



A networking tool for Activists and other interested parties

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EDITORIAL

As we begin to emerge out of lockdown things, hopefully, will get easier for all of us.

I'd like to draw your attention to MAG's Press Release of 6/5/20 asking for you to contact your MP and you'll find a template which Michael Armstrong, Rep for Cumbria, has sent me which you may wish to use or adapt.

Much emphasis has been put on cycling and walking by Central Government during the past few months with the mention of motorcycling conspicuous by its absence so its essential we have our say in influencing what is to become 'the new normal' which will only happen if we let our MPs know we're here and we're not going away.

Although I'm one of those who is meant to stay home till the end of June I have been going out. (Though, none of my journeys involved a trip to Durham!!!!) Just to a secluded local woodland to walk my dog where the only social distancing I have to do is from the wildlife.

Sadly, as with many other events, what would have been the 25th Bristol Bike Show has been cancelled for 2020 and held over to August 2021. Its been a nightmare year for organisers of all events this year including MAG events.

If you're able to get out and ride – enjoy. Be safe y'all, AG

Please submit copy for the July edition to: aine@mag-uk.org. Subject heading: Network

[Acknowledgments: George Legg, Lembit Opik, Colin Brown, Michael Armstrong, Julie Sperling – together with anyone else I've forgotten]

CAMPAIGNS REPORT FROM POLITICAL TEAM

Lembit and Colin.

Here's the latest from MAG's Political Unit, Lembit Öpik and Colin Brown, who have been hard at work over the last month. As the Government's policy towards Covid-19 becomes less clear, MAG has maintained its clarity of purpose, and has managed to remain very focussed – with some impressive results.

Secretary of State for Transport backs biking

It turns out that Grant Shapps, the Secretary of State for Transport, is on our side. This revelation was thanks to a question asked by an avid motorcyclist in the House of

Commons, Julian Lewis. He's the MP for New Forest East and he's also a member of the All Party Parliamentary Group.

During a debate in the House of Commons, Mr Lewis asked the following question: *'As an alternative to using public transport during the crisis, what assessment has my right hon. Friend made of the desirability of ageing bikers like me once again using motorcycles for travelling to work, and will he be taking any steps to incentivise motorcycle usage as the lockdown is gradually eased?'*

Mr Shapps gave a very encouraging response: *'Motorcycles are an enormously important way of getting around— 2.7 billion miles were travelled by motorcycle in 2018, the last year for which we have data. We are working on a number of projects, including sorting out potholes, which are a huge problem for people on motorcycles and other two-wheeled vehicles. I also encourage him—at whatever age—to adopt the electric motorbike.'*

Chair of MAG Selina Lavender praised Mr Lewis and Mr Shapps: 'MAG is very encouraged by this mature debate about the importance of motorcycles in the UK. We've repeatedly pointed out their value as a commuting mode of transport. Now Ministers advise the use of private instead of public transport, motorbikes are more important than ever. By law, bikers must wear personal protective equipment, and riding keeps you at least 2 metres away from others almost all the time, in line with Covid-19 guidance. Having made these points to Parliament repeatedly, we're delighted to see an MP share our view, and the Secretary of State for Transport recognising motorbikes in the transport mix.' Here's the link to the official record of that exchange.

<https://www.theyworkforyou.com/debates/?id=2020-05-12a.163.0&s=motorcycle#g171.4>

Once it is permitted, we will seek to use this encouraging view from the secretary of state for Transport to further build our relationship with the Department for Transport.

Radio 2 shout out for MAG – and a new relationship

Lembit Öpik was on Radio 2's Jeremy Vine Show in mid-May, thanks to a tip off from Motor Cycle Industry Association representative Nick Broomhall. 'It was good teamwork,' reports Lembit. 'Nick sent out the alert that they were going to talk about bikers on ride outs during the lockdown, and I was able to get onto the radio to defend riders. A big thanks to Nick for quick thinking.'

In an interesting sequel to the item, Lembit and Colin contacted a local Councillor, Jill McMullon, in Richmond, who had featured in the story. She made some valid points about some anti-social behaviour by bikers. MAG doesn't endorse irresponsibility and we're in talks with Jill to see what we can do to help resolve what were clearly unacceptable actions by a group she had some terse exchanges with. It might lead to some good outcomes, to reduce this kind of stupid behaviour in future.

If you see riders behaving in ways that bring the biking side down, please let us know. We want to be good ambassadors for motorcycling, not an embarrassment to biking.

MAG's Vice Chair Andy Carrott made it on to BBC Radio Lincolnshire to respond to the usual anti-biker news pieces there. Wherever possible we need voices prepared to make

reasoned arguments in favour of motorcycles to counter biased reporting. Please try to be a vocal motorcycling ambassador in your area.

Please make your views know on petrol engine ban threat

The deadline for submissions to the consultation on whether the Government should ban the sale of ALL new petrol, diesel and hybrid vehicles by a certain date is looming. You have to get your comments into the Department for Transport by 31st July 2020.

Make no mistake – this could spell the end of all new petrol motorcycles in the UK. IT might turn out to be impossible to implement, but if they make it a policy, that will still wreck the entire motorcycle industry as we know it. Please take a few minutes to oppose this bad idea. We literally face an end to our right to choose to buy petrol machines by as early as 2030.

Make your comments at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/consulting-on-ending-the-sale-of-new-petrol-diesel-and-hybrid-cars-and-vans>

If you don't, then you lose your voice – and, quite possibly, your right to buy a new petrol engine motorbike for evermore.

Covid, Confusion and Coalitions

The Government has lifted some restrictions on going out, but the message is confused. Can we ride out or not? What's acceptable and what isn't in terms of exercise. The Police in North Yorkshire have made matters worse by giving hard to understand guidance on what they will accept and what they won't in terms of riding motorbikes.

MAG working hard within a coalition of motorcycling organisations to create specific motorcycling guidelines endorsed by Government as well as the role of motorcycling as a sensible alternative to cars in the public transport averse future we now face. The coalition consisting of MAG, VMCC, TRF and BMF have recently gained endorsement from IAM RoadSmart and the All Parliamentary Motorcycling Group. We are getting Parliamentary Questions asked and glimmers of hope in the responses. We have a long way to go and the workload of this project is immense, but we cannot fail to turn up to the battle. We really are in a war against very clear and immediate threats to our rights as riders.

Oxfordshire shows signs of listening

Following a vigorous campaign to protect riders' rights in Oxford, MAG has had some success in preventing a wholesale rejection of the right to ride in some parts of the centre of the city.

Colin Brown has said he's 'cautiously optimistic that MAG's intervention will lead to a more common sense approach. Again we have worked at a co-ordinated campaign with other groups. We made our case very clearly, and it looks like this has had a useful effect.

Now we are working to get bikes included in an integrated way in the Council's transport thinking. Once again, it's good to have been taken seriously in our intervention. It is

abundantly clear that Oxford City Council now know they cannot walk all over the rights of motorcyclists.

Sadiq Khan brings back ULEZ – at possible cost of lives

Incredibly, London Mayor Sadiq Khan has reintroduced the Ultra Low Emissions Zone (ULEZ) and Congestion Charge, despite clear Government guidance that we should use private transport wherever possible to reduce the risk of spreading Covid-19.

In London Mayor's Questions on Thursday, 21st May, Mr Khan tried to blame the Government for the sudden reintroduction, but, thanks to questions from Conservative Mayoral Candidate Shaun Bailey, Mr Khan was quickly exposed as having done so on his own initiative to do so. The Government had only asked the Mayor for proposals on the reintroduction. Khan was also unable to provide a coherent defence of why he had included older motorcycles in the ULEZ charge.

Politically speaking, there are massive contradictions in what Mayor Khan is doing. In Parliament, in response to a question by Chris Law MP, who is Chair of the All Party Parliamentary Group on Motorcycling, Transport Minister Rachel Maclean stated: 'We recognise the social distancing benefits of using motorcycles at this time.' It is also recognised that motorcycles are the safest travel mode to limit Covid-19 infection, because riders MUST wear personal protective equipment - and naturally we ride over 2 metres apart.

Riding a bike is clearly safer than the tube, trains and buses, where social distancing often fails, thus risking more Covid-19 infections and deaths. The UK's immediate priority is to save lives now. It therefore makes no sense to charge riders of older motorbikes a fortune under ULEZ, forcing them onto the public transport network?

Thanks to the valiant efforts of Keith Prince, a member of the Greater London Authority and former Chair of the Transport Committee, he secured a meeting with Khan's representatives to review the situation regarding Covid-19 and motorcycle ULEZ charges.

It's worth remembering that in 2016, Mayor Khan stated motorbikes 'generate far less pollution, save time and money for the rider - and don't create congestion.' Even older bikes deliver those benefits. MAG is now preparing next steps with Keith Prince AM, prior to the meeting with the Mayor's people. We will put the case for exempting motorcycles from ULEZ. This will result in fewer deaths from Covid-19. Not to do so will cost lives, and MAG is determined to ensure that either the right outcome happens, or the Mayor faces the music in taking a step that WILL kill people who would otherwise have lived, if riders of older bikes could use those machines without the punitive cost of ULEZ charges. The forthcoming meeting will therefore test Mr Khan's credibility in terms of containing the spread of Covid-19. If he's serious about that, he WILL exempt motorcycles – and it's literally a life and death issue.

If this ULEZ policy affects YOU, please tell us on 01926 844 064, or email us at: central-office@mag-uk.org

Ride To Work Day is here

As things change over Covid-19, MAG is still inviting you to make journeys you have to make on two wheels on Ride to Work Day: 15th June 2020. The easing of the lockdown allows a little more flexibility with this, but please try to honour the spirit of the guidance, for the sake of everyone. If you need to travel on that day, do it on two wheels –it's the safest way to travel.

As we said last month, MAG is not planning or endorsing group rides or gatherings. Ignoring the health advice in place at that time would turn the day into an own goal that nobody wants.

There is a glimmer of hope that filming of our Filter Friendly video will make the cut for this year's RTW Day. It is still touch and go, but we are doing all we can to get this launched on the day.

With the mounting evidence that the majority of commuters steering clear of public transport will choose personal motorised transport, now is the perfect opportunity to promote the motorcycle as the most sustainable form of private motorised transport.

Wrong thinking in Nottingham Bus Lane Trial

Nottingham City Council have been quietly running a bikes in bus lanes trial for the last 18 months in a single stretch of their extensive bus lane network. We have received notification today (21st May) that they intend to end the trial and return access permissions to their original position (i.e. no motorcycle access).

Despite the fact that they say there has been not one motorcycle casualty as a result of the trial, and no impact whatsoever on any other road user group, the fact that a secret trial on a few hundred yards of bus lane has not resulted in wholesale modal shift to motorcycles is justification to avoid the cost of rolling out the policy to all bus lanes.

We are challenging this decision, but need all bikers in Nottinghamshire to express their views to local councillors.

Please write to the portfolio holder for local transport Cllr Adele Williams
(adele.williams@nottinghamcity.gov.uk)

Other Consultations

Future of transport regulatory review: call for evidence on micromobility vehicles, flexible bus services and mobility as a service – closes 3rd July

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/future-of-transport-regulatory-review-call-for-evidence-on-micromobility-vehicles-flexible-bus-services-and-mobility-as-a-service>

Vehicle Excise Duty: call for evidence – now extended to 3rd September

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/vehicle-excise-duty-call-for-evidence>

NOTICEBOARD

**Monthly
Direct Debits
now
available**

Next ROAD
deadline
10th July

Please check
your contact
details

FARMYARD
rescheduled for
25—27th
September

MAG AGC
postponed
look out for
details in the
next edition
of The ROAD

Keep well
Keep safe
Thank you

MAG PRESS RELEASES

A big thank you and an important rally update. 1 May 2020

MAG has been overwhelmed by the generous donations of some of those who would have been attending the Into The Valley rally this weekend, and we wish to thank you all for your thoughtful contributions. We are so grateful for the amazing support that will help enable us to continue fighting for riders' rights.



We know that some of our members regularly take the opportunity to renew their membership at this event, so we warmly invite them to either contact the office on 01926 844 064, or go online to renew at www.mag-uk.org

For those who have not yet seen the various options available for both this cancelled event, and the postponed Farmyard Party, please see below an edited update from the organisers, MAGic Action Promotions:

We have made the difficult but sensible decision to cancel Into The Valley 2020 and postpone the Farmyard Party till late September this year. Yorkshire Pudding Rally is currently still set to go ahead at the end of July.

Postponing the Farmyard Party to September 25th-27th gives the rally a greater chance of happening than sticking to its June date. It will be the same venue, bands, traders, caterers, fires and no fires field, Carry Nowt Camping, Great British Glamping, etc....

We anticipate some hurdles to overcome to go ahead in September, but feel that they will be surmountable. So, if we are allowed gatherings, it is safe to do so, and you buy tickets we will see you in September.

One of the immediate rules we have been advised to implement is that all tickets must be pre-booked; it is highly unlikely that gate tickets will be available or permitted.

Tickets can be booked now at www.magicactiononline.co.uk or by calling 0800 988 3199.

If you have already purchased tickets for Into The Valley or Farmyard Party this year:

The current Coronavirus restrictions are playing havoc with everyone's lives. MAG is far from immune from these problems and has already been hit financially due to the cancellation of many of its fundraisers.

These events are the lifeblood of the organisation and without this income they may well struggle in the coming months.

To try to avoid this and ensure the future of our events, we ask you to kindly consider donating your ticket(s) to us/MAG to ensure we will all be back next year fighting fit.

PRE-BOOKED INTO THE VALLEY tickets only:

If tickets were purchased from a MAG rep or one of our outlets:

1. Donate the ticket cost to MAG – please email enquiries@mapevents.co.uk with your ticket numbers to notify us of this intention OR return your tickets to the PO Box* with DONATED written on the back.
 2. Use your ticket at Yorkshire Pudding Rally 2020 or purchase an upgrade for £12 to a Weekend Farmyard Party (25-27 Sept). To do this go to <https://www.magicactiononline.co.uk/farmyard-party-upgrade> (online only, not available via reps or outlets)
 3. Return ticket/s to the outlet for a full refund (some outlets may currently be closed, please wait for them to reopen if you can)
- If tickets were purchased online with a debit or credit card or with a cheque via the PO Box:

1. Donate the ticket cost to MAG – please email enquiries@mapevents.co.uk with your ticket numbers to notify us of this intention OR return your tickets to the PO Box* with DONATED written on the back
2. Use your ticket at Yorkshire Pudding Rally 2020 or purchase an upgrade for £12 to a Weekend Farmyard Party (25-27 Sept) to do this go to <https://www.magicactiononline.co.uk/farmyard-party-upgrade>
3. Return them to the PO Box* for a refund (excludes booking fee(s), these are retained by our 3rd party booking agent)

PRE-BOOKED FARMYARD PARTY tickets only:

If tickets were purchased from a MAG rep or one of our outlets:

1. Use them for the new September date (25-27 Sept).
2. Donate the ticket cost to MAG: please email enquiries@mapevents.co.uk with your ticket numbers to notify us of this intention OR return your tickets to the PO Box* with DONATED written on the back.
3. Return them to the outlet for a full refund (some outlets may currently be closed, please wait for them to reopen if you can).

If tickets were purchased online with a debit or credit card or with a cheque via the PO Box:

1. Use them for the new September date (25-27 Sept).
2. Donate the ticket cost to MAG please email enquiries@mapevents.co.uk with your ticket numbers to notify us of this intention OR return your tickets to the PO Box* with DONATED written on the back.
3. Return them to the PO Box* for a refund (excludes booking fee(s), these are retained by our 3rd party booking agent).

* MAP EVENTS, PO Box 247, Beverley, HU17 9GY. Please write your contact number on the back of one of the tickets.

All enquiries: 0800 988 3199

Thanks to each and every one of you for your support. Take care till we see you in a field (hopefully sooner rather than later).

Pete.

Hopefully, the above information from MAGic Action Promotions will help you decide the best way forward with your rally plans.

And please don't forget, you can also contribute to MAG's fighting fund via the Donate button on the website.

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

MAG urges Government not to overlook motorcycles in plans to ease lockdown. 6 May 2020

MAG has criticised the omission of motorcycles in indications of Government thinking around transport in the transition from lockdown back to normality. Claiming that the "New Normal" may not be anything like that proposed by many lobby groups, MAG calls for clearer thinking



Transport Secretary, Grant Shapps, has suggested that encouraging people to commute by bicycle will be a key part of proposals for transport as travel restrictions for the pandemic lockdown are eased; however, motorcycles are not mentioned. Zealous cycle lobbyists are naturally excited by this statement and seem to be suggesting that vast numbers will turn to cycling as their only mode of transport. London Mayor, Sadiq Khan, has already announced his Streetspace

Plan, which is intended to fast-track the transformation of London's streets to enable millions more people to safely walk and cycle as part of their daily journeys.

Commenting on the media rush to suggest that cycling will be a substantial solution, MAG's Director of Campaigns & Political Engagement, Colin Brown, said: "The idea that cycling alone can replace all the transport needs of those who will be unable to commute by public transport is for the birds. The average cycle trip in 2018 was a mere 3.3 miles. Potentially, cycling could replace bus travel in London as the average trip was 3.7 miles but nationally, average local bus trips are 5.3 miles. The average trip on the London underground was 8.9 miles and on average surface rail trips are 30.9 miles. During lockdown, we have not all moved closer to our places of work. At an average trip distance of 13.4 miles, motorcycles can clearly replace far more public transport trips than cycling, whilst also offering congestion reduction benefits over cars."

Colin went on to say: "Any action that improves the safety of cycling and walking is to be commended. However, the plight of motorcyclists must not be forgotten in this dash for cycling infrastructure. We have serious concerns that road space segregation and cycle safety measures often increase risks for motorcyclists: something we highlighted at the last City of London meeting prior to lockdown. We are vulnerable road users too. It is vital that MAG and motorcyclists are consulted on the many plans to accommodate cycling that are being rushed through without opportunity for comment and scrutiny from other road users."

MAG Chair, Selina Lavender, said "Motorcyclists already wear a form of PPE as standard. Motorcycles provide social distancing, flexibility and range that cycles don't. There is no need to fast-track major changes to the roads infrastructure, though a few more authorities opening their bus lanes to motorcycles would be sensible. Leaving motorcycles out of plans to help the transport system to get going and the economy back on the road to recovery is an oversight of massive proportion."

MAG Director of Communications & Public Affairs, Lembit Opik, said: "Motorbikes and scooters are self-evidently safer than bus and train travel when it comes to virus transmission. Motorcycling guarantees social distancing, with most being 'PPE-ready' the moment they get on their machine, in a way that those using trains and buses are not. It's a ready-made solution, and the Government should rapidly highlight this to the millions of commuters looking for virus-resistant ways to travel."

Tim Fawthrop, MAG London Regional Rep, said: 'I nearly lost my life to Covid, and consider myself fortunate to now be on the long road to recovery. Like many others, I am avoiding public transport, which is potentially where I picked up the virus initially. I plan to avoid all public transport for the foreseeable future. As soon as I have the strength, I will return to riding my motorcycle in accordance with whatever guidelines are in place at that time. Getting back on the bike and on the open road will lift my spirits and aid my recovery. I am saddened that the Government and London's Mayor have not yet included motorcycles in their plans. As motorcyclists, we are aware of the benefits of our favourite form of transport and how they can support society in the fight against the effects of this horrendous virus. It is time for policy-makers to listen to us.'

MAG has approached the Secretary of State for Transport and the London Mayor, and will continue to assertively lobby for a long overdue review by the Department for Transport of the missed opportunities and ignored benefits of motorcycles. MAG has long promoted motorcycles as the most sustainable form of private motorised transport and is now calling on all riders to contact their MPs and councillors, asking them to promote motorcycles as a vital part of any “new normal” transport system that emerges.

Following on from the above PR, below is a template you may wish to use/adapt for your own communication to your MP. Its one used by Michael Armstrong, Cumbria MAG Regional Rep. And members from Cumbria MAG and which is also on the Cumbria face book page if you wish to cut 'n paste it from there.

Insert your own MP here,

We in MAG urge Government: 'Do not overlook motorcycles in plans to ease lockdown'

The Motorcycle Action Group has criticised the omission of motorcycles in indications of Government thinking around transport in the transition from lockdown back to normality. Claiming that the “New Normal” may not be anything like that proposed by many lobby groups, MAG calls for clearer thinking.

To support this: I'll use two arguments.

The first one being a reduction in pollution.

There are two reports to support this:

The Leuven Reports which supports that a 10% shift from car users to motorcycles will reduce congestion by 40%. So less vehicles and the amount of time standing idle producing emissions.

The second is TfL own report which states that motorcycles emissions is less than one percent of the total emissions for all vehicles!

The second is safety in regards to the reduction of spreading the virus.

MAG Chair, Selina Lavender, said “Motorcyclists already wear a form of PPE as standard. Motorcycles provide social distancing, flexibility and range that cycles don't. There is no need to fast-track major changes to the roads infrastructure, though a few more authorities opening their bus lanes to motorcycles would be sensible. Leaving motorcycles out of plans to help the transport system to get going and the economy back on the road to recovery is an oversight of massive proportion.”

MAG Director of Communications & Public Affairs, Lembit Opik, said: “Motorbikes and scooters are self-evidently safer than bus and train travel when it comes to virus transmission. Motorcycling guarantees social distancing, with most being ‘PPE-ready’ the moment they get on their machine, in a way that those using trains and

buses are not. It's a ready-made solution, and the Government should rapidly highlight this to the millions of commuters looking for virus-resistant ways to travel."

[delete/edit as appropriate]

(You can insert your own ideas here. Example: There will be a push to increase the use of cycling and granted this will help but it's only part of the solution. Motorcycling can play its part if properly supported.

Or motorcycling is my only form of personal transport and I believe that motorcycling is not on the same parity as other forms of transport.)

Also will you support the white paper, "Riding COVID Safe: A discussion paper" I'll look forward to your reply.

Kind regards,

(Add your name, address, contact details here)

MAG welcomes a statement by the Secretary of State for Transport, the Rt Hon Grant Shapps MP, in support of using motorcycles. 13 May 2020

MAG has praised the Secretary of State for Transport, Grant Shapps, for recognising motorcycles in the UK transport mix. In response to a question by Julian Lewis – MP for New Forest East and member of the All Party Parliamentary Group on Motorcycling - Mr Shapps agreed that motorbikes play a key role in delivering billions of commuting miles in the country.



In a House of Commons debate about Covid-19 on Tuesday, 12th May 2020, Mr Lewis asked: 'As an alternative to using public transport during the crisis, what assessment has my Right Hon. Friend made of the desirability of ageing bikers like me once again using motorcycles for travelling to work, and will he be taking any

steps to incentivise motorcycle usage as the lockdown is gradually eased?'



Mr Shapps replied: 'Motorcycles are an enormously important way of getting around— 2.7 billion miles were travelled by motorcycle in 2018, the last year for which we have data. We are working on a number of projects, including sorting out potholes, which are a huge problem for people on motorcycles and other two-wheeled vehicles. I also encourage him—at whatever age—to adopt the electric motorbike.'

Chair of MAG, Selina Lavender, praised Mr Lewis and Mr Shapps: 'MAG is very encouraged by this mature debate about the importance of motorcycles in the UK. We've repeatedly pointed out their value as a commuting mode of transport. Now Ministers advise the use of private instead of public transport, motorbikes are more important than ever. By law, bikers must wear a form of personal protective

equipment, and riding keeps you at least two metres away from others almost all the time, in line with Covid-19 guidance. Having made these points to Parliament repeatedly, we're delighted to see an MP share our view, and the Secretary of State for Transport recognising motorbikes in the transport mix.' MAG continues to work with the authorities on clear guidance to the riding community.

The Parliamentary question and answer are available [here](#).

The UK's leading motorcycle rider groups call on the Government to recognise the role of motorcycling during the COVID-19 crisis. 14 May 2020

The country's largest motorcycling organisations have today jointly submitted a White Paper to the Secretary of State, Grant Shapps, and to each of the three devolved administrations.



The coalition of organisations is calling for the Government to fully take the role of motorcycling into account as the UK continues to deal with the Covid19 crisis and its aftermath. The coalition also sets out the case for a Government-supported code of guidance for maintaining social distancing for motorcycling in the present situation.

The coalition of organisations consists of the Motorcycle Action Group (MAG), Vintage Motorcycle Club (VMCC), the Trail Riders Fellowship (TRF) and the British Motorcyclists Federation (BMF). The groups jointly commissioned a White Paper which was submitted to the Secretary of State earlier today.

The white paper:

- Reviews ways the crisis is affecting motorcycle riding.
- Discusses the conditions under which motorcyclists can continue to ride safely during the various COVID 19 Alert Level phases.
- Sets out the case for a Government-supported code of guidance for maintaining social distancing for riding in the present phase.
- Sets the scene for review and discussion with the Government about how restrictions affecting motorcycling can gradually be lifted as the Country enters future lockdown phases.
- Makes the case for encouraging the use of motorcycles as well as walking and cycling, during the crisis exit strategy and beyond.
- Opens the discussion on policy proposals that could help encourage greater take-up of motorcycling by commuters, avoiding public transport in line with Government guidance.

In a debate in the House of Commons on 12th May, Secretary of State for Transport, Grant Shapps, commented that "Motorcycles are an enormously important way of getting around". With Mr Shapps recognising the role of motorcycling, it seems clear that it is time to take discussions further with the Department for Transport (DfT). This paper is designed to create a starting point for that detailed debate.

MAG Chair, Selina Lavender, said: "A new transport normal can only be achieved by consensus of all road user groups. We look forward to consulting with the Government to ensure that motorcycles are given their rightful position in that new normal."

VMCC Chair, Bob Clark, said: "The VMCC is the UK's largest motorcycle club, although the average age of our membership is nearly seventy. Our members are thus perhaps more concerned with adherence to the guidelines than may be the case with other segments of the population. However, for us, motorcycling is more than transport, and is often the physical and mental exercise essential for our members' wellbeing. The VMCC seeks confirmation that those of our members who are fit and healthy can both remain within the law and enjoy the motorcycling that is their chosen form of exercise."

TRF Chair, Mario Costa-Sa, commented: "The TRF Code of Conduct provides a key role in training trail and adventure riders, and compliance with COVID guidance is no exception. Trail Riders want clarity; they look to us as leaders of the largest motorcycle groups to interpret and communicate the Government's public message."

BMF Chair, Jim Freeman, commented, "The time has come for the motorcycle to shine as a serious urban alternative to public transport, cycling and walking. For many, the typical public transport journey is too far to be walked or cycled. The car takes up far too much road and parking space."

Coalition of Motorcycling Organisations reports progress and growing support. 25 May 2020

Following the submission of its [Ride COVID Safe White Paper](#) to the Secretary of State for Transport, Grant Shapps, last week, progress has been made and support is growing.

Chair of the All-Party Parliamentary Motorcycling Group, Chris Law MP, said:

"I very much welcome this initiative and the partnership between the organisations which created it. Motorcycling does have an enormous role to play in any transport policy if we are to see a long term reduction in congestion and pollution, and the Parliamentary Motorcycle Group has long advocated this. The riders' code announced last week provides invaluable advice to those using motorcycles during the Covid19 crisis, and I urge all motorcyclists to take it into account and ride safe during these extraordinary times. As Chair of the APMG I strongly urge Ministers and the DfT to fully recognise motorcycles as a transport mode"



In a written response to a Parliamentary Question raised by Christopher Chope MP, Rachel Maclean, Parliamentary Under-Secretary (Department for Transport) and MP for Redditch stated:

“The Department’s guidance issued on 12 May refers to ‘Private cars and other vehicles’ as an alternative to using public transport, and encourages the public to ‘consider all other forms of transport before using public transport’. This would include private vehicles such as motorcycles and mopeds where the journey to be made is appropriate.

Motorcycles are an important way of getting around, and we are working on a number of projects, including sorting out potholes, which are a problem for people on motorcycles and other two-wheeled vehicles. I encourage people to adopt the electric motorbike.”

IAM RoadSmart, the UK’s leading road safety charity and advocate, have endorsed the White Paper. Neil Greig, Policy & Research Director for IAM RoadSmart said:

“IAM RoadSmart strongly support the key role of motorcycling in helping to get everyone around safely and in kick starting the economy as the Covid19 crisis reduces. It offers a winning combination of instant social distancing and cheap and efficient travel. We can’t wait to get back out on the road to deliver our mission to produce safer riders, but for now we have to agree with this report that only essential travel for work or responsible recreation is allowed. “

The Coalition still awaits a formal response from the Department of Transport. They have also sought but still await feedback from the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners and the National Police Chiefs Council.

The Coalition has noted much media interest in reporting complaints about motorcyclists’ behaviour, particularly during the first weekend since lockdown restrictions were eased in England. Less widespread is reporting of the ongoing valuable work of motorcycle riding volunteers such as the Bike Shed Community Response initiative and of long established organisations like the Blood Bikers. The positives far outweigh the few bad stories making the headlines.

The joint position of the Coalition’s members is that responsible, safe use of motorcycles should be encouraged within the framework of Government guidelines and related legislation. A uniform approach to policing the regulations will be assisted by clear communication of unambiguous advice. That is the most urgent element of our proposed guidelines. Of equal and more lasting importance is recognition of the role of motorcycling in our nation’s transport system. As a transport mode offering social distancing benefits acknowledged by the Department for Transport, motorcycling is, as Grant Shapps has commented, “an enormously important way of getting around”.

The Coalition of Motorcycling Organisations consists of the Motorcycle Action Group (MAG), the Vintage Motorcycle Club (VMCC), the Trail Riders Fellowship (TRF) and the British Motorcyclists Federation (BMF).

F E M A

FEMA supports the motorcycle industry's call for European help

FEMA News: May 27, 2020



The motorcycle industry wants to be able to sell Euro 4 bikes after 31 December 2020. ACEM, the European Association of Motorcycle Manufacturers, has asked the European Commission to extend the time to sell Euro 4-compliant motorcycles because of the COVID-19 situation. FEMA supports this request: <https://www.acem.eu/>

On 1 January 2020, a new environmental step (Euro 5) has been introduced for new vehicle types while Euro 4 vehicles can still be sold/registered until the end of the year (31 December 2020).

The outbreak of the COVID-19 virus has an enormous impact on the motorcycle industry, the importers and the retailers. In fact, it has an impact on the whole motorcycle sector. Several European countries have had a lockdown, which means that both production and sales of motorcycles have dropped or in some countries even stopped for a while. Factories and dealerships were closed for a long time and still suffer from logistical problems. This means that it is to be expected that the sector will not be able to sell motorcycles that are already in stock.

Although there is a provision in the type approval regulation 168/2013 to eliminate surplus stock, ACEM fears that in the present circumstances this will not be enough. To save the sector ACEM proposes a financing-free solution, which is to extend the end date of Euro 4. FEMA supports this request, because a healthy sector is not only in the interests of the motorcyclists too, but also because we need a healthy sector to work on the innovations that

are needed to allow motorcycling the role it deserves in the post-Corona period: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/ALL/?uri=CELEX%3A32013R0168>

Dolf Willigers, General secretary of FEMA, says: “Of course we support ACEM in their request. The motorcycle sector has already been hit hard by the measures that were needed because of the COVID-19 virus and will face more challenges in the future as a result for the call for clean transport, which will also affect motorcycling. A healthy sector is in our interest too, but most important is the need for solidarity between the sector and riders in these difficult times.”

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Top photograph courtesy of Yamaha.

£1.7bn funding boost to target potholes and increase EV charger numbers

RAC: 15th May 2020



The UK's roads look set for a major makeover thanks to a multi-billion pound investment announced by the government.

Transport Secretary Grant Shapps has set a target of filling 11 million potholes with the new Transport Infrastructure Investment Fund, among other vital improvements. Official statistics suggest the materials needed are enough to tarmac a road stretching a third of the way around Earth: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/multi-billion-pound-road-and-railway-investment-to-put-nation-on-path-to-recovery>

The £1.7 billion pound boost will transform roads and bridges and help install new priority bus lanes at key locations to keep the country moving.

A number of projects will be implemented to maintain the cleaner air levels recorded during lockdown, with £175 million worth of work accelerated to take place on quieter roads.

England's motorways and major A-roads have already benefitted from £200 million worth of work carried out in April.

Mr Shapps said: “To help those who do have to use public transport or get out on the roads to do their jobs, we've been accelerating infrastructure upgrades to make sure that, as we

gradually reopen our society, everyone can benefit from smoother and safer journeys with better connections for our future.”

RAC head of roads policy Nicholas Lyes: “We have pushed for essential road maintenance to be sped up considering the roads have been much quieter than normal, so we welcome the transport secretary’s announcement.”

Pothole-related breakdowns rose in the first quarter of the year, even though the nation was encouraged to limit travel to essential journeys from early March:

<https://media.rac.co.uk/pressreleases/pothole-related-breakdowns-jump-in-first-three-months-of-2020-2995603>

Mr. Lyes added: “It is particularly welcome that ministers are removing the complex and bureaucratic bidding procedures that local authorities usually have to go through for these funds, which should speed up repairs.”

Access to electric vehicle charging points are also a priority, as the government plans to provide a minimum of six ultra-rapid charge points to every motorway service station.

Larger sites could feature as many as 12 ultra-rapid points, each one allowing drivers to charge their vehicle in 15 minutes.

The charging process will also benefit from quick and easy debit and credit card payments.

Mr Lyes said: “Concerns about range anxiety still exist, particularly where drivers need their vehicles for longer journeys, so increasing the supply of rapid charge points at motorway service areas should help convert a number of drivers that are thinking about buying an electric vehicle into actually buying one.”

Scotland’s low emission zones paused



Plans to implement low emission zones in four Scottish cities have been paused temporarily in response to the Covid-19 outbreak, the Scottish Government has announced.

In September 2017, the Scottish Government committed to the introduction of low emission zones (LEZs) in Glasgow, Edinburgh, Aberdeen and Dundee by the end of 2020.

In 2018, Glasgow’s LEZ went live – in a move the city council said would make the city centre ‘more pleasant and attractive’ for those living, working and visiting:

<https://roadsafetygb.org.uk/news/scottish-government-ramps-up-support-for-low-emission-zones/>

Glasgow City Council has adopted a phased approach to implementation and by the end of 2022, the emission standards required to enter Glasgow's LEZ will apply to all vehicles.

However, in light of the coronavirus pandemic, the decision has been taken by the Low Emission Zone Leadership Group – which includes transport secretary Michael Matheson – to delay introduction in the remaining cities: <https://www.transport.gov.scot/news/scotland-s-low-emission-zones-paused/>

The group hopes in doing so, they will have an opportunity to 'consider the kind of transport systems we want to see return to our cities after Covid-19'.

The Scottish Government says it is fully committed to tackling air pollution in the quickest time possible.

Michael Matheson said: "The unprecedented impact of the Covid-19 outbreak has resulted in necessary changes to priorities across government and across our local authority partners.

"Similar to other initiatives, we have come to the view that introducing low emission zones across our four biggest cities by the end of 2020 is no longer practicable.

"We remain dedicated to introducing Low Emission Zones across Scotland's four biggest cities to improve air quality and protect public health. Local authorities share this ambition and Scotland's first LEZ in Glasgow has been in place since 2018.

"LEZ planning within local authorities will continue, the development of regulations is ongoing and funding to support businesses and individuals prepare for LEZs remains unchanged."

PTWs 'perfect alternative' during coronavirus pandemic



The Government has been criticised for failing to include motorcycles in its response to the coronavirus pandemic.

On 9 May, transport secretary Grant Shapps outlined the key role active travel will play in the UK's transition out of lockdown restrictions – while stressing the importance of avoiding public transport where possible: <https://roadsafetygb.org.uk/news/active-travel-to-help-the-uk-emerge-from-coronavirus-crisis/>

He also expressed fears an increase in the number of people driving could lead to towns and cities becoming 'gridlocked' and announced trials of e-scooters would be fast-tracked to combat the issue: <https://roadsafetygb.org.uk/news/government-fast-tracks-trials-of-electric-scooters/>

However, there was no mention of motorcycles, an omission which has angered one of the leading voices in the motorcycle industry.

The Motorcycle Industry Association (MCIA) says powered two-wheelers (PTWs) are the 'perfect alternative' for those who would usually use public transport – but for whom walking and cycling are not viable options.

The MCIA is calling on riders and those representing the industry to write to their local MPs in order to get PTWs officially endorsed by the Government:
<https://mcia.co.uk/en/bulletins/131-template-e-mail-to-your-local-mp>

The MCIA says: "PTWs, in the form of low and zero emission scooters and light motorcycles, are a clean and efficient transport mode that require little road space for travel or parking and which can meet the needs of a variety of commuters, while at the same time fulfilling their social distancing and environmental obligations.

"In the current climate they are the perfect alternative for those who would usually use public transport, but for whom walking and cycling are not viable options.

"Access to small PTWs is straightforward, with most requiring just the completion of a one-day training course, called CBT.

"With so much going for them, it could be assumed that they would be heavily promoted by Government, as the country works towards easing lockdown, but unfortunately that is not the case.

"When promoting alternatives for public transport, [Mr Shapps] extolled the road congesting private car and fast-tracked the consultation on un-regulated e-scooters, but ignored PTWs, even though they are already the choice of more than a million road users, legal and regulated."

WEBSITES WHICH MAY BE OF INTEREST:-

PACTS: Another step towards UK roadside evidential breathalysers – £105,000 awarded to winners of MEBTI competition

<http://www.pacts.org.uk/news-publications/press-releases/>

RSGB: PACTS to investigate safety benefits of 20mph in urban areas

<https://roadsafetygb.org.uk/news/research-to-investigate-safety-benefits-of-20mph-in-urban-areas/>

ACEM: ANCMA and EICMA launch campaign to encourage two-wheeler use to cope with deconfinement mobility challenges

<https://www.acem.eu/ancma-and-eicma-launch-campaign-to-encourage-the-use-of-two-wheelers-to-cope-with-deconfinement-mobility-challenges>

ABD Press Release: Shapps Announces £2 Billion War On Drivers.

<https://www.abd.org.uk/press-release-shapps-announces-2-billion-war-on-drivers/>

ETSC: German Road Safety Council launches campaign for a motorway speed limit

<https://etsc.eu/german-road-safety-council-launches-campaign-for-a-motorway-speed-limit/>

FEMA: Europe makes it easier to get an A2 motorcycle licence

<https://www.femamotorcycling.eu/a2-motorcycle-licence/>

FEMA: Swedish court: motorcyclists have a right to access accident data

<https://www.femamotorcycling.eu/swedish-accident-data/>

EU: New tyre labels to include information on energy consumption and grip

<https://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/press-room/20200512IPR78920/new-tyre-labels-to-include-information-on-energy-consumption-and-grip>

RAC: Cars imported from Europe will be taxed 10% from next year on post-Brexit tariff

<https://www.rac.co.uk/drive/news/motoring-news/cars-imported-from-europe-be-taxed-10-from-next-year-post-brexit-tariff/>

ROADPOL: Polish facts and recommendations - SUNNY WEATHER - MORE MOTORCYCLES AND BIKERS. WE HAVE TO REMEMBER ABOUT ROAD SAFETY

<https://www.roadpol.eu/index.php/news>

ETSC: UK permits e-scooter rental trials from next month

<https://etsc.eu/uk-permits-e-scooter-rental-trials-from-next-month/>

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