



**National Chairman
Neil F. Liversidge**

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Ben-Julian Harrington QPM, Chief Constable
Essex Police HQ
Sandford Rd,
Springfield,
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2 August 2022

Dear Chief Constable

I am writing concerning your online advice to motorcyclists not to filter, screenshot enclosed.

Certainly, there are dangers involved in filtering, but there are dangers involved in every on-road activity by all concerned, drivers of all kinds of vehicles, pedal cyclists, horse riders et al. I appreciate you have made this statement in good faith but saying that "Filtering is dangerous, don't do it" is unhelpful and may even create additional risks for road users.

I have been riding motorcycles on UK public roads for 41 years. All those who have contacted me to complain about your message are similarly long-time motorcyclists. We have all used filtering for our entire lives as motorcyclists and fully intend continuing to do so. It is legal.

There is a certain type of car driver, and all of us who ride motorcycles have encountered them, that hate motorcyclists and are envious of our ability to make progress through traffic jams while they sit and stew. These are the people who see us coming in their mirrors and reposition their cars to block us. Whatever, it's an occupational hazard, and we have all come across them. The majority of drivers, however, see us coming and make way, which is what I myself do when driving my car.

When you say, "it's dangerous, don't do it," you run the risk that the 'haters' will feel justified in their behaviour. These will be the people who, after they have knocked us off, will point to your advice and say, "It's your fault – the police have warned you." Your advice also risks poisoning the minds of magistrates, Judges, and potential jurors who might, in the future, sit on cases where a car driver has knocked off a filtering biker. It may even lead to bias amongst your own officers and CPS prosecutors.

As I have said, I do not doubt your good faith. Unfortunately, though, your message is dangerous and counterproductive. You would not dream of issuing advice to women not to go out in short skirts and low-cut tops for fear of coming to harm, and neither would you think of advising BAME individuals to avoid the less diverse parts of your force area. Putting the onus on bikers to stay safe by denying them the ability to safely execute a legal manoeuvre is no more acceptable. Can we therefore please suggest that you amend it as below.

The Motorcycle Action Group Ltd (MAG) formed in 1973 is a civil rights organisation dedicated to influencing political decisions and social attitudes for the benefit of motorcycling and motorcyclists. MAG is Registered in England as Company Number 8848806 and has its Registered Office at Unit C13, Holly Farm Business Park, Honiley, Kenilworth CV8 1NP.

“It is perfectly legal for motorcyclists to filter through traffic jams so long as, like everyone else, they exercise due care and attention. Car drivers who use their mirrors before manoeuvring should see filtering motorcyclists and allow them to pass. Deliberately blocking bikes by pulling into their path is an offence (inconsiderate driving at the very least) and can often be dangerous. Please look out for motorcycles and let them pass. They aren't slowing you down. If more people rode motorcycles instead of driving cars the roads would be less congested.”

I appreciate you are making your best efforts toward the common goal of road safety. Unfortunately, the ever-present risk posed by the law of unintended consequences makes this issue more complex than people realise until they sit down and think about it.

Can we also please request that you promote MAG's 'Filter Friendly' campaign, link here; <https://www.mag-uk.org/filter-friendly/>. Your fellow officers in Northamptonshire Police and Bikesafe assisted us in making the video and support the campaign. We have been particularly grateful for the support of Nick Adderley, Chief Constable of Northamptonshire Police, and NPCC lead for motorcycling, for his enthusiasm and assistance.

I thank you in anticipation and look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

Neil

Neil F Liversidge
National Chairman, The Motorcycle Action Group Ltd



Richard White shared a post.

7 m ·

Lost for words on this one....



Essex Police

6 h ·



When the traffic backs up and you're on two wheels, it's tempting to speed up and filter through the traffic jam of parked cars. But it's one of the most dangerous things a rider can do.

Whether you're on a motorcycle, pedal cycle or e-scooter, we can all get frustrated by the queue of traffic that doesn't seem to be moving, but your decision to filter through the traffic could result in you being injured or worse.

As a smaller "vehicle", drivers in cars and lorries may not see you approaching them from behind. If they haven't checked their mirror before changing lanes, they may not see you until it's too late.

Filtering is dangerous, don't do it.

That's why we want everyone to support our [#SummerRoadSafetyEssex](#) campaign, to ensure all road users are safe, especially two-wheeled vehicles.

For more information on [#SummerRoadSafetyEssex](#), click below.

[#ProtectingAndServingEssex](#)

About

Motorcycle riders in Yorkshire and surrounding areas.

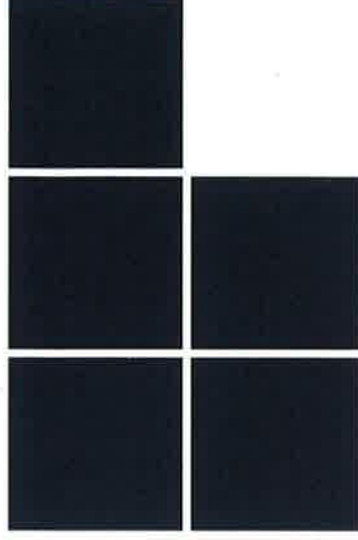


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