

26<sup>th</sup> March 2018

Tony Hall  
Director General  
British Broadcasting Corporation  
Broadcasting House  
Portland Place  
London  
W1A 1AA

Dear Mr Hall

The Motorcycle Action Group (MAG) is the leading riders rights campaign group in the UK. We work to protect and promote the interests of all legitimate riders in the country.

The Motorcycle Action Group and its membership are becoming increasingly concerned with the balance shown by the BBC in reporting and highlighting the growing issues around antisocial use of motorcycles and scooters on public roads and "moped-enabled crime".

Our view is that the coverage is biased and acts to publicise and even glorify the criminal elements carrying out this behaviour. We believe that documentaries such as "Inside Britain's Moped Crime Gangs" and "Britain's Most Wanted Motorbike Gangs" are biased towards the views of the criminal element featured in those programs and give little, if any, balanced counter-views from the victims of the criminal behaviour. Whilst we do not question the Corporation's right to explore and broadcast all views, we feel that there needs to be balance shown by giving equal coverage to the views of legitimate bikers and victims of the criminal behaviour.

MAG is working tirelessly with Police and other agencies to combat this lawless behaviour, being active contributors to the Home Office Roundtable meetings on moped- and scooter-related crime and members of the Motorcycle Crime Reduction Group. We also work at grassroots level with local police forces and authorities on initiatives to educate riders and planners on security best-practice and intelligence-gathering for the police. This work and the work of others in combatting this element of criminal behaviour is not widely reported in the Corporation's coverage. Equally, the views of local communities terrorised by antisocial riders and victims of moped-enabled crimes are not covered to the same extent.

In light of the Corporation's stated policy on breadth and diversity, MAG requests that the balance of coverage is addressed with editors. We would also ask that news reports refrain from referring to criminals as "bikers" or "motorcyclists". Use of this terminology brings with it, what we are sure are unintentional, implications that all bikers and motorcyclists are guilty of the same criminal behaviour. We feel that as a minority community, legitimate riders are being connected with the activity of criminals. We categorically state that not all riders are criminals and these terms should therefore not be used to refer to criminals; just as, for example, criminals are not referred to as motorists or car drivers when using cars as getaway vehicles or as tools for ram-raiding.

We would invite a formal response to our concerns and look forward to receiving communication from you.

Yours sincerely



Selina Lavender  
Chair  
Motorcycle Action Group