

## Motorcycle Action Group (MAG) Press Release

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### **Northamptonshire County Council – first in UK to promote modal shift towards motorcycles**

The Motorcycle Action Group has praised Northamptonshire County Council as the first in the UK to actively pursue modal shift from cars to motorcycles. This strategy has been a cornerstone of MAG's policy position, as outlined in its *Pathways to Progress* document. Northamptonshire's announcement comes in the lead up to the International Ride to Work Week; 20 – 26<sup>th</sup> June 2016. Their strategy and thinking behind the move is superbly covered in a short video – see link below.

MAG Chair, Selina Lavender, said 'Northamptonshire have shown a forward thinking attitude to helping solve the congestion issue faced in many towns and cities across the UK. We welcome this initiative and look forward to other counties following their lead.'

John Spencer, Team Leader of Road Safety and Travel Choices, Northamptonshire Highways says: 'As part of our modal shift strategy Northamptonshire County Council intends to embrace motorcycles and scooters as a sustainable transport mode within the future countywide transport programme. Greater use of motorcycles can bring environmental, congestion and accessibility benefits, particularly on journeys made for commuting to places of employment or education.'

Mr Spencer adds 'the road safety team in Northamptonshire is committed to improving safety for all road users but is also looking at encouraging different ways to travel. In 2015 we carried out a motorcycle survey to reaffirm why people were using motorbikes, but also why they were not! We collaborate with various partners like the Motorcycle Industry Association, Get on Team and the Ride to Work team, to encourage people to take up motorcycling as a safe, sustainable and better way of getting around.'

For more information contact MAG at 01926 844 064 or [central-office@mag-uk.org](mailto:central-office@mag-uk.org)

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*Below: Background to Northamptonshire Project*

## *About Ride to Work Week*

*Notes for Editors, Ride to Work Week (by Steve Muir, MCIA)*

See this link: <https://youtu.be/unS274SU9OM>

### **Background to Northamptonshire project**

- **Motorcycle Northants** was recently launched by Northamptonshire County Council, making it the first local authority in the UK to actively encourage a modal shift towards motorcycles, which is currently just 0.4% of all commuter traffic in the county. This is part of a wider plan to encourage sustainable transport options, which also include cycling, walking and using public transport.
- Motorcycle Northants will encourage the county's leisure riders to use their bikes to commute, especially where distance by pedal bike is impractical, aiming for an initial modal shift of 3%. Each day in Northamptonshire, an estimated 43% of commuter journeys are made by just one person in a car or van, so there is great capacity for some of these to be made on a powered two wheeler.
- Northamptonshire recognises that journey times on motorcycles are shorter due to the ability to filter and reduced pressure on parking. This helps all road users, which is backed up by a European study showing when just 10% of car drivers swapped to a motorcycle, scooter or moped, then congestion for all road users is reduced by 40%.
- As a county which relies heavily on the distribution/logistics industry, it is important that the roads do not become congested. For the first phase of the project, Motorcycle Northants has put a framework in place to make sure existing and new riders have access to high quality training providers.
- A second phase of the project will include looking at increasing motorcycle friendly infrastructure on roads and working with employers to encourage the availability of workplace changing facilities and motorcycle parking.
- Around two-thirds of motorcyclists do not have commuter cover on their policy, so major motorcycle insurers Ageas, ERS and Carole Nash are making commuter insurance cover available free to existing customers during Ride to Work Week.

### **About Ride to Work Week**

National Ride to Work Week spotlights the many benefits of commuting on a motorcycle, scooter or moped and will be particularly active in Northamptonshire this year. The county's residents will get the chance to try a motorcycle for free with Get On – the motorcycle industry's free 'try out' programme - during Ride to Work Week.

- These are available after work each evening at the Obelisk Centre, Kingsthorpe, Northampton, NN2 8UE. Monday 20<sup>th</sup> to Friday 24<sup>th</sup> June between 6pm and 9pm each evening.

- Also available on Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> June at the [Silverstone Circuit](#), Towcester, Northampton, NN12 8TN between 9.15 am and 4.30 pm.
- [Get On sessions](#) are with professional instructors and last for half an hour. All protective clothing is provided. Get On provides a safe and structured introduction to motorcycling. There are also [opportunities to try motorcycling](#) in several parts of the UK during the Summer and Autumn. Booking via the website [www.geton.co.uk](http://www.geton.co.uk) or by calling 02476 408040.

## Notes for Editors

- UK motorcycle ownership has nearly doubled since 1996.[3]
- Studies show roads are safer for bikers when numbers rise.[4] [5]
- Ride to Work Week is organised by the Motorcycle Industry Association (MCIA).
- MCIA has represented the motorcycle industry for over 100 years.
- Ride to Work Week activity will also take place across the UK at a series of 'bikers' breakfasts' and ride-outs, with offers and competitions on social media, where regular motorcycle and scooter commuters post updates about their journey into work.
- Northamptonshire is hosting the annual [BikeSafe Show](#) at Rockingham on July 18<sup>th</sup> 2016. Come and visit the MAG stand.
- Ride to Work Week promotes five main messages to highlight the benefits of riding:
  - o Save time
  - o Save money
  - o Easy Parking
  - o Road skills improve
  - o It's just more fun!

[www.ridetoworkweek.co.uk](http://www.ridetoworkweek.co.uk)

## Stevie Muir, PR, Motorcycle Industry Association

[1] <http://www.tmleuven.com/project/motorcyclesandcommuting/home.htm>

[2] Information based on around 700,000 unique insurance quotes.

[3] The number of powered two wheelers licensed and license exempt has risen from 720,900 in 1994 to 1,312,200 for summer quarter 2015. Figures from Gov.UK Statistical Data Set Motorcycles (VEH03).

[4] <http://www.motorcycleframework.co.uk/more-motorcycling-fewer-casualties/>

[5] Target prevalence affects the detection of vehicles during simulated driving, Attention, Perception, & Psychophysics. Beanland, V. et al. (2014) Safety in numbers: DOI 10.3758/s13414-013-0603-1

