

News from the Motorcycle Action Group (MAG)

MAG hails Home Office anti-moped crime talks 'a promising start'

This version: 2017 09 15

Embargo: IMMEDIATE

The Motorcycle Action Group (MAG) welcomed the first meeting dedicated to dealing with the current moped-related crime epidemic as a promising start towards finding a multi-agency solution to an escalating problem.

The summit, held at Home Office headquarters in Westminster, was chaired by two Ministers – Sarah Newton MP and Nick Hurd MP – both of whom hold crime and policing responsibilities in the Government.

MAG was represented by Colin Brown (who also attends the Motorcycle Crime Reduction Group for the organisation), and Lembit Öpik, MAG's Director of Communications & Public Affairs. Colin commented 'the importance of the issue nationally was underlined by the people in attendance. Tony Campbell, the new chief of the Motorcycle Industry Association, was present, as were top brass from the police, Home Office and other interest groups including the Motorcycle Crime Prevention Community, as well as insurance companies. It could have been a talking shop but actually it wasn't. The Home Office official summed up the next steps very well, and it sounded to me like the makings of an action plan.'

The figures for crimes involving mopeds are high, with 16,180 recorded crimes of this nature across the last 12 months. Four out of five of these crimes involved attempts at property theft and just about all of them involved stolen mopeds being driven illegally, for example on pavements. Colin asked about the ring-fencing of cycling budgets. Given that 0.24% of all pedal cycles in the West Midlands were stolen in 2016 as opposed to 3.24% of motorcycles, he proposed a rethink on the disproportionate spending on cycle security and suggested a dual-use solution for motorbikes and cycles, using Sustrans funding.

'Colin said that riders are around 16 times more at risk of falling victim to bike theft in the West Midlands, versus car theft,' notes Lembit. 'The figures are staggering and I hope they were taken on board by the Home Office representatives.'

Colin added, 'the solutions discussed ranged from better motorcycle security from manufacturers to more secure parking options for riders, especially in urban areas. It was also noted that if the authorities don't act then vigilantism will inevitably increase; a point noted by the ministers. Let's hope it doesn't come to that, though it seems that in some parts of London, we're already there.'

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

ENDS