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PRESS RELEASE

The UK's leading motorcycle rider groups call on the Government to recognise the role of motorcycling during the COVID-19 crisis

The country's largest motorcycling organisations have today jointly submitted a White Paper to the Secretary of State, Grant Shapps, and to each of the three devolved administrations.

The coalition of organisations is calling for the Government to fully take the role of motorcycling into account as the UK continues to deal with the Covid19 crisis and its aftermath. The coalition also sets out the case for a Government-supported code of guidance for maintaining social distancing for motorcycling in the present situation.

The coalition of organisations consists of the Motorcycle Action Group (MAG), Vintage Motorcycle Club (VMCC), the Trail Riders Fellowship (TRF) and the British Motorcyclists Federation (BMF). The groups jointly commissioned a White Paper which was submitted to the Secretary of State earlier today.

The white paper:

- Reviews ways the crisis is affecting motorcycle riding.
- Discusses the conditions under which motorcyclists can continue to ride safely during the various COVID 19 Alert Level phases.
- Sets out the case for a Government-supported code of guidance for maintaining social distancing for riding in the present phase.
- Sets the scene for review and discussion with the Government about how restrictions affecting motorcycling can gradually be lifted as the Country enters future lockdown phases.
- Makes the case for encouraging the use of motorcycles as well as walking and cycling, during the crisis exit strategy and beyond.
- Opens the discussion on policy proposals that could help encourage greater take-up of motorcycling by commuters, avoiding public transport in line with Government guidance.

In a debate in the House of Commons on 12th May, Secretary of State for Transport, Grant Shapps, commented that "Motorcycles are an enormously important way of getting around". With Mr Shapps recognising the role of motorcycling, it seems clear that it is time to take discussions further with the Department for Transport (DfT). This paper is designed to create a starting point for that detailed debate.

MAG Chair, Selina Lavender, said: "A new transport normal can only be achieved by consensus of all road user groups. We look forward to consulting with the Government to ensure that motorcycles are given their rightful position in that new normal."

VMCC Chair, Bob Clark, said: "The VMCC is the UK's largest motorcycle club, although the average age of our membership is nearly seventy. Our members are thus perhaps more concerned with



adherence to the guidelines than may be the case with other segments of the population. However, for us, motorcycling is more than transport, and is often the physical and mental exercise essential for our members' wellbeing. The VMCC seeks confirmation that those of our members who are fit and healthy can both remain within the law and enjoy the motorcycling that is their chosen form of exercise."

TRF Chair, Mario Costa-Sa, commented: "The TRF Code of Conduct provides a key role in training trail and adventure riders, and compliance with COVID guidance is no exception. Trail Riders want clarity; they look to us as leaders of the largest motorcycle groups to interpret and communicate the Government's public message."

BMF Chair, Jim Freeman, commented, "The time has come for the motorcycle to shine as a serious urban alternative to public transport, cycling and walking. For many, the typical public transport journey is too far to be walked or cycled. The car takes up far too much road and parking space."

Issued on behalf of the Coalition of motorcycling organisations by the Motorcycle Action Group

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ENDS

Notes for editors

The White Paper "Riding COVID safe: a discussion paper" can be accessed here:

<https://bit.ly/2LqZSrt>

In summary, our current advice is:

- As lockdown measures are eased, whether you ride for essential reasons or just for recreation, observe social distancing and good hygiene measures at all times to help halt transmission of the virus.
- Ride alone or with, at most, one other person, other than members of your own household.
- Stay well away from other people. Take food and drink etc with you.
- Be COVID-safe at fuel stops.
- Do not gather in crowds.
- Know what COVID safety kit you are going to take with you and use it sensibly.
- Plan your route so you can always return home safely the same day.
- Know how you are going to deal safely with any emergencies.



- Do not ride at all if you or members of your household have symptoms and need to self-isolate.
- Think carefully about the risks if you are over 70 or have a pre-existing condition.
- Don't damage the image of motorcycling in the lockdown by riding irresponsibly.
- Be aware that, at present, the guidelines for leaving the house for other than essential reasons may be different in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

