



October 2023

Network

A networking tool providing information for Activists and other interested parties

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[Acknowledgments:- George Legg. Colin Brown. Lembit Opik. Tim Peregrine. FEMA. Julie Sperling. Chris Mitchell.....and anyone else I've forgotten]

EDITORIAL

Further to my inclusion of pieces in Network concerning ULEZ I have been asked to clarify how ULEZ came about and whose brainchild it actually was.

ULEZ was the idea of Boris Johnson when he was Mayor in 2015. He announced ULEZ would be introduced into inner London in 2020 in a bid to give Londoners 'cleaner air'. ULEZ was actually introduced a year before in April 2019 by Mayor Sadiq Khan who came to office in 2016.

Having said that the idea of extending this charge to Greater London rests solely with the existing Mayor.

Now, you can say it was originally a Tory idea capitalised on by a Labour Mayor down the line. I'm not interested in the different parties because based on recent events they all come up wanting, to put it mildly. What is concerning is that they sit in their ivory towers and suddenly decide 'ok, we've shafted the inner London residents now let's get greedy and shaft the entire residents'. Because that's what they're doing. To tax ordinary working people who come into the Capital £250 a month is shafting them - no matter how they like to spin it.

And, talking of 'money' - further on I've reproduced a piece I came across entitled 'The staggering amount TfL made from ULEZ fines in just one year - and that's before zone even expanded (msn.com)'. ULEZ not about money! Pull the other one.

A couple of interesting updates:- <https://insidecroydon.com/2020/10/22/now-tories-look-to-axe-freedom-pass-as-well-as-zip-cards/>

Also, <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2023/aug/29/tories-accused-hypocrisy-ulez-row-call-extend-congestion-charge> just to bring it up to date...

Having had enough of ULEZ and onto something much more interesting - Annual Group Conference. Many thanks to Taunton MAG who put on a great AGC - nice venue, good attendance, great catering and friendly atmosphere throughout.

Good to catch up with people I've not seen for the past year.

Catch you next month, ride free, AG

For the November edition of Network please submit copy to aine@mag-uk.org by the 25th October with the subject heading Network

POLITICAL REPORT – COLIN BROWN AND LEMBIT OPIK

Once again, Sadiq Khan has added to his record of unpopular antics by standing behind his loathed emissions zone tax to a wider part of London. In dramatic contrast, the Conservative Government has finally demonstrated a hint of sense by delaying the banning of petrol and diesel vehicles by half a decade. MAG's Political Unit, Lembit Öpik and Colin Brown, share the latest from the corridors of politics.

At last, common sense from a Prime Minister.

In a remarkably sensible move, Prime Minister Rishi Sunak has announced a toning down of the intense green-washing agenda that has been gripping British politics for the last few years. Sunak has formally stated that he will delay the enforced introduction of the electric vehicles from 2030 to 2035. He has stated that he thinks 2030 is too soon, and is therefore pushing back the banning of the sale of new petrol and diesel vehicles by half a decade.

This in itself is not what MAG wants. We are campaigning for a complete abandonment of the prohibition of new petrol motorcycle (and car) sales. We believe the environmental arguments put forward in favour of this ban are risible, self-contradictory and logistically unworkable. However, the delay is a very big step in the right direction, because, very often, such postponements lead to the shelving of a policy entirely.

What has Labour said about it? It's very hard to interpret the confused messaging coming out of the Labour Party, which appears to have been totally broadsided by the announcement. However, the Prime Minister's announcement is likely to lead to a watering down of Labour's own commitment to the 2030 ban – though at present they seem to be weathering the storm of public disquiet over the ban, presumably on the basis they still think taking our right to buy internal combustion engine vehicles is a vote winner.

What happens next? This policy change will ricochet around the corridors of power for some time to come. Greens, sensing they are at last losing their stranglehold on policy making, will continue to bleat about the betrayal of their agenda. However, their voice is becoming comparatively irrelevant, as the major parties begin to recognise that taking petrol and diesel vehicles away is not a vote winner, and allowing us to operate them will not cost us the earth. Lembit believes that persisting with a 'ban' policy could, on the other hand, cost parties the next election.

EV Consultation response submitted

Lembit Öpik, MAG's Director of Communications and Public Affairs, has submitted a comprehensive report to Government on the drawbacks and logical flaws in the electric vehicle mandate, even in a 12 year timeline. "While it's good the Prime Minister has delayed

the forced ban on the sale of petrol motorbikes and cars, the best thing to do is to let the market drive technological developments and stop meddling with what we can buy,” says Lembit. “There is no infrastructure plan to prove the extra electricity required, the charging points won’t be there, and the Government has never published a convincing case for why this move is necessary in the first place.”

You can look at MAG’s submission here: https://wiki.mag-uk.org/images/f/f9/Environment_and_Climate_Change_Committee_Inquiry_-_Electric_Vehicles_-_MAG_response.pdf

Mayor disgraces himself in front London’s road users

Against all advice, warnings and public opposition, London’s Labour Mayor, Sadiq Khan pompously remained steadfast behind the discredited Ultra Low Emission Zone (ULEZ) expansion across London, leading to public order violations and a mass rejection of his legitimacy as the Mayor.

The ULEZ expansion has not been shown to serve any health benefit – nor has it been justified in terms of reducing access to air free of particulate matter (PMs). Note that the London Underground typically exposes commuters to levels of PMs between 600% and 3,000% higher than what you would experience in an old car.

Since we have covered this matter extensively in the past, we won’t repeat the arguments against ULEZ again – you’ll be able to read all about it in the next edition of Open Road magazine. Suffice to say, it now looks like Khan could lose his re-election campaign on the basis that this disastrous scheme has no scientific justification and no semblance of fairness. Remember, Khan and his people have coerced scientists to not promote information and data that indicates the ULEZ scheme is pointless from a health perspective. Emails from Shirley Rodrigues, Deputy Mayor for Environment and Energy, proved she tried to secure a rewrite of conclusions of studies that question the health benefits of the ULEZ policy as a whole. And Imperial College London’s Environmental Research Group got £800,000 from the Mayor since 2021, including £45,000 for a report on the ‘future health benefits of mayoral air-quality policies.’ And these idiotic reports claimed ULEZ would increase life expectancy in London. We therefore have a test – if life expectancy doesn’t leap up as a result of ULEZ it will indicate that the policy is a scam.

Together Association Grand Event

The Together Association, an independent minded grass roots movement dedicated to giving power back to the people, held its annual meeting September 29th 2023. MAG attended, and contributed significantly to the transport part of the movement’s campaigning work.

The Together Association is a significant ally to MAG, and we have certainly benefitted from our collaboration. If you’d like to know more about it, here’s a link to their work:

<https://togetherdeclaration.org/>

20mph blanket speed limit in Wales

In a move that is literally slowing down life in Wales, the Welsh Assembly has imposed a blanket 20mph speed limit in urban areas. This breath-taking act of patronisation is a victory for the road safety lobby, and a defeat for anyone living in Wales. MAG has previously highlighted the fact that in a number of areas where 20mph limits were introduced, the accident casualties increased, due to a combination of frustration, lower attention to the road, and vehicles driving closer together. Nevertheless, the Welsh Assembly carried on regardless, and has enforced this ludicrous policy, making Wales an even less attractive place to live. Let's see what happens to the accident statistics in this, the largest test market for this policy we have seen in the UK.

It's worth pointing out that if the only measure of the success of a policy is casualty rates, it would be better to reduce the speed limit to 5mph, which would probably lead to a significant reduction in road injuries and deaths. Lembit one suggested this at a road safety conference – where the idea was heavily criticised by attendees, who inadvertently revealed that even for them, the unquestioning reduction of casualties was not the only consideration.

"I used to live in Wales," adds Lembit. "With this ridiculous road speed reduction, I wouldn't be inclined to live there now. It would just take too long to get around. I value my time – even if the Welsh Assembly doesn't."

Parking charges survey

Initial analysis of the parking charges survey showed that despite getting a good response we did not attract enough range of responses from riders using up to 125cc motorcycles. As usual with MAG surveys we had a good response, so the results will be credible, but less than 4% of respondents rode 125cc or smaller bikes. This of course is reflective of MAG membership, but does not reflect the spread of motorcycles found in parking bays. Colin is therefore taking steps to encourage responses from riders of smaller capacity machines by advertising the survey in communities that may reach riders of these machines.

It is perhaps also unsurprising that we had no responses from riders of electric motorcycles.

So, the survey is still open, despite the reports that it would be closed by now. If you ride or know someone who rides a 125, or electric bike, ask them to complete the survey here: <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/Z2NQ3VB>

Colin hopes to be able to publish the results of the survey before the end of October.

ROR hits the House of Commons

Colin received a formal invitation to attend the AGM of the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Better Roads held at the House of Commons. The meeting was due to be addressed by the Roads Minister, Richard Holden, but he found excuses not to be there. The meeting was also used to launch a new report which is calling for the re-introduction of ring-fencing for roads maintenance funding.

The Pothole Action Fund when first introduced in 2015 was a ring-fenced pot of money that had to be used for repairing and/or preventing potholes. In 2021 the ring-fencing element was removed allowing councils the right to use the funds as they saw fit. Between 2016 and

2020 the roads saw a measurable improvement with 7% more roads being classed as in good condition by 2021 than in 2016. To be fair that is not something to be overly excited about when the bar is starting from such a low point with just 55% of roads being classed as in good condition at the peak. Since the ring-fencing was dropped the number classed as in good condition has nose dived back down to 50% in just a couple of years. The money is clearly being diverted – no prizes for guessing where.

The meeting demonstrated the shocking lack of interest in the subject amongst parliamentarians. The meeting was not quorate, so even MPs who are part of the APPG were not terribly dedicated to the cause. The APPG is struggling for membership, so this creates an opportunity for some letter writing to share the APPG report and recommendations to your MP and to ask your MP to join the APPG.

The APPG report can be found here: https://www.appg-betterroads.org/?page_id=348

Fight Motorcycle Theft: Time to get noisy in London and West Yorkshire

Another successful event was ticked off in Manchester, and with the next meeting scheduled in Hull we are continuing to push the motorcycle theft issue up the agenda in key hotspots around the country. As Jimmy Torrance pointed out “Turnout may have been better than expected - but showed the lack of trust based on past reaction/results. It is not a lack of trust/respect of the community with MAG - but a long term, memory of the actions taken by both the Greater Manchester political establishment and GMP Management.”

As usual many interesting and concerning perspectives were aired, and whilst we cannot say that everyone left the meeting thoroughly satisfied that things will improve, we can say that the start of a long process of engagement has begun. Deputy Mayor, Kate Green was in listening mode and notes were being taken. Colin is angling for further meetings particularly to discuss victim support a theme that came through quite strongly on the night. We are not talking emotional support, but rather financial compensation and redress for the victims. Some attendees spoke of riders unwilling to report thefts due to the lack of belief that the police will act, combined with an increased financial burden of going through a process that leads to increased insurance premiums and other potential charges. If victims are convinced that the police won't react and asking for action will only lead to more pain, there is something fundamentally broken in the system. This is not how a bike theft victim should ever feel, so what can be done to support the growing ranks of riders that have been financially compromised by the actions of criminals that feel no fear of consequence for their actions?

Meanwhile we continue to struggle to get engagement in other hotspots. Notably the DMPC's for West Yorkshire and London are blanking our requests for meetings. If you are based in West Yorkshire or London, please write to their offices, and your MP and Councillors to voice your opinions on their lack of response. We need to raise the heat on these individuals, whose sole role is to act as a conduit for engagement between us, voters, and policing priorities. By failing to engage they are guilty of a dereliction of duty. We need you to let them know how you feel about that failure.

PAYD Forum

Colin attended the inaugural Pay-As-You Drive Forum meeting on 19th September. The purpose of the Forum, set up by the Campaign for Better Transport is “To bring together

organisations supportive of the need to reform vehicle taxation. The forum aims to solidify a general consensus on the best way forward and to inform policy-makers of the wide-ranging support for pay-as-you-drive and any consensus or arguments to consider.”

Colin made it clear that MAG is only supportive of a PAYD taxation as a replacement.

Here’s the latest from Colin – 29/9/23. Now, I know I’m cynical but I’m hazarding a guess here and saying the announcement of 2030 being increased to 2035 was merely an attempt to gain votes knowing the majority of the public are ignorant of this latest mandate. Yes, I know = how dare I?

The Government published its response to the ZEV mandate yesterday confirming that it will go through as proposed with a minor tweak for vans. This is despite the headline announcements of the 2030 date being delayed to 2035.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/a-zero-emission-vehicle-zev-mandate-and-co2-emissions-regulation-for-new-cars-and-vans-in-the-uk/outcome/zero-emission-vehicle-zev-mandate-consultation-summary-of-responses-and-joint-government-response#joint-response-to-summary-of-responses>.

The quotas for cars are as follows:

Table 1: annual targets for ZEV sales shares from 2024 to 2035 for cars

Year	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
Target	22%	28%	33%	38%	52%	66%
Year	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034	2035
Target	80%	84% (*)	88% (*)	92% (*)	96% (*)	100% (*)

(*) Target will be set out in future legislation later in the decade.

The quotas for vans are:

Table 2b: annual targets for ZEV sales shares from 2024 to 2035 for vans

Year	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
Target	10%	16%	24%	34%	46%	58%
Year	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034	2035
Target	70%	76% (*)	82% (*)	88% (*)	94% (*)	100% (*)

(*) Target will be set out in future legislation later in the decade.

This applies to cars and vans from 2024, but not yet motorcycles.

The announced delay of the ban to 2035 is largely immaterial in the face of the ZEV mandate, and I fear that motorcycles will have a similar mandate applied when they finally announce the outcome allegedly this autumn.

I fear that they will stick with 2035 as the date for all motorcycles dropping the 2030 date for smaller bikes, but in the face of the ZEV mandate manufacturers will be forced to phase out the petrol models up to 125cc simply to meet the quota obligations. This will effectively force the removal of choice for 125cc sooner than 2030 which would be a dramatically worse outcome than a straight ban in 2030 in my view. Learners will be learning on twist and go electric – how will they transition to geared bikes? Sales of illegal e-bikes, and no doubt increased levels of associated antisocial behaviour by unlicensed riders will further diminish the public perception of motorcycling and we will face ever more calls for restriction of our freedoms.

Most members of the public are blissfully unaware of the ZEV mandate – we need to shine a light on it, at least in the riding community so that they wake up to the implications.

MAG PRESS RELEASES

MAG supports Better Roads Fund proposals. (13/9/2023)

The APPG for Better Roads are calling for central Government to reinstate effective ring-fencing and multi-year settlements for local road maintenance.

Evidence and proposals presented by the APPG are aligned with MAG's own Resurface Our Roads campaign.

MAG's Director of Campaigns & Political Engagement, Colin Brown, was invited to attend the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Better Roads AGM and launch of the 2023 'Working for better roads' report. MAG is campaigning for increased funding and an effective national approach to reversing the decline in the quality of the UK's local roads network.

Poorly maintained road surfaces have been shown by MAG to contribute to an average of 74 motorcyclist deaths and serious injuries every year.

The APPG report demonstrates that the Pothole Action Fund (2015/16-2020/21) was a successful policy. Ring-fencing led to a marked improvement in the proportion of the local network classed as being in a 'good condition' with 7% of the English local road network moving into this category during the life of the Fund.

In contrast, since 2021 when the Pothole Action Fund was incorporated into councils' general block highway funding from the Department for Transport (DfT), the number of roads classed as 'good' has gone into reverse. The APPG report points to data that shows there are now 5% fewer miles of English local roads in good condition.

Sir Christopher Chope MP, Chair of the APPG for Better Roads said:

"Both the Prime Minister and the Chancellor have pledged to tackle the 'plague of potholes' on our local roads. But, as this report shows, funding for local road maintenance is falling and the Government's assumption that hard pressed local authorities will spend allocations on roads is not enough.

"The roll-out of autonomous vehicles and decarbonising transport will place even greater funding pressure on our local road network in the years ahead. That's why we are calling for a Better Roads Fund to be created with longer term funding commitments, budget ring-fencing and full transparency on allocation.

"This Better Roads Fund would help deliver a sustained improvement in road conditions and enhanced network resilience. It would also save money over the long term and ensure our local roads are able to support the challenges ahead."

Speaking after the launch Colin Brown said:

"I fully support the proposed Better Roads Fund proposals. For motorcyclists in particular the declining state of our local road network presents an increasing threat to life. We have a clear case of funding policy changes in 2021 reversing any hope of improvement. It is time to move forward not slide further back.

"I was particularly disappointed that the Roads Minister, Richard Holden, did not attend the launch and will be writing to him on this and other matters. We will continue our Resurface Our Roads campaign, and lobby MP's asking them to read the report and support these proposals from the APPG for Better Roads."

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

Notes for Editors

The full report 'Working for better roads: A call for the re-instatement of effective ring-fencing for local road maintenance' can be found here: https://www.appg-better-roads.org/?page_id=348

Details of MAG's Resurface Our Roads Campaign can be found here: <https://mag-uk.org/resurface-our-roads/>

Deputy Mayor and Chief Inspectors to be grilled in Manchester.

One week in advance of the Manchester Fight Motorcycle Theft meeting MAG is confirming the panellists. The hustings style meeting will give attendees the chance to demand answers from the Deputy Mayor and two Chief Inspectors from Greater Manchester Police.

The Manchester Fight Motorcycle Theft meeting kicks off at 6pm at the Firbank Pub and Kitchen, Newall Green, in Manchester next Thursday, 21st September. MAG's Director of Campaigns & Political Engagement, Colin Brown, will Chair the hustings style meeting. The panellists will be:

- Kate Green, Deputy Mayor of Greater Manchester,
- Stephen Warriner, Chief Inspector, Neighbourhood CoM South District, and
- Mike Parker, Chief Inspector, GMP Safer Transport Team (Roads Policing)

The event is open to all riders in the area and will give them the opportunity to raise concerns, and ask questions about what action is being taken to reduce motorcycle theft in the Greater Manchester area.

Colin Brown said:

"I have spoken to the Deputy Mayor's Office and Chief Inspector Warriner to confirm the format and set expectations for the meeting. I would like to thank the Deputy Mayor, CI Warriner and CI Parker for being willing to engage with the riding public in this way. I look forward to a strong attendance and robust discussion – these meetings can lead to better relations between police and public and tangible outcomes through increased co-operation and partnership working. Tackling motorcycle theft can, and should, be moved up the agenda in many parts of the country. Hopefully we can start to achieve this in Manchester next week."

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

Volunteers wanted to help at the Motorcycle Live stand at the NEC. Get to see the show and help on the stand for a few hours. You are our best marketing tool! Please contact Louise (in the office) if you can help, tell us your availability and we will do our best. Not commutable, don't worry we have accommodation sorted not too far away (this is available on a first come first served basis). Call 01926 844 064 or email central-office@mag-uk.org

The staggering amount TfL made from ULEZ fines in just one year - and that's before zone even expanded

Story by Adam Toms •6d



London's ULEZ was expanded to cover Outer London boroughs on August 29© PA

Transport for London has revealed that more than 1.6 million ULEZ fines were issued in just one year, generating more than £50m of revenue. An official, in response to a freedom of information request from a member of the public, stated that "1,641,299 ULEZ PCNs (penalty charge notices) were issued between 1 July 2022 and 30 June 2023 with £53,331,191 of revenue generated".

[The authority](#) also detailed that 134,832 vehicles incurred a second PCN within 20 days of the first one being issued. A further 47,419 vehicles, meanwhile, incurred a second PCN more than 20 days after the first penalty.

TfL bosses and the Mayor of London, [Sadiq Khan](#), have repeatedly assured residents that the cash raised from the ULEZ is reinvested back into [the capital's transport network](#). A £160 million scrappage scheme, the largest of its kind in the world, has also been set up, from which Londoners with cars that fall foul of the rules (broadly pre-2005 petrol and pre-2015 diesel cars) can claim a £2,000 grant to scrap their vehicle and buy a new one.

Officials have already said that the scheme is expected to raise around £300 million in its first year. But, the Mayor of London, [Sadiq Khan](#), has highlighted previously

that the expansion's function is not to raise money, as [drivers](#) switch away from polluting cars and fewer are charged as a result.

No revenue, therefore, will be accrued, bosses predict, by 2027. TfL has also said that the money that is raised will be reinvested in the capital's transport network, and officials have emphasised that the authority is set to deliver **a multi-million pound surplus**.

The Mayor also [previously told MyLondon](#): "We're not anti-car. We're not anti-people being able to use their car. What we're 'anti' is poison in the air that causes children to have stunted lungs, around 4,000 premature deaths a year, adults with a whole host of health issues from asthma to cancer, dementia to heart disease.

"So what we're encouraging people to do is to get rid of their non-compliant vehicles, which means when they're driving these vehicles they're breathing in the poison, kids in the back are breathing in the poison as well. We're encouraging them to either get compliant vehicles or cycle or use public transport where they can.

"The good news is the experience from the central London ULEZ is that it led to fewer non-compliant vehicles, but also fewer vehicles. The expansion to Inner London also led to fewer non-compliant vehicles, and also fewer vehicles, because more people then decided to walk, cycle, or use their public transport, and I'm hoping the same happens in Outer London."

You can check if your vehicle is ULEZ compliant [here](#). TfL says you may be issued with a PCN for driving in London if:

- Your vehicle does not meet ULEZ emissions standards and you are not exempt or registered for a 100% discount
- Your vehicle does not meet the ULEZ emissions standards and you haven't paid the correct charge by midnight on the third charging day after travelling in the zone
- You paid the charge for an incorrect number plate (vehicle registration mark) or incorrect day of travel
- You paid by post less than 10 days before your date of travel

MAG Notice Board

Next
Network deadline
25th October

OPEN ROAD deadline
15th November



50th Anniversary
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Christmas—19th Dec to 8th Jan 24



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FEMA

Motorcyclists' road safety in Norway is improving

FEMA News: August 30, 2023



So far this year there have been less motorcycle accidents in Norway: 50 percent fewer fatal motorcycle accidents versus 2022, even though the motorcycle population is increasing year by year.

The Norwegian motorcycle community joined forces in the National Forum for Motorcycle Safety to try to reduce the number of motorcycle accidents. Norwegian motorcyclists' organisation [NMCU](#) – a member of FEMA – is an active participant in the National Forum. Norwegian website reitwagen.no talked to members of the National Forum, looking for an explanation of this success.

Rider training is central in Norway. Good training as well as an active call for motorcyclists to ride modern and safe motorcycles. Further encouragement for refresher courses and rider development courses, as well as an increased focus on good rider experiences (and not speed) have probably also contributed to the reduction in motorcycle accidents this year. The effort is coordinated by the Norwegian Road Administration through the National Forum for Motorcycle Safety.



NMCU's Odd Terje Døvik

“There are many indications that the motorcycle community has succeeded better than others with coordinated, attitude-creating work”, says Odd Terje Døvik, who is head of the central board of NMCU, the Norwegian Motorcycle Union. He represents close to 40,000 motorcyclists who are members of NMCU or follow the Facebook group [Bikelife](#) in Norway.

Odd Terje Døvik adds: “But to quote Aristotle: one swallow does not make a summer! This year the numbers are low. Last year they were high. Next year they may rise again. We are talking about small, statistical variations. The important thing is the development over time, the long lines. And there the picture is completely clear: the risk of being killed or seriously injured on motorbikes in Norway continues to decrease – as it has done for many years already.”

In August 2021 the Norwegian road administration established a ‘National Forum for Motorcycle Safety’. Furthermore, a national [implementation plan](#) for motorcycles, mopeds and ATVs 2022–2025 has been drawn up. The purpose of the National Forum for Motorcycle Safety is to bring together competent specialist communities. The Ministry of Transport has contributed NOK 4 million (approximately € 346,662) to support a number of training and attitude-building measures. “Attitude-creating work is a top priority in the work that takes place under the auspices of the National Forum for Motorcycle Safety. It is very important and good, says NMCU’s Odd Terje Døvik.



Ingrid Dahl Hovland from the Norwegian Road

Administration

Ingrid Dahl Hovland is road director and is at the head of the team in the Norwegian Road Administration that contributes actively to fewer motorcycle accidents. The motorcycle industry praises her for good cooperation on measures that produce good results. Ingrid Dahl Hovland: “In a demanding summer for traffic safety, the motorcycle figures are a bright spot. While last year we had a total of 17 fatalities in the first seven months of the year, the number of fatal accidents involving motorbikes has almost halved this year with nine fatalities. Of course, nine is too many. The Norwegian Road Administration has invested a lot in cooperation with the important players around motorcycles and safety, as well as a focus on good driving techniques in recent years. We know that the entire motorcycle community is concerned with promoting the individual motorcyclists’ focus on rider development courses. We believe this work is very important. It is important to stand together to help ensure the good development we are now seeing.”

“Something very positive is happening in Norway,” says Per-Anton Vinje, chairman of the Motorcycle Importers Association, [MCF](#). He continues: “I believe that what we are now seeing is the result of a huge effort with all the important actors who work together in the National Forum for Motorcycle Safety. Coordination is important and is probably one of the important reasons why we are now seeing a positive development. We have had a great focus on communication and attitude-building work. We have also focused on a few messages. It is riding experience that counts. Don’t speed. Furthermore: everyone should attend rider training. The motorcycle importers have also contributed to creating a separate [media channel](#) to help promote these important messages to the country’s more than 250,000 motorcyclists. This way we can reach our users directly with the important messages through a number of digital media and channels.”

Written by [Wim Taal](#). Source: [reitwagen.no](#). Top photograph courtesy of [MCF](#)

This article is subject to [FEMA's copyright](#)

Hundreds of motorcyclists demonstrate in Berlin

FEMA News: September 1, 2023



Under the motto 'Riding together, fighting together for our rights', the German motorcyclists' organisation [Biker Union](#) (a member of FEMA), organises a rally every two years to draw the attention of politicians and the public to the specific problems of powered two-wheelers.

This year, on 26 August 2023, the demonstration led from the starting point near Schönefeld Airport across the western part of the city to the Berlin exhibition grounds and from there on to the Brandenburg Gate, where the final rally took place.



Biker Union chairman Rolf Frieling (photo by Wim Taal).

In his speech, Rolf Frieling, chairman of the Biker Union, pointed out that Biker Union has had a lot of success with its work since it was founded 37 years ago. As a recent example, he cited the 'Leaflet on the Improvement of Road Infrastructure for Motorcyclists' by traffic engineers, in the development of which Biker Union has been significantly involved. By a decree of the Federal Ministry of Transport, the leaflet has been setting the state of the art in terms of motorcycle-friendly road construction and road maintenance for two years, which has led to and will continue to lead to a significant improvement in road safety. Unfortunately, however, many of the demands on politicians have not yet been implemented. So there is still a lot to be done.

In addition, Tedy Bach, deputy chairman of the Biker Union, pointed out in his contribution that it is important to stay on the topics continuously, which is not easy

for an organisation in which only volunteers work. Often, the prevention of further restrictions on powered two-wheelers must be considered a success.

Rolf Frieling: "From our point of view, this year's rally can be considered a success, even if the number of participants did not quite meet our expectations. The capricious weather of the last few weeks has apparently prevented many from making their way to Berlin. The cooperation with the police, especially with the Berlin motorcycle squadron, which did an excellent job and brought us back to Schönefeld safely and without incident after the rally, worked well again. We are already looking forward to the Biker Union rally in 2025."

*Written by [Wim Taal](#). Source: [Biker Union](#). Top photograph courtesy of Biker Union
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Finland: roadside checks to test the technical state of motorcycles

FEMA News: September 6, 2023



There is no mandatory periodic inspection of motorcycles and mopeds in Finland, but the authorities have recently started roadside checks to learn more about the technical state of motorcycles and mopeds.

In Finland, patrols of the traffic police sector of the Eastern Uusimaa Police and the Finnish Transport and Communications Agency [Traficom](#) organised two joint motorcycle and moped surveillance raids last week. The roadside checks were carried out as mobile checks, as well as from fixed locations.

Traficom gathered information about the technical condition of motorcycles and mopeds in general. Police motorcycle and car equipment were used for surveillance. During the surveillance raids, fifty motorcycles and 25 mopeds were checked. Two fines were imposed on motorcyclists, three traffic violation fees and 29 notices. As for mopeds, the situation was a little worse. Nine fines, five driving bans and two traffic fines were imposed on the riders, and we made 17 surveillance reports, says inspector Katri Lehti from the traffic police: "An inspection report means that we found defects in the two-wheelers or that they were in violation of the regulations in terms of structure or condition", says Lehti.

"Roadworthiness checks aim to improve road safety. This type of control has not been done before and for this reason we have no information about the condition of the motorcycles. The surveyors were technical experts under the control of the police. On the basis of moped raids carried out by the police in the past, it is known

that the mopeds are often tuned or have technical faults”, says Traficom’s leading expert Timo Ojala.



According to the information Finnish motorcyclists’ organisation [SMOTO](#) received, Traficom has been interested in the subject and these roadside checks and Traficom’s upcoming report on motorcycle accidents show the direction

in which things are to be taken. Traffic safety for motorcyclists has improved and there has been a clear downward trend in accidents in the 21st century in relation to the number of motorcycles. Based on the data collected from accidents, the technical condition of the motorcycle has very rarely (< 1%) been the cause of the accident. Based on the results of the control strikes, one could imagine otherwise. It should be examined what kind of shortcomings have been observed in the supervision and what their effect on the traffic safety of the vehicle really is.

Roadside monitoring has been known to be an effective way to monitor the condition of vehicles, and SMOTO supports it instead of periodic inspections. There is no mandatory periodic inspection of motorcycles and mopeds in Finland. The inspection would require a change in the law, and it is not within Traficom’s jurisdiction. The EU Commission is about to issue a proposal to amend the inspection directive during Q3/2023. The presentation will probably propose mandatory periodic inspections for all motorcycles and possibly mopeds as well. That’s when the matter will be processed in the EU institutions. However, it would take a long time before the directive came into force in the member states.

SMOTO has worked purposefully to prevent periodic inspections of motorcycles. We are continuing to work in this area and it would seem from there that soon there will be ‘busy years’ around the subject again. The situation is very similar to the handling of the current inspection directive in the EU in 2012. The end result was then that an exception was made to the directive, according to which member states can implement alternative measures to improve traffic safety. A few member states, including Finland, used this exception, and Denmark chose the name roadside inspections as a replacement measure for the inspection.

Written by [Wim Taal](#). Sources: [poliisi.fi](#) & SMOTO. Top photograph courtesy of Morgan Kane. This article is subject to [FEMA’s copyright](#).

Car versus motorcycle: new digital safety features tested

FEMA News: September 24, 2023



Digital connectivity between motorcycles, cars and infrastructure is entering a new phase. Recently FEMA joined a test day on the German Lausitzring track.

On 14 and 15 September 2023 stakeholders from motorcycle- and car industry, road safety- and research institutions and users' organisations got the opportunity to see with their own eyes and experience themselves how the new safety features that are developed by the Connected Motorcycle Consortium and its member's work. FEMA was invited to participate in these demo days.



The Connected Motorcycle Consortium (CMC) was founded in 2016 when BMW Motorrad, Honda and Yamaha agreed upon the need to further enhance motorcycle/scooter safety by the means of C-ITS. Since then, a range of manufacturers, suppliers and research institutes joined forces to collaborate. FEMA decided in 2020 to [become a supporting member](#). In the past, CMC has several times presented some progress on their [website](#) but until now we had to do with written information and some publicity videos.

On a sunny [Lausitzring](#) in Germany we were first informed about the new developments, the ideas behind certain choices and the scientific foundations behind the applications. Most important is to realize that the base of the applications is digital connectivity (C-ITS) between the motorcycle, cars and infrastructure. The vehicles send out signals that are picked up and processed by the infrastructure (and forwarded to) the receiving vehicles, which could either be a car or a motorcycle.

CMC had prepared nine use cases that were demonstrated on the Lausitzring, where the spectators were able to see everything well from an elevated terrace. Here we could see (and sometimes hear) how the system intervened when a car driver overlooked an coming motorcyclist when turning, or a slower riding motorcyclist in front of him, a crossing motorcyclist who was hidden by a wall or another vehicle, or warned the motorcyclist when a car driver was opening his door, or was just standing still, when an emergency vehicle approached, et cetera. Also, the working of ADAS (Advanced Driver Assistance Systems) was shown in avoiding crashes with motorcycles. These systems are not based on digital communication, but on sensors (camera, radar, lidar) on the car.

After being able to see the working of the systems from a small distance, the participants had the opportunity to experience the working themselves as passenger in one of the test cars. When it considered ADAS, these were sometimes normal production cars that are already equipped with ADAS and applications that communicate with motorcycles that are fitted with senders. I experienced how the car driver was warned for a motorcyclist that was hidden from the car by a big van, both riding and standing still. Also, for a motorcycle that was standing on the edge of the road (like you do with a breakdown). All not very spectacular, but very useful in daily traffic situations.

The most spectacular thing is that these applications not only already exist, be it mainly still in the test phase, but also that they can be retrofitted to existing motorcycles. The unit I saw had about the size of a packet of cigarettes and can be fitted under the saddle or another suitable place on the motorcycle. So, we do not need to trade in our motorcycles to get some extra safety. The machine-to-rider communication might be a bit of an issue for older bikes that do not have digital dashboards (by the way, the preferred way of warning the rider is with flashing lamps on the mirrors, as this gives the best combination of reliability, visibility and fast reaction by the rider).

Written by [Dolf Willigers](#). Photographs courtesy of CMC. This article is subject to [FEMA's copyright](#)

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Potholes 'now pose a severe risk to life'

Road Safety GB: 15 September 2023



Motorists have been warned that the risk to life because of potholes is now severe, as new figures reveal UK roads are in the worst condition in years.

The team at Road Angel is urging councils to fork out and repair potholes or they say road users 'will lose their lives'.

Local authorities paid out over £32 million in

compensation for 5,596 personal injury claims due to potholes between 2017 and 2021, according to a freedom of information request.

Meanwhile, figures from the AA show pothole-related breakdowns hit a five-year high in July this year, with 50,079 callouts to vehicles stranded with faults caused by potholes, an increase of nearly one-fifth from 41,790 in July 2022.

Road Angel says a wet summer has meant that UK roads are in a worse condition than expected as water causes greater damage and repairs are harder to carry out.

If left, the organisation notes potholes grow in size as traffic wears away the edges leaving greater numbers of larger holes that will cause serious damage if driven through.

Gary Digva, founder of Road Angel, is now pleading with local authorities to assess the risk to life if the pothole problem in the UK is not repaired.

He said: "It is shocking to see that the pothole plague in the UK is not being taken seriously by local councils given how many people are injured because of them.

"With fewer potholes being repaired than in the last decade, it is only a matter of time before we start seeing an increase in accidents, injuries and fatalities unless something changes.

"Potholes are incredibly dangerous for motorists as they can cause them to lose control, especially if they cause damage to the tyres of suspension, or swerve out of the way to prevent damage.

"Almost 30,000 people were killed or seriously injured on UK roads last year, and we fear these numbers could increase with the current state of the roads.

"Potholes not only pose a threat to motorists, but they are also dangerous for cyclists because the uneven surfaces can cause the bike to lose control, leading to accidents and serious injuries.

"Pedestrians could also get caught in the crossfire of out-of-control vehicles, putting them at serious risk of harm if walking along a busy road.

“To make matters worse, we have had an unusually wet summer this year which makes potholes harder for road users to see, meaning more people are at risk of hitting potholes and losing control.

“The best advice to motorists while the roads are in this substandard condition is to drive with caution at all times and reduce speeds when approaching a pothole.”

Joint call to stimulate the European automotive industry’s transformation and enhance competitiveness

ACEM News: September 7, 2023

As the voice of the motorcycle industry in Europe, ACEM joins main stakeholders from the automotive value chain calling on the President of the European Commission, Ursula von der Leyen, to stimulate sectoral transformation and enhance competitiveness.

The sector of two, three and four wheels is firmly committed to shaping the green and digital transition while continuing a constructive dialogue with public authorities. However, the rise of several challenges is putting further pressure on the decarbonisation of transport and undermining the transformation of our industry.

The signatories have prioritised six key actions before the end of the current mandate:

1. Develop a robust industrial strategy;
2. Scale up a European zero-emission market and battery value chain;
3. Ensure a stable and coherent regulatory environment for the sector;
4. Enhance the skills agenda and Just Transition framework;
5. Improve transport affordability; and
6. Ensure a global level playing field.

Future inaction from law makers at this critical moment will undermine the European automotive industry and put at risk employment in a sector that generates more than 13 million EU jobs.

‘Bankrupt’ Birmingham council spent £9.8m on bike lane ‘no one uses’.

Birmingham’s “[bankrupt](#)” [council](#) has been accused of wasting almost £10 million on a cycle highway that is wider than a bus lane.

The multi-million pound cycle lane was opened in 2019, but motorists say it has been barely used and is a prime example of the authority’s [financial incompetence](#).

On Sept 5, the Labour-run council issued a [section 114 notice](#), meaning it cannot meet its financial liabilities amid an outstanding £760 million of equal pay claims.

The council, which is Europe's largest local authority, confirmed all but essential new spending must stop immediately.

Locals have since highlighted a number of examples of shocking wastes of money that have contributed to the town hall bosses' perilous position.

They include a 2.5 mile "cycle highway" along the A34 – one of the busiest commuter routes into the city – which has been barely used by cyclists since opening four years ago.

Road users say the lane, between the city centre and Perry Barr, causes complete gridlock at rush hour and forces the bus lane farther into the road.

It means parts of the road have been left with just one lane for cars, while in other sections the cycle lane slices into the pavement.

Photographs taken on Wednesday show bumper-to-bumper gridlock with the bike lane sitting empty and one cyclist even ignoring it to ride down the main road instead.....

I don't really want to take up space on this idiocy, however, if you're interested in reading further why Birmingham City Council put the priority of cyclists above everything else – then read on:-

<https://www.birminghamworld.uk/news/birmingham-council-bankrupt-4284471>

FROM THE HOUSE

[Written Answers - Department for Transport: Delivery Services](#)

13 Sep 2023

Richard Holden: The Department has not had any discussions with Transport for London on delivery drivers driving with learner plates. The Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) chairs the Motorcycle Strategic Focus group which Transport for London are part of. The group considers issues affecting motorcyclists, including challenges with delivery riders in the gig economy, and rider safety of those...

[Business of the House](#)

14 Sep 2023

Judith Cummins: Two months ago, one of my constituents had to be taken to accident and emergency with a fractured knee after she was mowed down on a path by a reckless e-scooter driver. As the Leader of the House is aware, although it is illegal to use e-scooters on public paths and highways beyond the designated trial areas, they are freely available to buy. They are known to reach speeds of up to 70 mph...

[Home Department: Illegal Motorcyclists](#)

18 Sep 2023

Chris Philp: I would be happy to look into those specific issues. The police have powers to pursue, even where the motorcycle rider is not wearing a helmet. We had similar issues with mopeds in London four or five years ago. For a time, the police did not pursue them, and moped crime shot through the roof. They now pursue them, and it has gone back down. I urge Bedfordshire police to use those powers, but...

[Scottish Parliament: Fatalities on Scotland's Roads](#)

28 Sep 2023

Jamie Greene: Tragically, last year, there were 174 fatalities on Scotland's roads. That number has increased by 23 per cent, year on year, and it is at its highest level since 2016. I am sure that many in the chamber, as well as our constituents, have been touched by those tragic accidents. However, that also comes against the backdrop of a 14 per cent drop in the number of police road traffic officers...



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AQN: First Hydrogen to trial parcel delivery with their fuel cell vehicles

<https://airqualitynews.com/fuels/first-hydrogen-to-trial-parcel-delivery-with-their-fuel-cell-vehicles/>

Statistical data set: Cycling, motorcycling, school travel, concessionary travel and road safety (Last updated: 30 August 2023)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/nts06-age-gender-and-modal-break-down>

Statistical data set: Travel by vehicle availability, income, ethnic group, household type, mobility status and NS-SEC (Last updated: 30 August 2023)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/nts07-car-ownership-and-access>

AQN: A bus, using locally produced green hydrogen, starts trials in Bridgend

<https://airqualitynews.com/cars-freight-transport/a-bus-using-locally-produced-green-hydrogen-starts-trials-in-bridgend/>

NI: NIFL signs up to 'Share the Road to Zero'

<https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/news/nifl-signs-share-road-zero>

NI: Public Engagement on the Eastern Transport Plan (ETP) 2035

<https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/consultations/public-engagement-eastern-transport-plan-etp-2035>

NI: Changes to driving and vehicle test fees

<https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/news/changes-driving-and-vehicle-test-fees>

AQN: Emissions-based parking charges to be implemented in Bath

<https://airqualitynews.com/headlines/emissions-based-parking-charges-to-be-implemented-in-bath/>

AQN: Emissions-based parking charges to be implemented in Bath

<https://airqualitynews.com/headlines/emissions-based-parking-charges-to-be-implemented-in-bath/>

AQN: UK motorists need to save for 13 years to buy a new EV, research finds

<https://airqualitynews.com/headlines/uk-motorists-need-to-save-for-13-years-to-buy-a-new-ev-research-finds/>

MCIA: August Powered Two-Wheeler Registration Statistics

<https://www.mcia.co.uk/posts/august-powered-two-wheeler-registration-statistics>

MCIA: August Powered Two-Wheeler Registration Statistics

<https://www.mcia.co.uk/posts/august-powered-two-wheeler-registration-statistics>

Official Statistics: Daily domestic transport use by mode (Last updated: 13 September 2023)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/transport-use-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-pandemic>

RAC: Road treatment and resurfacing falls to lowest level in five years

<https://www.rac.co.uk/drive/news/state-of-the-roads/road-treatment-and-resurfacing-falls-to-lowest-level-in-five-years/>

Statistical data set: Motorcycle riding test data by test centre (Last updated: 15 September 2023)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/motorcycle-riding-test-data-by-test-centre>

Statistical data set: Motorcycle theory test data by test centre (Last updated: 15 September

2023)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/motorcycle-theory-test-data-by-test-centre>

EU: Driving licences and execution of driving disqualifications

<https://www.europarl.europa.eu/committees/en/driving-licences-and-execution-of-driving-product-details/20230913CAN71047>

London: Fire Committee raises the alarm on regulation of e-bikes

<https://www.london.gov.uk/who-we-are/what-london-assembly-does/london-assembly-press-releases/fire-committee-raises-alarm-regulation-e-bikes>.

RSGB: Potholes 'now pose a severe risk to life'

<https://roadsafetygb.org.uk/news/potholes-now-pose-a-severe-risk-to-life/>

RSGB: Have your say: 20mph speed limits

<https://roadsafetygb.org.uk/news/have-your-say-20mph/>

National statistics: Reported road casualties Great Britain: motorcyclist factsheet 2022

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/reported-road-casualties-great-britain-motorcyclist-factsheet-2022>

Scotland: Scotland's pavement parking prohibitions - consultation on enforcement regulations for local authorities

<https://consult.gov.scot/transport-scotland/enforcement-regulations-for-local-authorities/>

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