



June 2021 Network

A networking tool for Activists and other interested parties

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Acknowledgments:- George Legg. Colin Brown. Lembit Opik. Selina Lavendar. Manny. Michael Armstrong. Julie Sperling. FEMA. MClA. Plus anyone else I've forgotten.

Editorial

I'm a bit disappointed this month as there doesn't seem much to get me onto my soapbox and have a rant!

I've friends who do a lot of learner and advanced training for riders and they seem to confirm the claims (article included in this edition) that motorcycling is on the 'up' and has been over the past year. This can only be a good thing.

Its only a shame that, due to this pesky virus, the numerous normal motorcycling events aren't taking place. That won't always be the case, of course, then these new riders will be able to see even more benefits to two wheels and meeting the people who ride them.

Further on in this edition is notification of the 2021 Annual Group Conference which is planned to be a 'virtual' event. If you could also look at the Contacts list you'll see from both documents volunteers are needed for various posts. MAG has always relied heavily on its volunteers, so if you fancy doing your bit, there's really no harm in contacting Central Office for a job description.

On that note, I'm off to put the finishing touches to this publication before I send it to George for proofing.

Ride free, AG

For the July edition please submit copy to: aine@mag-uk.org by 25th June with subject heading: Network

Political Unit Report – Lembit Opik and Colin Brown

Ride To Work Day is fast approaching, and for the second year, the Motorcycle Action Group is in charge of running it. Colin Brown, from MAG's Political Unit, shares what you can do to celebrate two wheels on the way to work, and Lembit Opik updates you on other key campaign activity led by the movement in defence of your rights.

Ride to Work Day is here!

The lead up to the Ride To Work Day event on 21st June is now under way. Make sure you share the various related press releases and BLOG posts and other material, from whatever source it is coming. We should have a number of campaign supporters helping to spread the word that riding a motorcycle is the most fun you can have on your daily commute. Please use the hashtags #RTWFUN and #RideToWorkFUN

We have invested a lot of time and hard work into this year's campaign, but it will only be successful with your support. So please share the fun. Check out the website here: <http://ride-to-work-day.mag-uk.org/> - but more importantly get non-riders to check it out too.

If you want to appear in the official 2021 Ride To Work Day video there is still time (just) so if you haven't done so already, get your clips filmed and sent to Colin – see the details here: https://wiki.mag-uk.org/images/8/83/Ride_To_Work_Day_2021_Video.pdf

Election results show where - and who - we need to focus on

The results for local elections, national elections in Wales and Scotland, for Police and Crime Commissioners and the Parliamentary by-election in Hartlepool all took place in May. As reported in last month's Network, a wide selection of elections take place on Thursday, 6th May 2021.

Many thanks to everyone who approached local candidates and political parties and got commitments from them. MAG achieved a great deal of in terms of contacts and promises.

Lembit adds: 'it's really important that we separate our personal views on party politics and even on successful candidates from the need to influence these individuals and parties. Regardless of your own views in the political sphere, I would encourage you to engage with those elected, regardless of whether or not you voted for them. Some of our best progress has been with politicians working together on a cross-party basis. We're making riders' rights into a political issue, not a party political one. That's why we've made so much progress in recent years, and I'm confident you can do the same in your area.'

Want to talk about it? Contact Lembit on 01926 844 064 or on: lembit@mag-uk.org

Lembit will be happy to help.

Police Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill on trial

Last month, Lembit highlighted the existence and content of the Police Crime, Sentencing and Courts (PCSC) Bill. Regular readers will recall Lembit warned that contains potential trouble for riders and those who feel that their right to public protest should not be limited.

An evidence gathering 'Public Bill Committee' has taken place to consider the contents and people's views. It had some witnesses, notably from the Local Government Association and from the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners.

Those with a strong objection to the Bill will not find the proceedings particularly encouraging. The general view of Council representatives and the spokespeople for the police was broadly supportive. There was a lot of debate about the detail, but not much at all regarding any profound question of civil liberties. There is a great deal to look at, and for completeness here's a link to a large proportion of what has been said and done in Parliament:

<https://www.theyworkforyou.com/psc/2021-2/Police%2C%20Crime%2C%20Sentencing%20and%20Courts%20Bill/>

MAG is watching developments closely and at time of writing we are debating the best way for the organisation to the contents of the Bill. Lembit observes: 'there is a general view that the Bill will pass in substantially the same form as it is currently formulated. This means that there will be further restrictions to our liberty to demonstrate, with a toughening up of punishments for traffic offences. Once we get a clear picture of the final content of the legislation, we will, of course, share this with you.

As I've said before, the actual clauses in the Bill are less significant than what a Government seeks to do with them. Therefore, it could be our best defence is engagement with the powers that pass and implement such laws, to seek a proportionate approach. That's time consuming and quite frustrating on occasion. But it might be the best way for us to protect our rights, by setting precedents with the authorities rather than trying to set them – or prevent them – in court.

We'll keep you up to date on the legislation as we hear more about it.

MAG publishes petrol motorcycle survey results.

The Motorcycle Action Group (MAG) has published the results of its snapshot survey of motorcyclists' attitudes to potential phasing out of petrol motorcycles.

MAG recently ran a survey to establish a snapshot of riders' opinions about what remains technically a potential phase-out of petrol-powered motorcycles. Motorcycles are not currently included in the Government's announcement of the 2030 end-to-sales of new petrol and diesel cars and vans. It is widely accepted, however, that motorcycles are likely to be covered in future announcements as the country works to decarbonise transport.

The survey attracted a total of 4,805 responses. Of these, 1,575 responses were from MAG members. The remaining 3,230 were from non-members. It is assumed that all respondents would consider themselves to be motorcycle enthusiasts due to the channels used to promote the survey. This was not a randomised sample of all motorcycle riders.

The first question covered opinion on a potential phase-out of the sale of new petrol motorcycles. We refer to the phase-out as a ban for brevity. Just 8% of respondents accepted a potential ban, 36% would want to see a ban delayed and 55% were completely opposed. It is noted that complete opposition was higher amongst non-members than members (48% of members compared to 59% of non-members were completely opposed.)

Eighty-three percent of all respondents want to see MAG work with other groups opposed to the ban of petrol- and diesel-powered vehicles.

The third question probed attitudes to electric motorcycles. Asked whether they would stop riding altogether, keep existing petrol motorcycles running for as long as possible, or adopt electric before the end of any phase-out, 31% said they would hang up their crash helmets, 56% would resist the switch for as long as possible and just 13% would make the switch before it was unavoidable.

MAG Chair, Selina Lavender, commented:

"I was delighted by the level of response to the survey and I would like to thank all those that took the time to let us know their opinions. MAG always represents the views of all riders, regardless of their choice of motorcycle. We have worked hard to develop the channels that get riders opinions heard by Government. We will not misrepresent those opinions. If you care about motorcycling, you can rely on MAG to voice your opinions at the highest levels. Please do ensure you join or renew your membership of MAG. Your subscription will help support our work to ensure motorcycling has a bright future."

The raw results and graphical representations can be found here:

https://wiki.mag-uk.org/images/2/26/Petrol_Survey_Results_2021.pdf

London – friends in high places

The new Deputy Chair of the Greater London Authority Transport Committee I aid motorcyclist and MAG supporter Keith Prince AM. Keith increased his majority by over 1,000%, indicating his popularity in the large area he represents.

Another politician of relevance to MAG is the new Chair of the Greater London Authority Transport Committee, Caroline Pidgeon. In a debate in April, she made promises to MAG

about dialogue with bikers, and we intend to ensure she keeps that promise. Lembit is pleased with the outcome of our work so far – and reminds bikers nationwide that this sort of progress is not confined to London. Where we put the work in, we make friends.

If you'd like to plan similar engagement in your area, just get in touch with Lembit or Colin.

Questions arise about feasibility of 2030 ICE ban

Several car manufacturers have started to question the practicability of banning petrol and diesel cars by 2030. Carlos Tavares, chief executive of Stellantis, which owns Vauxhall, has suggested that requiring the automotive industry to make a modal shift from petrol and diesel to electric power could have unintended environmental costs.

Mr Tavares stated that in his view cars could become the preserve of the rich as Britain and other countries around the world impose bans on diesel and petrol cars and embrace electrification. He also believes that a speedy shift to electric vehicles could have the effect of increasing costs of private transport ownership, so that there will be a significant increase in cost, to the extent that even middle classes families could be priced out of buying electric vehicles. Centrally, he has suggested the move may fail to significantly reduce carbon emissions because, like for like, electric vehicles are heavier than their petrol equivalent. MAG has made this same point for a few years.

The CHoice in Personal Transport (CHiPT) campaign is examining the evidence, and what Mr Tavares has said, with a view to making reasoned arguments for the continued sale of petrol-powered motorcycles.

Low Traffic Neighbourhoods cause public opposition

There's been an upsurge of objections against Low Traffic Neighbourhoods (LTNs) in various places. It appears that one Council leader, in Ealing, may even have lost his position as leader due to the objections.

What's happening in your area? If you have an LTN you don't like, please get involved in any local activity to raise those objections. Many of these are only there under Covid-19 emergency powers. They therefore don't have long term legal legitimacy and that makes it far harder for the Council to keep them if people don't want them.

If no campaign exists, why not start one? It could be that a few of these schemes are popular, but mainly this doesn't seem to be the case. Call Lembit anytime to discuss these further on 01926 844064 or email Lembit@mag-uk.org

UN aims for 50% cut in KSIs (killed/seriously injured) on roads.

MAG has had a long dispute with road safety promoters about the credibility of reducing road deaths to zero. Now, the United Nations has committed to a vision to reduce road deaths and casualties by 50% by 2030 compared to 2021. This is challenging but a great deal more credible than the impossible and tokenistic 'vision zero' of no deaths and injuries.

The primary question is timescale. What would it take to half KSIs – those killed and seriously injured? Looking at the data reveals the most advanced countries turn out to have flatlined in terms of the level of KSIs on their roads. This is the case in the UK. As such, only a qualitative change in technology or some draconian new rules could alter the level of road accidents. This is the motivation for interest in autonomous vehicles and lowering speed limits.

Lembit recalls, from his years as an MP, that ‘politicians are dreadful at making calculations involving actuarial risk. In other words, they tend to introduce moves that are often worse for society, but which are good for what’s called virtue signalling. It’s down to MAG to defend our right to ride on the simple basis that motorbikes are always a target when it comes to trying to reduce risk on the road. We need to point out the overall benefits of riding, and personal choice. It’s a never-ending debate that we’re dutybound to continue.

See the commentary on this from a UK politician at:

<https://www.theyworkforyou.com/wrans/?id=2021-05-13.1027.h&s=Road+Safety#g1027.r0>

E10 comes step closer

The Government is introducing legislation to bring ‘E10’ to the garage forecourts of the UK. DfT: Entitled ‘The Motor Fuel (Composition and Content) and the Biofuel (Labelling) (Amendment) (No. 2) Regulations 2021’ it lays out the regulations designed to bring E10 into mainstream use in the UK. The reason given is that it’s more eco-friendly than crop-based petrol and diesel.

The Government states that the E5 product currently on sale remains on after the introduction of E10, but it is expected this will be a minority use fuel. Costs are likely to therefore escalate.

Lembit warns that ‘the introduction of E10 will mean those riders with older engines will suffer degraded performance or engine failures. The thing is, you might not realise this is caused by the E10, and it would be very likely hard to prove.

The E10, has created a lot of debate about whether it’s eco-friendly, as it requires farmland that could be used for food production to be turned over for fuel production. It also this significantly increases our dependence on agriculture for our fuel, and therefore the weather will become an increasing factor.

You can find the Government legislation here:

<https://bit.ly/3hk645P>

MAG raised concerns about the introduction of E10, but these don’t seem to have deterred the Government from its intended course of action. If you have concerns about E10, please write to your Member of Parliament, in your own words, and ask for a reply. If you have a worry, you have the right to express it.

Debates in Parliament, with Mayors and in State legislatures

As part of our continuing work to monitor what’s being said about us and on our behalf, we’re keeping a close watch on politicians to see what questions, answers and debates relate to motorcycling. Here’s a short summary of what our research guru, George Legg, has found between mid-March and the end of April 2021. Note one of the questions relate directly to MAG’s relationship with Transport for London.

Parliament

We identified four Written Answers. These covered:

- electric bicycles;

- licences and Covid-19;
- mopeds and foreign licence holders;
- American driving licence holders.

There was one Westminster Hall debate, about air ambulance funding in relation to a serious motorcycle accident.

Northern Ireland Assembly

There was one orally answered question in the Northern Ireland Assembly, relating to infrastructure responsibilities about vehicle and driver testing.

Mayor of London

In questions to the Mayor of London, there were 12 questions during the period. These covered:

- The general terms of the scrappage scheme
- Blue badge holders and the scrappage scheme
- Motorcycle related
- The value of the motorcycle scrappage scheme
- Crystal Motorcycle Provision
- Meeting of Transport for London with the Motorcycle Action Group
- Mayor's request for bikers to use public transport
- Scrappage applications in terms of numbers
- ULEZ exemptions
- Motorcycles specifically applying for scrappage funding
- Non-compliant blue badge vehicles in relation to ULEZ
- Offence of not holding insurance

We are still building up our monitoring procedures on all this – there's a lot to track! Please contact Lembit if you'd like any further information or to discuss this matter.

Local Transport Plans and visions of the future.

There was a hiatus in local transport plan consultations due to the May elections, but Colin has seen that a number of local authorities are getting back to work on these. Keep your eyes peeled for consultations or better still reports about forthcoming consultations. If we can get a dialogue started before consultations are published we increase our chances. Don't ignore the conversation about the wider vision documents. Colin has been struck by the way that sweeping visions are often those of the planners but rarely receive much input from ordinary citizens. We all have opinions about what the future should look like, don't let a select few have disproportionate influence. This goes far beyond the realm of motorcycling and transport, but do take the time to give your opinions. We don't feel it is MAG's role to take a position on some of these things, but that does not mean that you should keep your personal opinions to yourself. The shape of these visions do have significant impacts on transport plans and thus on motorcycling. We live in a democracy but it may not always feel like it. Engage with your councillors and MPs and ask them to listen to your views. There are many new politicians following the elections, now is the time to build relationships with them.

Colin is engaging with Oxfordshire, Warwickshire, Coventry City and Transport for West Midlands on their transport plans but do let us know of any other activity. Colin is ready and willing to support your efforts or make approaches to local authorities on your behalf, so don't hesitate to get in touch via central-office@mag-uk.org

Is bike theft data reliable?

The answer is sadly 'not very'. Colin is forming plans to address this issue with all the newly elected and returning Police and Crime Commissioners. We have continued to uncover more evidence of errors, miss-reporting and confusion when asking a very simple question – how many motorcycles were stolen in 2020?

If you have made contact with your local PCC and have received positive reply, do let us know at central. Our plan is to build up a base of supportive PCCs willing to take on the data issue and campaign with us for reform of reporting standards and procedures. This will combine with our attempts to get a meeting with the Policing Minister, Kit Malthouse.

The 2020 Police Force Bike Theft Rankings are not yet complete, but we hope to publish them before too much longer. Colin has also begun exploring possibilities of working with the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners.

Engaging in hushed tones on motorcycle noise

We are continuing to engage with any reported issues around noise complaints. We are not making a lot of noise but we are certainly not sticking our heads in the sand on this issue. It is sometimes difficult to get responses from campaign groups that are making noisy complaints, but we will continue to proactively reach out to any of these groups.

If there are issues being raised in your area and you want support from the political unit, please do get in touch.

MAG PRESS RELEASES

MAG congratulates Bill Wiggin, new Chair of Parliamentary Motorcycle Group. 30.04.21

The Motorcycle Action Group (MAG) congratulates Bill Wiggin MP on his election as the new Chair of the All-party Parliamentary Motorcycle Group (APMG). MAG also thanks outgoing Chair Chris Law MP for his support over the last four years.

At the Motorcycling APPG's AGM on 29th April, Bill Wiggin MP was elected as the new Chair of the parliamentarians motorcycling group.

Bill is an enthusiastic motorcyclist. In 2003 he introduced a bill to allow motorcycle access to bus lanes. His opening line was "As possibly the only Member of Parliament who motorcycles to work every day, I am one of more than 1 million motorcyclists in Britain who recognise the pleasure and convenience of filtering past the gridlocked traffic and steering clear of public transport."

MAG's Director of Communications & Public Affairs, Lembit Opik, is a former MP and former

chair of the Motorcycling APPG. Lembit said:

“Bill was a very active member of the All Party Group when I was Chairman, and I emphatically applaud his promotion to the top job in the group. He is a truly frequent rider, using his machine as a commuting tool. This means Bill experiences what we all experience in terms of traffic, bad weather and the joy of riding. I’m really looking forward to teaming up with him again, because I know he’s going to be good for the All Party Group and great for British biking.”

Bill Wiggin commented:

“Having been a motorcyclist for more than quarter of a century, I have always seen the importance of motorcycles as a vital part of the mix of travel options in the UK. They’re economical, inexpensive and have a low carbon footprint. I hope to make sure that the Government takes biking into account as we create a sustainable transport regime. Working with riders and the industry, the future looks brighter for motorbikes and scooters. I look forward to the APPG integrating political understanding and priorities even more closely with biking.”

One of Bill’s first acts as Chair was to give the APPG’s formal support to the Ride To Work Day campaign. This is a fitting start for an APPG Chair who rides his motorcycle to work.

MAG has also thanked outgoing Chair, Chris Law MP. Lembit paid tribute to Chris Law saying:

‘Chris has been a tremendous advocate for motorcycling, earning the respect and gratitude of thousands of riders across the UK. His active contribution - and personal knowledge of biking as a world-travelled rider - means he has raised the profile of motorcycling inside and outside Parliament. Chris will always be welcomed at MAG events wherever he goes, as a part of the community he has done so much to represent.’

MAG on track to turn hope into reality for motorcyclists. 04.05.21

Continuing progress between the Motorcycle Action Group (MAG) and the Department for Transport (DfT) shows that MAG is on track to turn hope into reality for motorcyclists. Roads Minister, Baroness Vere agrees that “there is more that the Department can do to provide direction and support for motorcycling.”

MAG’s meeting with Roads Minister, Baroness Vere in January will have a lasting impact on the future of motorcycling in the UK. A recent letter has revealed the extent of the progress made. At the meeting, Baroness Vere asked MAG to create a list of riders’ top five priorities.

In the letter, Baroness Vere admits that delivering on the priorities raises complex and challenging issues. The Minister states that MAG and the DfT will need to work together to better understand the specifics of each ask. She goes on to recognise the extensive contacts and influence that MAG has developed in various forums. The Minister concludes by saying:

“I am pleased that MAG is taking such a collaborative approach and that, whilst work is still continuing on the consideration of your ‘top five priorities’, we have in place forums with the right expertise to not only address these concerns, but to explore what more the

Government can do to support motorcycling.”

MAG Chair, Selina Lavender, commented:

“I am delighted by this further evidence that we are on track to deliver real results. Factors like the recent formation of the National Motorcyclists Council and MAG’s continued work mean that riders can hope for a brighter future. We are at the early stages of a complex and no doubt lengthy process, but we are undeniably moving motorcycling to where it needs to be - at the heart of transport policy.

If you are not already a member, now is the time to join MAG. The work we do does not happen by chance and there are costs involved. More riders investing in MAG membership will help us to turn hope into reality on your behalf.”

You can support MAG’s work and enjoy many member benefits by taking out full membership for just £27 per year. Join online at www.mag-uk.org or by contacting the office during normal office hours on 01926 844 064.

MAG publishes petrol motorcycle survey results. 19/5/21

The Motorcycle Action Group (MAG) has published the results of its snapshot survey of motorcyclists’ attitudes to potential phasing out of petrol motorcycles.

MAG recently ran a survey to establish a snapshot of riders’ opinions about what remains technically a potential phase-out of petrol-powered motorcycles. Motorcycles are not currently included in the Government’s announcement of the 2030 end-to-sales of new petrol and diesel cars and vans. It is widely accepted, however, that motorcycles are likely to be covered in future announcements as the country works to decarbonise transport.

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MAG celebrates 30 years of fun riding to work. 24/05/2021

The Motorcycle Action Group (MAG) has announced the 30th International Ride To Work Day campaign. This year MAG will celebrate fun - the real benefit of riding to work.

The international Ride To Work Day campaign marks its 30th birthday this year and UK promoters of the campaign, MAG, are using the opportunity to promote the fun side of riding a motorcycle or scooter, and reckon that riding to work is better than commuting by car.

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

“We spend a lot of time promoting the advantages of less congestion and pollution when it comes to motorcycling, and there is no doubt that a motorcycle commute can be far more practical than a car commute. However, following a depressing year of lockdowns and restrictions, focusing on the sheer joy that motorcycling can deliver to a rider seems wholly appropriate. There are many who have never tried powered two wheelers and they are missing out: not only on the rather sensible benefits, but also on the chance to introduce a little more fun into their lives.”

Ride To Work Day 2021 takes place on Monday 21st June. This is also the intended end point of the Government’s roadmap out of lockdown.

Colin added:

“It is great that Boris has chosen to ensure that the end to all lockdown restrictions should coincide with our campaign and we look forward to official confirmation from Number 10 that support for the campaign goes all the way to the top!!”

MAG plans a program of promotion leading up to the event. The idea is to spread the word that riding a motorcycle or scooter is a sensible and practical choice for your commute. But the overriding message is that it is also good, old fashioned, unapologetic, life-affirming FUN.

MAG AGC 2021: a virtual affair 28/05/2021

The Motorcycle Action Group (MAG) announces that their Annual Group Conference (AGC) 2021 will take place with an online element, offering members the best opportunity to attend this important event amidst ongoing uncertainty regarding the pandemic. Motions and nominations must be submitted no later than Wednesday, June 30th, 2021.

MAG AGC 2021 will take place on Saturday, September 25th. In order to announce details of the event, and to provide timely notice for submission of motions and nominations, the decision regarding how AGC will take place had to be taken in May. The National Committee considered the viability of holding a group event to include members from all four nations, taking into consideration the possibility that conditions could change, and restrictions reintroduced. It was strongly felt that this year's event should go ahead, allowing the maximum number of members the opportunity to participate, and should include a contingency in case of restrictions being reinstated. AGC 2021 will therefore take place with online connections.

Motions and nominations should be submitted to central-office@mag-uk.org or by post to MAG, Unit C13, Holly Farm Business Park, Honiley, Kenilworth, Warwickshire CV8 1NP. Submissions should be received by Wednesday, June 30th, 2021 latest.

The following positions are up for election:

Directors of The Motorcycle Action Group Limited (5 positions, with tenures of between 1 and 4 years), National Chair, National Clubs Officer, and National Reps Liaison Officer. The Board is currently without a Director of Finance.

Plan A: Online live meeting with 'hubs' plus limited individual access. MAG groups to arrange a physical event - locally or as a region - where multiple members log in via one connection: a 'hub'. This allows those who wish to come together and perhaps include a fundraiser or party the option to do so. Those not in a position to attend a group event can request to log in as individuals, but these places will be limited.

Plan B (contingency): Should restrictions be such that, on the day, physical groups cannot meet, or applications to attend exceed the limit of the software licence, the event will change to a pre-recorded video format. The video will be available to members for a limited time to view. A deadline will be given for asking questions and voting, which can be done via either email or letter.

Selina Lavender, MAG Chair, said "There is a lot of administration to be worked through and it is acknowledged that this scenario is not ideal; however, we owe it to our members to take the steps necessary to hold an AGC in 2021. Many elements of life have been put on hold due to the pandemic, but politics and attacks on motorcycling continue. I do hope our members will be supportive of an online event, and that they will provide assistance to those members who are looking to join but who are less confident with the technology."

Full details regarding AGC 2021 will be published in The ROAD, and in Network.

AGC 2021, Saturday 25th September

Due to the ongoing Coronavirus pandemic and restrictions on meeting in person, this year's AGC will be an online event (full details to follow in the next issue of The ROAD). This is a decision taken by the NC to allow this event to go ahead in 2021 regardless of the situation come September. It is recognised that there is no way of knowing what restrictions - if any - may be in place come September, and the need to give notice now in order to meet the requirements of the Constitution.

It is envisaged that, subject to restrictions at the time of the event, groups or regions will look to meet and access the event as a 'hub'. This will require some technical equipment and know-how, along with Reps taking on the role of chairing at their venue. Time for testing from the 'hub' venue will be offered in the run up to the event along with guidance for those chairing.

Being aware that not everyone may be in a position to attend a 'hub', for any number of reasons, there will be a number of 'spaces' reserved for individuals to access the event live.

Should we find the event oversubscribed or Government restrictions being such that the 'hub' approach cannot be operated, then the AGC will be available as a pre-recorded video broadcast to members with questions and voting moved to a written format (all being timebound).

Full details, including how to register for the online event, deadlines for doing so, and the contingency plan will be provided in the next issue of The ROAD, in the September issue of Network, and via the members database, with reminders through social media.

Whilst online proceedings can suffer from technical glitches, the aim is to start AGC at its traditional time of 12 noon on Saturday 25th September 2021.

Motions & nominations

In accordance with the Constitution, we invite motions and nominations to be received no later than the June 30th, 2021.

The following roles are up for election at AGC 2021:

Directors of The Motorcycle Action Group Limited (5 positions, tenures of 1 - 4 years), National Chair, National Clubs Officer and National Reps Liaison Officer. The Board are currently without a Director of Finance.

Both motions and nominations may be sent by post to MAG, Unit C13, Holly Farm Business Park, Honiley, Kenilworth, Warwickshire CV8 1NP or via email at central-office@mag-uk.org

From the Constitution:

6. g. All matters to be included within the Agenda of the Group Conference should be sent in writing and received at the Central Office of the Company not later than midnight on the last day of June in the year of the year of the General Conference. Submissions can be sent by email to nominations@mag-uk.org or by post to the registered office address. Submissions received by post on the first working day following 30th of June shall be accepted. All proposals should include the name, address and Membership number of the person proposing the matter and the person seconding it.

6. i. All nominations for the directors or other officers of the Company must be seconded and must be submitted after 1st June in each year. Submissions can be sent by email to nominations@mag-uk.org or by post to the registered office address. Submissions received by post on the first working day following 30th of June shall be accepted. All proposals should include the name, address and Membership number of the person proposing the matter and the person seconding it. Each nominee must have been a Member for at least 12 months prior to the nomination and must include a manifesto of not more than 1200 words with their nomination.

For a full copy of the Constitution, visit the MAG wiki and look under 'Toolbox'

<https://wiki.mag-uk.org/index.php/Toolbox#Constitution>

MAG Central Office are happy to email electronic versions of the Constitution; email central-office@mag-uk.org

Should you not be on email and require a paper copy, please telephone Central Office on 01926 844064 and they will post you a copy. Please be aware that a charge will be made for postage.

Awards

We invite nominees for the following awards:

The Fred Hill Freedom Award - Awarded to the MAG Member who, in the opinion of the National Committee, has made an outstanding, sustained, significant and positive contribution to the work of the Group over a period of years.

The Richard Tegg Award - Awarded to the MAG Member who, in the opinion of the National Committee, has made a sustained, significant and positive contribution to the work of the Group over a period of years at a local level. National Committee members are not eligible for this award in relation to their national work or NC activity, but may be nominated in respect of specified local non-NC activity as an ordinary member.

The Steve Tannock Teamwork Award - Awarded to the local group, region, or other team of MAG members who, in the opinion of the National Committee, have made a significant joint contribution to the work of the Group.

Honorary Life Membership - Awarded in respect to significant work over a sustained period on behalf of the group. Except in exceptional circumstances, nominees for Honorary Life membership should have been fully paid-up ordinary members of MAG for an unbroken period of at least ten years prior to nomination for this award.

Media Award - Awarded to a person or publication who, in the opinion of the National Committee, has been MAG-friendly in the promotion of and/or reporting of MAG.

Young MAG Member Award - Awarded to the MAG member, who in the opinion of the National Committee, has made an outstanding, significant and positive contribution to the work of the Group over the last year. This award is only open to members under the age of 25, or whose 25th birthday falls within the year in which they are being considered for the award.

Nominations for awards may be made directly to your Regional Rep OR to the Chair via email (chair@mag-uk.org) or by post (see Central Office address above).

The NC will consider all nominees for awards at its August meeting.

Note: Anyone who is interested in becoming a Director of MAG Media or NEL can submit a Manifesto to the Board at any point during the year. ALL Directors roles are on a voluntary basis.

MAG Notice Board



Next
Network deadline
25th June

ROAD deadline
15th July




**Monthly Member
Draw**
New for 2021
**See advert for
more details**

 

Parliament Recess Dates

Witsun rises 27th May and returns 7th June

Summer rises 22 July and returns 6th September



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

 Filter Friendly stickers now
available in the MAG online Shop
<https://www.mag-uk.org/shop/>



Manhole question's with Cumbria County Council (C.C.C.)

Cllr Paul Turner and I asked for a follow up meeting with Rob Lewis, Highway's and Transport Dept of C.C.C. plus Chris Broadbent, Safety Coordinator of the Cumbria Roads Safety Partnership (C.R.S.P.). So here's the summary of that mid-April meeting:

1. For background purposes: Has everyone read the "It's Grippy Up North" article? Yes. The article covers Paul and myself first meeting with C.C.C. back in 2017, when it was decided that C.C.C. would purchase some anti-slip composite manhole covers.
2. From the first batch of manhole covers bought, C.C.C. raised an issue with the manufacture that their was an gas flow issue. Has this been solved? The issue hasn't been resolved to date and the few covers left from the original batch won't be fitted by the C.C.C. either.
3. Will C.C.C. be buying more of the same? Not at the moment but if the problem was rectified, we would review the situation.
4. Budget's: With the overall budget cut of £10M. What will be the new budget specially for manhole cover purchase and maintenance?
 1. How many manhole covers are the C.C.C. likely to buy and what type?
 2. What will be the ratio between the different types? Answer to both parts is that they don't have a specific budget for purchase and maintenance?
5. Will you work with MAG on where these manhole covers could be situated? Yes, through the reporting link on the C.C.C. website or a C.R.S.P. meeting. (Of which I was invited to join).
6. Identification: Is it possible to have C.C.C. stamped onto it? As it will help with reporting. The consensus is that it wouldn't work because the markings would be worn away.
7. Does the C.C.C. have influence over utility companies on what type of manhole cover to install? Yes, CCC will continue to work with MAG and the utility companies to promote the use of anti-slip composite manhole covers.

The way ahead:

When coronavirus subsides, Paul and I with Rob Lewis and Chris Broadbent will visit the Cumbrian factory which make the manhole covers to see if a solution can be done.

And that I'll follow up with manhole covers in general through C.R.S.P. meeting's.

So my final question is to you: What is your local authority/utility company stance on manhole covers?

Michael Armstrong
Regional Rep
Cumbria M.A.G.

MAG Monthly Prize Draw Winners

May – to be drawn 01.06.21

April – Liam of Sudbury

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

Yorkshire News

“Hi all.

I've managed to cultivate a great relationship with the Yorkshire Evening Post crime reporter. Here are a couple of links to recent reports in the paper with plenty of name checks for MAG. Onwards and upwards” 🤔👍

Manny (Yorkshire Regional Rep)

<https://www.yorkshireeveningpost.co.uk/news/crime/leeds-motorbike-thefts-not-a-victimless-crime-say-campaigners-calling-for-action-3244922>

<https://www.yorkshireeveningpost.co.uk/news/crime/leeds-motorbike-theft-problem-needs-tackling-to-stop-illegal-and-anti-social-riders-motorcycle-action-group-3244908>

And, as Lembit said:-

“Manny’s actions indicate that all we have been saying is a valid formula to gain good coverage in the media.

His laudable approach is replicable elsewhere.

Remember, as I ‘ve said before, once you are on the media’s list as an expert in particular areas, they’ll keep coming back to you and that’s how you can build MAG’S media profile.”

That's part of the function of Network – passing on information that can help others. These sorts of relationships with media can only help Activists further MAG's/Rider's cause.

Riding the Lockdown Rollercoaster

MCIA: 10th May 2021



MCIA today released the April 2021 powered two wheeler (PTW) registration statistics. With the 2020 lockdown curtailing PTW retail activity, the three-figure percentage increases recorded this year were not unexpected. However, the growth over the 2019 pre-COVID result confirms MCIA's belief that 2021 can be a bumper year.

2021 April registrations show an eye-watering year on year increase of **570% at 10,874** units and an arguably more impressive growth of **10.7%** against April 2019. Whilst the 2020 lockdown may have instigated the thirst for PTWs as an isolated and safer way to travel, 2021 is seeing the transport decisions materialising in new PTW purchases for both efficiency, leisure and the many mental and social health benefits associated with riding.

Electrically powered PTWs once again go from strength to strength with April registrations up **515.7%** on 2020.

If the idea of the many benefits of riding a PTW appeals to you, visit www.unlockyourfreedom.co.uk, to find out more about getting onto powered two wheels, including how to access the straightforward Compulsory Basic Training (CBT) course, which is all that is required to ride a PTW of up to 11Kw or 125cc.

More details about April's PTW registrations can be at: <https://www.mcia.co.uk/press-statistics>

Please credit MCIA when quoting this information.

FEMA

How To Improve The Driving Licence

May 6, 2021

The European Commission wants to revise the driving licence legislation and asks for feedback. FEMA asks the Commission to shift the focus from technical skills to better risk awareness and the ability to handle unexpected situations.



The European Commission takes the next step to new driving licence legislation and has published a 'Roadmap' to a revision of the Directive on driving licences (you can respond [here](#) until 21 May 2021). In this roadmap the Commission defines several problems and initiatives to tackle them. FEMA reacted and has sent its views on driving licences to the Commission (you can read FEMA's full reaction [here](#)).

In FEMA's view, the revision must be used to solve several problems that we have already addressed for a long time. In general, FEMA asks for a change of direction from the present focus on technical skills at low speeds, to higher skills that leads to better risk awareness and preparation to handle unexpected situations. This can be done without raising the threshold to obtain a full A-licence by making different choices and to make it easier to go through the stages from A1 to A.

We also draw attention to the present structure of the Directive regarding training- and test motorcycles, which makes that women and smaller men are still unnecessarily excluded. A change in the demands on training- and test motorcycles could change that. Finally, we ask for a further harmonization with respect to trailers and the possibility to ride a light motorcycle with a B-licence in all member states.



Photograph courtesy of www.mmvng.nl

FEMA also states that the consequences of a physical disability can often be overcome by using adapted controls (even in the case of powered two-wheelers); physical disabilities should not necessarily form an obstacle to obtain a driving licence. This also means that it must be possible to follow trainings and tests with a vehicle with adapted controls. The permission given by the authorities of one member state to drive/ride in such a way, must be recognized in other member countries.

FEMA General Secretary Dolf Willigers said: “The revision is a good opportunity to work on driving licence legislation that has a real added value for road safety for motorcyclists and at the same time lowers the threshold. Also, it is an opportunity to solve some minor issues like riding with trailers and riding on a light motorcycle with a car driving licence; riders have asked for this and in the countries where this is already implemented it did not lead to more accidents. Of course, the member states must also look at how they will implement the revised Directive. In several member states the present Directive was implemented quite badly, thus making the threshold too high for new riders. I see new chances on a European and a national level to have better driving licence legislation.”

*Top photograph courtesy of [KNMV](#).
This article is subject to [FEMA's copyright](#)*

German Federal Transport Minister On Noise: ‘Road Closures Are No Option’

May 14, 2021



Noise annoyance is a big problem in Germany that has caused many protests from civilians and action groups. Road authorities often react by closing roads completely or during specific times.

In 2020 the German federal meeting of governments of state (the Bundesrat) adopted far reaching proposals to limit the sound emission of motorcycles. Although the Bundesrat has no direct legislative power and the federal government opposed the proposals, the tone was set. The German motorcycle community of riders and industry developed a strategy paper in a try to contribute to the solution from their side.

FEMA members Biker Union ([BU](#)) and Bundesverband der Motorradfahrer ([BVDM](#)) had a second meeting with the Bundesverkehrsminister (Federal Transportminister) Andreas Scheuer on 6 May 2021. During this round table conference, the new strategy paper of the Federal Motorcycle Working Group (BAGMO) was officially handed over to the minister. Dur-

ing the meeting with the delegation of motorcyclists and motorcycle industry, the minister repeated that road closures are not an option for him, and that “Freiheit, Vernunft und Regeln” (freedom, reason, and rules) must be kept intact. In view of the ongoing discussions about powered two-wheelers, the strategy paper came just in time.



BU-president Rolf Frieling said: “With the handover of our strategy paper, which is led by the BU and the Institute for Motorcycle Safety ([IfZ](#)) as the coordination office of the BAGMO and on which intensive work was done in several voting rounds of the ‘Berliner Runde’ and the BAGMO, we have taken a big step forward. The two aspects of sustainable and socially acceptable mobility with motorized two-wheelers are comprehensively dealt with and placed in the right context, on just 19 pages.”

Rolf continued: “In addition, many claims, which have been circulating for months, but are sometimes rather nonsensical, are corrected. For us as association however, the document also contains a commitment to take the escalating conflicts that have escalated in recent years seriously. Lack of consideration for the residents on busy motorcycle routes is not, in our view, a cavalier offence either. The conflict resolution approaches we have described must now be implemented to achieve a fair and mutually acceptable balance of interests.”

You can find the press release (in German) [here](#). The strategy paper (also in German) you can find [here](#).

Photographs: Biker Union & Wim Taal

Text: press release Biker Union, Dolf Willigers

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Swedish road users like motorcyclists

FEMA News: May 27, 2021



A survey shows that motorcyclists are the second most liked road user group in Swedish traffic. This is a positive result for motorcyclists' association [SMC](#), since motorcycle riders often face criticism.

The number one are tractor drivers and in third place you find the lorry drivers, according to a survey from the car broker Kvd bil. The survey also shows that dangerous overtaking is the behaviour that makes most people see red.

Motorcyclists are liked all over the country and in the big city regions of Stockholm, Malmö and Göteborg.

The group that is most disliked are the bicyclists. Every second Swede (51%) thinks that the bicyclists are at the bottom. The friction between motorists and cyclists has always been there. Motorists think that cyclists take up too much space and hinder traffic flow, while cyclists, on the other hand, think that they have an equal right to use the roadway.



In major cities, users of electric scooters are seen as the worst road users (photograph courtesy of sverigesradio.se)

The bicycle riders don't have the worst reputation everywhere; there has been a new type of traffic that even more people are annoyed with, at least in the cities and among non-motorists. The electric scooter is a mobility solution in an urban environment, but unfortunately there is a lot of uncertainty about which rules apply and this of course creates conflicts between electric scooters and other road users, says Daniel Odsberg, sales manager at Kvd bil.

In Stockholm, Göteborg and Malmö (the three biggest cities in Sweden), the users of electric scooters are seen as the worst road users by 62% of the motorists. Besides being annoyed by bicycles and electric scooters, 23% of motorists are annoyed by the behaviour of taxi drivers.

The most annoying behaviours are dangerous overtaking (68%), usage of a mobile phone while driving (62%) and bicyclists who are not obeying the traffic rules (49%)

Has Covid-19 sparked a motorcycle revolution?



The RAC has described 2020 as a “remarkable year” for new powered two-wheeler (PTW) registrations.

Government figures show [2.1 million vehicles were registered for the first time in Great Britain during 2020](#), 27% lower than during 2019.

The fall owes a lot to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, which saw showrooms across the county close their doors for a substantial period of time.

In terms of vehicle type, the largest falls were among HGVs (32%), buses and coaches (29%) and cars (29%).

Conversely, motorcycles saw the smallest decline, down 5%.

In fact, during the second half of the year, registrations of new motorcycles actually rose – up by 27%.

The RAC says Covid-19 – and the resulting decline in public transport use – has [“encouraged many more people to think about how they get around”](#).

Rod Dennis, RAC data insight spokesman, said: “2020 was a remarkable year for registrations of new motorcycles and other two-wheelers such as mopeds and scooters.

“Despite the pandemic, the second half of the year saw the highest number of new registrations of these since 2016 and meant overall 2020 sales fell by just 5% year-on-year, compared to car sales which fell by a huge 29%.

“It seems Covid and the decline in public transport use have encouraged many more people to think about how they get around. It could also mean some have switched to motorcycles and mopeds as an alternative to a second car.”

Vehicle licensing data shows rise in SORNs and motorcycle sales during the pandemic - RAC statement

Reacting to [new government data on licensed vehicles on the UK's roads in 2020](#), RAC data insight spokesman Rod Dennis said:

“2020 was a remarkable year for registrations of new motorcycles and other two-wheelers such as mopeds and scooters. Despite the pandemic, the second half of the year saw the highest number of new registrations of these since 2016 and meant overall 2020 sales fell by just 5% year-on-year, compared to car sales which fell by a huge 29%. It seems Covid and the decline in public transport use have encouraged many more people to think about how they get around. It could also mean some have switched to motorcycles and mopeds as an alternative to a second car.

“What’s more, with more than a quarter of a million cars declared off-the-road (‘SORN’) at the end of last year, it remains to be seen just how people’s mobility choices are affected by the pandemic in the longer term and how many of these cars come back on to the road.

“The data also confirms separate figures from the SMMT that show that more alternatively-fuelled – including pure electric – cars were newly registered in 2020 than diesel cars for the first time. With ever-more electrified models available, it’s looking increasingly likely that sales of diesel cars may now never recover to previous levels, which will help improve the air quality in towns and cities.”

Local government urged to support motorcycling ‘revolution’

RSG



The National Motorcyclists Council (NMC) is calling on all local, city and regional authorities to incorporate motorcycling in their plans for transport.

With new local government administrations commencing work around the UK following the elections earlier this month, the NMC says motorcycles, scooters and mopeds are 'increasingly the transport alternative of choice' during the Covid-19 pandemic: <https://www.uknmc.org/news/the-nmc-calls-on-local-government-to-engage-the-uks-motorcycling-revolution>

It points to Government statistics which show 2.1 million vehicles were registered for the first time in Great Britain during 2020, 27% fewer than during 2019.

Despite this, sales of new motorcycles only fell by 5%: <https://roadsafetygb.org.uk/news/has-covid-19-sparked-a-motorcycle-revolution/>

In fact, during the second half of the year, registrations of new motorcycles actually rose – up by 27%.

The NMC also wants to see authorities 'work positively' with local motorcycling organisations as they develop their strategies.

Craig Carey-Clinch, NMC executive director, said: "Motorcycling is a key part of the transport mix and is increasingly becoming the transport alternative of choice for the commuting public.

"Local, city and regional authorities need to recognise this and work with motorcycle groups locally to create transport plans which recognise motorcycling as an important part of the transport mix.

"They must ensure that local policies support those who wish to ride to work through the provision of supportive measures. This will lead to a safer and more sustainable environment for motorcycling."

The NMC was launched in March with a 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 interests and road safety experts.

WEBSITES YOU MAY WANT TO VISIT

An interesting read:-

<https://www.autoexpress.co.uk/opinion/354874/our-rush-electric-cars-may-harm-environment-and-snuff-out-valuable-alternatives>

road safety : 3 Commons debates

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Transport: Motorcycle and Moped Training Centres (29 Apr 2021)

<https://www.theyworkforyou.com/debates/?id=2021-04-29a.501.7&s=Road+Safety#g502.2>

Rachel Maclean: ...workers have played a vital role in the response to the pandemic—our thanks go to all of them. The hon. Lady will know that it is important that learners have the right skills to drive, because**safety** on the**road** is just as important during a lockdown as at any other time. It is vital that up-to-date**road safety** knowledge is there at the critical point when people drive and supervise for...

Transport: Topical Questions (29 Apr 2021)

<https://www.theyworkforyou.com/debates/?id=2021-04-29a.512.0&s=Road+Safety#g513.1>

Grant Shapps: The hon. Gentleman and I, and the whole House, share similar concerns about the**safety** of our motorways. One of the first things I did as Secretary of State was to introduce the smart motorways stocktake. One factor we have to look at is the level of fatalities on both smart motorways and regular motorways. As I mentioned to the hon. Gentleman previously, from 2015 to 2019 there were 39...

road safety : 1 Written Answer

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Written Answers - Department for Transport: Motorways (28 Apr 2021)

<https://www.theyworkforyou.com/wrans/?id=2021-04-22.HL15203.h&s=Road+Safety#gHL15204.q1>

Lord Bradshaw: To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the Office of Rail and**Road** assessed the**safety** of smart motorways when they were introduced.

Guidance: 2020 and 2021 Rights of Way order information: start date notices, inquiry & hearing notices and rejection letters (Last updated: 4 May 2021)

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/2020-rights-of-way-order-information-start-date-notices-inquiry-hearing-notices-and-rejection-letters>

CAV: Autonomous Vehicle Safety: Pedestrian Detection in the Spotlight

<https://www.cavsafetyhub.com/autonomousvehiclesafetypedestriandetectioninthespotlight>

MCIA: DVSA Launch Ride Free

<https://www.mcia.co.uk/posts/dvsa-launch-ride-free>

FIM: The 2024 FIM Rally has been assigned to Italy after the cancellation of the 2021 edition

<https://www.fim-moto.com/en/news/news-detail/article/the-2024-fim-rally-has-been-assigned-to-italy-after-the-cancellation-of-the-2021-edition>

RAC: Drivers support wider use of average speed cameras on motorways - despite more than half admitting to breaking the 70mph-limit

<https://www.rac.co.uk/drive/news/motoring-news/drivers-support-wider-use-of-average-speed-cameras-on-motorways/>

London: Sadiq pushes ahead with the expansion of the Ultra Low Emission Zone

<https://www.london.gov.uk/press-releases/mayoral/ulez-to-be-expanded>

The House: 'This Is Going To Create More Conflict With The Police, Not Less': What Will The Policing Bill Mean for Protest?

<https://www.politicshome.com/thehouse/article/policing-bill-protest>

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