

News from the Motorcycle Action Group (MAG)

MAG recommends ULEZ 'breathing space' for motorcycles

This version: 2019 03 04

Embargo: IMMEDIATE

The Motorcycle Action Group (MAG) has asked London authorities to allow time with bikers to prevent an angry, administratively nightmarish chaos over ULEZ charges for motorcycles.

MAG met with former Chair of the Transport Committee on the Greater London Authority, Keith Prince AM, at London's City Hall to seek a postponement for motorcycles from the ULEZ pollution charges for older motorbikes. Reasons identified for the postponement of the charges include:

- The Mayor and TfL haven't yet grasped issues relating to the introduction of the ULEZ charge for older bikes. This means eleventh-hour panic could lead to ill-considered, knee jerk decisions from bikers and also from policy makers.
- Postponing ULEZ on motorcycles has a tiny impact on emissions. By TfL's own figures fewer than 4,000 bikes will be non-compliant with Euro 3 – a figure itself already declining through entirely legitimate individual exemptions.
- ULEZ as it stands means the certainty of injustice, as one biker can be charged whilst riding next to a biker with an identical bike that's exempt.
- Postponement can still lead to charging in 2021 if evidence proves the case for it. Currently TfL has no meaningful evidence on motorcycle emissions, nor effective modelling techniques to know the positive effect of modal shift to powered two wheelers. A delay provides time to measure real world emissions and journey time-savings – which will also reduce congestion and thus secondary emissions.
- The social impact on the poorest road users, who can often only afford older motorcycles and scooters for their commuting needs, has been totally ignored and turns the ULEZ charges into a regressive tax against the least wealthy.
- TfL has yet to justify the disproportionate effect of charging motorcycles, which would have to pay the same as older cars, while newer cars get in for free.

MAG's Director of Communications & Public Affairs, Lembit Öpik, warns: 'there's a pressing need to take all of this into account to avoid administrative nightmares and injustices. Many motorcycles facing the charge are operating at emissions levels below the ULEZ emissions thresholds. TfL would be obliged to refund any payments made by those riders. So let's be sensible and postpone this charge, before the whole thing descends into chaos.'

Contact MAG at 01926 844 064 or central-office@mag-uk.org

ENDS