

News from the Motorcycle Action Group (MAG)

MAG continues input to Silvertown Tunnel consultation

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The Motorcycle Action Group (MAG), the UK's leading voice for riders' rights, has submitted further evidence to the inquiry into the proposed new Thames crossing – known as Silver Town Tunnel – near the Greenwich Peninsula, challenging the logic of charging motorcycles.

The Motorcycle Action Group (MAG) has once again called on the panel considering the operational conditions surrounding the proposed Silver Town Tunnel under the Thames to recommend abandoning plans to charge Powered Two Wheelers (PTWs) – namely motorcycles and scooters - for using the tunnel.

Lembit Öpik, MAG's Director of Communications & Public Affairs, invited the proposers of the scheme to explain why charging PTW riders makes any sense as this mode offers significant benefits when compared to cars or vans in terms of reducing pollution and congestion, and facilitating social and economic mobility when alternatives are too costly in time and/or money and a bicycle is, for whatever reason, not an option. Dr Leon Mannings, MAG's Campaigns and Policy Adviser commented: TfL's excellent study of motorcycle emissions clearly shows that enabling more modal shift from cars or vans to powered two wheelers cuts emissions of harmful gasses and reduces fossil fuel consumption in real-time journeys. Any new charge for bikes will have a negative impact on the scheme's own objective to cut congestion and emissions. If they're serious about cutting NOx & Co2, they should scrap plans to charge motorcycles.'

Lembit added: 'We've also highlighted the social injustice of charging riders. Many depend on their bikes specifically because they earn relatively modest incomes, which is why they ride to work. Charging them would potentially quadruple commuting costs, and cause bikers to seek other routes across the Thames, making their journeys longer for no benefit to anyone. If bikes are charged, then the charges must be made to apply to electric vehicles too, which add as much to congestion as any other car, and make far less social contribution to low paid workers. MAG will continue to strongly make these points, as we have done for many months now, to make sure fairness and common sense prevail.'

The sessions were held between 17th and 19th January in Newham.

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