



May 2021 Network

A networking tool for Activists and other interested parties

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[Acknowledgments: George Legg. Lembit Opik. Colin Brown. Michael Armstrong. Martyn Boyd. Julie Sperling. FEMA. Plus anyone else I’ve forgotten]

EDITORIAL

It looks as though, finally, the penny may have dropped with The Minister and Highways England on the danger of SMART motorways in that I saw a headline where no further SMART motorways would be created "without additional safety measures".

Included in this edition is an article taken from Road Safety GB which gives further detail. I only hope that any new measures/technology will include the ability to pick up broken down motorcycles and their riders enabling the lane to be closed immediately because one member in Western Region broke down within full view of the cameras meant to pick up such things and close the lane. However, the lane remained 'live' even when the breakdown truck arrived.

The article clearly states:- **All new smart motorways will open with the technology in place to spot stopped or broken-down vehicles 'quickly', the Government has announced.**

Let's hope this is the case because enough people have lost their lives to what, in my humble opinion, is the most lunatic and definitely not correctly named concept to hit our highways in a long time.

STOP PRESS: Whilst typing this up a headline appeared on my phone from the Independent "campaigners are asking the High Court to scrap the Smart Motorway network once and for all because dozens of drivers have died on roads without a hard shoulder over the past 6 years".

Watch this space.

My editorial will continue further on in this edition on the lead into the article on the draconian **Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill** which I mentioned in my Editorial in April. Coverage of this begins immediately following the Campaigns Report.

Ride free, AG

[For the June edition please submit copy to aine@mag-uk.org . Subject heading Network by 25th May.]

Political Report – Campaigns Team. Colin Brown & Lembit Opik

With elections on 6th May 2021, you have just days to make the most of the campaigning opportunity these present to get riders' rights into the political arena. Together with the approach of Ride to Work Day and the continuing campaign to defend your right to buy new internal

combustion engine powered motorcycles, MAG's Political Unit are hard at work. Here's the latest from Lembit Öpik and Colin Brown.

Make 6th May count for bikers

As reported in last month's Network, a wide selection of elections take place on Thursday, 6th May 2021. These occur in England for Councillors, Police and Crime Commissioners, Mayors - and there's a Parliamentary by-election in Hartlepool. In Scotland and Wales the regional administrations are up for grabs, with all the seats being contested. Northern Ireland's Assembly is election free this year.

As revealed in April, the Election Handbook is available to you to help with getting commitments from candidates and parties to support biking. Please do use it – everything you need to know is there, and if you have any additional questions, Lembit is happy to answer them and help arrange things.

You already have it, but just for safety, this is the link to the Handbook:

https://wiki.mag-uk.org/images/7/76/MAG_Election_Handbook_Version_202103A.pdf

We strongly advise you to make at least one contact with candidates. Biking is under threat from the removal of road space, the threatened ban on internal combustion engines and the general pressure being put on us to conform to the pressure to cycle, walk and use public transport. So, this time, until 6th May, is your chance to try and get some common sense into the debate – and assurance that the travel mix in the UK will be handled with bikers in mind. Lembit adds, 'I know I keep going on about it, but I know from my days as an MP that candidates are extra focussed during the election period. Don't waste the chance to get them to say **yes** to us when they most need you to say **yes** to them.'

Clubhouse conversation

Big thanks to Anton in London MAG who organised an interesting discussion on something called 'Clubhouse' - the latest social media site that's come to light. The discussion was a combination of chat about motorcycles and getting used to the new forum. Did it do any good? Probably, but these things tend to be 'slow burn.' Lembit isn't particularly au fait with social media but recognises 'the significance of these sites. It's how a lot of the world operates these days, so I'm glad Anton has coaxed me into the 21st Century.' Lembit recommends that you also do the social media sites you have access to. 'If I can do it, so can you!'

Legal but lethal?

A worrying accident took place involving a Tesla vehicle in America, and this is relevant to the work Lembit has been focussing on regarding autonomous vehicles. As reported in the New York Times: 'Two men were killed in Texas after a Tesla they were in crashed on Saturday and caught fire with neither of the men behind the wheel, the authorities said. Mark Herman, the Harris County Precinct 4 constable, said that physical evidence from the scene and interviews with witnesses led officials "to believe no one was driving the vehicle at the time of the crash." The vehicle, a 2019 Model S, was going at a "high rate of speed" around a curve at 11:25 p.m. local time when it went off the road about 100 feet and hit a tree, Constable Herman said. The crash occurred in a residential area in the Woodlands, an area

about 30 miles north of Houston. The men were 59 and 69 years old. One was in the front passenger seat and one in the rear seat, Constable Herman said.'

MAG has, once again, been ahead of the curve in citing two issues relating to all of this. One is the question of electric power, which isn't technically an autonomy issue – but it is an issue. The raging fire, involving something called 'thermal runaway,' meant that the fire burned for four hours, instead of there being no fire - or one that would be easy to put out as is the case with most petrol engine vehicles.

The second issue is whether robocars are safer overall versus their human controlled equivalents. Elon Musk, the man behind the Tesla, recently claimed that electric cars are 10 times safer than manually controlled vehicles. MAG needs to be true to its databased approach. We need to look at the true figures and the actuarial risk involved with robocars. Only then can we draw sensible policy conclusions for the implications for motorcycling.

Law Commission in talks with MAG

Following on from the autonomy debate, Lembit is in talks with the Law Commission as they seek to create a legal framework for the use of autonomous vehicles on the UK's roads. Lembit submitted a comprehensive document on behalf of MAG which has been received and positively acknowledged. The aim is for bikers to have a formal voice in the considerations relating to the evolution – and coexistence – of autonomous vehicles and human controlled vehicles. We'll keep you posted on significant developments in the discussions with the Law Commission.

Please let us know if you read, see or hear anything relevant to the prospect of actual autonomous trials in the UK. We want to reach out to the practitioners and work together to ensure sensible answers.

Lembit's submission, on behalf of MAG, is available here:

https://wiki.mag-uk.org/images/9/92/Autonomy_and_the_law_2021_04_12.pdf

Ride to Work Day update

Work for this year's Ride To Work Day campaign is progressing well. The website updates are progressing though we are still doing battle with some technical details. The campaign will run with a 4 week lead up to the actual day on 21st June, so look out for the campaign messaging to start hitting the media from 24th May.

Colin is still looking for volunteers to help with a campaign video, so if you are not camera shy and would like to be featured in the campaign video please get in touch with Colin as soon as possible. There is a brief for what is expected of volunteers here: https://wiki.mag-uk.org/images/8/83/Ride_To_Work_Day_2021_Video.pdf

We can all take part in the campaign by simply telling everyone we know about the benefits of riding a motorcycle to work (or anywhere else for that matter)

Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill contains trouble

Lembit has reviewed the situation regarding the content of the Police Crime, Sentencing and Courts (PCSC) Bill contains potential trouble for riders and for MAG. The issues for MAG related to worrying restrictions that give the police greater powers to stop demonstrations

and fine or even imprison those breaking the new rules, if they get passed. For example, the smallest size demo they can stop is a demonstration of just a single person. In addition, making excess noise is to become a more serious crime. Obviously, both of these changes can affect the ability of riders to demonstrate.

Yet there is another part of the Bill that has been almost ignored. The traffic laws are being made stricter, with stiffer sentencing in some situations. In effect, the changes here are likely to have a far more serious impact on a daily basis than the laws on demonstrations.

Lembit says: 'the media has been mainly reporting the new restrictions of demonstrating – but the traffic rule changes are the unannounced spectre which could cause worries for riders. I'd welcome your views, because MAG needs to have a position on all of this.'

Can we alter the content of the legislation? Maybe. However, the main thing is to understand the implications for riders on a day-to-day basis. This work is all being done now, and you're welcome to input as MAG moves towards a policy position on all of this.

Here's the link to Lembit's summary of the document:

https://wiki.mag-uk.org/images/4/47/Police_Crime_Bill_2021_04_16.pdf

please respond to:

Lembit@mag-uk.org

Choice in Personal Transport

Following extensive debate about the ChiPT campaign it will come as no surprise that we all agreed that we are petrol heads at heart and all have a deep desire to ensure that we and fellow petrol heads will continue to have the choice to buy and use internal combustion engine motorcycles. Discussion of the pro's and cons of various routes to achieving this common goal are understandably less binary. We also recognise that not all riders are petrol heads and the times they are a-changin'. MAG is an inclusive organisation and will continue to represent the views of all motorcyclists. We are not a single powertrain lobby group nor a single marque club.

The NC voted to continue with the ChiPT campaign at present and we are also conducting an audit into the best way to achieve our agreed aim. We will clarify our goals, clearly identify allies, and discuss our strategies and next steps. Lembit is working on all of the above in what will undeniably be a challenging process. Motorbikes haven't been formally included in the announced policy covering petrol and diesel powered cars and light vans. That may well change but we are still in a position to influence government decisions on its policy for motorcycles. We will use all our lobbying ability to ensure that members' views are represented and considered by the policy makers. We are constantly reviewing the most effective ways to apply pressure that will influence Government thinking.

To find out more, please get in touch with Lembit at: Lembit@mag-uk.org

Tracking daft policies

Many of you will have seen the media storm over the Northumbria PCC's (Kim McGuinness) proposals for mandatory trackers on all motorcycles. The question of trackers being fitted to all bikes is not necessarily a bad idea, but giving the police or anyone else authority to constantly monitor the location and speed of all motorcycles is definitely not a good idea.

A local PCC clearly doesn't have the power to enforce such a proposal, but from a national perspective this became a real issue with the admission that McGuinness was lobbying the Home Office to introduce legislation to mandate this.

Colin immediately prepared the ground for a very vocal campaign but also engaged directly with the PCC's office to call for a meeting with McGuinness. This action combined with the vocal complaints in the motorcycle media led directly to the change of direction by the PCC. At the eleventh hour MAG's press release changed from one of conflict to one of reporting progress.

McGuinness is now dropping plans to lobby for legislation and MAG has secured a commitment from the Northumbria PCC's office to meet to discuss practical solutions to the very real issues of motorcycle theft and subsequent anti-social behaviour. We are embedded with the PCC's office which is vital as it secures progress even if another candidate wins the Northumbria PCC election on May 6th.

Approaches to Policing Minister

Colin's initial approach to the Policing Minister, Kit Malthouse, was met with the entirely expected brush off response. Colin has pressed again for a meeting with a slightly firmer tone. Any members can contact their MP's asking them to support MAG's request for a meeting. We are yet to feel the need for a major letter writing campaign, but a few rumblings hitting the Minister's inbox via MPs may do the trick.

MAG's five priorities

Nothing further to report on progress here yet. The priority list was submitted and we received acknowledgment from the Minister, along with a reaffirmation of her willingness to work with MAG. Colin has asked for confirmation of which officials are reviewing the list and when we should expect further activity.

The Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill.

EDITORIAL – part 2.

Firstly, please bear in mind that, as with all my editorials, the lead into the following are my own personal views and not those of the MAG NC.

Secondly, my thanks to George Legg, Western Region Rep, for ensuring this Bill was discussed at the last National Committee Meeting at which I was not in attendance and which has resulted in Lembit's evaluation of it and its implications. Lembit understands these things far better than me and his document makes for extremely scary reading on so very many things we, as a democratic country, now take for granted.

As I said last month *Phrases like ".....causing serious annoyance or inconvenience"!!!* is open to interpretation. On the biking front - this could have a disastrous effect on our many activities, not to mention our ordinary lives.

It seems that thousands of others are just as concerned with over 250,000 people signing petitions for Parliament to debate. What a shame it wasn't 2,500,000!

Since being Editor of Network I've always tried to pass on all the information out there for a balance so you, as Acitivists', can make an informed decision and act or not accordingly.

To this end, here is Lembit's assessment of this Bill (thanks Lembit for ploughing through the 300 pages of what can only be described as dismal reading) followed by a response from the Home Office to one of the on-line petitions. My take on the latter beingwell, that's best left out of print!

Over to Lembit. Thanks, AG.

Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill

Summary of implications for MAG

2021 04 16

As promised, this summarises the implications of the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts (PCSC) Bill on the activities and freedoms of the Motorcycle Action Group to pursue its agenda using various means, including demonstrating publicly.

Background to the Bill

'Ever since the first large-scale Extinction Rebellion protest in April last year I have been talking publicly and with the government about the potential for change to powers and to legislation that would enable the police to deal better with protests in general given that the act that we work to – the Public Order Act – is now very old, [dating to] 1986. But specifically, to deal with protests where people are not primarily violent or seriously disorderly but, as in this instance, had an avowed intent to bring policing to its knees and the city to a halt and were prepared to use the methods we all know they did to do that. Metropolitan Police Commissioner, Cressida Dick

The PCSC Bill has been generated as a direct result of demonstrations which took place in London and Bristol. In London, supporters of the Extinction Rebellion environmental group disrupted the ability of people in the capital to go about their business. The police stated at the time that they felt unable to remove the protestors using existing powers. There was much public anger regarding these demonstrations. In Bristol, a demonstration removed the statue of a historical figure and demonstrators threw it into the quayside waters, again causing a great deal of debate and controversy. These two incidents have led to the current initiative to give police more powers to prevent a recurrence of such events in future. The Bill has been used as an opportunity to introduce a wide range of measures in one go. Inevitably, in seeking to restrict the actions of the groups mentioned, everyone else is also potentially affected.

Overall assessment

In theory, the measures in this Bill could further restrict MAG's ability to conduct its demonstrations in the UK. The powers of the police are expanded, and they can prevent demonstrations of groups as small as one person from taking place. Furthermore, it can be an offence for individuals to act in ways which are illegal but which they didn't even know are illegal, as long as they 'ought to' have known the situation regarding the law.

Whether the rules actually impact on MAG's demonstrations and activities is entirely a function of political guidance given to the police by the prevailing political administration. Indeed, this is the case under existing law. Therefore, it is not possible to say that this Bill necessarily restricts MAG's actual activities. It does, nevertheless, provide more tools to the State to prevent demonstrations.

However, an area of the Bill which has barely been mentioned relates to changes in road traffic tariffs for offences. It seems that there is a substantial increase in the severity of the tariffs, and this will unquestionably have an effect on road users, including motorcyclists. Regardless of people's views about these tariffs, our membership should be aware of them, and MAG should have a position.

Specifics

I cover the measures in brief. I am able to provide a more detailed analysis on request. The comments relate to the order in which they appear in the Bill, not according to a perceived hierarchy of concern to riders.

Part 1

Police Driving Standards

There's a lot here about tightening up the expectations on police drivers in regard to their duty of care in how they drive. Doubtless this is intended to address the issue of accidents involving speeding police officers. This hasn't been a major MAG issue but it's interesting that it's here. Most likely, this sort of provision would show up for a specific case that MAG might be required to look at in the future, at the request of a member who is involved in an altercation with a police vehicle. I provide relevant references at the end of this document.

Part 2

Chapter 3

Extraction of Information from Electronic Devices

There is a lot of new power to extract information from electronic devices, such as your phone. Although the rules proposed here pay lip service to the owner's right to refuse, in reality if you hand your phone to the police, they can pretty much do what they like with it. This is not a good step forward. A biker stopped at the roadside and accused of a crime could have their phone taken away and its contents analysed. While not biker-specific, it clearly does provide some opportunity to invade personal liberties of riders in a way that is compromising to the principle of personal privacy to a greater extent than current law allows

Part 3

Public order

The Government claims public order is being 'protected... with specific reference to worrisome considerations such as noise, causing offence and intimidation or harassment of persons of reasonable firmness.' This opens the way for court cases to set precedents in this regard. There are other, similar, statements from the Government, all of which are open to the setting of new precedents in court.

The problem for MAG is simple. If a court case is lodged against a MAG demo, then this can be used to set the precedents for other motorcycle demos. The issue is more serious because it is very expensive for MAG to defend actions at a demo in court while, by contrast, the Government has effectively unlimited resources to invest in a court case. Therefore, even if we're right, we are unlikely to be able to pay for the cost of the defence. This is why the Government usually wins such cases – and these then become the precedents used in law. This process erodes civil liberties over a period of time.

Next, a fundamental change here is a shift towards giving the police close to absolute power to shut down any protest. Arguably, they already have this power, because there is a wide-ranging set of laws about the issue already. However, this part of the Bill includes a further set of restrictions on our liberty. That doesn't necessarily mean that MAG's ability to demonstrate will be curtailed. However, the set of new conditions that can be imposed on, for example, a peaceful demonstration by motorcyclists, means that any demo could be stopped very easily, for instance on the basis of concerns about what MIGHT happen, and what MIGHT be the intent of the demonstrators.

Specifically, police senior officers will be able to impose substantial conditions on static protests – that means protests where there is no marching. A stationary motorbike blockade would constitute a static protest. They can also impose a start and finish time – thereby making it illegal to demonstrate before or after that time. Remember, although we know this is all a response to the disruptive and anarchic antics of Extinction Rebellion - an anti-establishment group that the police felt current powers prevented them from dispersing and arresting - these new rules lead to rights lost by MAG too.

Another factor here is the imposition of noise limits. This is directed at the use of loudspeakers and noisy groups. However, the unintended consequence is directly going to affect motorbike demos, because of the obvious emission of noise by machines. It will be a matter of precedent – yet again – in terms of how these rules are applied and how they affect MAG. Note also that MAG domos often use handheld loudhailers, and these would also fall under the new restrictions – with severe penalties if one is found guilty of transgressing the law. As such, these regulations will indeed potentially affect MAG events, if it is deemed that they are being held in some way illegally, or if the 'proper' permissions have not been secured.

Note again that all of these apply to a demonstration carried out even by one single one person. A loud motorbike being revved in protest outside a building would breach these new regulations. The fine for this, or generally refusing to follow police directions over how they should conduct their protest, can be up to £2,500.

Note also that another worrying part of this is that it will also become a crime if you don't follow restrictions you, as a protester, 'ought' to have known about, even if you haven't received a direct order from an officer. This means you can be found guilty of an offence you didn't know you were committing. This is a big change, because the current law requires police to prove protesters knew they'd been told to move on before this constitutes a breach of the law.

A part of the new framework includes making it a crime to be 'intentionally or recklessly causing public nuisance.' This is all about giving police powers to prevent people occupying public spaces, hanging off bridges, gluing themselves to windows, or employing other protest tactics to make a demonstration inconvenient to others. The Government claims that they are not curbing the public's right to protest, but this is self-evidently untrue. These changes clearly do reduce the public's ability to demonstrate – and the politicians have made it absolutely clear they intend to proceed with these changes come what may. Bikers

could be prevented from carrying out just about any kind of demonstration, or the demo could be so limited it becomes meaningless.

Part 4

Unauthorised encampments

'Unauthorised encampments' are also included in the Bill. This does not cover things like MAG rallies. It is again directed at those who set up tents on public highways and so on. However, there are also limitations to going onto land without authorisation, including with a vehicle. These restrictions actually include elements of regulation that means even if you appear to have the intent to trespass or are 'likely' to cause damage or 'significant disruption.' Thus, likely future outcomes are now being taken into consideration and there are MAG related situation where this, or the 12-month sanction which relates to the fact that if someone tells you not to go onto their land, that restriction lasts for 12 months, even if you aren't told not to go on the land again. There's potential for MAG members to fall foul of this restriction, and again this is likely to be tested in court, with the precedents becoming the applicable indication of what is permitted and what is not. The Government will claim none of this is intended to prevent legitimate protest or activity, but the powers are so wide ranging they could indeed affect MAG activity.

The Government has stated (including to MAG) that 'Articles 10 and 11 of the European Convention on Human Rights set out that everyone has the right to freedom of expression and of peaceful assembly and association with others. However, these freedoms are not absolute, and restrictions may be placed for the protection of the rights and freedoms of others.' However, this is window dressing. MAG has explored the potential for using these protections in the past, and the cost in time and money make them practically out of reach to the majority of groups and individuals, and MAG hasn't got the resources to take the Government or police to court – and they know it.

In summary, this part of the Bill really does have the capacity to curtail MAG's ability to demonstrate. However, the truth is that we have few options in terms of preventing the passage of this Bill. The Government has an in-built majority and the damage done to the reputation of public demonstrations by Extinction Rebellion is so great that the public is vaguely supportive of the changes.

Part 5

Road traffic

No-one seems to have noticed the next section, which relates entirely to road traffic, and primarily to offences. There is more to worry about here as far as riding is concerned than there is in any other part of this legislation. There are 12 pages on increasing penalties for traffic offences.

One of the darkest changes is the escalation of the penalty for causing death by dangerous driving to 14 years. This basically raises the penalty to the virtual equivalent of a sentence for murder. Connected to this section, there is also attention for careless and 'inconsiderate driving.' It is clearly a response to the remorseless lobbying from the road safety lobby. MAG ought to consider our response to this. Will stiffer penalties really have the desired effect, or is this the further demonisation of road users? Again, MAG might benefit from taking a view. Colleagues will be aware that MAG has indicated some sympathy with severe penalties in certain circumstances where a death has been caused by a third party. Now is the time for

us to focus our attention on where, specifically, we stand on this issue. Whether or not we can change the law we need to be aware of where we stand on it.

In addition, in this section there are more powers to charge a vehicle user for the removal and disposal of vehicles. This is pretty much an open-ended opportunity to charge whatever they want to for the purpose of taking your motorbike away and crushing it. MAG should take a position on this.

In summary, this section really could create practical effects to riders, and it would be beneficial to consider these points, though again MAG needs to be realistic about the chances of actually altering any of the legislation.

Part 7

Chapter 1

Driving disqualification: extension in connection with custodial sentence

The Bill returns to traffic offences, this time the rules are extending the period of disqualification in the situation whereby there is a custodial sentence associated with the tariff set by the court. This is consistent with the general tenor of the overall legislation. Sentencing is being toughened up, and the law will be able to impose more severe penalties for a number of traffic related offences. MAG might wish to be aware of these, but again it is unlikely we will be able to secure any changes, even if we are concerned about aspects of these rules. The main use of knowing the new rules is in the event of a member of MAG seeking our guidance and assistance.

Schedules

These schedules expand on a number of elements of the Bill, with details of how the rules should be applied. These relate to the earlier parts of the Bill.

Summary

Overall, the sections of traffic offences are more significant on a day-to-day basis than the sections on demonstrations. However, both of these aspects of the Bill serve to tighten up the reach of the State into MAG's activities and riders' freedoms.

In extreme cases, a particularly authoritarian Government could easily instruct the police to operate a strict enforcement, essentially banning a large proportion of demonstrations. In addition, the stricter punishment regime outlines a perspective that punishment is the way to control road users and demonstrators, and the restriction of the ability to demonstrate is the way to control anarchy-orientated groupings such as Extinction Rebellion.

There are other aspects of the Bill that will affect us as residents of the UK, and these are both ominous and restrictive. However, they are beyond the immediate scope of MAG's jurisdiction.

I propose that MAG takes heed of this report and considers the elements that I have highlighted as relevant to our political and freedom related activity.

We also need to be honest with ourselves about what we can and cannot change. In part our mission is to ensure that we influence the legislative process where this is likely to deliver

results. Another part is to be prepared to support and inform our members in the circumstance where the legislation creates injustice in the treatment of motorcyclists in the UK. Thus, in the worst-case scenario, we need to understand what is happening and how it will affect us. In the best-case scenario, we could change the legislation. My professional assessment is that we are currently heading towards the worst case, not the best.

Lembit Öpik

Director of Communications and Public Affairs, MAG

Appendix

Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill 2021:

<https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/bills/cbill/58-01/0268/200268.pdf>

Overarching document:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/police-crime-sentencing-and-courts-bill-2021-overarching-documents>

Link to Explanatory Notes to the Bill: <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/bills/cbill/58-01/0268/en/200268en.pdf>

Link to the Bill itself:

Bill factsheets: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/police-crime-sentencing-and-courts-bill-2021-factsheets>

House of Commons Library supplementary notes:

<https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/cbp-9158/>

The Home Office response to the on-line petition:-

Dear

The Government has responded to the petition you signed – “[Do not restrict our rights to peaceful protest](#)”.

Government responded:

The public order measures in the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill do not erode the public’s right to protest; the Government will not be removing these measures from the Bill.

The right to protest is a cornerstone of British democracy and the Government is absolutely committed to maintaining freedoms of expression and assembly. This Bill will enable the police to manage disruptive protests more effectively. The majority of protests in England and Wales will be unaffected by the proposed measures in the Police, Crime, Sentencing and

Courts Bill. They will not stop people from carrying out their civic right to protest and be heard.

Existing public order legislation was passed in 1986 and is no longer suitable for managing all the types of protests we experience today. We aim to ensure that legislation remains fit for purpose.

In recent years, we have seen a growing trend in protest groups using highly disruptive tactics that have a detrimental impact on the fundamental rights of others. The misery caused to millions of people by protesters gluing themselves to train carriages, blocking traffic, including emergency vehicles, and preventing newspapers from being distributed is totally unacceptable.

In a recent inspection, the independent policing inspectorate, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary, Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) found that the rights of protesters are sometimes prioritised over the rights of local residents, businesses, and those with opposing views, and recommended a 'modest reset' of the balance. This is what this Bill is designed to achieve.

The proposed measures will allow police to better manage highly disruptive protests, protecting the legitimate rights of those affected by the protests whilst remaining compliant with the European Convention on Human Rights.

Articles 10 and 11 of the European Convention on Human Rights set out that everyone has the right to freedom of expression and of peaceful assembly and association with others. However, these freedoms are not absolute, and restrictions may be placed for the protection of the rights and freedoms of others.

The police will continue to be required to pay due regard to Human Rights obligations when making use of any powers to manage protests and they must be able to show that their use of powers is necessary and proportionate.

Home Office

Click this link to view the response online:

https://petition.parliament.uk/petitions/579012?reveal_response=yes

This petition has over 100,000 signatures. The Petitions Committee will consider it for a debate. They can also gather further evidence and press the government for action.

The Committee is made up of 11 MPs, from political parties in government and in opposition. It is entirely independent of the Government. Find out more about the Committee: <https://petition.parliament.uk/help#petitions-committee>

Thanks,
The Petitions team
UK Government and Parliament

MAG PRESS RELEASES

MAG remind riders to 'lock up after lockdown'

The Motorcycle Action Group (MAG) is reminding motorcyclists to 'lock up after lockdown'. Motorcycle thefts were significantly reduced in 2020 due to the pandemic but, with an easing of lockdown restrictions, more motorcycles could become easy targets for thieves once again.

MAG actively campaigns for more action to be taken to combat motorcycle theft. Early figures suggest that the scale of the motorcycle theft problem reduced by as much as 60% in 2020. This good news is, however, tempered by the circumstances of the last twelve months. Less motorcycles on the road will have resulted in less opportunity for thieves.

MAG's Director of Campaigns & Political Engagement, Colin Brown, commented:

"We would all like to think that the 2021 theft figures will remain low, but that is probably an unrealistic expectation. Many riders will have used their motorcycles far less during 2020, but with the end of restrictions in sight that situation is bound to change. We have also seen indicators of increasing motorcycle use between the various lockdowns. MAG will continue to campaign for more secure parking facilities, and increased focus from police forces, but of course we need to be sure that owners also take security of their bikes seriously. We should not become complacent, and new riders will need to be educated about the most effective security choices. The simple message is, therefore, to lock up your bike when parking in public spaces."

MAG will be pushing its "Lock it or Lose it" leaflets and amplifying all other similar motorcycle security messaging. The work to campaign for better quality, secure motorcycle parking bays has been taken to Ministerial level as part of the top five priorities for motorcyclists discussed with Roads Minister, Baroness Vere of Norbiton. In addition, the MAG Foundation charity promotes Lock To Lock, a simple concept suggesting a daisy chain approach where secure rails aren't provided.

We continue to work with the Motorcycle Crime Reduction Group and directly with a number of police forces. All MAG members' bikes are also covered by the MAG Protect reward scheme for information leading to the conviction of bike thieves. We will be publishing the 2020 Police Force Bike Theft Rankings as soon as all data has been received. The 2019 report can be found here: https://wiki.mag-uk.org/images/3/37/Rankings_July_2020.pdf

Contact MAG at 01926 844 064 or central-office@mag-uk.org

MAG praises Northumbria PCC's Office for clarification on motorcycle tracker proposals. 16/4/2021

The Motorcycle Action Group (MAG) has praised the office of Northumbria Police & Crime Commissioner, Kim McGuinness, following clarification of her recent proposals. Motorcyclists have been alarmed by reports of proposed measures, but MAG has engaged with the office of the PCC and is now looking forward to helping find genuine solutions to the problem of anti-social and criminal use of motorcycles.

Tempers were raised following a press release issued by the sitting PCC for Northumbria, Kim McGuinness. Adrian Pearson, Director of Planning & Delivery at the Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner for Northumbria, admits that the press release was not very well written, baldly stating that 'reckless' riders would have nowhere to go if all motorbikes were fitted with a tracker device. Many members contacted MAG with concerns that law-abiding riders would be punished simply because a criminal element was breaking the law.

MAG's Director of Campaigns & Political Engagement, Colin Brown, contacted the PCC's office in an attempt to resolve the issue, which has resulted in a clarifying statement.

Pearson has stated:

"To be clear, we're letting people know that:

- 1) the PCC is not proposing mandatory tracking devices on all bikes. The press release was not very well written in this regard.
- 2) We are very open to hearing suggestions from MAG and the motorcycle community on how people who misuse bikes for anti-social behaviour can be stopped.

I would add that the early feedback from the biking community is that they would not support tracking devices on the most at-risk bikes and, as such, I don't think we'll be taking this part of the proposals further in our lobbying. We're working on a revised press release or statement to post on the website clarifying things."

Colin Brown said:

"I am delighted that we have been able to clarify the situation and arrive at a positive outcome for motorcyclists in Northumbria and beyond. All credit to Adrian Pearson and we fully appreciate the difficulties in arranging short-notice meetings during the PCC election campaigns. We will have a more detailed discussion on the issue following the elections on May 6th. I am also continuing to request a meeting with the Policing Minister, Kit Malthouse - we may even be able to work alongside Northumbria and other PCCs to lobby the Government for genuine solutions to the scourge of motorcycle crime."

MAG Chair, Selina Lavender, said:

"MAG has taken proactive steps on behalf of its members and prevented what could have been a heated argument from developing. I urge all motorcyclists to support MAG and the work it does on their behalf by taking out a membership. The membership benefits far outweigh the cost."

MAG club affiliation scheme

Did you know that MAG offers a Club Affiliation scheme?

The Motorcycle Action Group (MAG), the leading UK riders' rights organisation, offers various membership categories, one of which is Club Affiliation. Clubs can affiliate to MAG for as little as £30 a year; a small price to pay for the benefits received, including exposure on our social media feed.

Affiliated club benefits include:

- Receiving 'to share' copy of our bi-monthly magazine, The ROAD.
- Discounted public liability insurance (PLI) via our insurer.
- Reciprocal link to your website and social media.
- Listing of your events in our magazine, and on our social media and website.
- Club members upgrading to a full individual MAG membership receive a £5 discount on their first year.
- Your club affiliation can start on a date to suit you. Many clubs choose to renew in alignment with their AGM.

Selina Lavender, MAG's National Chair, says: "Club affiliation is an important aspect of MAG membership. Riders may think of MAG as an organisation for individuals; however, we also offer club affiliation. Not all clubs need a 'one size fits all' package so our affiliation scheme offers add-ons such as PLI. MAG benefits through engagement with the wider riding community, and the numbers it can genuinely claim to represent. When speaking to politicians and decision makers, numbers really count. No matter the size of your club, this is important to us as it makes a real difference."

A spokesperson for one affiliated club said: "Riders' issues are very important to us and we know that we need to be part of something bigger to get the message across. We also know that protecting freedom isn't free. Through affiliation we help to fund MAG, which ensures that the rider's voice will be heard."

Whether you are a motorcycle, scooter, sidecar or trike club, find out more about our club affiliation scheme by visiting our website <https://www.mag-uk.org/affiliated-clubs/> contacting MAG's Central Office at central-office@mag-uk.org, or telephone 01926 844064 during office hours.

Notes:

Our Facebook page has over 22,000 followers.

The affiliation fee you pay depends on the declared size of your club.

If your club AGM isn't for a while, and you'd like to receive a reminder about MAG affiliation, email central-office@mag-uk.org with the date and we'll schedule sending you further information nearer the time.

MAG calls on PCC candidates: pledge to tackle motorcycle theft.

26/04/21

The Motorcycle Action Group (MAG) is calling on candidates for Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) roles to make a pledge to tackle motorcycle theft. MAG has contacted every PCC candidate for Hertfordshire and West Mercia following worrying revelations from Freedom of Information (FOI) requests.

MAG has highlighted the positive effect that COVID has had on motorcycle theft in 2020. However, two particular police force areas appear to have bucked the trend in a big

way.

MAG is collating national figures by police force area. Hertfordshire Police's FOI response to MAG showed a 50% increase from 134 to 201 in 2020. This was closely followed by West Mercia's response, which shows a 42% increase from 103 to 146.

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

"We still have a few responses to come back, but Hertfordshire and West Mercia's responses are sticking out like a sore thumb. Out of 34 responses so far only three have shown an increase. When the national trend is significantly down we have to ask why Hertfordshire and West Mercia have such ominous increases."

MAG has written directly to all seven candidates for Hertfordshire and West Mercia. The request is that each candidate pledges to review motorcycle theft in their area and to work with MAG to tackle the issue.

Colin said:

"Naturally we would hope that all PCCs will commit to work with us on tackling motorcycle theft. The figures for Hertfordshire and West Mercia make them of particular concern. London remains the worst affected area by far, but we cannot ignore such worrying figures coming from these two force areas. We will publish any responses we receive from the candidates no later than Monday 3rd May so that voters can see where the candidates stand on this matter."

ENDS To join MAG visit www.mag-uk.org or call 01926 844064 (office hours)

MAG Monthly Prize Draw Winners

April - to be drawn 04.05.21

March – Mr Jones of Cardiff

February – Alex of Cambridge

January – Ian of Aberdeen

Christmas Prize Draw Winner

Tony of Exmouth

Our thanks to Cumbria MAG, Bikesure, MAG Foundation, RideTo and Ian Mutch

MAG Notice Board

Next ROAD
deadline
10th May



**Monthly Member
Draw**

New for 2021

**See advert for
more details**



Not received your ROAD?
Please contact the office
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call 01926 844 064

Ride to Work day
<http://ride-to-work-day.mag-uk.org/>
21st June 2021

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The ROAD magazine offer for
non-MAG members
See details in Network & The ROAD

Need a test? Its a waiting game.

I saw a post on Facebook on a local motorbike page from a person who wants a full Category A qualification on his driving licence. He was asking for when testing would resume after Boris's roadmap announcement back in February, so I asked my motorcycle instructor for advice (mid April) and then I thought about emailing my MP. The reason behind this was: MAG might hopefully recruit new members who are going through their tests because we stood up for them and secondly it keeps MAG at the forefront of politicians minds.

Mark Jenkinson MP,

In my capacity as Regional Rep for Cumbria Motorcycle Action Group (MAG). I am asked questions on motorcycling and with the Prime Ministers announcement on his road map out of lockdown on Monday 22/2/21, I received a question from Shane Thompson from Whitehaven about the availability of theory test with the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DSVA).

Shane Thompson had a theory test booked for the 25th of March (3rd re-book) and he asked me if its likely to go ahead.

I asked Cumbria Motorcycle and Driving Training for advice and they received from the DVSA that motorcycle/car driving tests plus theory test will not restart until the 12th of April 2021.

I passed this information onto Shane Thompson and he replied that all Cumbrian theory test centres are fully booked for the next three to four months and that he is looking for availability in Newcastle, Liverpool and Preston. (Preston being a 105 miles one-way trip and where he has his next test booked).

So could you please ask the following questions to The Rt. Hon. Grant Shapps, Secretary of State for Transport. (Written or orally)

- What is the total number of people waiting for a theory test?
- What is the total number of people waiting for a motorcycle test?
- What steps is the Secretary of State taking to alleviate the backlog of test and including the constant demand of new applicants?
- What distance in miles (one way) does the Secretary of State deem appropriate for an examinee to travel for said tests and will he make a statement?

Yours sincerely,
Michael Armstrong
Regional Representative
Cumbria MAG

And this was the summary of the letter from the DfT through Mark Jenkinson MP:

- Confirmation that testing would resume on the 12th of April in accordance with the Prime Ministers road map announcement.

- The current waiting time is 13 weeks but they believe that the DVSA will recover the backlog quickly by extending operating hours and being to book tests four months in advance. (Theory).
- The number of the backlog practical motorcycle tests currently stands at 10,000 and ways to reduce this:
 - Extend the working day.
 - Overtime.
 - Buy back annual leave.
 - Second former examiners back to their former role.
 - Start a recruitment campaign.
- Criteria for traveling to a test centre is no more than 20 miles and a 30-45 minute travel time.
- Thank you for your email and continued patience during the pandemic. Signed by Baroness Vere of Norbiton.

I then later received a reply from the DVSA which was exactly the same apart from that they started 300 driving instructors would be released from other duties.

So now armed with their traveling times and distance recommendations, I thought that maybe a more rural country like Cumbria, I thought that I would ask for extra funding with the following question:

Could there be additional support for more isolated counties like Cumbria and will he make a statement?

In which I received the following response:

- Thank you for your email and that they appreciate the challenges in rural areas like Cumbria.
- Gave an overview of the examiner resource within Cumbria and stated that they were a mobile resource.
- Stated that resource could be sent from neighbouring counties and from Scotland too when restrictions are reduced.
- Then stated that the governments policy to help people in rural communities was to travel by bus! Which went into great detail locally and nationally too.

In summary; if we want to help people into motorbiking, we need politicians on our side to lobby the Department for Transport and the Driving Vehicle Standards Agency on our behalf to help people to pass their motorcycle tests.

For further information/assistance:

Search Facebook for Motorcycle Action Group Cumbria.

Or email:

cumbria-region-rep@mag-uk.org

I have assisted six learners within my county and emailed three different MPs. So we need to contact more to help make that change.

Michael Armstrong, Regional Rep ., Cumbria MAG.



Win a MAG Prize Package in MAG's Monthly draw for 2021

Prize package contains years MAG membership at renewal sponsored by Bikesure. Other prizes may also be included and are subject to change for example Oxford Lock provided by MAG Foundation or Ian Mutch's book - Low Rider or £10 RIDeto voucher

To be in with a chance to win this
MAG nificent prize all you need
to do is be a full MAG member when the draw
takes place on first working day after the end of
the month at 12pm

Our thanks go to Bikesure, MAG Foundation, Ian Mutch
and RIDeto for generously donating towards these
monthly prizes.

For full terms and conditions see website www.mag-uk.org



FEMA

Motorcyclists deserve a full role in road safety policies

FEMA News: April 5, 2021



FEMA wants motorcycles and other powered two-wheelers to be included in Europe's road safety plans.

FEMA studied the European Commission's latest road safety plans and wrote an extensive response, stating that the plans focus on cars only and do not sufficiently take motorcyclists into account. FEMA can and will not support an approach that is not safe for all road users, including motorcyclists.



The road safety policy of the European Commission is based on the 'Vision Zero' doctrine that was developed in Sweden. This doctrine and the resulting 'Safe System' approach is focussed on cars. What this means in practice is visible on Swedish roads, where motorcyclists often feel very uncomfortable and unsafe. (photograph courtesy of Wikipedia).



The European Commission published its [Road Safety Policy Framework](#), called 'Next steps towards Vision Zero'. The Commission sets new intermediate targets to halve the number of fatalities and serious injuries on European roads by 2030. According to [Mrs Adina-Ioana Vălean](#), EU Commissioner for Transport: "The Framework provides a comprehensive set of measures for priority areas such as improving the cross-border enforcement of traffic offences, modernising driving licences and preparing the safe transition to higher levels of automation), and links them with financing solutions. It also includes monitoring on the basis of key performance indicators to assess progress. And it addresses the EU's role in improving road safety on a global scale."

FEMA calls upon the European Parliament, the European Commission, and the Council to include motorcyclists and other users of L-category vehicles in the road safety policy in a way that is not restrictive for these road users.

Below is a summary of our response to the European Commission. [on the link to read our full response \(7 pages in pdf format\): https://www.femamotorcycling.eu/wp-content/uploads/documents_library/FEMA_view_EU_RoadSafety_PolicyFramework_2021_DEF.pdf](https://www.femamotorcycling.eu/wp-content/uploads/documents_library/FEMA_view_EU_RoadSafety_PolicyFramework_2021_DEF.pdf)

The EU Road Safety Policy Framework 2021-2030 has a large impact on all road users. As an organization that represents the motorcyclists in Europe, FEMA considers this policy insufficiently tailored to motorcyclists and other users of L-category vehicles. Assumptions, plans and key performance indicators are very much focussed on cars and do not sufficiently take other road users into account. In this view we follow the four pillars of the EU Road Safety Policy Framework 2021-2030. Only KPIs (key performance indicators) that are relevant for motorcyclists are mentioned here.

1. Infrastructure – safe roads and roadsides

Motorcyclists need smooth roads, obstacle free roadsides and safety barriers that are fitted in

a safe way. **The KPI (key performance indicator) for infrastructure** – Percentage of distance driven over roads with a safety rating above an agreed threshold – must include motorcycles.

2. Safe vehicles

In the plans for vehicle safety as formulated by the Commission, we miss powered two-wheelers. **The KPI for vehicle safety** – Percentage of new passenger cars with a Euro NCAP safety rating equal or above a predefined threshold (e.g. 4-star) – to be specified further - ignores vehicle safety for powered two-wheelers. We invite the European Commission to also develop a KPI for vehicle safety that is focussed on powered two-wheelers and other L-category vehicles.

3. Safe road use

We support the intention to update the UNECE regulation concerning safety belt reminders, a more effective cross-border enforcement on traffic offences, stricter limits on blood alcohol content for professional drivers and/or novice drivers. We are of the opinion that the Commission with the possible revision of the present European driving licence directive should abolish the stepped entry to the A-licence or at least set it up in such a way that it does not form an additional threshold and the focus must be on higher level skills.

Concerning

- **The KPI for speed:** Percentage of vehicles travelling within the speed limit. Speed limits have several functions and road safety is one of them. Other reasons to introduce a speed limit can be noise annoyance, air pollution, traffic flow, etcetera. Furthermore, different member states have very different speed limits on comparable roads. Finally, there is a difference between speed limits and safe speeds. The latter can be much lower, depending on the local situation, traffic situation, weather, vehicle. To connect speed limit to safe speed and base a KPI on that is not logical for us.
- **The KPI for sober driving:** Percentage of drivers driving within the legal limit for blood alcohol content (BAC). Although this seems a logical KPI, again legal limits differ per member state and per driver category.
- **The KPI for protective equipment:** Percentage of riders of powered two-wheelers and of cyclists wearing a protective helmet. Although we have no problem with this KPI, we are of the opinion that the latter may not be the most logical KPI. Especially the combination of the (in most cases) mandatory crash helmet usage for riders of powered two-wheelers and the (in most cases) voluntary use of helmets for cyclists will give a distorted picture.

4. Emergency response

About the **key performance indicator for post-crash care**: Time elapsed in minutes and seconds between the emergency call following a collision resulting in personal injury, and the arrival at the scene of the emergency services, we would like to see this KPI to be used for crashes with all vehicles, not only for cars.

Written by [Dolf Willigers](#). Top photograph by [Wim Taal](#).

Blog: motorcycles will be the logical choice after Coronavirus

FEMA Blog: April 13, 2021



Walking and cycling are fine, but for personal transport, powered two-wheelers will be the logical choice after Coronavirus, says FEMA's Dolf Willigers.

If we have to believe the experts, travelling will never be the same again. Even when the COVID-19 virus itself is under control, we have to take into account that the risk of contamination or a new wave of the pandemic for a long time, if not forever. Already politicians and medical experts speak of the 1.5-meter society: a society in which we have to keep our distance from each other in the public space, including public transport, schools, restaurants et cetera.

'For short distances, walking and cycling are very good, but they are no alternative for longer distances.'

Another thing we can already see is that interest groups like the cyclists and pedestrians' organisations, road safety organizations and environmentalists already take an advance on the future and advocate a status quo in transport of the present situation. A bit short sighted, because sometimes it is very hard to keep a distance on the sidewalks or on the bicycle: just look what happens when a group of cyclists has to wait for a traffic light. But the present situation also means that many jobs are lost, self-employed people have lost their income, people suffer from social isolation and the economy has dropped dramatically. Our society and economy need transport of people and goods and this will come back one way or the other when the present restrictions are partly or totally lifted.



Picture by Liverpool Echo

So, the question is: how do we organize transport and tourism when we are allowed to travel again? Goods will have to be moved and people need to go to their work, school, shops or will be on the way for social reasons. To keep your distance in public transport is very hard, especially in rush hour, but also on railway-, underground- and bus stations and airports. The idea behind public transport is that many people take little space, i.e. sit or stand closely

together. This is just what we are supposed not to do anymore. The capacity of public transport will drop dramatically with 60-80 percent if we must keep a distance from each other of 1.5 meter. For short distances, walking and cycling are very good, pleasant and recommendable alternatives, even while it can be hard to keep your distance, but they offer no alternative for longer distances.

This leaves personal motorized transport: car and powered two-wheelers. Securing a distance from other persons of 1.5 meter is probably easiest in the car, at least as long as you are the only occupant. More or less the situation you could already see before the Coronavirus outbreak when you entered Brussels or other cities in rush hour. However, this leads to other problems, as we could see earlier already. With people changing from public transport to cars and with only one occupant per car there will be even more traffic jams, parking problems, air pollution, greenhouse gasses emissions than there was before Coronavirus. Besides, when more people choose for cycling and walking while keeping a safe distance, they need more space. In this scenario, cars take up too much space, they are just too big.

‘Powered two-wheelers allow you to keep a safe space from other people.’



Picture by AutoGids.be

The same can be said for transport of goods in urban areas. The vans of the parcel deliverers and suppliers of shops and other companies take up much space, perhaps too much when the city councils allocate more space to cyclists and pedestrians. In fact, in many cities already temporarily, at least that is what we are told, parts of the road that before were allocated to cars are now allocated to bicycles and pedestrians. In Brussels, the centre of the city was changed from the first of May 2020 to a 20 kp/h area with priority to pedestrians and cyclists.

There is only one way out: next to more people walking, cycling or using e-scooters, people who have to travel a longer distance and for who public transport is no longer an option will have to choose a powered two-wheeler. This might be a moped or a motorcycle. Powered two-wheelers allow you to keep a safe space from other people. Motorcycles can ride both long and short distances, take up far less space than cars (and use less fuel) and bad weather isn't a problem anymore with good clothing. Modern motorcycles have low emissions and we even see more and more electric motorcycles and mopeds coming. In many countries it is even possible to ride a 125cc or equivalent electric motorcycle(-scooter) with a car licence and some additional training.

Several tests from FEMA and others (organizations, newspapers) showed that powered two-wheelers are by far the fastest way to commute. It is also cheaper than using a car or public transport, and always available. In some European cities it is even possible to use an electric moped in a sharing system. When more people choose powered two-wheelers, this means that there is more room left for other road users like cyclists and pedestrians. Even the

remaining car drivers profit: [research](#) from the Belgian research institute Transport & Mobility from 2011 learned that not only the motorcyclists but also the car drivers profited. When ten percent of the car drivers changed to motorcycles the total of lost travel hours was reduced with 63 percent. For goods, other solutions must be found. Partly by way of electrified cargo bikes, partly by quadricycles and other light vehicles. Options like cargo boats or even drones and the like may be possible too, but that is out of our scope.



‘For personal transport, powered two-wheelers will be the logical choice.’

FEMA’s General Secretary Dolf Willigers (photo by Wim Taal).

Conclusion: assuming that we will be able to travel freely soon, there will probably, at least for a period of time, be limitations to our freedom. Limitations in the way we travel as a result of the need to keep our distance. The capacity of public transport will be limited, and we will have to switch to more individual transport. At the same time, city councils allocate more space to pedestrians and cyclists instead of cars and goods vehicles. This calls for vehicles that are smaller than cars and trucks. For personal transport and partly for goods transport, powered two-wheelers (motorcycles, mopeds, e-bikes, speed-pedececs, cargo-bikes et cetera) will be the logical choice.

Road authorities and city councils should keep the use of motorcycles possible and facilitate the use of them by keeping roads open for them, create dedicated parking spaces and create safe charging infrastructure for electric powered two-wheelers. The use of small individual motorized transport – as powered two-wheelers are – allow people to travel into the cities while maintaining the needed social distance and leaving room for pedestrians, cyclists and users of other kinds of micro-mobility.

Written by [Dolf Williger](#). Top photograph courtesy of Triumph. This article is subject to [FEMA's copyright](#)

Where are the electric motorcycles?

FEMA: April 21, 2021



The European Union aims for a 90% reduction in transport emissions and a ban on petrol engines. Car manufacturers jump at the opportunity to sell us one of their newly developed electric or hybrid cars, but the established motorcycle industry does not appear to be so keen. FEMA's Dolf Willigers asks what the motorcycle industry is waiting for. And the industry [responds](#).



Charging station (photo by Wim Taal).

In December 2020 I [wrote](#) about the possibilities of survival of the internal combustion engine (ICE) motorcycle in a world that shows more and more electric vehicles. Now I will focus on electric motorcycles. Here something strange is happening. Manufacturers of cars are changing rapidly to fully electric and hybrid cars. LRJ ([Land Rover Jaguar](#)) has even announced that they will stop making ICE cars altogether from 2025, [Volvo](#) and [Ford](#) from 2030, [Audi](#) has stopped the development of new diesel engines, [Volkswagen](#) wants to compete with [Tesla](#) and plans to launch 70 purely electric cars by 2030. They are becoming cheaper as well: in the Netherlands for example, the basic model of the newest [Mercedes](#) EQA 250 is cheaper than the basic GLA 250 from which it is derived. [Dacia](#) has launched its sub-€20,000, fully electric mini-SUV Spring.

Many Chinese brands bring battery powered cars to Europe with growing success. Even the iconic American pickup trucks will be electrified: [General Motors](#) announced recently that they will produce the Silverado electric pickup truck in their ZERO factories in Detroit and Hamtramck (Michigan). To make a long story short: forced by the European CO₂ tax, and with plans in several countries to ban the sale of new cars with an internal combustion engine, and with a growing number of low and zero emission zones, all manufacturers are developing hybrid and fully electric cars, trucks, lorries et cetera.

Bans on ICE vehicles and low emission zones (LEZs) affect motorcycles too. Also, the Euro 4 and 5 emission standards forced manufacturers to take many models from the European market. Especially the larger touring models are getting scarce. The [Honda](#) Pan-European and the [Yamaha](#) FJR 1300 could not be updated to Euro 4 standards and vanished already some time ago, but now also models like the [Kawasaki](#) Z 1000 and ZZR 1400, Honda VFR models and [Harley-Davidson](#) Sportster have disappeared. There was even a rumour that the [BMW](#) K1600-series would be discontinued because they could not be homologated to Euro 5, but they are still on the price list. Of course, this could just be because of the opportunity the

European Commission gave to the manufacturers to sell existing stock that does not comply to Euro 5 standards a bit longer because of the Covid-19 situation.

‘European Green Deal: in 2050 the emissions from transport must be reduced by 90%’



Harley-Davidson LiveWire (photo courtesy of Olaf Biethan).

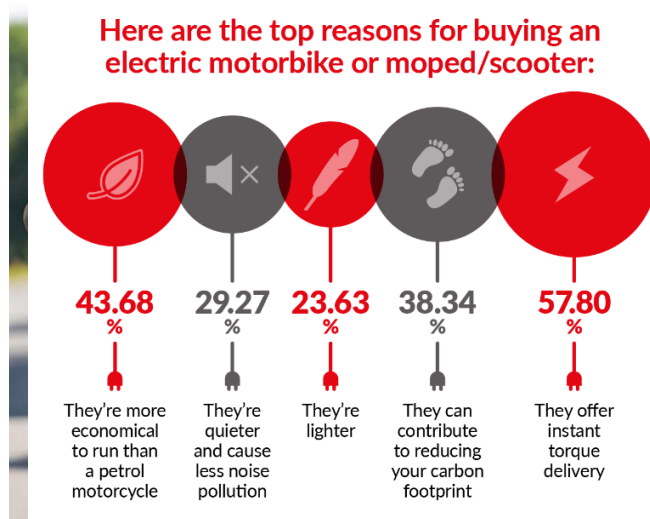
One would expect these models to be replaced by other models with an ICE or electric engine. This is not the case. The electric motorcycles we see are almost all from manufacturers like [Zero](#), [Evoke](#), [Damon](#), and [Energica](#), that made electric motorcycles from the beginning. Other new manufacturers like [OX Riders](#), [Cake](#) and [Pursang](#) have just started to produce or show interesting prototypes. Cake even advertises its model Ösa+ as “... a utility machine, a work bench and power station on wheels”. We do not hear much from the established brands. Of course, Harley-Davidson has its Livewire, [KTM](#) some dirt bikes, [Triumph](#) recently showed their TE-1 project prototype, and BMW has its C evolution scooter. However, all this cannot be

compared with the developments in the car industry. One could say that this is good news for the petrol heads among us, but is this so?

Like it or not, ICE motorcycles will be confronted with restrictions in purchase and use. Many countries have already announced the year after which no new cars with internal combustion engines should be sold. In March 2021, nine European countries have called on the European Commission to come up with a plan to phase out cars with ICE and of course there is the [European Green Deal](#), in which there is no place for internal combustion engines. In 2050 the emissions from transport must be reduced by 90%. Although motorcycles are never mentioned, there is no reason to believe that they will be exempted from any coming measures. In the United Kingdom motorcycles are exempted from the ban on the sale of new vehicles with an internal combustion engine in 2030, but how long will this last?

Motorcycles pollute less than cars and emit less greenhouse gasses, but will that be enough to earn a different treatment? With a growing number of hybrid and fully electric cars, there is a risk that motorcycles will in time stand out as polluting. We already see the same with the noise issue: cars have become considerably quieter, and motorcycles attract more attention. Resistance against real or perceived motorcycle noise grows. As we already saw, many types of motorcycles could not be homologated to the Euro 4 and 5 standards and disappeared from the showrooms. It is not that they are pushed out by electric motorcycles, they just did not comply with current environmental standards anymore.

‘Europe is just 2.5% of the global motorcycle market’



(photo courtesy of Yadea).

It is a mistake to think that the apparent reluctance of the established motorcycle manufacturers to invest in electric motorcycles, benefits the ICE motorcycles. You also should consider that Europe is just a tiny piece of the cake for the big Japanese manufacturers. In 2020, 56.5 million motorcycles were sold globally, which was 14% less than the 64.4 million that were sold worldwide in 2019. In Europe, in 2020 1.5 million motorcycles (and other powered two-

and three-wheelers) were sold, which was a little more than in 2019. Around 75,000 of them were electric. Just to put things in perspective, you can say that Europe is just 2.5% of the global motorcycle market. Outside Europe and North America, motorcycles are generally small. No wonder that motorcycle manufacturers are not in a hurry to develop new large models.

Have you ever heard of [Yadea](#)? According to www.motorcyclesdata.com it is the second largest motorcycle manufacturer in the world, after Honda, and a the largest electric powered two-wheeler manufacturer. They sold 5.6 million electric scooters in 2020, mostly in China. The Indian government put a target on 2025 of 90% electric powered two-wheelers. This means about 20 million electric motorcycles per year. With numbers like this, it is to be expected that the large Japanese motorcycle manufacturers will not spend much time and money to develop motorcycles for a European market (a market that was already declining before governments and city councils announced their plans to ban ICE vehicles).

If the big Japanese four manufacturers, but also the big European motorcycle manufacturers, do not seem to invest much in ICE motorcycles anymore – especially in the bigger bikes – why do we not see the alternatives yet? Honda seems to be working on a CB125 look-alike electric bike. Honda, KTM, [Piaggio](#), and Yamaha recently formed the Electric Battery Consortium, and announced a swappable battery standard, which is genuinely nice for small motorcycles, but you would need a crane to swap the batteries of a big bike. This leaves the question why we do not hear or see anything about a medium sized or big electric bike from the established manufacturers. Where is the electric touring bike that could replace my Honda Pan European, with the same range, luggage capacity, protection, qualifications et cetera? And make it a little bit affordable as well please, which is only achievable when large quantities are made.

‘Bikesure: 47.6% of the riders in the UK would like to own an electric motorcycle’

the car industry shows that it is possible, the established motorcycle industry still appears to be hibernating. Do not get me wrong: I do not want all ICE motorcycles replaced by electric ones, but I want to have a choice and I am surprised by the inactivity of the vested names. According to a survey of the British insurance company [Bikesure](#), 47.6% of the riders in the UK would like to own an electric motorcycle, but also 44% think that the sale of petrol-powered models should never be banned. For the people who would like to own an electric motorcycle, the torque from zero rotations is the most important reason, followed by the more economical run, the environmental impact and the lower sound emission. For the fans of the ICE motorcycle the range is still the most important issue to stick with petrol, followed by the charging time compared to the time to fuel an ICE bike and the general experience like the sound, feeling the engine working, et cetera.

From a survey we at FEMA did ourselves in 2016, I remember that there were big differences in Europe. Leisure riders wanted to stick to their ICE motorcycle, while other riders, who see their bike more as a commodity, would gladly change to electric. When almost half of the riders in Europe say they would like to own an electric motorcycle and governments all over the world are talking about a transition from ICE to electric, it is very strange at least that the established motorcycle industry keeps hesitating.

We asked ACEM, the European Association of Motorcycle Manufacturers, to respond on behalf of the motorcycle industry.



Today as in the past, [ACEM](#) manufacturers are working on exciting, sustainable individual mobility, leisure and personal transport solutions for now and for the future, ensuring safe, clean, smart, fun and efficient mobility for all.

With the Green Deal launched in December 2019, the EU took the political commitment of being climate neutral by 2050. The European [Climate Law](#) sets the 2050 target and the direction of travel for all EU policy. The subsequent [EC Communication on Sustainable and Smart Mobility Strategy](#) (December 2020) states that a clear path is needed to achieve a 90% reduction in transport-related greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. This is the effort required from transport to ensure the EU becomes the first climate-neutral continent by 2050, as outlined in the European Green Deal. ACEM acknowledges the EU's ambition of achieving net zero carbon emissions by 2050.

Whilst powered two-wheelers represent less than 2% of the vehicle fleet on EU roads, they provide a wide spectrum of vehicles, often used for very specialised purposes. Overall, in the EU motorcycles emit significantly less greenhouse gases than cars (50 times less). According to the European Commission's Directorate-General for Mobility and Transport (DG MOVE), the average car emits 2.0 tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions (CO₂ equivalent) each year, compared to just 0.3 tonnes for motorcycles. However, decarbonisation does not necessarily go through electrification. Our industry ambition, based on the 'right vehicle, right place, right energy carrier' concept, is to continue to offer

to the market a variety of powertrains that each individually will contribute to decarbonisation.

ACEM expects that the predominant share of the urban mobility powered two-wheeler market will be electric by 2030, with increasing spill overs on the whole motorcycle range towards 2050.



Antonio Perlot, ACEM's Secretary General (photo by Wim Taal).

Within the above multi pathway approach, the powered two-wheeler industry clearly understands that electromobility will play a key role in the future mobility of people and goods. Manufacturers in ACEM are progressively increasing the availability of electric models designed to meet these new consumer mobility- and citizen needs, within or around cities. Electric versions of leisure orientated motorcycles are still a niche market, made of 'early adopters' both in the industry and amongst consumers, willing to accept current limitations in the usage of the vehicle, let's face it with a much higher price tag, when comparing vehicles with the same purpose and characteristics. Start-ups are predominantly visible in this area, due to the fact that their investment and smaller manpower can be focused on such limited quantities, often acting as 'system integrators' when it comes to the powertrain and choosing to address a very specific market. Their production usually revolves around one, or in any case few, vehicle models or even trims.

Established manufacturers are balancing long term investments in infrastructure and employment, as well as high consumers' expectations linked to the brand when it comes to overall quality – electric propulsion for leisure motorcycles being only a fraction of their total activities. They are involved in a variety of vehicle segments, meeting different purposes and consumers' expectation. Needless to say, whilst established manufacturers are also entering the electric motorcycle segment, for most pure electrification is focusing mainly on smaller, short range vehicles, aimed mainly at the urban environment, where the perspective of higher volumes is in line with their industrial dimension. With the right enabling conditions, ACEM expects that the predominant share of the urban mobility

powered two-wheeler market will be electric by 2030, with increasing spill overs on the whole motorcycle range towards 2050.

Written by [Antonio Perlot](#), ACEM's Secretary General.

European countries with plans to ban fossil fuel powered cars are:

Austria – 2027 Non-electric newly registered taxis, car shares and hire cars.

Belgium – 2026 Petrol & Diesel new company cars.

Denmark – 2030 Petrol & Diesel new vehicles, 2035 all vehicles and new PHEV.

France – 2040 no fossil fuels for new cars and light commercial vehicles.

Germany – 2030 Zero emission new cars.

Ireland – 2030 Fossil fuel, new cars.

Iceland – 2030 Petrol & Diesel, new cars, except remote areas.

Netherlands – 2030 Zero emission, all cars.

Norway – 2025 Zero emission, all cars.

Portugal – 2035 Petrol and Diesel cars, still under discussion.

Scotland – 2032 Climate Action Plan, support electric vehicles.

Slovenia – 2030 <50 gr CO₂/km.

Spain – 2040 ICE, new cars.

Sweden – 2030 Petrol & Diesel, new car sales, Dec 2019 Climate Policy Action Plan.

United Kingdom – 2030 ICE, 2035 plug-in hybrid cars. Despite our efforts, this list may not be completely comprehensive or up to date. The information that we could find was sometimes contradictory. The status of the plans differs from rather vague to concrete legislation, although in most cases they are still plans and no more than that. In March 2021 nine EU countries (Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Greece, Malta, Ireland, Lithuania, Luxembourg and the Netherlands) asked the European Commission to set a phase-out date for the sale of new passenger cars and light commercial vehicles with combustion engines in the EU that is in line with the goal of climate neutrality by 2050. Next to the national bans, there are many local limitations on ICE vehicles in low- or zero emission zones and congestion zones. A full overview of these can be found on the website urbanaccessregulations.eu. So far, motorcycles are not mentioned in any national plans, but bans on older motorcycles and/or mopeds to enter LEZs already exist in some European cities. Examples are London, Paris, Amsterdam (mopeds and in 2025 all ICE vehicles), some Italian cities (two-stroke engine motorcycles and mopeds).

Written by [Dolf Willigers](#). Top photograph courtesy of [Energica](#). This article is subject to [FEMA's copyright](#).

The NMC Encourages Motorcyclists to Support Ride To Work Day

21st June event highlights that motorcycling is part of the solution to transport problems



National Motorcycle Council: April 23, 2021

Motorcycles are a key part of a sustainable future for transport. They provide social, economic and environmental benefits in a world dominated by cars, which are often driven with no passengers.

Many workers have been displaced from public transport over the last year and motorcycles offer a Covid-safe way to fill the gap between active travel and reduced public transport, without relying on the car.

21st June is national Ride to Work Day and details can be found on the website at: <http://ride-to-work-day.mag-uk.org/>

The initiative demonstrates that motorcycles are part of the solution to current transport problems. It is also an important mode of transport as part of the UK's 'transport recovery' from Covid-19. This is something which needs broader recognition by both local and national government. Using motorcycles, scooters and mopeds for work, education and for domestic activities, helps reduce traffic congestion and pollution. They are also easier to park and in the majority of places this is free.

The NMC and its members are delighted to support Ride to Work Day, an initiative promoted by NMC member the Motorcycle Action Group. Riders are urged to support the ride to work message by enjoying a two wheeled commute on the 21st June. The website gives access to resources which can be used and shared to support the Day.

Spread the message - particularly among work colleagues that motorcycling opens a world of opportunity and enjoyment, not just for work, but also for recreation and leisure.

ENDS

Notes to editors

1. For further information on Ride to Work Day please contact central-office@mag-uk.org
2. National Motorcyclists Council members are: The Auto Cycle Union, the British Motorcyclists Federation, IAM RoadSmart, the Motorcycle Action Group and the Trail Riders Fellowship.

NMC joins Government's Road Safety Delivery Group

Road Safety GB: 13 April 2021



A month on from its launch, the National Motorcyclists Council (NMC) has taken the first steps on its mission to “help assure a positive and sustainable future for motorcycling”.

The NMC brings together a broad spectrum of motorcycle organisations. These range from riders’ campaign groups to motorcycle sport representatives, off road and ‘green roads’ organisations and road safety experts.

Among its aims is for the creation of a new motorcycling strategy – covering transport policy, safety, accessibility for motorcyclists, motorcycle sport and the future of motorcycling for both transport and recreation.

Since forming in March 2021, the NMC has been invited to become a member of the DfT’s Road Safety Delivery Group (RSDG): <https://www.uknmc.org/news/national-motorcyclists-council-joins-government-road-safety-delivery-group-and-announces-its-priority-policies>

The RSDG works to reduce road casualties and draws its membership from a range of governmental and non-governmental organisations.

The NMC says its membership “significantly increases” representation from the motorcycle industry – and is a “key step” towards the creation of a motorcycling strategy.

Neil Greig, policy and research director at IAM RoadSmart and a member of the NMC, said: “The NMC being invited to join the RSDG is very welcome news and marks an acceleration of progress by the NMC.

“Indeed, the motorcycling lobby now forms almost the biggest single nongovernmental bloc on the RSDG. This is particularly important given that the proportion of motorcycle casualties remains a real concern.

“We look forward to working with the DfT and other departments as the NMC’s programme for policy change continues to develop.”

The NMC has also published a list of priority areas for change. These relate to different sectors of the motorcycling community and are designed to support the ongoing work of individual member organisations.

They include changes to licencing testing and training – to make the system easier to understand and access – as well as fiscal incentives to encourage motorcycle use, such as universal free parking and inclusion in schemes to encourage less car use.

Northern Ireland MAG has been busy

In conjunction with the Ulster farmers Union, the main representative body of farming in Northern Ireland, a joint press release was issued to appeal to farmers to be more mindful of motorcyclists safety regarding farm waste deposits on public roads. This appeal was picked up nationally and carried by UK farming on their website. See these links:

www.farminguk.com/news/farmers-asked-to-be-mindful-of-bikes-as-weather-improves_57963.html

www.ufuni.org/news/ufu-asking-farmers-to-be-mindful-of-bikes-on-roads

MAG NI was proactively approached by the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) to provide a motorcycling perspective to their road safety policy consultation document. The DUP is the largest political party in NI and currently holds key ministries including First Minister.

I was also proactively approached by a regional newspaper in County Tyrone, the Tyrone Courier, to write a short article about potholes with regard to motorcycles.

MAG has also been invited to be involved in the user engagement process of the Statistics and Analytics Branch of our NI Dept for Infrastructure which has responsibility here for all roads and all things roads. They want our input into motorcycle road safety and motorcycle collision statistics.

I've recently initiated engagement with the NI branches of the BMF and of Cycling Ireland to consider a joint appeal to our Department of Infrastructure for a concerted effort to tackle the crumbling state of our roads from the perspective of safety for these two vulnerable road user groups. Part of our appeal is for a change of thinking to actively include considering two-wheeler safety when planning and executing road repairs.

Cheers, Martyn

Is there something in the water in Somerset and North Somerset?

I'm seriously wondering because it seems Councillors seem to be coming up with 'nutty' schemes.

Last month we had N Somerset wanting to close some roads to motorised vehicles to be used by cyclists and walkers (not sure where you would have stood if you had a horse and cart!!!). That idea was quickly shelved.

Now though, wait for it, Somerset want to put a road right through the centre of a roundabout. Yep.-

Major plans for revamp of Burnham's Edithmead M5 roundabout unveiled

Major new plans have been unveiled this week to redesign the motorway roundabout next to Burnham-On-Sea's M5 junction in a bid to make it safer and reduce congestion.

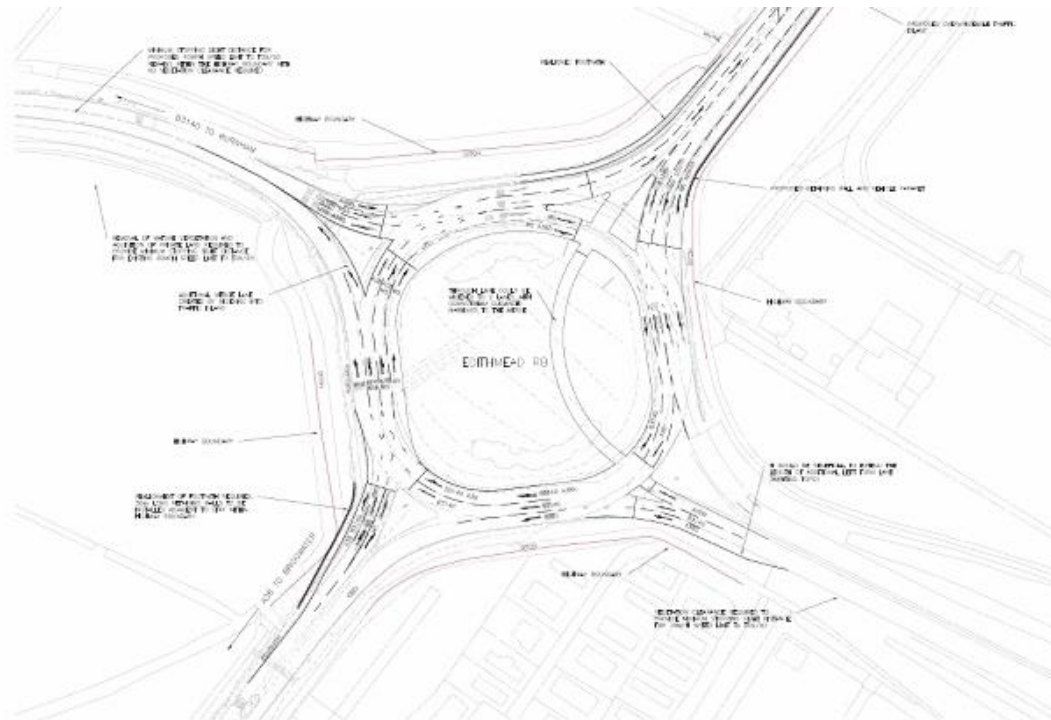
Somerset County Council displayed the proposals to town councillors for the first time during a virtual meeting of the Town Council's planning applications committee on Wednesday evening (April 21st).

The improvements are part of the county council's A38 Major Road Network Scheme, which aims to deliver safety improvements along the busy route.

Burnham's M5 roundabout at Edithmead will get more lanes, a new 'through-a-bout' cutting across the middle of the current roundabout, as shown on the plans below. It aims to improve traffic flows at peak times.

The County Council's Andrew Wiles explained: "Our proposal is to increase the capacity on the approaches to the roundabout by adding extra lanes and adding a 'through-a-bout', which is an additional lane that cuts through the centre of the roundabout to allow traffic coming off the M5 and travelling north up the A38 to move through more freely."

Cllr Andy Brewer said "safety has become a particular concern at peak times" and he added: "We are concerned about traffic coming out of Burnham along Queen's Drive – there is often significant congestion as traffic heads towards the M5 or A38."



The County Council's Mike O'Dowd responded: "We are looking at widening of all the 'arms' onto the junction and also including traffic signals which change according to capacity in order to move traffic around. We've introduced a similar new design in Yeovil with a 'through-a-bout' and it works very well."

Read the rest of this at:-

https://www.burnham-on-sea.com/news/major-plans-for-revamp-of-burnhams-edithmead-m5-roundabout-unveiled-by-council/?fbclid=IwAR15chTsjQ-LXUhDzGROI8j6QD7mndIxszk1rP_DDHEB6silYhgiMncLqw

WEBSITES YOU MAY WANT TO VISIT:-

Is it time for us to claim our own segregated road space?

<https://www.visordown.com/news/general/madrid-plan-trial-70-metre-motorcycle-only-lane>

News story: Government paves the way for self-driving vehicles on UK roads (Last updated: 28 April 2021)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-paves-the-way-for-self-driving-vehicles-on-uk-roads>.

RSGB: Motorcyclists in Somerset encouraged to 'Raise Your Ride'

<https://roadsafetygb.org.uk/news/motorcyclists-in-somerset-encouraged-to-raise-your-ride/>

RSGB: Think Bike Week gets underway with local support

<https://roadsafetygb.org.uk/news/think-bike-week-gets-underway-with-local-support/>

Guidance: E-scooter trials: guidance for users (Last updated: 19 April 2021)

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/e-scooter-trials-guidance-for-users>

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FIM: "Don't Forget Motorcycles" FIM tells EU Commission

<https://www.fim-moto.com/en/news/news-detail/article/dont-forget-motorcycles-fim-tells-eu-commission>

GEM: We can all help to reduce motorcycle casualties

<https://blog.motoringassist.com/news/we-can-all-help-to-reduce-motorcycle-casualties-says-gem/>

Form: Taxing historic vehicles (INF34) (Last updated: 30 March 2021)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/inf34-taxing-historic-vehicles>

Form: Apply for Motorcycle Single Vehicle Approval (MSVA) (Last updated: 29 March 2021)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/motorcycle-single-vehicle-approval-msva-1>

MOT inspection manual: motorcycles (Updated: 22 March 2021)

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/mot-inspection-manual-for-motorcycles>

RSGB: YouTube GB - Safeguarding motorcyclists: trialling new PRIME road markings for casualty reduction

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2UuGtubzHPc&t=23s>

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