

Manifesto for riders: Motorcycle Action Group

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The Motorcycle Action Group (MAG) is the UK's leading riders' rights organisation. Biking is part of the solution regarding the promotion of ecology, economy and liberty. We recognise that walking, cycling and rail can't do what motorcycles and scooters do. This is our agenda for riding, and we will work with member of all parties and none to achieve it. These are our 12 key policy targets.

1 MAG seeks exemptions for Powered Two Wheelers (PTWs) regarding all road-user charging schemes.

All the evidence proves that motorbikes and scooters reduce congestion, pollution and commuting costs. Often the least wealthy use them to get to and from work. MAG has worked across the UK to win support from local authorities and road operators for exemptions to user-charging. We apply this rationale for an exemption in relation to congestion charging, road tolls and clean air zone charges.

2 MAG seeks a better approach to road safety.

Despite passing official 'Safety Audits,' many 'road safety' schemes have bad impacts on motorbike and scooter safety. Examples include pavement 'build-outs' and speed cushions which encourage cars into the path of riders along the centre of roads.

Reallocating road space for 'cycle-only' lanes - and changes in junction design -cuts space for motorcyclists and the 97% of traffic that isn't bicycles. We want to review this imbalance.

3 MAG calls for Powered Two Wheeler access to bus lanes to be a nationwide policy.

A huge bank of evidence from London and other UK towns proves motorcycle access to bus lanes reduces congestion, doesn't hinder buses and cuts CYCLE accidents by 11%. Over 40 UK towns, including Brighton and Hove Council, run by the Green Party, allow bikes in bus lanes. MAG wants this to be a nationwide policy.

4 MAG calls for Powered Two Wheelers to be treated on a par with bicycles.

A shift from four to two wheels helps everyone, cutting congestion and enabling shorter journey times. We want local authorities to provide bike and scooter parking for the UK's 1.5 million riders – just as they do for cycle parking. Bikes are *not* cars, and can't be treated like cars just because they have number plates. We've as much right to park our vehicles as other congestion-busting vehicles.

5 MAG seeks zero-rating of Vehicle Excise Duty (VED) on eco-friendly motorcycles.

It's illogical to exempt some cars from road tax while taxing eco-friendly motorcycles and scooters. MAG wishes to review this anomaly with policy-makers.

6 MAG seeks a review of the rider testing regime.

MAG opposes the substantial barriers to achieving a full motorcycle licence, which ignore the social, economic and traffic-flow benefits that bikes and scooters offer. We want Government and the motorcycle industry to work with us to find a fairer system. MAG also calls for a review of the practical aspects of the motorcycle rider test that

currently have to be conducted in a relatively small number of off-road test centres – which followed implementation of an EU Directive. Now, as the need for UK compliance with EU Directives comes to an end, we propose that testing a rider's capacity to gain a full motorcycle licence should be carried out on the roads they would be fully qualified to ride on.

7 MAG will engage with innovations such as electric motorcycles.

Electric bikes offer breath-taking economy and clean travel. Many road-going models are already on the market. MAG will work with Government and industry to explore these and other revolutionary, low-pollution vehicles, while insisting on the riders' right to choose conventionally-powered machines.

8 MAG will work with industry and the police on safety.

MAG is a riders' rights organisation, not a road safety group. But many 'road safety' schemes increase risks to bikers (and cyclists). This flies in the face of considering our safety alongside other vulnerable road users. We want a level playing field for our safety – with cost-effective improvements for all road users.

9 MAG seeks a review of sentencing for those causing fatal and serious injury.

MAG works to raise awareness and challenge sentencing decisions that don't reflect the seriousness of offences that lead to the death or injury of motorbike and scooter riders.

10 MAG opposes the erosion of liberties through telemetry and auto speed restrictions

MAG is philosophically committed to libertarian principles of personal choice. We oppose the use of technology to erode personal freedom for marginal returns. We seek confirmation that candidates share our commitment to privacy and liberty.

11 MAG seeks solutions to deal with crime against bikes and bikers.

Motorbike-related crime is an epidemic. MAG is working with the authorities, including the police, to protect bikers and bikes from crime.

12 MAG supports a common-sense approach to motorcycle clothing.

MAG is concerned by the growth of ideologically-led gimmicks that have seen requirements for riders to dress in specified ways being introduced in some EU countries. MAG contends that road safety is largely a feature of rider and driver attitude and it is in this area that safety initiatives should focus rather than inhibiting riders' rights of free expression in how they dress. MAG invites candidates to confirm that they recognise this common-sense approach.