



**February 2018
Network**

A networking tool for Activists and other interested parties

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For the March edition please note that the copy deadline is 25th February and the subject heading is:- Network. To aine@mag-uk.org

[Acknowledgments for this edition:- George Legg. Lembit Opik and Julie Sperling, Colin Brown. Selina Lavendar. Andy Carrot. Tim Peregrine. Jane Carrott plus anyone else I've forgotten]

Editorial

I'm going to keep this really short as its such a lengthy edition.

This is mainly due to a) a 7 page article from GEM which may be of interest for reference. I've pointed out, though, that is may be date sensitive given any change in law and used with the caveat of a disclaimer advising seeking professional advice. Nonetheless, an excellent insight into the penalty points system and enforcement thereof.

And, b), another lengthy article from FEMA about riding with a trailer. For those intending touring in various countries, the laws relevant to that country are clearly stated.

With that in mind, as Spring is on its way, closely followed by Summer, I'll leave it there.

Ride free, AG

Campaigns update

This version: 201801 23

Welcome to the latest from your trusty campaigning team. As ever, there's a lot going on and we're here to make sure you have all the support you need to make things happen in your area too. Here's a quick update on the latest political developments in magnificent world of MAG.

Recruitment campaign: MAG is actively recruiting Labour MP for Southwark and Old Bermondsey, Neil Coyle, has indicated his intention to join MAG. Other senior politicians are also being invited to join. We'll update you as and when they specifically confirm that they have joined or will join. Please do ask your local politicians on the Council – and local MPs – to sign up. There's a good chance many will say yes. Be sure to explain there are lots of riders in their area – and every area. In an average constituency that amounts to thousands of electors. Please DON'T go on about MPs and Councillors 'being able to afford to join.'

MPs get endless requests for money, and it annoys them. Sell the benefit of membership, and point out MAG is a great resource on riding and transport issues which can help them way beyond motorcycling.

Crime and Government: MAG is attending the next meeting of the Home Office summit about motorcycle related crime. We've also spoken to the motorcycle industry and there's a good chance we'll be working with them on this too. By the time you read this, MAG will also have attended a big evening event dedicated to highlighting the issue of acid attacks against riders in London. It's been organised by Jabed Hussein, who was the first delivery rider attacked with acid. There'll be more to report on the shortly, and it's good to see riders coming together to take such a positive stand with politicians.

Greater London Authority and MAG – a new relationship: MAG's Chair Selina Lavender and London Region rep, Tim Fawthrop, met with the Chair of the Greater London Authority Transport Committee, Keith Prince, on 10th January. The get together went so well that Keith has actually joined MAG (he did it online). This particularly pleases Lembit because Keith is a fan of the old 'stokers,' having owned a Kawasaki KH250 two stroke triple in the past. We've got some action steps from the meeting and we're following these up. It turns out that the committee has primarily got an oversight role when it comes to London transport, and this can be handy in influencing the thinking of Transport for London and local authorities. We're still working out how best to use this new relationship for mutual good, though it's obviously excellent to have such a mature interaction with the GLA. We also met with the Green Party members of the GLA, and that led to a feisty discussion on various issues, which we're also following up.

Road restrictions: it looks like the contagion of pedestrian and cycle-only areas is spreading. That's not good. If you're experiencing something like this locally, please let us know immediately on 01926 844064. The experience in places like Manchester where this is happening is that it really mucks up the city centre for 'normal' road users. We're keen to engage with local authorities to try to prevent this sort of restriction from being introduced on a mass scale.

Tony Campbell is our friend: Colin Brown, Julie Sperling and Lembit met with MCIA head Tony Campbell in January. We had about an hour with him, and Colin must be thanked for facilitating this – he wanted to get a plan in place for Ride to Work Week in the Midlands. Other MCIA reps were there too, and it seems obvious that we're going to get on well with them in 2018. The more that riders and the industry can make common cause, the more effective our voice will be.

Northern Ireland Motorcycle Show: on 2nd February to 4th February the annual motorbike show is occurring in the Eikon Centre just outside the town of Lisburn. Ian Churchlow is heading up the team on our MAG stand there. Go along and say hello, and bring a friend too. Let's try and get them to sign up!

Up next: we've got an edition of The Road coming up which is a reminder for you to send in YOUR news to Editor Mutch anytime you like. It's always great if you can take a photo as well – that really helps to illustrate a story.

Lembit Öpik. Political Unit

MAG Position Statement

Road pricing

In brief

MAG opposes the implementation in the UK of road pricing on powered two wheelers. It is an additional tax on the road user, over and above the charges already levied on those who own vehicles for personal use.

The benefits

Powered two wheelers (PTWs) and trikes offer a solution to the issues surrounding today's congested towns and cities. They are generally designed to carry fewer passengers, carry less laden weight across a smaller contact area and are well maintained by their owners.

- PTWs emit negligible amounts of NOx
- PTWs can move through traffic, spending less time stationary and causing pollution
- PTWs cause less damage to the road surface
- PTWs over their lifetime are more environmentally friendly than a car (when comparing similar vehicles)

Charging a vehicle to use the highway does not ease congestion or prevent that vehicle from creating pollution.

Charging owners of older vehicles (a planned proposal in some areas) is discriminatory, especially against those in the lower earning/social structure who can neither afford to purchase a newer, exempt, vehicle nor use public transport (should public transport even be suitable for their journeys).

If all PTW users switched to cars then congestion would increase. However, if 10% of car users switched to PTWs there would be a 40% reduction in congestion*.

Currently

At the present time there are plans to introduce low emission and ultra low emission zones across the UK. MAG has already submitted responses to some of those consultations, e.g. London. Motorcycles are exempt from charging in some areas, e.g. Leeds.

MAG position

MAG is opposed to the charging of PTWs to use the public highway.

MAG builds arguments based on facts and we will present these to any authority looking to introduce road charging for PTWs.

*Figures from the Belgian Transport & Mobility Leuven study

Wiki position statements

https://wiki.mag-uk.org/index.php/Toolbox#Position_Statements

MAG PRESS RELEASES

MAG meets Transport Chair at Greater London Authority

The Motorcycle Action Group met the Chair of the Greater London Authority (GLA) Transport Committee, Keith Prince, to begin a serious dialogue about the future of motorcycling in London.



MAG's Chair, Selina Lavender, and London Rep, Tim Fawthrop, met GLA Transport Committee Chair, Keith Prince, in a high-level meeting to discuss the Committee's attitude and approach towards motorcycle and scooter use in the city. The meeting, held on 10th January 2018 at the GLA's City Hall headquarters, covered a number of policy areas which have been of major concern to MAG in recent months. MAG's Director of Communications and Public Affairs, Lembit Öpik, was also there to support the delegation.

Selina observes: 'we covered four key areas of work with Mr Prince. These were bike-related crime, secure parking, charging riders for using the roads and the case for promoting motorbikes as a net reducer of congestion and pollution. As Keith himself is a rider, it made him easy to talk with and meant there was little need to explain the benefits we all get from the freedom of two wheels. This enabled us to focus the meeting as he could see our viewpoint. Keith was most supportive of riders and I look forward to MAG maintaining an open dialogue with him and the GLA.'

As a specific next step, MAG will be providing some detailed technical information to justify the benefits that motorcycles bring to the city in reducing congestion and pollution, as well as increasing mobility for less wealthy citizens.

Tim Fawthrop also raised the question of access to bus lanes. 'We keep being told that Transport for London wants to enable motorbikes to use bus lanes across the city. Mr Prince was supportive of this, and gave us very good advice on how to proceed. The specific steps he proposed – and offered to support - really make sense. We've created a lot of work for ourselves in meeting the Chair of the committee, and this kind of investment will undoubtedly generate a much more powerful voice for the riding community in London.'

MAG comments on London Mayor's summit with motorcycle manufacturers

This version: 2018 01 26 Embargo: IMMEDIATE

Representatives from Honda, Suzuki, Yamaha, BMW and Piaggio were invited to meet with

the Metropolitan Police, MOPAC, the Motorcycle Industry Association and Secure by Design at City Hall on 23rd January.

On social media, Sadiq Khan commented “today I met with leading motorcycle manufacturers to say it is vital they design anti-theft measures into their vehicles to help keep Londoners safe”.

Following the meeting, MCIA boss Tony Campbell commented “We know the Mayor would like to hear there is a ‘magic bullet’ which can be fitted to all bikes to stop them from being stolen, but unfortunately there isn’t. If there was, we would be fitting it, as theft is particularly damaging to business and to our customers.”

He went on to say “We have explained to the Mayor that a ‘layered’ approach to security is proving to be the most effective and realistic way of making theft more difficult. This uses a combination of new technologies like ‘tagging’ and ‘tracking’ and riders are encouraged to always supplement this with physical security in the form of locks and chains. However they need something to lock their bikes to, which is where City Hall can make a difference by providing more secure parking across London.

Powered two wheelers are a solution in reducing congestion in the capital, improving air quality and relieving the pressure on parking, as they do in other European cities. They need to be properly factored into London's transport planning over the long term and secure parking is one of the elements to ensure this is successful.”

Colin Brown of the Motorcycle Action Group’s TACT (The Anti-Crime Team) says: “We wholeheartedly agree with Tony Campbell’s position that there is no single Silver Bullet solution. All parties need to accept responsibility for bringing this crime epidemic to an end. We are keen to see an immediate response to an immediate problem. The priority that the Metropolitan Police have given to the issue needs to be applauded, but we feel it is now time for Sadiq Khan and all local authorities to put their hands into their pockets to supply the kind of secure parking infrastructure that has been given to cyclists. This is a proven solution that can show results far sooner than any design changes to the machines that are being targeted by criminals. Riders need to be recognised as the primary victims and should be afforded the budgets required to support them just as the victims of any other crime are supported rather than blamed.

Equally we look forward to London’s Mayor delivering on the promises made during his election campaign. In 2016 Sadiq Khan said ‘I don’t make promises I can’t keep, so let me make a promise I can definitely honour. As Mayor, I will meet with representatives of riders’ rights organisations and learn at first-hand what you need and want. This will include a discussion about lane width and secure parking.’ Now is the time to deliver on that promise.”

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

ENDS

AROUND GB

Salisbury MAG and the Salisbury Transport Strategy

Fin Colson and Nick Hancock from Salisbury MAG attended the first Salisbury Transport Strategy workshop on 7th December 2017. This workshop was organised by Salisbury City Council with invitees from interested parties, in an attempt to develop the strategy over the coming years (up to 2026) and identify local transport issues and problems.

A presentation by consultancy firm Atkins gave a profile of Salisbury, its residents and volumes of traffic, including modelling to try to predict future needs due to a number of planned developments. This was followed by group discussions and interactive sessions to try to capture all ideas in order to help deliver the strategy.

Both Fin and Nick provided the motorcyclist's perspective to all suggestions on the table, and some that were even off the table but had been aired in the group discussions. There was a vocal element of the 'not in my back yard' lot and 'what are you going to do about [my specific] problem' but it's better to be involved at the start than playing catch up later.

At the end of the meeting, feedback was collated and this will be followed by a public meeting in January and a working group formed in February to move the strategy forward. Salisbury MAG were pleased to be involved and will continue to do so.

A follow-up presentation/workshop was attended by Nick Hancock 11th January 2018. Although very similar to the previous workshop (albeit a public audience at the Salisbury Area Board meeting), Nick had a one to one discussion with a representative from Atkins and explained that we would like motorcycles considered in all of the proposed schemes taken forward.

Reference was also made to the Wiltshire Powered Two-wheeler Strategy document and the representative seemed very responsive to the feedback. Hopefully Salisbury MAG will be able to get involved in the next stage and be part of the working group.

The transport cash cow – a word from the Vice.

I've just come back from Holland, having spent some time in Amsterdam. Speak to almost anyone who has been there and the first question they ask is "did you go to the red light district and visit a coffee shop?" Well, visit the tourist centre of that fine city and you cannot avoid walking past the red-framed human window displays not found in most city centres or indeed inhaling the heady aroma of marijuana that is openly in use and legally on sale in said coffee shops.

The other thing that hits you (sometimes literally – you need eyes in the back of your head) is the vast number of cyclists and cycle lanes. On top of that add scooters, sometimes two-up, also using the cycle lanes and not wearing helmets. Riders are permitted to go lid-less on scooters with a restricted top speed, identified by their blue number plates. I didn't see one person wearing a cycle helmet either as they sped along on their expensive sit-up-and-beg style Dutch bicycles.

We too have cycle lanes in some cities in the UK, the most notable being the Cycle Super Highways in London. The big difference between London and Amsterdam is that in London

valuable road space has been taken up to create the cycle lanes whereas in Amsterdam the cycle lanes are often well away from the main highway so the rest of traffic is not hampered. In London where there were once 4 lanes on the Embankment there are now just 3. In essence, 25% of road space has been given over to just 3% of road users. Congestion has risen on some routes as there is less space for traffic and powered two-wheelers have less space to filter. In making the roads safer for one group (a good thing) they have made it more dangerous for another (not a good thing and, at best an oversight, at worst, discrimination).

A study has shown that if just 10% of single-occupancy cars switched to powered two-wheelers the time loss for ALL vehicles reduces by 40% and total emissions are down by 6%. The Motorcycle Action Group has argued for years that bikes are part of the solution, not the problem. Despite the Government's own statistics that show motorcycling's net contribution to pollution is so small it is rounded down to zero in some statistics, obstacles are placed in our path.

From 2019 it is proposed an Ultra Low Emission Zone (ULEZ) will be implemented with all motorcycles that are not Euro 3 compliant (i.e. any bike or scooter pre-2007) paying £12.50 a day to enter the zone. The zone is currently the congestion charge area (that's another charge already in operation), but is intended to spread wider. That's Joe Bloggs on his 1989 Honda C90 trying to get to work emptying bins and stock market trader RupertBufton-Tufton in his Jaguar on his way to his private members club, both paying £12.50. This is patently wrong! Riders in London are not the culprits; they are actually helping reduce congestion and pollution. I have seen comments that "we must do our bit" to reduce pollution. Well we already are by simply riding and more should be done to encourage car drivers to join us on two wheels.

"Ah, but this is just London" I hear you cry. Not so. At least 5 other cities are already looking at Clean Air Zones and what council could resist the prospect of more income? Durham have been congestion charging since 2002 (but bikes are not included). Road charging of some sort could be coming to a city near you soon (on top the road tax and fuel duty we already pay for being so selfish as to want personal transport and not use public services). Exorbitant charges, plus road restrictions to the detriment of our safety and efficient travel, need to be challenged.

Andy Carrott. MAG National Vice Chairman

The Motorcycle Action Group is the country's leading organisation when it comes to representing rider's interests and you can be a member for just over 50p per week. Please call 01926 844064: single membership costs £27 (family, joint, affiliated club and corporate memberships also available).

Minute-taker for NC meetings and AGCs

MAG requires a Minute-taker to take accurate Minutes of its National Committee meetings.

Meetings are held on the second Saturday of February, April, June, August and December (October meeting having been incorporated into the AGC weekend).

Meetings are held near Warwick, start at 12 noon and should finish no later than 5.00 pm.

There is a small amount of administrative support in relation to these meetings.

In addition, the Annual Group Conference, which takes place at the end of September, will be Minuted.

Duties:

1. Send out timely reminders for Reports prior to each NC meeting and collate them for inclusion in the Minutes.
2. Generate an Attendance List for each NC meeting, including apologies for absence.
3. Generate an Agenda for each NC meeting, taking into account AOB items.
4. Provide accurate, timely Action Points that have been identified during meetings.
5. Provide accurate, timely Minutes of all NC meetings.
6. Provide accurate, timely Minutes of Annual Group Conferences.

This is a volunteer role but it is envisaged that commitment will be given to attending as many meetings as possible.

Although previous experience would be useful, training and mentoring is available and templates can be provided.

If you feel you may have the potential to fulfil this role and would like to know more, please feel free to contact The Lady Rootveg for an informal, no-obligation chat. Contact 01205 357417 after 6.30 pm or email nrlo@mag-uk.org

An excellent video tool

The two following links will take you to a great short video put together by Colin Brown, the West Midlands Rep. This is a great asset when negotiating with local councils on the subject of road pricing:-

It is on youtube here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kRC70Q7F-ik&feature=youtu.be>

Facebook here:

https://www.facebook.com/motorcycleactiongroup/videos/10159440699628125/?hc_ref=AR_TMRSmrnCIXDtxzRUuvI13MoTy_94Ax7LGCCtkCExdMTnUNeP6pm5zY7ZsICYCypMI&fref=gs&dti=201276056640512&hc_location=group

M3 junction 9 improvements scheme Consultation;

M3 Junction 9 is a key transport interchange which connects South Hampshire (facilitating an intensive freight generating industry) and the wider sub-region, with London via the M3 and the Midlands/North via the A34 (which also links to the principal east-west A303 corridor).

A significant volume of traffic currently use the grade separated, partially signalised gyratory (approximately 6,000 vehicles per hour during the peak periods), which acts as a bottleneck on the local highway network and causes significant delay throughout the day.

Northbound and southbound movements between the M3 and the A34 are particularly intensive, with downstream queues on the northbound off-slip of the M3 often resulting in safety concerns during peak periods. To overcome queuing on the off-slip, additional green time is allocated to the northbound off slip of the M3 and the A34 link, resulting in the development of lengthy queues on A272 Spitfire Link and Easton Lane during the morning and evening peak periods respectively.

Aims

This scheme will aim to:

- Improve safety by reducing queuing and delays
- Reduce congestion and improve reliability
- Reduce the number of people affected by noise and improve air quality
- Improve conditions for non-motorised users. The scheme would connect National Cycle Network Route 23 which is severed by the current layout.
- Support sub-regional economic growth, unlocking road capacity for jobs, businesses and new homes

The deadline for submitting responses to the consultation is Monday 19 February 2018.

https://highwaysengland.citizenspace.com/he/m3-junction-9-improvements/supporting_documents/GFD17_0022%20M3%20Junction%209%20consultation%20%20brochure%20spreads%20FINAL.PDF

Tim Peregrine.

[The following is an extremely long article, however, handy to keep for reference. Please bear in mind when using this a) the date of the document and b) it should be referred to along with a disclaimer. The link is:

<https://www.motoringassist.com/motoring-advice/general-motoring/general/enforcement-guide-penalty-points-system/>

Enforcement Guide and the Penalty Points System

Posted on January 1st, 2018 by GEM Motoring Assist

Introduction

Every day throughout the country police deal with numerous road traffic offences. Many of these are minor and are dealt with at the roadside, but a number are serious and result in injury and death on the road. Make sure you stay safe on the road, and on the right side of the law, by reading our guide to motoring offences and enforcement.

Drinking and Driving

Approximately 200 died and over 8,000 people were injured on Britain's roads in 2016 as a result of drinking driving. Even a small alcoholic drink can affect the way you react when driving so if you're driving don't drink.

Different parts of the UK have different drink drive limits as follows:

In England, Wales and Northern Ireland the limit is currently 80mg of alcohol per 100ml of blood.

In Scotland the limit is lower and stands at 50mg of alcohol per 100ml of blood.

The penalty for being found guilty of driving with excess alcohol is an obligatory disqualification of at least 12 months plus a fine of up to £5,000 and your driving licence will be endorsed. There is also the possibility of six month's imprisonment.

In addition to any penalties that court may impose you could face the loss of your livelihood if driving is required, a huge increase in insurance costs when the ban is lifted, increased travel costs for the period of disqualification, the inconvenience of a lack of personal mobility, the effect on family life and the social ridicule having committed, what most people consider, to be a selfish act. You may also find it difficult if you want to travel to places such as Australia, Canada and the USA.

Drug driving

The Road Traffic Act 1988 makes it an offence to drive, attempt to drive or be in control of a mechanically propelled vehicle on a road or other public place when unfit through drink or drugs

In addition to this if you live in England and Wales there is the separate offence of driving over the prescribed limit in relation to drugs. In essence this is similar to drink driving in that there is a specified limit for the amount of 17 drugs, both illegal and prescription, in a person's blood.

These are two separate offences and you could potentially commit one or the other or both.

The penalty for drug driving is a minimum 12 month disqualification, an unlimited fine/six months in prison or both; and your driving licence will be endorsed for 11 years.

Just like drink driving a conviction for drug driving will have massive consequences for insurance post ban, job prospects and also overseas travel.

Insurance

Uninsured drivers pose a serious risk to themselves and other road users. To drive a motor vehicle on a road you must have a valid insurance policy covering the driver's use of the vehicle. If you are found to be driving without insurance by the police they have the power to seize the vehicle there and then. The offence can be dealt with by way of a £300 fixed penalty that carries 6 penalty points or, if found guilty at court the offence carries a potential unlimited fine and possible disqualification.

Speeding

The faster you go the longer it takes you to stop – FACT. In 2016 nearly 1 in 5 fatal collisions involved excess or inappropriate speed so there's no wonder that it something that is actively targeted by the police.

If you are caught exceeding the speed limit, depending on the recorded speed, you may be invited to attend a Speed Awareness Course or you may receive a £100 fixed penalty notice and three penalty points on your driving licence.

Depending on the circumstances and the speed you were travelling at you may find that neither the speed awareness course nor the fixed penalty are deemed appropriate. In that case you will be sent to court where you could be fined up to 175% of your weekly income, have up to 6 penalty points added to your licence or you could even be disqualified from driving for 56 days.

Dangerous driving

If your driving is considered to be grossly irresponsible you could be convicted of dangerous driving. This is one of the most serious motoring offences and carries with it a possible prison sentence of up to two years, an unlimited fine and an obligatory disqualification. The official definition of dangerous driving is when a person's driving 'falls far below what would be expected of a competent and careful driver and it would be obvious to a competent and careful driver that driving in that way would be dangerous'.

The offence of causing death by dangerous driving carries with it a 14 year prison sentence, an unlimited fine and disqualification.

Careless or inconsiderate driving (Driving without due care and attention)

Careless driving, also sometimes called driving without due care and attention, happens when a person's driving falls below the standard that would be expected of a competent and careful driver. This can range from pulling out from a junction without looking properly to passing too close to a cyclist causing them to fall off.

You can be found guilty of this offence if drive without reasonable consideration for other road users. Depending on the circumstances you could receive a fixed penalty of £100 with 3 penalty points on your licence or, if you were to go to court, a potential disqualification and unlimited fine.

Mobile phone offence

It has been illegal to use a handheld mobile phone whilst driving since 2003. This means using your phone for anything, not just for talking, but for texting, updating social media and following a map. If you are caught using your phone behind the wheel you will be liable to a £200 fixed penalty notice and 6 points on your driving licence. If you go to court you could potentially receive up to a £1,000 fine on conviction in court (£2,500 for drivers of goods vehicles, buses or coaches) and 6 points.

The fixed penalty ticket

If you commit a minor traffic offence, for example not wearing a seatbelt or driving with a broken headlight, the police can issue you with a one-off fine called a fixed penalty notice. Non-endorsable offences – those which don't result in points on your licence – usually incur a fine of £100.

Fines for endorsable offences, such as speeding or using a mobile phone while driving – are £100 with three penalty points.

Disqualification

If you get 12 points on your licence within a three-year period as a result of endorsable offences, your licence will usually be taken off you for at least six months. Offences that warrant mandatory disqualification from driving include all drink driving offences. In these cases, the minimum period is 12 months, but for repeat offenders or where the alcohol level

is high, it may be longer. For example, a second drink-drive offence in the space of ten years will result in a minimum of three years' disqualification.

In some serious cases, the court must (as well as imposing a fixed period of disqualification) order the offender to be disqualified until he or she passes a driving test. The test may be an ordinary length test or an extended test according to the nature of the offence.

Road Traffic (New Drivers) Act

This Government initiative was introduced in June 1997 in an attempt to reduce the number of casualties, and those incurring endorsable traffic offences, among newly qualified drivers. If you collect six or more penalty points within two years of passing your driving test, your licence will be revoked. The Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) will automatically revoke your licence when notified by a court or fixed penalty office. There is no right of appeal against revocation, but you can appeal against the conviction itself.

Once your licence has been revoked your driving status reverts to that of learner. As a result you must take and pass another driving test in order to get your full licence back.

Vehicle seizure

Under Section 59 of the Police Reform Act 2002 the police have the power to seize your car if it is being used in anti-social manner, that is to say, if you are driving in such a way as to cause alarm, harassment or annoyance. Inconsiderate driving and unauthorised off-road driving are also included in this category. An example of this would be conducting handbrake turns in a car park. The police must warn the driver of the vehicle that if they continue to drive in that manner then it can be seized at any point during the 12 months following the warning.

Points on your licence

If you receive penalty points on your licence they will remain 'live' for three years. Drug driving endorsements are live for 11 years.

FAQs

Q: I have been sent a speeding ticket. I wasn't the driver. What do I do?

A: If you were not driving at the time of the offence but are the registered keeper of the car, it is your responsibility to provide the full name and address of the person who was driving. Failure to provide this information is an offence and will result in a court summons.

Q: I was stopped for speeding in a 30mph limit but I swear I didn't see any signs telling me it was 30. Do I have any defence?

A: In a word, no. The Highway Code (Rule 124) clearly states: 'The presence of street lights generally means that there is a 30mph speed limit unless otherwise specified,' so it is assumed that all drivers know that where there are street lights, the speed limit is 30mph. It is illegal to display repeater signs in a 30mph zone, unless there are no street lights, but the speed is displayed on posts, normally on both sides of the road, as you enter the 30mph area. The speed remains in force until a different limit is posted on both sides of the road.

Q: Is it worth reporting a motorcyclist who overtook me across solid double white lines and made an oncoming car swerve? I got his number plate.

A: You are perfectly within your rights to report the motorcyclist, but the likelihood of the police being able to do anything about it is slim. Unless you have evidence such as photographs or video footage, or can get the driver of the oncoming car to back you up, it's just your word against his.

DISCLAIMER

The information on this Site is provided on the understanding that GEM Motoring Assist is not rendering legal or other advice. You should consult your own professional advisers as to legal or other advice relevant to any action you wish to take in connection with this website.

Driving documents

Posted on January 1st, 2018 by GEM Motoring Assist

A look at the vehicle and driver paperwork that goes with motoring

Introduction

As you can imagine, the laws governing how we behave and what we may and may not drive on public roads are extremely wide-ranging and detailed. We offer some introductory guidance on this page. We have taken trouble to ensure it is as accurate as possible, but we should warn that it is only general advice and you should not attempt to use it as part of any legal defence.

Driving licence

Before you drive a vehicle on a public road, you will need a valid driving licence for the vehicle being driven. There are two types of driving licence, provisional and full. You must be at least 16 before riding a motorcycle and 17 before driving a car.

Provisional licence: to comply with the law you will need to display 'L'plates and be supervised by a qualified driver sitting in the front passenger seat. You are not allowed to drive on motorways, nor are you allowed to tow a trailer.

Full licence: if you hold a full licence, then you can drive vehicles in the category of licence you hold, usually without restriction. Your full licence acts as a provisional licence for other categories, subject to the usual restrictions imposed on provisional licence holders.

Insurance

You must also have appropriate insurance which allows you to have a vehicle on the public road. This includes driving it, parking it or leaving it because it has broken down. You must be insured to use a motor vehicle on a public road. The minimum level of insurance is known as 'third party', which will typically cover you for any damage you cause to other people or their property. 'Comprehensive' insurance covers accident damage to your own vehicle as well as fire damage and theft. Driving without insurance is a serious offence. That's why it pays to be absolutely sure that you are properly covered if you plan to borrow a friend's car.

Vehicle Excise Licence

Formerly the paper tax disk, the system for taxing vehicles is now completely electronic. To use and keep a vehicle on a road it must have a current Vehicle Excise Licence. Untaxed vehicles can be seized by the police and DVLA immediately and drivers will be prosecuted, resulting in a large fine and a requirement to pay any tax arrears.

If you are not using your car and have taken it off of the road you must notify the DVLA through the Statutory Off-Road Notification (SORN) process. Failure to do this can also result in a fine and the vehicle being clamped. Further information on how to tax your vehicle or declare it SORN can be found at www.gov.uk.

MOT Test Certificate

If your vehicle is over three years old then it requires a valid MOT Test Certificate to be used on the road. This annual test looks at various aspects of your vehicle to ensure that it is roadworthy and does not present a danger to other road users. MOT certificates are valid for one year.

Your vehicle

You should make sure before driving a vehicle that it is in a roadworthy condition. There are dozens of ways in which you could fall foul of the many regulations governing vehicle roadworthiness – far more than we can cover in this section. But as a guide, penalties cover everything from relatively minor violations such as empty windscreen washer bottles and

non-functioning horns through ill-fitting roof racks and cracked mirrors to much more serious offences such as bald tyres, steering and brake defects and the overall condition of a vehicle.

Keep your vehicle on the right side of the law:

- Make a weekly check of fluid levels, lights and tyres. Toot the horn as well, to ensure it's working.
- Check again before any long journey.
- Investigate any new noises or vibrations in your vehicle. They usually mean some form of maintenance is required promptly.
- Don't overload your vehicle and ensure you have an unobstructed view.
- Don't delay replacing a cracked windscreen.
- Always clean a dirty windscreen before a journey, and in winter make sure the windscreen is completely clear of ice and snow before you go anywhere.
- Don't put unnecessary stickers on your windscreens.

Frequently asked questions

Q: I am taking my car for a service and have been offered the use of the garage's courtesy car. Will I be insured to use it?

A: It's your obligation to make sure you are properly insured. The garage may have a policy that covers you, but you won't know unless you ask. If in doubt, check with your insurer.

Q: My car was recently hit by a third party. There will be a delay of around six weeks before I can get it repaired. I'm worried that someone could be injured by some sharp points on the bodywork. What should I do?

A: The law requires any motor vehicle to be in such a condition that it won't cause danger – however remote the risk – to any member of the public. As a temporary measure you could cover any sharp areas with strong tape, though make sure you don't risk further damage to paintwork and don't obscure any lighting in the process. Your repairer may be able to offer more specific advice.

Q: I have just received a speeding ticket. Is it my responsibility to tell my insurer now, or when I renew my insurance, or can I leave the burden on the insurer to find out?

A: You are obliged to disclose any motoring convictions, including speeding. The wisest step is to inform your insurer immediately, then there can be no complications when you make a claim. You should certainly disclose the information when you next renew. If you don't and you subsequently try to make any claim, the insurer may refuse to pay part or all of the claim.

Q: My MOT certificate is out of date. Presumably I have to take my car to a garage to get a new MOT, so what offence would I be committing on the journey to the garage?

A: If you drive a car without a valid MOT certificate then under current law a court can fine you up to £1,000. However, a non-endorsable fixed penalty ticket would be more usual. You will avoid any penalties on your journey to the MOT garage by ensuring you have pre-booked your MOT appointment.

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Alternatives to Prosecution

Posted on January 1st, 2018 by GEM Motoring Assist

Introduction

Where motorists are caught committing certain road traffic offences they can be given the opportunity to attend a re-education course as an alternative to prosecution. The most popular courses are for drivers caught speeding, but there are also workshops for drivers jumping red traffic lights, not wearing seatbelts but there are various others all aimed at keeping people safe on the roads. They are offered at the discretion of the relevant Chief Constable so not all courses may be available in all areas.

The courses are delivered by an officially recognised training provider who must be a member of the Association of National Driver Improvement Course Providers (ANDISP) and are all quality assured by the National Driver Offender Retraining Scheme (NDORS). In this way the standard of delivery of these national courses is maintained whether you live in Land's End or John O'Groats.

The idea behind the courses is to help drivers and riders challenge and change their own attitudes, to make them more aware of their own responsibility for their actions and to develop a personal safety strategy. Further information can be found here <https://ndors.org.uk/>

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Speeding

Courses for drivers caught exceeding the speed limits are offered under the guidance of the National Speed Awareness Scheme. This was put in place by police forces across the UK to allow motorists caught speeding to have the chance of completing a workshop rather than be issued with three penalty points and a £100 fine. In 2016 1,188,961 people attended this course.

If you are caught exceeding the speed limit you may receive notification that you are eligible to attend a speed awareness workshop. Usually the drivers eligible will be those that have exceeded the legal limit but not by a large amount. Each individual police force decides its own margins. If you are invited to attend such a course you will be given a specific date, time and location to attend and you will need to accept the offer. If you cannot accept it, you will need to take the fine and the points on your license instead.

The cost of attending a speed workshop varies across the different force areas. You could usually expect to pay between £100 and £150. You may find you are paying more to join the course than you would be as your fine, but by avoiding penalty points you can keep your insurance premium down and save money in the long run.

Red traffic lights

Red light offences, overtaking on double white lines and aggressive tailgating can all be dealt with on the What's Driving Us? Course. This course aims to explain to drivers the risk they pose to themselves and others by their driving behaviour. The course therefore aims to have a long-term impact on safety for all road users, and helps reduce the numbers killed and injured.

National driver awareness scheme

Formerly known as the Driver Improvement Scheme these workshops provide further training for drivers who have been involved in a road collision or incident. The benefits are that they will avoid prosecution for a Careless Driving offence and will hopefully reduce the risk of being involved in similar incidents in future.

In order to attend this course you would typically have been involved in a collision or incident where the police have investigated the circumstances and feel that you have a case to answer in court, or the police feel that you would benefit from attending on a voluntary self-referral basis.

Research suggests the workshops have a positive impact. Scientific studies by University of Exeter in the late 1990s have shown a tendency for less re-offending after attendance on a Driver Improvement Scheme

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Driver improvement workshops

These workshops provide further training for drivers who have been involved in a road collision or incident. The benefits are that they will avoid prosecution for a Careless Driving (or similar) offence and will hopefully reduce the risk of being involved in similar incidents in future.

In order to attend a Driver Improvement Course you would typically have been involved in a road crash or incident where the police have investigated the circumstances and feel that you have a case to answer in court, or the police feel that you would benefit from attending on a voluntary self-referral basis.

Research suggests the workshops have a positive impact. Scientific studies by University of Exeter in the late 1990s have shown a tendency for less re-offending after attendance on a Driver Improvement Scheme.

Drink-drive rehabilitation workshops

If you are convicted of an offence involving drinking and driving, then the magistrate (or in Scotland the sheriff), may offer you the opportunity of attending a rehabilitation course. Completion of a course will entitle you to a reduction of up to a quarter in the period of disqualification. In the case of a one year period of disqualification, the reduction will be three months. The court will decide the length of reduction for longer periods of disqualification.

The purpose of the course is to educate drivers about the effects of alcohol consumption. A range of issues will be covered, including information about alcohol and its effect on the body; the effect of alcohol consumption on performance, particularly driving ability, and behaviour; analysis of drink/driving offences; alternatives to drinking and driving future action and sources of advice. The content of courses run by different organisers across the country may vary but is likely to involve short lectures; group discussion; role play; assessment of personal drinking habits and presentations by police officers, lawyers or doctors.

Frequently asked questions

Q: Is there evidence that attending a speed awareness course will do me any good?

A: Yes. Figures show that, on average, one in 12 drivers who have attended a workshop will be stopped again for speeding. That compares with one in four drivers who received a fixed penalty ticket, points and a fine.

Q: I've had a speeding ticket but no invitation to attend one of these workshops. Can I write to the police and ask to be put on one as I'd prefer not to have points on me licence?

A: No. You can only attend a workshop if you are referred for it by the police.

Q: Do I need to inform my insurer that I've been put on a speeding course? Will it affect my premium?

A: No, you do not. That's because the speeding offence is cancelled. However, if you do not take the offer of a workshop, then you are obliged to notify your insurer of any prosecutions.

Q: I did one of these speed courses two years ago and I think I was recently flashed by a camera. If I get a ticket, will I have another go on the speed workshop?

A: No. Drivers cannot attend a course if they have attended a Speed Awareness course within the last three years.

DISCLAIMER

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The future of road transport in the EU AT A GLANCE Policy Departments' Monthly Highlights

Dear Reader,

Road transport continues to be a dominant mode of transport in the European Union and so it remains important to further reduce road fatalities, to lower CO₂ and other emissions of pollutants, and to decrease fossil fuel use whilst improving the sector's competitiveness in the global market.

The TRAN Committee is currently working on two Mobility Packages, including a total of 10 legislative proposals, focusing on this sector. Issues debated on in the TRAN Committee include the haulage market, drivers' working conditions, interoperability of road tolling systems and common specifications for public transport data, among others.

Recognising the importance of the road transportation for the economy as well as its impact on the environment, the TRAN Committee frequently requests studies on this subject from the Policy Department for Structural and Cohesion Policies. The studies provide valuable support and assistance to the Committee's work.

KarimaDelli, MEP Chairwoman of the Committee on Transport and Tourism

Odometer tampering: measures to prevent it

Policy Department for Structural and Cohesion Policies November 2017

Odometer tampering is still a widespread malpractice in the European Union and it affects almost all second-hand car markets of its Member States.

This study, requested by the TRAN Committee, examines how improvement can be made by presenting the best practices implemented in some Member States and countries outside of the EU, while emphasising their success factors and results achieved. Furthermore, the study highlights the available technological developments and IT

solutions to combat the phenomenon with a view to a potential further application by the European automotive industry.

[http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/ATAG/2018/606783/IPOL_ATAG\(2018\)606783_EN.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/ATAG/2018/606783/IPOL_ATAG(2018)606783_EN.pdf)

FEMA

Riding with a trailer



Picture: www.motor-aanhangerhuren.nl

Some motorcyclists like to attach a trailer to their bike. But is that legal in every country? And if it is legal, what are the specific rules for riding with a trailer? FEMA gives you the facts.

In the development of the Third Driving License Directive the fact that sometimes motorcycles pull trailers was not taken into account (unlike with cars). The reason for this is that the European Commission seemed not to be aware that there are motorcyclists who sometimes ride with a trailer attached to their motorcycle. This means that every country can make its own rules!

FEMA collected as much information as possible to show you what the rules are in specific countries. If you have additional information that we can verify, please send it to info@fema-online.eu

Country	Allowed	Max. speed	Max. weight	Max. width	Other **	Sources
Austria*	Yes	100 km/h		80 cm		ANWB
Belgium	Yes	120 km/h		1 m for solo motorcycle, or may not exceed the width of the motorcycle with sidecar	With a trailer behind motorcycle with sidecar the sidecar wheel should have a brake. The trailer should have two red reflectors. No passengers allowed in trailer	MAG B , Federale Overheidsdienst Mobiliteiten Vervoer
Czech Republic	Yes	80 km/h				JAMK
Denmark	Yes	80 km/h	150 kg	Length: 2.5 m, width: 1 m	No passengers in trailer, trailer needs	DMC , MCTC , Færdselsstyrelsen, Danish Road Safety Agency

							to be registered
Estonia	Not regulated	Not regulated	Not regulated	Not regulated			Examination Department Estonian Road Administration
Finland	Yes, with full license	Without suspension 60 km/h, with suspension 80 km/h	Laden weight max. half of motorcycle	1.5 m or as wide as the towing vehicle if this is wider	No passengers in trailer, max. one axle		Finnish Transport Safety Agency (Trafi), Unit Driving Licences and Permits
France*	Yes	130 km/h	Laden weight max. half of motorcycle				Div.
Germany	Yes	60 km/h	< 750 kg	1 m	No possibility to have trailers registered for higher speeds; max. speed on highways is 60 km/h		Federal Ministry of Transport and digital Infrastructure
Greece	No, but allowed for visitors	80 km/h			No provision in national legislation regarding the riding of a motorcycle with a trailer attached to it		Ministry of Infrastructure, Transport & Networks DG of Road Safety Directorate of Road Traffic & Safety
Hungary	Yes, behind L3, L4, L5 vehicles, with full license	As cars	80 kg		Stability may not be affected, trailer may have only one wheel, no trailer allowed behind a tricycle or motorcycle with sidecar		General Police Directorate Road Safety Service & Central Office for Administrative and Electronic Public Services
Iceland	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Ireland	Yes	80 km/h	laden weight < 150 kg	1 m	Not regulated in driving license regulations, but in the Road Traffic Regulations 2003. Motorcycle over 125cc		Road Safety Authority, MAG IE
Italy*	Yes	80 km/h	Laden weight max. half of motorcycle				Div.
Latvia	Yes	90 km/h	n.a.	n.a.	Only specially designed (manufactured) trailers for motorcycles		Road Traffic Safety Directorate
Lithuania	No	–	–	–	–	–	ANWB
Luxembourg*	Yes	90 km/h					
Malta	No	–	–	–	–	–	Government
Netherlands	Yes	90 km/h	Laden weight: max. half of motorcycle empty weight.	2 m	No passengers in trailer, max. height: 1 meter, max. length: max. 2,5 meters from rear wheel motorcycle axle. With a trailer behind motorcycle with sidecar, the sidecar wheel must have a brake.		
Norway	Yes	80 km/h	50 % of bike dry weight, excl. weight	125 cm	If the hitch is of a ball type – width of ball min. 50 mm. The		NMCU , ThoreBergsaker

				motorways	
United Kingdom	Yes, with full license	96 km/h	150 kg or <2/3 of the kerb weight (bike+fuel+oil)	1 m	Motorcycle over 125cc BMF

* Not confirmed by a FEMA member organization.

** Technical demands on sizes and weights differ: the width ranges from 0.8 to 2.5 meters, also the length differs. Motorcycle trailers are no part of the EU type approval, are not seen as O1 trailers, because O-category trailers are to be attached to vehicles with at least four wheels.

The information presented here was thoroughly researched by FEMA, but FEMA will not accept any (legal) responsibility if this information is false or incomplete.

‘Speed marathon’ returns in 2018 [PART]

Police forces across Europe will take part in a 24-hour ‘speed marathon’ in April, which has become the focal point of TISPOL’s annual week-long speed enforcement campaign.

Part-financed by the European Commission, TISPOL is the European Traffic Police Network – established by traffic police forces across Europe to improve road safety and law enforcement.

The speed marathon on 18 April is one of a number of initiatives which feature on TISPOL’s 2018 events calendar.....

READ THE REST AT:-

TISPOL: <https://www.tispol.org/>

RS GB: <http://www.rsqbarchive.org.uk/news/5043.html>

More action required to bring about greater uptake of ULEVs [PART]

60% of new cars must be electric by 2030 if greenhouse gas targets are to be met, ministers have been warned.

In a new report on the UK’s Clean Growth Strategy, the Committee on Climate Change – the official watchdog – says the Government must take more action ‘to drive greater uptake of ultra-low emission vehicles’.

While acknowledging that the UK has made good progress in reducing its greenhouse gas emissions, the report says ‘urgent action is needed to flesh out current plans and proposals’ to help the UK meet its legally-binding carbon targets in the 2020s and 2030s.

The Government has set out an ambition for between 30% and 70% of car sales, and up to 40% of van sales, to be ultra-low emission vehicles (ULEVs) by 2030.....

READ THE REST AT:-

The CCC: <https://www.theccc.org.uk/2018/01/17/uks-ambitious-clean-growth-strategy-must-translated-urgently-action/>

CCC Report: <https://www.theccc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/CCC-Independent-Assessment-of-UKs-Clean-Growth-Strategy-2018.pdf>

RS GB: <http://rsgbarchive.org.uk/news/6193.html>

‘Shared space’ an unhelpful phrase – CIHT [PART]

‘Shared space’ is an unhelpful phrase that should no longer be used to describe a form of street design, a new report has concluded.

Published yesterday (9 Jan), the Chartered Institution of Highways & Transportation (CIHT) report reviews how shared space schemes are being designed, implemented and installed across England.

The report recommends that three more specific terms: ‘pedestrian prioritised streets’, ‘informal streets’ and ‘enhanced streets’ should be used when developing future schemes.....

READ THE REST AT:-

CIHT: <http://www.ciht.org.uk/en/media-centre/news/index.cfm/ciht-launches-streets-review>

A few other sites you may wish to visit:-

First MOT test to remain at 3 years to protect road safety

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/first-mot-test-to-remain-at-3-years-to-protect-road-safety>

Extending first MOT date to 4 years (Consultation outcome)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/extending-first-mot-date-to-4-years>

Police boosting efforts to stop drivers using their phones at the wheel

<https://news.npcc.police.uk/releases/police-boosting-efforts-to-stop-drivers-using-their-phones-at-the-wheel>

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