rules on the cross-border exchange of information on traffic offences to streamline assistance between member states. The committee backed expanding the list of traffic offences that would trigger cross-border investigation to include dangerous parking, dangerous overtaking, crossing a solid line and hit and run amongst other offences. Given that around 40% of cross-border offences go unpunished, MEPs support more robust assistance procedures between EU countries by involving national contact points more in cross-border investigations, providing them access to different national registers and setting up an IT portal for information exchange. *“The ambitious goals of Vision Zero cannot be achieved without the ability to enforce penalties for road traffic offences committed by foreign drivers. Member states must have the tools to exchange information and effectively identify road traffic offenders. Driving abroad should not mean impunity of punishment, including for third-country drivers,”* EP rapporteur Kosma Złotowski (ECR, PL) added.

The draft rules on driving disqualifications were approved by 37 votes to five, while the proposal on the cross-border exchange of information was passed with 37 votes in favour and five abstentions. MEPs also agreed to start talks with member states on the final shape of both texts (35 votes to six on driving disqualification, 34 votes to one and four abstentions on cross-border exchange of information), once plenary has given its green light during the December 2023 plenary session. Both proposals are part of the [Road safety package](#) presented by the European Commission in March 2023 to improve safety for all road users, facilitate cross-border enforcement of traffic rules and modernise driving licence rules.

Source: Committee on Transport and Tourism. Top photograph courtesy of Kees Meijer

This article is subject to [FEMA's copyright](#)

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## The two-wheeler sector gathers at EICMA in Milan

ACEM News: 13 Nov 2023



The 80<sup>th</sup> edition of the International Exhibition of Two-Wheelers (EICMA) welcomed around 500.000 visitors last week making Milan the world capital of the motorcycle sector with the presence of global brands, public authorities, industry organisations and, above all, passionate riders.

ACEM has actively participated this year by engaging with members and by contributing to external activities in the promotion

of motorcycling. Concretely, our Board of Directors gathered to discuss the sector's approach towards a safer, greener and digital-resilient mobility set on the EU agenda. However, the industry's main claim is the need to create a more favourable policy framework to avoid losing competitiveness at global level especially when facing emerging countries mainly from Asia.

In parallel, our secretary general Antonio Perlot was invited to address a keynote at the Motorcycle Conference [“Riding Future Technologies 8.0”](#) organized by the

engineering consultancy Ricardo. Experts from different brands discussed the challenges and trends of alternative fuels in the motorcycle industry including the implications of design and software to ensure the best performance under different environments.

The importance of motorcycles in cities was showcased in the new space dedicated to [Urban Mobility](#). ACEM participated in the roundtable referring to our [Vision2030+](#) that summarises efforts from the manufacturers to provide clean, efficient and affordable solutions for passenger mobility and last-mile logistics. In this sense, ACEM members continue developing innovative vehicles such as mopeds, scooters, motorcycles, tricycles and light quadricycles already present in most of the European cities, or ambitious projects such as the [swappable batteries consortium](#) for electric lightweight-category vehicles.

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## TRL to deliver SHARP helmet safety scheme

The consumer information scheme, launched in 2007, seeks to reduce fatalities and serious head injuries amongst motorcyclists by providing an independent assessment of helmet performance.

Published on 25 October 2023

TRL is proud to announce it has been awarded a contract with the Department for Transport (DfT) to manage and deliver the Safety Helmet Assessment and Rating Programme (SHARP).

The consumer awareness programme was initiated in 2007 to support a reduction in the severe and fatal head injuries typically sustained by motorcyclists in road collision. According to the latest figures, motorcyclists, constituting only 1% of road traffic in GB<sup>1</sup> tragically accounted for a disproportionately high 20% of road fatalities<sup>2</sup>. Approximately 80% of motorcyclist fatalities and 70% of those with serious injuries are the result of head injuries. While all helmets must meet minimum safety standards by law, SHARP goes beyond the established standards, providing an independent assessment of helmet impact performance, with safety ratings ranging from 1 to 5 stars, with 5-star helmets offering the highest level of protection. SHARP also offers guidance on selecting a properly fitting helmet. This information, provided at the point of purchase, can help riders make an informed choice within their budget.

SHARP, which aims to test around 30 helmets each year, utilises research findings from international studies on road traffic incidents involving motorcyclists. These studies replicate real-world accidents in laboratory conditions, allowing for the determination of impact locations, frequencies, and severities on helmets. By subjecting helmets to more demanding impacts than required by regulations, SHARP identifies helmets that perform significantly better in real-world collisions.

Dr. Phil Martin, Head of Transport Safety at TRL, expressed the significance of their role in the SHARP program, stating: *"Our appointment on the SHARP program feels like a return to our roots. From developing the original SHARP protocols, to advising the DfT on updates to the test protocols to reflect evolving helmet designs, TRL has been involved with SHARP for almost 20 years. Over time we have collected better data and provided better insights about the head injuries suffered by motorcyclists in road collisions. This data not only reveals the cause and location of injuries, but also the long term effects, derived from decades of collision research and our experience in providing expert testimony for personal injury claims."*

While helmet manufacturers prioritise safety, and consumers consider it a pivotal factor in their decision-making, not all helmets are created equal. *"Although all helmets that meet the minimum standards are inherently safe, some provide superior protection,"* adds Dr. Phil



Martin. *“SHARP solves the challenge for consumers in identifying these distinctions, as price alone does not serve as an indicator. Since its launch, helmet manufacturers and retailers have embraced the SHARP star rating system. We have confidence that they will demonstrate their continued enthusiasm for the scheme by participating in the process to update and expand it,”* he concludes.

TRL, a social purpose enterprise, operates the most advanced helmet impact test facility in the United Kingdom and conducts hundreds of helmet safety tests annually on motorbike helmets, cycle helmets and specialist protective helmets. They also manage the Road Accident In-Depth Studies (RAIDS) program for DfT, recording detailed information about road traffic collisions, their causes, and outcomes. This data underpins the safety standards of modern road vehicles and is essential for promoting road safety.

As a principal contributor to key safety initiatives like NCAP and Euro-NCAP, which designate safety ratings for new cars, TRL has consistently demonstrated its commitment to enhancing road safety for all. Their pivotal role in the SHARP program is set to ensure the continued influence of the scheme in protecting the lives of motorcyclists on UK roads.

ENDS

1 Road Traffic Estimates in Great Britain, 2022: Traffic in Great Britain by Vehicle Type

2 Reported road casualties Great Britain, annual report: 2022 Table 4

Thinking of buying a new motorbike helmet? Check the SHARP rating before you buy.

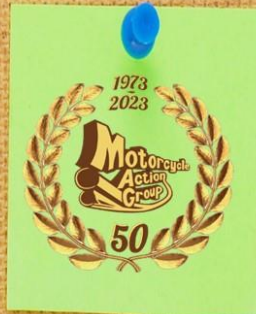
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***The general public rush to the shops from 1 – 24 December when they know those shops will be closed for one day on the 25<sup>th</sup>!!!***



## MAG Notice Board

Next  
Network deadline  
24th December  
\*\*\*  
OPEN ROAD deadline  
15th January  

50th Anniversary  
products are in stock  
And will not be  
replaced please order  
online soon before  
stock runs out

[www.mag-uk.org/  
shop/](http://www.mag-uk.org/shop/)



### Office

We close on Friday  
22nd December at  
lunchtime and  
reopen on Tuesday  
2nd January 2024

Parliament Recess Dates  
Christmas—19th Dec to 8th Jan 24

\*\*\*  
New Member Benefit

StopMyEngine

50% Off first 250 MAG  
members then

30% Off

See advert in here or  
Issue 110 Open Road





## LGA responds to RAC third-quarter pothole breakdown figures

### The LGA responds to the RAC's third-quarter pothole breakdown figures.

[View all Transport articles](#)

10 Nov 2023



Responding to the RAC's third-quarter pothole breakdown figures, Cllr Darren Rodwell, transport spokesperson for the Local Government Association, said:

"The LGA has long-called for longer term funding to tackle the issues facing our roads and we believe that government should award council Highways Departments with five yearly funding allocations to give more certainty, bringing councils on a par with National Highways."

"Councils much prefer to invest in more cost-effective and resilient resurfacing than retrospectively dealing with potholes. The recently announced £8.3 billion additional funding for roads maintenance should help to bring more of our local road network up to scratch, and help deal with the £14 billion backlog of repairs. We await to see more details of the funding plan."

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More news about Transport

- **LGA responds to AA survey on October pothole breakdowns**
- **LGA responds to £8.3bn roads funding announcement**
- **LGA responds to RAC third-quarter pothole breakdown figures**
- **More news in this topic**

RAC: RAC patrols dealt with record number of pothole breakdowns this summer  
<https://www.rac.co.uk/drive/news/motoring-news/rac-patrols-dealt-with-record-number-of-pothole-breakdowns-this-summer/>

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## **WEBSITES OR ON-LINE CONTENT YOU MAY WISH TO VISIT**

[https://www.reuters.com/business/autos-transportation/evs-struggle-with-reliability-due-charging-battery-issues-consumer-reports-2023-11-29/?utm\\_source=Sailthru&utm\\_medium=Newsletter&utm\\_campaign=Technology-Roundup&utm\\_term=112923&user\\_email=67c7d8f071b4eae67049a56a8136e052e590abae6877566538920383799f35eb](https://www.reuters.com/business/autos-transportation/evs-struggle-with-reliability-due-charging-battery-issues-consumer-reports-2023-11-29/?utm_source=Sailthru&utm_medium=Newsletter&utm_campaign=Technology-Roundup&utm_term=112923&user_email=67c7d8f071b4eae67049a56a8136e052e590abae6877566538920383799f35eb)

AQN: Dott research reveals the reasons why riders take e-scooters onto the pavement  
<https://airqualitynews.com/cars-freight-transport/dott-research-reveals-the-reasons-why-riders-take-e-scooters-onto-the-pavement/>

RAC: Met Police reveal nearly 1,000 ULEZ cameras have been stolen or damaged in the last seven months  
<https://www.rac.co.uk/drive/news/motoring-news/met-police-reveal-nearly-1000-ulez-cameras-have-been-stolen-or-damaged/>

CAV: Automated Vehicles Bill introduced by UK Government  
<https://www.cavsafetyhub.com/automatedvehiclesbillintroducedbyukgovernment>

MCIA: October Powered Two-Wheeler Registration Statistics  
<https://www.mcia.co.uk/posts/october-powered-two-wheeler-registration-statistics>

RSGB: Potential of self-driving vehicles 'enormous'  
<https://roadsafetygb.org.uk/news/potential-of-self-driving-vehicles-enormous/>

News story: New laws to safely roll out self-driving vehicles across British roads  
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