



A networking tool for Activists and other interested parties

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Acknowledgements :- Selina Lavendar, George Legg, Colin Brown, Lembit Opik, Julie Sperling.....and anyone else I've forgotten

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Editorial

I'm going to keep this real short because, given the current situation we find ourselves in, Selina, MAG National Chair, has some important notices directly after this Editorial.

The only comment I'm going to make is before you go hot footing it off to Oxfordshire Council to vent your anger after reading MAG's PR of 17th April outlining their blatant ill informed bias against riders read that of the 22nd where they have taken on board our criticism and acted on it.

Just want to say how wonderful it was to hear that Tim Fawthrop, Greater London Rep, won his fight against covid-19 and is out of hospital recovering.

Be safe out there, *AG*

From the Chair

We find ourselves in very unusual times and, at this time, we've no idea of the next steps.

What we do know is that we have the technology to communicate with you and others to continue to work for the benefit of all riders; however our income is being negatively affected by the current global crisis.

We are able to continue to communicate electronically with everyone via email and Social Media; please take the time to ensure your email is up-to-date (members can do this via self-serve), follow us on our local / national Facebook pages / Twitter feeds. It may be that you find yourself with 'free time' so do keep an eye on our output and if there is something relevant that you would like to get involved with, take action.

If you have an article for The ROAD, published every two months (next deadline 10th May), then get in touch via theroad@mag-uk.org

Network is produced monthly as an activists newsletter so, if you have something for inclusion, email aine@mag-uk.org subject heading Network.

The office is fully functional so if you wish to get in touch you can email central-office@mag-uk.org or call 01946844064. If you call, be prepared to leave a message requesting a call back.

We know many are suffering financially at this time and the same is true of MAG. Our income stream is significantly reduced due to the cancellation of fundraisers and events, and MAG cannot survive long-term on only its income from membership fees, which remain very important to us.

We'll continue to send reminders when your membership is nearing its expiry date; electronically if we have those details or by post if we don't. In addition, we'll post regular reminders to check the expiry date on your membership card as we know many members renew at annual events.

We have released an option to pay membership monthly by Direct Debit, which we hope will help those on a budget to join or remain members. If you are reading this and are not a member(perhaps you just 'never got around to it') then now is a good time to join.

If you would like to make a donation to MAG, you'll find a donation button (using PayPal) on the front page of the website www.mag-uk.org or you can call the office, or send a cheque. I personally have made a pledge to send a donation to the fighting fund equivalent to a tank full of fuel every time I 'miss' an event.

MAG remains open for business: our team continues to work as the voice for riders. If you spot something that needs addressing, please make us aware.

Finally, to all those in a care setting and keeping the country running: 'Thank you!'

Selina, MAG National Chair

In light of restrictions to gatherings, the NC have passed the following motion:

Due to the ongoing Government-instated lockdown measures in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic, to temporarily suspend the Constitutional requirement for all AGMs to be held within 15 months of the last AGM. This suspension to stand until such time as the Government reinstates public meetings of large groups. All outstanding AGMs to be held within 6 months of that date.

Regards, Selina Lavender, MAG National Chair.



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The Government – Department for Transport to be precise – is holding a consultation on whether to ban the Internal Combustion Engine (ICE) as a power source for new vehicles by 2035, or sooner, if technology allows. This is the greatest threat to our freedom to ride since 1973. It is, effectively, a declaration of war against our civil liberties. It is also impossible to achieve – because there is no technical possibility of electricity being available in sufficient quantities, or at sufficient locations in a standardised way for this to work.

Any attempt to do this also ignores basic science. Despite all the scaremongering about vehicle emissions and health, much of the evidence has been discredited and not a single person in the UK has been recorded as dying from ambient transport emissions.

MAG is actively working on creating a very robust response to this totalitarian, tokenistic and pointless policy proposal. Please add your voice to stand up for the internal combustion engine, which is not killing anyone, is practical, relatively efficient and the best option we have for now.

You can submit your views to:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/consulting-on-ending-the-sale-of-new-petrol-diesel-and-hybrid-cars-and-vans>

This is an occasion when popular pressure really can – and MUST - change the outcome. Please take 15 minutes to oppose this insane policy – or we will all be saying goodbye to our right to choice in personal transport. Please do it now – and the absolute deadline is 31st July 2020. Even though motorcycles are not explicitly mentioned in the proposals, only a fool would think we're not on the firing line too.

This could lead to the end of motorcycling, as we know it. There has NEVER been a more important time to stand up for our biking rights.

Coronavirus keeps politics in lockdown...

Pandemic related to Covid-19 continues to keep the majority of the UK population at home. However, MAG's Political Unit continues to fire on all cylinders, even if we have to rev out engines at home! Lembit has had a number of meetings with individuals and groups. Colin has been pushing hard on Councils that seem to be trying to take the current lockdown as a green light for bad policies – a practice we expose in this report. You can contact us as usual by phone, videoconference links and online. Nobody in the Political Unit has been 'furloughed' because we're still 100% in action!

... But enemies of the state of riding keep at it

Hiding in the shadow of Coronavirus, Oxfordshire County Council has initiated a consultation that is both insulting to, and discriminatory against, motorcycling. It's so bad the Motorcycle Action Group, has formally requested that Oxfordshire County Council withdraw part of its Local Transport and Connectivity Plan documentation amid claims of unjustified bias against motorcyclists.

If you have followed our press releases you will know that we have achieved a partial victory in getting the Council to revise their motorcycle topic paper. This is a step in the right

direction, but if you read the revised document you will see that, although the initial sting has been taken out, the revised document is still heavy with bias.

This will be a long struggle. The council has tacitly admitted bias by amending the document, but this is in no way job done.

We will formally respond to the survey and push hard for real change. We cannot allow this bias to carry through to the finished transport strategy.

The survey is open for responses until 17th May, so there is still time to respond. The initial result is that we have drawn a line in the sand, but we need to continue this campaign in the coming weeks.

If you have not already done so, please take the time to complete the survey.

Please contact Oxfordshire County Council to express your views at:

<https://consultations.oxfordshire.gov.uk/consult/ti/ltcp.engagement/>

If you want to discuss this with Colin, contact MAG at 01926 844 064 or central-office@mag-uk.org

ULEZ suspension in London continues

At time of writing, the Ultra Low Emissions Zone and Congestion Charge suspensions remain in place. Be watchful of both – we really have no idea what their plan is and MAG is seeking a continued suspension of the ULEZ charge in particular, as the whole city (and country) has higher priorities than paying a punitive tax on vehicles that are doing no harm to anyone. MAG has highlighted the fact that motorcycles enable social distancing and comparatively Covid-19 safe travel.

Fuel price collapse means cheap petrol – for now

Although the full effect of a collapse in the oil market has not been passed on to consumers, fuel prices are very low at the moment. This is likely to remain the case until travel returns to normal. Economically speaking, this makes petrol power more attractive and electric power less attractive. Depending on the long-term situation, policy makers may need to revise their assessment of how many people will make the enormous investment in electric power in years to come.

Ride To Work Day is still happening

MAG is still running Ride to Work Day on 15th June 2020. The current lockdown doesn't prevent everyone from going to work. If you need to travel on that day, do it on two wheels - in comparative safety from the germs. Ride To Work Day will definitely go ahead this year and on that date.

We aren't organising or endorsing group rides or gatherings. Please only travel if you were going to anyway, and adhere to Government guidance on social distancing. It's possible the

lockdown will be lifted by then, but nobody really knows until nearer the time. We'll all hear about that at the same time. So, please, use common sense until then.

Vehicle Excise Duty policy position announced

As promised in the previous Network, MAG has published its position on VED. You'll find that statement here:

https://wiki.mag-uk.org/images/4/49/Position_Statement_Vehicle_Excise_Duty_2020_03_19.pdf

The Treasury has asked for views on options to overhaul VED for cars and motorcycles. Please use the MAG position to contact your MP and ask them if they will support our proposal. MAG will also be actively looking for other lobby groups to support our position.

Vehicle Excise Duty: call for evidence

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/vehicle-excise-duty-call-for-evidence>

Hacked off with Hackney

As well as problems in Oxfordshire County Council, Hackney Council in London has also gone loopy over the logic of local transport. In a breath-taking act of anti-bike prejudice, they have told a biking activist, William Morris;

'Thank you for your email regarding the current Motorcycle Parking Consultation.

At the moment we are holding a public consultation so that we can collect feedback from all groups of people that would potentially be affected by the proposals. We will consider this feedback to shape our future policies in relation to motorcycle parking within the borough.

The proposals outlined are aimed at tackling air pollution by discouraging unnecessary journeys and encouraging the use of more sustainable modes of transport such as walking, cycling, car clubs and public transport over the use of a private motorcycle for commuting purposes. The proposals would see motorcycle charging being brought in line with the borough's current emissions based pricing system in which the vehicles with the highest CO2 emissions pay more for a permit than less polluting models.

In response to your question on four-hour maximum stay bays, Hackney does currently have maximum stay limits on pay and display and shared use bays in the borough. If these bays were extended to include motorcycles than they would be subject to the same restrictions that are already in place for that bay and these differ depending on the area.

In relation to motorcycle theft, we realise that the introduction of more lockable stands is one tool that can help to decrease motorcycle theft and make it harder for perpetrators to steal motorcycles. Unfortunately, motorcycle theft is a wider issue but the Parking and Markets Service will continue to consider any further measures that could be put in place.

We recognise that Hackney is a diverse borough and aim to consider resident, businesses and visitor viewpoints when implementing changes in the borough.

Bike activist William Morris comments:

I have commuted in London daily for 20 years on both pushbikes and motorbikes. They say the premise of your scheme is to reduce pollution but I don't see how charging motorbikes to park addresses this. Motorbikes contribute around 1% of emissions in London, reduce journey times greatly and massively reduce congestion so this is a red herring. Encouraging people out of their increasingly large and expensive cars in Hackney would seem more logical.

Electric motorcycles are prohibitively expensive at the moment. Whilst I have ridden several and think they could be a viable alternative, at present with bike emissions such a low proportion of emissions I think it's not a priority to promote them until they are significantly more practical and financially viable for commuters. Bikes already have to comply with Euro 3 emissions standards in the ULEZ so introducing that in Hackney would make more sense if air quality were the issue.

A4-hour maximum stay for paying bays would seem to be aimed squarely at stopping motorbike-commuting to/in Hackney. It's a strange policy when reducing congestion and in turn pollution would seem to be the priority.

They say they will provide secure parking for bikes but modern cordless grinders can cut through any chain in seconds. Addressing the root of bike crime is more important.

We cannot allow such sneering bias to go unaddressed. Please make your views known at Hackney Motorcycle Parking Consultation, which you'll find at:

<https://consultation.hackney.gov.uk/parking-services/motorcycles/>

Or contact their Parking Policy Team at: parking.policy@hackney.gov.uk
www.hackney.gov.uk

020 8356 4008.

CBT's in Lockdown

There is much uncertainty about many aspects of the lockdown, and CBT certificates is one of those grey areas. We are making enquiries on this subject. It is possible to book a driving test via DVSA, if you are a critical worker, but it is not possible to book a CBT via that route. We are hearing that some CBT trainers are able to deliver new and renewal CBT courses but the guidelines seem to be unclear. We hope to be getting clear and formal guidance direct from the DfT/DVSA and will keep you updated.

Please remember the guidance on unnecessary travel, but if you ride under a CBT certificate, and this expires during the lockdown you will be driving otherwise than in accordance with your licence, so please take care to ensure you are not breaking the law.

Please respond to these surveys

2Wheels London Rider Survey

<https://www.2wheelslondon.com/2020-rider-survey/>

This one gives London riders the opportunity to give a biker's perspective on road safety issues in the capital.

NYRF Young Rider Survey

<https://shinysideup.co.uk/nyrf/rider-survey/>

You will need to be 16 – 24 to respond to this one. If you don't fit the age criteria, but know someone who does, please pass it on to them.

MAG PRESS RELEASES

31-03-2020 MAG makes initial comments on the Transport Decarbonisation Plan

MAG has given its initial reaction to the low key launch of Grant Shapps' Transport Decarbonisation Plan, asking why the Department for Transport continues to ignore motorcycles as a separate and crucial mode of transport.



On 26th March the Government quietly published a document stating the current challenges and steps to be taken when developing a transport decarbonisation plan.

In the Ministerial Foreword, Grant Shapps stated "Climate change is the most pressing environmental challenge of our time. There is overwhelming scientific evidence that we need to take action, and doing so is a clear priority for the Government."

The Government will publish the final plan in Autumn 2020.

MAG's Director of Campaigns & Political Engagement, Colin Brown, and Director of Communications & Public Affairs, Lembit Opik, were asked for their initial reactions to the "Setting the Challenge" document.

Colin said: "Once again we see a policy document that singularly fails to recognise the fact that motorcycles are not cars. This continued blind spot exhibited by policy makers is something that MAG unfailingly points out at every opportunity. It is hard to grasp why this message is not sinking in. Opportunities are being missed by failing to properly consider the benefits that motorcycles and scooters have to offer. It is time for the Government to properly consider the role of what is undeniably the most sustainable form of private motorised transport that exists."

Lembit said "MAG has repeatedly called for proof from environmentalists to explain the rationale behind ignoring motorbikes and pinning all hopes on electric motive power. Electrification only cuts emissions with a 'clean power grid.' Wind can't do it, and the last UK nuclear power station to open was in 1995. So electricity does pollute - even

ignoring the ecological damage from batteries. We know efficient petrol machines, like motorbikes, create few emissions. Either the Government backs modal shift to lighter vehicles like motorbikes, or they're doomed to make things worse."

There will be a program of engagement with stakeholders and the public over the coming months. The Motorcycle Action Group has immediately expressed its interest to being involved as a stakeholder group in the conversation, and will be repeating the message that motorcycles and scooters are a solution, not the problem.

The Government document can be found at [HERE](#)

6-04-2020 MAG's work continues during country's lockdown

During these unprecedented times, MAG will still have its foot on the gas working for motorcycling, due to the support of its amazing members.

With many fundraisers, plus the first of the premier events, cancelled or postponed for the foreseeable future, there is the unfortunate potential to lose over 50% of our funding, so our members are even more valuable than ever before.

We know that many members renew their memberships at rallies such as Into the Valley, so we would like to encourage them all to still go ahead and renew, either by visiting our website or by calling the office on 01926 844 064. Our membership administrator, Carol, is still working and looks forward to hearing from you.

We are also mindful that the lockdown may well be affecting members finances too, so we are pleased to be releasing the option of a new monthly Direct Debit payment scheme: link: <https://bit.ly/MAGMonthlyDD> It is charged at a slightly higher rate per month to cover the additional costs of managing the scheme, but is still only £3.00 per month for an individual membership and £4.12 per month for a joint membership.

If you are already a member and would like to transfer to this new scheme, just complete the direct debit mandate and we will start collecting at your renewal date.

Our annual direct debit payment option is available [HERE](#):

17-04-2020 MAG exposes 'blatant anti-motorcycle bias' in Oxfordshire County Council

MAG has formally requested that Oxfordshire County Council withdraw part of its Local Transport and Connectivity Plan documentation after discovering 'jaw-droppingly inappropriate' accusations against bikers in their document



In an email communication dated 8th April 2020, MAG formally requested that the Council urgently withdraw what it described as a "highly biased and inaccurate document". The document in question, entitled

“Connectivity: Motorcycles” is one of 28 documents published on the Council’s consultations website as part of what is described as an engagement activity of Oxfordshire County Council’s Local Transport and Connectivity Plan. The Council state that they would like survey responses before the full consultation of the Local Transport and Connectivity Plan, which will be out later this year. The Council will use the responses to the engagement to inform the content on the consultation.

MAG’s Director of Campaigns & Political Engagement, Colin Brown, met Councillor Yvonne Constance, Cabinet Member for Environment at Oxfordshire County Council, along with Councillor Alex Hollingsworth, Cabinet Member for Planning and Sustainable Transport at Oxford City Council, in November 2019. This meeting was facilitated by Councillor John Broad of Cherwell District Council. Cllr Broad is a MAG member and regularly corresponds with Colin. At the meeting Colin and Cllr Broad were able to present MAG’s Pathways for Progress document which lays out a sensible and balanced view of motorcycling and how the transport mode can be better integrated into transport policy.

Colin Brown commented “Despite a somewhat terse opening from Cllr Constance, I felt that the meeting went well and the points we made were generally welcomed and found to be of value. This makes the blatant anti-motorcycle bias displayed in the consultation document hard to understand. For the Council to allow a document to be published in its name that accuses motorcyclists of being a ‘danger to themselves’ and alludes to ‘places showing drops in collisions once motorised two wheelers have been banned’ is jaw-droppingly inappropriate. The document even goes as far as to state MAG’s position that motorcycles are the most sustainable form of private motorised transport and then immediately claim that ‘This is not the same as being sustainable’. They may as well have just said ‘MAG has a position, but we don’t agree and nor should you’.”

MAG asked Cllr John Broad to give his opinion on the document. He said: “Having noted that the previous Local Transport Plan 4 only had one mention of motorcycling and that was the accident rate I was determined not to let the same happen to the new Plan 5. The intention of the final document is to produce plans and policies to integrate all forms of transport around Oxfordshire. The other sections of this early document do attempt to debate how this can be achieved for each subject but the Motorcycling Section 28 is just a blatant attempt to ban these vehicles from the roads! During our discussions with the Councillors and Officers I pointed out how cycling is morphing into motorcycling via e-bikes and small commuter bikes and how these can resolve many of the issues around congestion and parking with new electric motorcycles coming onto the market to reduce pollution. Safety should be part of the road infrastructure by design and not by trying to ignore any recognised form of transport. It is extremely disappointing that after such a positive start in discussing motorcycling that some Councillors and Officers have attempted to use the County Transport Plan to try to un-invent this long-established transport system of Powered Two Wheelers”.

MAG’s President, Ian Mutch, described the document as “amateurish” whilst MAG Director, Ian Churchlow, commented “I’ve seen some biased papers on motorcycling before but this one is right out there”

MAG has received many comments from members and a response from a senior Oxford City Councillor who has expressed his shock at how the motorcycle section has been written.

MAG asked Oxfordshire County Council for comment, and we received the following statement:

'I thank the Motorcycle Action Group (MAG) for raising comments on the Local Transport and Connectivity Plan Motorcycle Topic paper. I am sorry that they feel that it is biased in its outlook as this was not the intention but accept that it was construed this way. This paper is one of the papers on different aspects of transport and set out to give a relatively short overview of motorcycle matters in Oxfordshire today. The paper included information on levels of motorcycle usage, highlighted some of the likely benefits and dis-benefits of motorcycling, as well as using some information and data to provide context.

The overall goal of the Local Transport and Connectivity Plan engagement survey is not to set out firm positions on transport but to welcome the views of residents.

I'm aware that MAG has asked for further detail on the data referenced in the paper, particularly that on accidents, and I have asked officers to get back to them on this as soon as possible. I also look forward to receiving the full MAG response to this engagement exercise, which I'm sure will help us develop our Local Transport and Connectivity Plan and its policies, including those related to motorcycling, over the coming year.'

MAG encourages all motorcyclists to take a look at the Oxfordshire County Council document for themselves, draw their own conclusions and then respond. Colin said: "On their website the Council point out that 'any inappropriate or offensive language will not be considered acceptable, and your response will not be submitted' – strangely this is the only consultation with that warning. The document asks 'what do you think?' I hope that all bikers will take the time to politely let this Council know that they will not accept this kind of bias".

MAG stands ready to work with Oxfordshire County Council, to help it develop a transport policy position that makes the most of all transport options. But MAG will vigorously defend motorcycling against all poorly informed bias.

22-04-2020 MAG praises Oxfordshire County Council for revising motorcycle proposals following feedback from MAG

In a major motorcycling breakthrough, MAG has welcomed a rethink by Oxfordshire County Council following significant input from MAG and local bikers about blatant anti-motorcycle bias regarding their Local Transport and Connectivity Plan.

MAG challenged sweeping statements in the Council's document that were not backed by evidence. These showed a biased and discriminatory attitude against motorcyclists. Top of the list of claims that MAG objected to was the



stunning statement that motorcyclists are ‘a danger to themselves.’

Communicating directly with the Council, MAG secured a promise that the Council would supply the evidential basis for the document and ensure that the document reflected the references “appropriately.” Yesterday, MAG received confirmation that the review had been completed and the document amended.

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

“MAG gives credit where credit is due. Oxfordshire County Council has accepted comments we made, plus those of many others who responded to the survey. The amended document - published today - no longer contains references to motorcyclists posing a danger to themselves; nor does it contain the incredible statement that motorbikes make a disproportionate contribution to noise pollution.

We still disagree with elements of the document. However, the Council’s rethink, based on our feedback, means we can have a productive conversation to create an informed and balanced policy.

Motorcycles are legitimate and legal - and for many a vital mode of transport. The Transport Policy must cater for this transport mode in a reasonable way. The amendments have averted large, spontaneous demonstrations by bikers against the Council and Councillors identified with the original document.

We welcome the opportunity to work closely with the Council to develop a good policy position. This has always been our sole motivation and we will continue to do all we can to ensure motorcyclists are fairly treated.”

The revised topic paper is now available on line at
<https://consultations.oxfordshire.gov.uk/consult.ti/ltcp.engagement/consultationHome>

MAG thanks all who have already responded to the online survey. Colin stresses that the need remains for all local motorcyclists to have their say and provide sensible and productive suggestions.

The specific questions the survey asks are:

- How should the approach to motorbikes and motorbike riders in the new Local Transport and Connectivity Plan be reviewed?
- How could any approach affect active and healthy travel opportunities?
- Could there be better and clearer parking, as distinct from cycle parking and car parking?

- Could road safety campaigns on motorcycles be extended? What angle/s should this cover?

The survey remains open until 17th May 2020.

27-04-2020 MAG calls for a weight-based Vehicle Excise Duty system

MAG has revealed its position on Vehicle Excise Duty. Proposing a universal system based purely on vehicle weight, MAG says it is promoting a system that meets all the goals of the Government whilst offering a long-term solution that addresses far more than just a single vehicle emission problem.



On 11th March 2020 HM Treasury published a call for evidence seeking views on moving towards a more dynamic system of Vehicle Excise Duty which recognises smaller differences in carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions.

Speaking after the publication of a formal position statement, MAG's Director of Campaigns & Political Engagement, Colin Brown, explains the thinking behind MAG's position:

"Motorcyclists have long felt that the current VED system is unfair. The existing system - based on engine capacity for motorcycles - sees many riders paying far higher levels of VED than most car owners. I own both a motorcycle and a car, yet pay around three times as much VED on my bike compared to my car, even though my motorcycle pollutes less than my car, causes less congestion than my car and causes less damage to the road infrastructure than my car."

In proposing a move to a purely CO₂ emissions-based approach for all vehicle classes, there would be redress on this current situation. However, given that the Government wants to move to a purely electric vehicle fleet, they are clearly building in a limited lifespan for their revenue stream. When all vehicles are producing zero tailpipe emissions there will no longer be a basis to charge any VED. Not only will the revenue stream dry up, but many other issues will have failed to have been addressed. It is widely accepted that car use needs to be contained and reduced. A VED system based purely on CO₂ emissions will have no impact on behaviour change once electric cars are the norm.

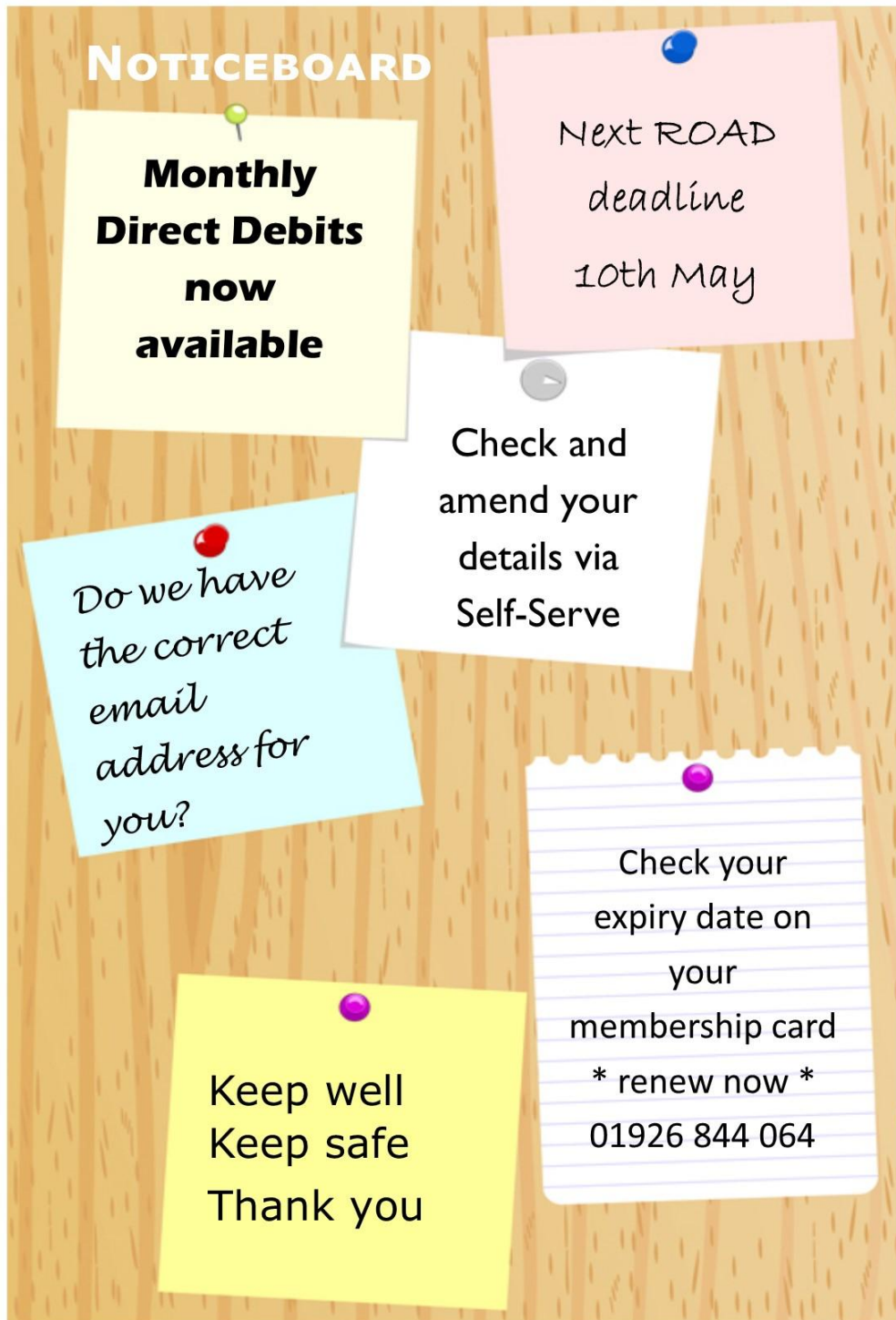
Converting all cars to electric will not reduce congestion and will increase particulate matter generated from tyre and road surface wear.

It is clear that reduced vehicle weight translates to reduced emissions of CO₂, yet current electric cars are, on average, 30% heavier than their traditional, internal

combustion-engine equivalents. Regardless of motive power, more energy is required to move a heavier vehicle. More energy necessarily means more emissions, whether that be at the tailpipe or the electricity generation plant. However, maintaining the weight-based approach means that regardless of progress towards reduced CO2 emissions, the revenue stream remains intact. Vehicle weight cannot be cheated, and applies to all classes of vehicle, no matter how many wheels, axles, tracks or technology. The lighter vehicles are, the more sustainable they will be. A weight-based system future-proofs revenue, as well as guiding common sense with regards to how we use the planet's finite resources.

MAG looks forward to discussing this approach to Vehicle Excise Duty with Ministers, but also calls on all other groups to back this position. From pedestrians and cyclists concerned about harm from overweight vehicles, to councils struggling with tight budgets to maintain the roads, and from the Motorcycle Industry Association to the Road Haulage Association, we believe that all parties will be able to see the sense in this elegant solution to maintaining a Government revenue stream whilst encouraging more sustainable transport behaviours.

Contact MAG at 01926 844 064 or central-office@mag-uk.org
MAG's position statement on the matter can be found [HERE](#)



F E M A

Working for motorcyclists – FEMA in a nutshell

FEMA: April 8, 2020



What does FEMA do for European motorcyclists on a daily basis? FEMA's Dolf Willigers describes some of today's issues.

What FEMA stands for

FEMA is the Federation of European Motorcyclists' Federations. This means that we represent our members, and in fact all European motorcyclists, on a European level.



From left to right: Wim Taal (FEMA), Matthew Baldwin (the European Commission's Deputy Director-General for Mobility and Transport and European coordinator for road safety and sustainable mobility) and Dolf Willigers (FEMA).

We have contacts with members of the European Parliament, other organizations that work in Brussels and Geneva (in the UN ECE) like FIM Europe, FIA (that represents the mobility clubs in most European and African countries), ACEM (the European motorcycle industry association), ETSC (the European Transport Safety Council) et cetera. But most of all we have contacts with the European Commission. This we do formally in writing and by giving our views through the public 'have your say'-pages of the European Commission, by attending the meetings of the advisory boards like the Motorcycle Working Group (MCWG), Motor Vehicle Working Group (MVWG), Driving Licence Committee, the Connected, Coordinated and Automated Mobility Single Platform (CCAM SP) meetings, workshops, conferences et cetera. Also, by informal contacts with officials from the European Commission on all levels.

Our members

Our members are riders' rights organizations from all over Europe, not only from the European Union, but also in Norway, Switzerland and the UK (although they are still in the EU). They are very different in size and organizational structure (some have only direct

members, others are federations of clubs, others are a combination). Also, the culture differs very much, just as riders differ much.



Driving licences

Our concerns are widespread and differ much. It ranges from infrastructure to driving licences. At the moment we are preparing the revision of the 3rd Driving Licence Directive, that was implemented in 2013. As you may know, part of this is the staged entry with three times either trainings or tests. In most countries it is a combination of training and testing. We still think that this was introduced too soon and without any scientific background. Although we understand that it might not be a very good idea to ride a very powerful bike without experience and some kind of staged entrance is understandable, the way it is regulated now causes a too high threshold and costs the rider too much money. Also, the focus on low speed skills instead on the so-called higher skills (the ability to recognize and avoid dangerous situations) is something that we think must change.



Protective clothing

A well trained and conscious rider wears appropriate protective clothing, gloves, boots and helmet. We advocate good standards, that are usable in all circumstances. Motorcycle clothing that protects very well but causes overheating in a southern climate is not usable. We advocate clothing and helmets that provide a good protection and is wearable in warmer climates. Manufacturers and legislators need to find the right balance. Still, although we advocate good riding gear and good standards, we are against laws that make the wear of protective clothing mandatory. This is because the present protective clothing is not always suited for all circumstances and at the same time protective enough. To force people to wear safe but hot and heavy trousers and vests in the city with low speeds on a hot day may cause more danger than the protection is worth.



Infrastructure

Another thing that we are always dealing with is the infrastructure. Our roads are designed and maintained with cars in mind, not with one-track vehicles like motorcycles. We have no protective cage around us, and we cannot afford to crash into trees, lampposts and other obstacles. But road restraint systems, guard rails, can also be very dangerous for motorcyclists, especially when they are not fitted with a motorcycle protection system or fitted too close to the lanes. Aside from the design of the road, maintenance is something that is more important for motorcycles than for cars, because motorcycles are balancing vehicles with just two wheels. Road surfaces that are slippery because of wear or have potholes are dangerous for motorcyclists.



Environment and energy

Next is the environment and energy transition. We are very much aware that there are problems, both with the climate change and with the quality of the air in the cities. We also know that fossil fuels play a role in this. Therefore, we advocate cleaner engines for motorcycles, schemes that give a financial support to motorcyclists when they have older and less environmentally friendly motorcycles demolished and replaced by new, cleaner motorcycles. We also support the development and sales of electric motorcycles, especially in the cities. However, we are also very much aware that many owners of older motorcycles are not in the position to buy a new one, and we are also aware that most motorcycles ride just a limited distance. The replacement of these motorcycles with new ones would perhaps cause a bigger burden to the environment than continued use of an older motorcycle.



Automated cars

A thing that worries many motorcyclists are the developments around the so-called self-driving or automated cars. They feel that with the transition to automated cars, there will be no place on the road anymore for motorcycles. First, we feel that the road to (fully) automated cars on all public roads will be a very long one. Next, the problems already exist. Many cars are fitted with ADAS (advanced driver assistance systems) that warn the drivers or even fulfil driving tasks like keeping distance to other vehicles, keeping the car in the lane, et cetera. These systems do not only have to see and react to other cars, but also to motorcycles. It has been proved that these systems do not always work properly. We are working on better systems that react properly to motorcycles and we are also looking into the future and participate in working groups that advise the European Commission to make certain that motorcycles are not forgotten. We will not accept that motorcycles are banned from the roads because automated cars cannot handle motorcycles.



Here to stay

Motorcycles are becoming more fuel economic and cleaner. Compared with cars, that tend to use more fuel with the trend to heavier and higher models and that use more space to drive and park, especially in the cities, motorcycles are becoming much more economic and less pollutant compared to cars than they already are. Therefore, we see a bright future for motorcycles and other powered two-wheelers. Also, especially but not only in the cities, we will see a growth in electric motorcycles that have even less emissions. Of course, there is the discussion of how the electricity is made and how the batteries are produced, but in the cities they emit fewer toxic gasses than a vehicle with an internal combustion engine. Finally, we will solve the challenges to make motorcycles fit in a traffic that consists of highly automated vehicles. So yes, motorcycles are here to stay.



Written by [DolfWilligers](#)
Photography by [WimTaal](#).

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British Bikers Criticise Plans To Ban Petrol Bikes

The British government wants to get rid of motorcycles with an internal combustion engine from 2050 and it wants to redefine how we travel. British motorcyclists' organization MAG responds to the plans.

The British government is developing an ambitious plan to accelerate the decarbonisation of transport. The plan includes achieving zero emissions from every single mode of transport by 2050.

The UK government wants a rapid renewal of the road vehicle fleet with zero emission vehicles, and also wants to consider how we travel and how our goods and services reach us today. In a recently published document, the government says all vehicles, including motorcycles, must be zero emission by 2050, but the document fails to talk about the opportunities motorcycles have to offer in everyday traffic. This does not sit well with FEMA member MAG.



Motorcycle Action Group

The Motorcycle Action Group (MAG) has given its initial reaction to the decarbonisation plan, asking why the Department for Transport continues to ignore motorcycles as a separate and crucial mode of transport. MAG repeats the message that motorcycles and scooters are a solution, not the problem.



MAG's Director of Campaigns & Political Engagement, Colin Brown said: "Once again we see a policy document that singularly fails to recognise the fact that motorcycles are not cars. This continued blind spot exhibited by policy makers is something that MAG unfailingly points out at every opportunity. It is hard to grasp why this message is not sinking in. Opportunities are being missed by failing to properly consider the benefits that motorcycles and scooters have to offer. It is time for the government to properly consider the role of what is undeniably the most sustainable form of private motorised transport that exists."

MAG's Director of Communications & Public Affairs, Lembit Opik said: "MAG has repeatedly called for proof from environmentalists to explain the rationale behind ignoring motorbikes and pinning all hopes on electric motive power. Electrification only cuts emissions with a 'clean power grid.' Wind can't do it, and the last UK nuclear power station to open was in 1995. So, electricity does pollute – even ignoring the ecological damage from batteries. We know efficient petrol machines, like motorbikes, create few emissions. Either the Government backs modal shift to lighter vehicles like motorbikes, or they're doomed to make things worse."

F I M

RIDERSATHOME, WIN THIS GLOBAL RACE TOGETHER

The FIM has an important role to play during Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic in terms of educating and informing riders around the world how to behave in a correct and

responsible manner. By reaching out to the wider FIM family, the FIM is looking to support local authorities as they put in place various safeguards in an attempt to reduce the impact of this pandemic.

Using the FIM's social media channels – 'We, The Riders' and 'FIM-Live' – the FIM wants to reinforce the global message 'to stay at home' via its own campaign #RidersAtHome.

Even though riding is still permitted in some countries – the FIM is requesting that ALL riders keep their motorcycles parked in order to reduce the risk of accidents and injuries that could take up valuable healthcare resources during a period when they are already under great pressure.

The FIM is asking riders both amateur and professional, but also organisers, promoters, partners and Media from all disciplines and from all countries to record their own video messages that can be shared on social media to help spread and reinforce this important message: **#RidersAtHome**

Be part of the #RidersAtHome campaign!

Post your video messages on Facebook, Twitter & Instagram

Use #RidersAtHome and tag @WeTheRiderswtr

Open consultation

Consulting on ending the sale of new petrol, diesel and hybrid cars and vans

Published 20 February 2020

Last updated 9 April 2020 — [see all updates](#)

From:

[Department for Transport](#) and [Office for Low Emission Vehicles](#)

Summary

Consultation on ending the sale of new petrol, diesel and hybrid cars and vans by 2035 or earlier if a faster transition appears feasible

This consultation closes at

11:45pm on 31 July 2020

Consultation description

Government is seeking views on bringing forward the end to the sale of new petrol, diesel and hybrid cars and vans from 2040 to 2035, or earlier if a faster transition appears feasible.

We are asking for views on:

- the phase out date
- the definition of what should be phased out
- barriers to achieving the above proposals
- the impact of these ambitions on different sectors of industry and society
- what measures are required by government and others to achieve the earlier phase out date

Documents

[*Consulting on ending the sale of new petrol, diesel and hybrid cars and vans*](#)

HTML

Ways to respond

Email to:

communications@olev.gov.uk

Write to:

Consultation Response
Office for Low Emission Vehicles
Zones 3/29-33
33 Horseferry Road
London
SW1P 4DR

Share this page

The International Motorcycle Manufacturers Association appoints Rakesh Sharma as new president



The International Motorcycle Manufacturers Association (IMMA) has elected Rakesh Sharma, Bajaj Auto Executive Director, as new president for a 2-year mandate.

The decision was taken by IMMA General Assembly, held by correspondence on 21 April due to the COVID-19 crisis.

Mr Rakesh Sharma joined Bajaj Auto in October 2007 as President (International Business) and is currently the Executive Director. He is a member of the Board of Commissioners of PT Bajaj Auto Indonesia, a subsidiary of Bajaj Auto Ltd and the Chairman of the Exports Council of SIAM, the Society of Indian Automobile Manufacturers.

Mr Sharma had been previously holding office as Vice-President in IMMA, elected in May 2019. In his new role, he succeeds Mr Johannes Loman, Director of PT Astra International Tbk and Executive Vice President Director PT Astra Honda Motor (AHM) Indonesia, and President of FAMI - Federation of Asian Motorcycle Industries and President of AISI, the Indonesian Motorcycle Industry Association.

Quote

On being elected, **Mr Sharma** said “Indeed these are very challenging times and I take up this prestigious appointment fully conscious of the role the motorcycle industry has to play both as a key industry and a responsible member of the society. Whilst we are facing numerous difficulties, we can also see that in due course new but different opportunities will emerge. The role of national, regional and global associations such as SIAM and IMMA is now more important than ever and we will work hard to ensure we play a strong and responsible role in the recovery.”

Mr Loman stated, “IMMA aims to advance the sustainable growth of the two-wheeler industry in every region of the world. We are fortunate to have Mr Sharma with his wide international experience in the two and three- wheeler industry, to steer IMMA through the difficult time and be the trusted global voice of the motorcycle manufacturers. I look forward to work with Mr Sharma in my role as FAMI representative in IMMA’s Steering Committee”.

Antonio Perlot, Secretary General of the European Association of Motorcycle Manufacturers (ACEM), said: “I first of all wish to thank Mr. Loman for his commitment during the FAMI Presidency, where many challenges were identified as benefiting from exchanges and coordination within IMMA. We congratulate Mr. Sharma on his election, we wish him success in continuing to drive IMMA forward, in the technical and policy areas, in particular within current extraordinary circumstances linked with COVID-19.”

Link

[Read the news on IMMA website](#)

About IMMA

The International Motorcycle Manufacturers Association (IMMA) represents the powered two- and three-wheelers manufacturing industry at global level. It promotes mobility through safe, sustainable motorcycling by advocating the development and harmonisation of technical regulations affecting the motorcycle industry and by advancing inclusive policies for motorcycling.

IMMA members include:

- Regional associations: professional trade associations of moped and/or motorcycle manufacturers, with members in more than one country in the same geographic region.
- Manufacturer associations: professional national trade associations of moped and/or motorcycle manufacturers.
- Individual manufacturers: manufacturers of mopeds and / or motorcycles if there is no manufacturer association member in the respective country.
- Associate members: professional national trade associations representative of moped and motorcycle importers, where there are no manufacturers of mopeds and/or motorcycles in the respective countries.

IMMA regional association members include:

- The European Association of Motorcycle Manufacturers (ACEM)
- The United States Motorcycle Manufacturers Association Inc.
- Federation of Asian Motorcycle Industries (FAMI)
- Federal Chamber of Automotive Industry (Australia)
- Motorcycle & Moped Industry Council (MMIC - CIMC; Canada)
- The Society of Indian Automobile Manufacturers (SIAM)
- Abraciclo (Brasil)

An open letter to motorcyclists and scooterists from MCIA

MCIA: 24 April 2020

Dear Rider,

One of the unexpected consequences of the current situation is that motorcycles and scooters are showing their true worth.

Whether they are delivering essential items like medical supplies, food, things to fend off lock down boredom, or taking care of self-isolation on key workers' commutes, powered two wheelers shine in a crisis.

Of course, riders know that PTWs don't need a crisis to shine. Their agility, small footprint and light weight mean they don't cause congestion, damage roads or consume swathes of valuable space for parking. Their low and zero-emission engines help the environment. They minimise commutes and leave more time for the important things in life. And they put a smile on your face.

It's great to see that most riders are complying with the Government's instructions about essential travel and when riding are doing so responsibly, but unfortunately some are not.

The sun is shining, you're bored of lockdown, the roads are empty and your ride is itching to go. It's very tempting, but before you grab your keys and helmet, consider this:

As riders, we all have a responsibility to motorcycling, if it is to survive without restrictions.

As riders, we are ambassadors for motorcycling and how we ride, what we ride and, at the moment, the fact that we are riding at all, creates a perception about us all. In the eyes of many, PTWs are noisy, anti-social, dangerous and often ridden irresponsibly. Is your leisure ride reinforcing that view?

We know that bikes and scooters are perfect for self-isolation, but what if you have a breakdown or a puncture? You'll probably need the help of someone to sort the problem.

If you haven't ridden over the winter, you may be a bit rusty. It's easy to get over-confident when the sun is shining and traffic is light, so what happens if you pitch off? Police, recovery truck, paramedics all involved. And you may have noticed that the NHS is a little preoccupied at the moment and could probably do without any self-inflicted cases taking up beds.

For the good of motorcycling and its place in the future transport mix, let's all stick to the rules on this. They don't discriminate against riders, most leisure activities are disrupted, so clean your kit, watch MotoGP re-runs and wait until we can all get out on the road again.

For further details or to arrange interviews with Tony Campbell, contact Polly Fenn on [02476 408000](tel:02476408000) or email p.fenn@mcia.co.uk

WEBSITES YOU MAY WANT TO VISIT

RSGB: Government sets out shift away from driving

<https://roadsafetygb.org.uk/news/government-sets-out-shift-away-from-driving/>

Guidance: Plug-in motorcycle grant: eligibility and applications (Last updated 6 April 2020)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/plug-in-motorcycle-grant-eligibility>

ABD: Press Release: Never Waste A Crisis: Transport Secretary Uses COVID-19 To Bury Bad News

<https://www.abd.org.uk/press-release-never-waste-a-crisis-transport-secretary-uses-covid-19-to-bury-bad-news/>

ABD: Decarbonising Transport – A Costly Exercise in Limiting Personal Freedom

<https://www.abd.org.uk/decarbonising-transport-a-costly-exercise-in-limiting-personal-freedom/>

TRL: What has the Covid-19 situation done to motorway traffic?

<https://trl.co.uk/news/news/what-has-covid-19-situation-done-motorway-traffic>

RAC: Why you should be more careful driving on empty roads during the COVID-19 pandemic

<https://www.rac.co.uk/drive/news/motoring-news/why-you-should-be-more-careful-driving-on-empty-roads-during-covid-19/>

ABD: Petrol & Diesel Ban Date Consultation

<https://www.abd.org.uk/petrol-diesel-ban-date-consultation/>

ABD: Net Zero Petition

<https://www.abd.org.uk/net-zero-petition/>

Guidance: Coronavirus: driving tests (Last updated 20 April 2020)

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-driving-tests-and-theory-tests>

Guidance: Coronavirus: theory tests

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-theory-tests>

NSW Premier says going on a motorbike ride counts as exercise, assures riders they won't be fined

<https://www.9news.com.au/national/can-i-ride-a-motorbike-in-nsw-premier-says-it-counts-as-exercise/51351e27-2004-4532-92dc-63fe5c8bab17>

Apply for an emergency theory test if you're a key worker

<https://www.gov.uk/apply-emergency-theory-test>

Apply for an emergency driving test if you're a key worker

<https://www.gov.uk/apply-emergency-driving-test>

ABD: The Future of Transport: Government Consultation

<https://www.abd.org.uk/the-future-of-transport-government-consultation/>

Open consultation: Future of transport regulatory review: call for evidence on micromobility vehicles, flexible bus services and mobility as a service

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/future-of-transport-regulatory-review-call-for-evidence-on-micromobility-vehicles-flexible-bus-services-and-mobility-as-a-service>

Correspondence: Letter from DVSA Chief Executive to motorcycle training schools about coronavirus (COVID-19)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-letter-from-dvsa-chief-executive-to-driver-and-rider-trainers/letter-from-dvsa-chief-executive-to-motorcycle-training-schools-about-coronavirus-covid-19>

RSGB: Praise for Warwickshire's Biker Down team

<https://roadsafetygb.org.uk/news/praise-for-warwickshires-biker-down-team/>

NSW Premier says going on a motorbike ride counts as exercise, assures riders they won't be fined

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