



A networking tool for Activists and other interested parties

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[Acknowledgments: George Legg, Selina Lavendar, Colin Brown, Lembit Opik, Julie Sperling, FEMA, Steve Wykes, plus anyone else I’ve forgotten]

EDITORIAL

If you're lucky enough to still be riding your bike as opposed to paddling a canoe then you must live in an area not prone to flooding which I hope is most of you because, at the time of writing this, its pretty dreadful out there in many places.

You no doubt remember my rant on (Not So) Smart motorways so the Government have made one step in the right direction in that they've put a hold on introducing more until they've come to their senses (my words not theirs!). Not before time as I've just read of an accident on the M25 which happened in 2017 (I think) where a car broke down, the driver and passengers managed to get out and behind the barrier. A lorry hit the car, catapulted it over the barrier killing the driver's sister and mother.

My question is: why, if this horrendous accident, followed by many others, happened did it take a panorama programme highlighted the dangers to the wider public before Highways Agency did something about it? And, would they have acknowledged they got it wrong had the programme not been aired?

The next step, in my humble opinion, would be to suspend the existing smart motorways and reinstate the hard shoulder.

I'm also sending you a separate appendix to this edition in the form of the response to the Scottish ULEZ Consultation which will give you some idea as to how to respond to ones similar in your area.

From an article just received from FEMA it appears the UN have decided to review regulations for helmets! I would have thought there were far more pressing issues worldwide but, hey, who am I to question?

Ride free, AG.

Campaigns Team Report – Lembit and Colin

During a winter of storms over Britain, storms have also been brewing in British politics. MAG's Political Unit Colin Brown and Lembit Öpik report on the apparent race between parties to ban the internal combustion engine while the nation awaits news on whether fuel taxes will rise for the first time in a decade. Here's the latest in biking politics, UK style.

Who's going to ban us first?

Following the post General Election lull, the politicians appear to have started another ludicrous, symbolism-filled contest – this time bringing forward the date banning the sale of internal combustion engines. In a surprise move, Prime Minister Boris Johnson has stated his ambition to ban internal combustion engine sales by 2035, for the sake of health and the environment (the specific reasons are slightly unclear). Other politicians, eager to jump on the same bandwagon, have committed to do the same as early as 2030.

Now, so far motorcycles haven't been specifically named in the policy statements. But Lembit has spoken to sources close to the industry and the message is clear: not being

mentioned is NOT the same as not being included in any ban. There are different views on what will happen here. Lembit feels strongly that motorbikes would inevitably be threatened if petrol cars are axed. Others take a less pessimistic view.

What's for sure is that these threats affect the industry now, because there's little point in investing long term if there's only a medium term market for what you're developing.

MAG is planning a strategic response to all of this. There'll be more in next month's Network. Be aware, this is a clear and present danger to your right to ride a petrol motorbike. If nothing else, consider the fact that even if motorcycles survive and other petrol machines don't, the cost of petrol – and its availability – would alter the economics of biking substantially.

The other scenario is that the whole agenda is abandoned when the world doesn't end in 2030, as some environmental catastrophists predict. By then it will be too late if we haven't taken a stand. Petrol motorbikes might simply not be on sale in large numbers in the UK by then.

There will be consultations and it's clear to everyone that there is a lot of work to be done if the nation is to be moved away from its love of petrol and diesel vehicles. We need to start preparation now to know where our Politicians stand on this emotive issue.

Please write to your MP and ask if they support or oppose the sale of petrol motorcycles by a given date. Let us know what you find out. We'll have to take this to individual MPs, and take the battle to them. Common sense simply isn't winning the day – it needs a little help from MAG.

Fuel Duty hike?

After assurances during the General Election that there would not be an increase in fuel duty, rumours abound that this commitment may be broken. That would obviously affect all road users, including bikers. We've been working with insiders to see if we can find out any more on this story, however we're all likely to find out in the Budget on the 11th of March.

Postponement to Motor Cycle Industry Association MCIA summit with MAG's National Committee

We said we'd report on the presentation of MCIA supremo Tony Campbell, who was scheduled to speak with MAG's National Committee (NC) in February. That didn't happen, due to unforeseen circumstances Tony cancelled and we understand his reasons for doing so. We know the MCIA are making the case for Private Light Vehicles – which tend to mean those funny little runabouts with three and four wheels that you sometimes see. We eagerly await to see what he includes in his presentation to the NC which has been re-scheduled for April.

Ride To Work Day 2020 – 15th June

The pace is picking up for Ride To Work Day planning, with third party support being pledged to help promote the campaign. We will be centring efforts in Northamptonshire, but we need your help to ensure this is a truly national campaign. If you can get your local

council, police force or local businesses to pledge support for the campaign, please let us know at Central. We will be putting together media packs to help supporters promote the ride to work day messaging, so let us know relevant contact details and we will send these packs out.

It's very important we sell the benefits of biking right now, given the threats we face all the time.

Filter Friendly Campaign Launch

We will be holding a launch event for our Filter Friendly safety campaign in Northamptonshire on Wednesday 13th May. Exact details of the event are yet to be finalised, but if you are relatively local and available for that day, please put a note in your diary. This will be a press launch for a national safety campaign aimed at car drivers and closely allied to the messaging around Ride To Work Day. We will be looking for bikers and bikes for TV radio and newspaper coverage.

Mayoral election – London

Lembit and Colin visited London City Hall, where we engaged with various parties in the run up to the London Mayoral Elections. Three candidates took the time to provide text for The Road about their plans – they represent Conservative, Green and Lib Dem. Unfortunately, the main Independent candidate and the existing Labour Mayor didn't reply to our requests at all, thus offering no text about their plans for biking in the Capital. You'll find the statements we did receive printed in the current edition of The Road.

London isn't the only place holding Mayoral Elections on the 7th of May; Greater Manchester, Liverpool City Region, Tees Valley, West Midlands, Bristol, Liverpool and Salford all see their Mayors up for election too.

New engines increase CO2 output!

An interesting article in Which? magazine confirms what MAG's Political Unit has been saying for years: new (car) engines create more CO2 than older ones, even if the new engines produce LESS power. MAG has known this would happen, and we even explained why it happens. This is to do with running engines richer to reduce other emissions. So, the authorities have achieved exactly what we warned they'd achieve: a reduction in nitrogen oxides at the cost of an increase in Carbon Dioxide. In physics, there's no such thing as a free lunch. The sad thing is that, so far, nobody has proved which is a higher priority. It's the politics of guesswork. And while they're guessing, our fuel consumption goes up. Nice work, guys.

Potholes

We are looking for members with personal experience of damage or injuries as a result of potholes. In March we will be doing some media work on this perennial problem. If you have suffered as the result of a pothole issue in your area, please get in touch with Central.

Smart motorways feel the heat

The Highways England Motorcycle Working Group meeting is coming up on 25th March. We have asked for Smart Motorways to be on the agenda. Please do get in touch with us at Central if you have experience of issues on a stretch of Smart Motorway, whether as a result of breaking down yourself or as a result of another vehicle breaking down.

Please make your views known to your MP – the more people point out it's NOT smart to be told to sit on your machine in the outside lane when you break down, hoping for recovery before you get smashed to pieces by another vehicle, the better.

Central contact details email: central-office@mag-uk.org or call 01926 844 064 if you can mention that you are contacting us further to reading Network that would be most helpful.



MAG needs you!

There are volunteer vacancies in MAG at branch, Regional and National levels.

Many branches are in need of more active members to spread the load and reach a wider audience. Pop along to your closest meeting to see what's needed and offer your support, you'll find a list of meetings in The ROAD. If you don't have a recent copy of The ROAD or are not currently a member then Central Office will be happy to point you to your closest meeting Tel: 01926 844 064 Branch meetings are open to members and non-members.

If you live in an area that does not have a regular meeting or a Regional Rep and you have the drive to represent MAG either where you live or on a national level the National Committee would like to hear from you. The main purpose of any officer is to promote MAG, a full description of Regional and Branch Rep roles can be found in MAG's Reps Handbook. To request your copy email central-office@mag-uk.org, subject line 'Rep's Handbook'.

On a National level we have vacancies for; National Clubs Officer, National Reps Liaison Officer and National Finance Officer. If you are interested please email chair@mag-uk.org

In order to be an officer, you will need to have held full membership (individual or joint) for a minimum of 12 months.

We are always looking to add new regular MAG meetings. If you are prepared to run a meeting in the first instance you should approach your Regional Rep (RR), where there is not an active RR then please contact Central Office on the email address above.

Government brings forward ban on petrol and diesel car sales



Road Safety GB: Image: RAC

The Government has ‘many hurdles to cross’ before it can implement a ban on the sale of new petrol, diesel and hybrid cars, according to the RAC.

In July 2017, the Government pledged to end the sale of conventional new diesel and petrol cars and vans by 2040: <https://roadsafetygb.org.uk/news/government-unveils-plans-to-tackle-vehicle-pollution-5902/>

However, today announced plans to bring forward the ban to 2035 – while also extending the legislation to cover hybrid vehicles.

The move comes after climate experts said 2040 would be too late if the UK wants to achieve its target of emitting virtually zero carbon by 2050.

It has been welcomed by road safety stakeholders, including the RAC and Brake – with the latter describing it as a ‘step in the right direction’ to creating safe and healthy streets.

Joshua Harris, director of campaigns for Brake, said: “People should be free to move in a safe and healthy way on every journey and this includes ensuring the air they breathe isn’t polluted.

“Banning petrol and diesel cars will go a long way to tackling poor air quality but we also need to encourage more people to leave their car at home and walk, cycle or use other means of active travel to get around.”

The RAC says a more ambitious target ‘should be the catalyst for faster change’, but adds there are ‘clearly many hurdles to cross’: <https://media.rac.co.uk/news/petrol-and-diesel-car-sales-ban-brought-forward-to-2035-rac-statement-393396>

Nicholas Lyes, RAC head of policy, said: “We are not surprised by the Government’s plans to bring forward the date to ban the sale of petrol and diesel vehicles to 2035 as there is indisputable need to tackle climate change.

“A more ambitious target should be the catalyst for faster change, but there are clearly many hurdles to cross.

“Manufacturers face a great challenge in switching their production from conventional powertrains to cleaner electric technology.

“More electric vehicles will also require a great deal of investment in charging infrastructure – particularly for those who rely on on-street parking outside their homes.”

Motorcycles registrations in the European Union increased by 8% in 2019

ACEM: 11 Feb 2020



A total of 1,079,524 motorcycles were registered in 2019 in the EU according to the final figures published today by the European Association of Motorcycle Manufacturers (ACEM). This represents an increase of 8% compared to 2018 numbers. The largest motorcycle markets in Europe in 2019 were: Italy (231,712 units), France (197,470 units) and Spain (177,037 motorcycles). Motorcycle figures include both two- and three-wheeled vehicles with an engine capacity above 50cc as well as electric motorcycles.

Moped registrations in the EU also grew by 11%

The European moped market rose from 272,338 units in 2018 to 303,152 in 2019. This represents an increase of 11.3%. The largest markets for mopeds in Europe were: France (91,043), Netherlands (62,340), Belgium (27,073), Germany (25,247) and Italy (21,133).

Registrations of electric motorcycles and mopeds increased in 2019 in the EU

In addition, the European electric motorcycle market grew from 6,901 units in 2018 to 14,111 units in 2019 (+104.48%). However, it remains at niche levels. Only 1.3% of all motorcycles registered in Europe in 2019 were electric. Registrations of electric mopeds in the EU increased substantially from 39,940 units in 2018 to 59,776 units in 2019 (+49.7%). The electric quadricycle market dropped from 3,184 units to 2,816 (-11.6%).

Quote

Commenting on the latest market trends ACEM Secretary General Antonio Perlot said:

“The increase in the market experienced in 2019 exceeds all expectations. Ten years after the crisis, which had also seriously impacted the motorcycle sector, it is confirmation of the return to a general, positive attitude towards consumption.

It also shows that the interest in motorcycles and mopeds is growing, both for commuting and leisure. This is partly a reflection of the move to the EURO 4 environmental standard which, by now, has been fully completed. With the recent application of the EURO 5 and the related launch on the market of new motorcycle models, this positive trend should be expected to continue in 2020.

The growth in the moped segment also confirms a renewed interest in light urban mobility solutions, particularly as regards the niche electric vehicle sector. Overall, due to the replacement of older vehicles in the fleet, this will improve the contribution of motorcycles and mopeds to cleaner, more efficient mobility.”

Documents available to download

ACEM - Statistical press release - January - December 2019 - EN [pdf]

https://www.acem.eu/images/publiq/ACEM_statistical_release_-_Jan-Dec_019.pdf

ACEM - Statistical press release - January - December 2019 - FR [pdf]

https://www.acem.eu/images/publiq/ACEM_statistical_release_-_Jan-Dec_019_FR.pdf

ACEM - Statistical press release - January - December 2019 - ES [pdf]

https://www.acem.eu/images/publiq/ACEM_statistical_release_-_Jan-Dec_019_ES.pdf

ACEM - Statistical press release - January - December 2019 - IT [pdf]

https://www.acem.eu/images/publiq/ACEM_statistical_release_-_Jan-Dec_019_IT.pdf

FEMA

German motorcyclists fight for open roads

FEMA: February 13, 2020



German motorcyclists' organizations have spent a lot of their time and efforts on road closures for motorcycles.

And let's face it: these road closures do not only affect German riders, they also affect riders from other countries that love to ride through the beautiful German countryside during their holidays.

Road closures for motorcyclists in Germany still seem to be the only solution the authorities are able to come up with, when it comes to dealing with incidents involving motorcyclists and reports of noise pollution. For German motorcyclists' organization (and FEMA member) [BVDM](#) this leads to the question 'Does the misconduct of individuals justify that all motorcyclists are deprived of riding pleasure?'. Their answer is a strong 'no' and BVDM therefore fights against road closures for motorcyclists.

GEMEINSAM FÜR FREIE WEGE



Legally the blocking of a road for motorcyclists is only permitted if other, minor measures (such as targeted traffic monitoring) have been unsuccessful. BVDM's opinion is very clear: the possible misconduct of a few should in no case be sufficient to prevent others from exercising their fundamental rights.

In order to prevent the complete closure of routes, which should always be the last measure, BVDM participates in meetings and advises authorities. BVDM also talks to local residents and motorcyclists along popular motorcycle routes, which leads to a better understanding and can even lead to more realistic solutions than road closures.

To see the roads affected go to: <http://www.fema-online.eu/website/index.php/2020/02/13/german-road-closures/>

Top photograph courtesy of inFranken. This article is subject to [FEMA's copyright](#)

New helmet rules from the United Nations

FEMA news: February 27, 2020



Your motorcycle helmet has to be produced and tested according to rules from the United Nations. After almost twenty years these rules will be updated. FEMA's WimTaal explains the most notable changes.

The UN ECE (United Nations Economic Commission for Europe) regulation #22 applies to motorcycle helmets licensed to be sold as road-legal on European roads. The regulation establishes the 'uniform provisions concerning the approval of protective helmets and their visors for drivers and passengers of motorcycles and mopeds'. The current fifth revision of the regulation (ECE 22.05) will soon be replaced by ECE 22.06.

Added to scope of the regulation will be:

Modular helmets – Helmets equipped with a movable or detachable protective lower face cover, will be tested with or without chin guard in position.

Sun shields – Sun shields cannot restrain or prevent the movement of the visor. On opening the visor, the sun shield can pivot in the working position. By means of a simple movement the sun shield must be able to be moved separately from the visor. Helmets placed on the market with a sun shield shall be tested with the sun shield in working position.

Reflective stickers – In order to comply with national requirements, the helmet may be required to have reflective materials. These materials can be delivered with the helmet, with proper instructions on where and how to apply them on the helmet.

Accessories – Helmets placed on the market with accessories shall be examined to make sure the equipment has no adverse effect and that the helmet and/or visor still comply with the requirements. Testing will be done with and without the accessory and its support with particular attention to energy absorption, sharp edges and field of vision. You are not allowed to modify the helmet from its original specification as manufactured. Accessories must be fitted in accordance with the helmet manufacturer's instructions. Only accessories tested during the type approval procedure of the helmet keep the type approval valid.

High speed particle test for visors – To make sure visors don't shatter when hit by something hard during your ride, they shall be tested with a steel ball at 60 m/s. The visor should not fracture or deform, and the visor housing should not separate into two or more pieces, or no longer be capable of holding the visor in position.

Brain injury by rotation – An impact test method of measuring rotational acceleration will be introduced, to test the impact on the brain when the helmet is twisted during an accident. To test this, the helmet will be allowed to fall, under specified angles and with a specified speed on to a rigidly mounted anvil.

So when will this new regulation start to affect us riders? The proposal for regulation 22.06 and all the amendments will be voted on in June 2020, so before then officially nothing will change and regulation 22.05 will still be in place. Only three years after the official date of entry into force of regulation 22.06, will it become illegal to sell helmets and visors that do not comply with regulation 22.06.

The proposal and amendments of UN Regulation No.22 can be found at:

<https://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/trans/doc/2019/wp29grsp/ECE-TRANS-WP.29-GRSP-2019-25e.pdf>

This document also includes all the test methods.

Regulation ECE 22 requires every motorcycle helmet to bear a sticker sewn into or onto the retention system (aka: 'the chinstrap'). This sticker shows the homologation mark, the homologation number, and the production serial number. For most important features go to: <http://www.fema-online.eu/website/index.php/consumer-information/ece-22-05-helmet-stickers/>

Written by [WimTaal](#). Top photograph courtesy of [Cardo Systems](#). This article is subject to [FEMA's copyright](#).

The motorcycle is here to stay



FEMA: February 20, 2020.

It is easy for 'outsiders' to be negative about motorcycling, but we at FEMA have a different view. FEMA's Dolf Willigers about the continuing success story of motorcycling.

Motorcycles play an important role in our society. Many people use motorcycles for commuting and leisure, professionals use them to do their work. The motorcycles developed from bicycles with an engine to highly sophisticated machines that provide safe, quick and clean transport. Yet they are ignored by policy makers, road authorities, mobility clubs and NGOs (non-governmental organizations) that deal with mobility. We think that motorcycles should and will play an important role in transport in future.



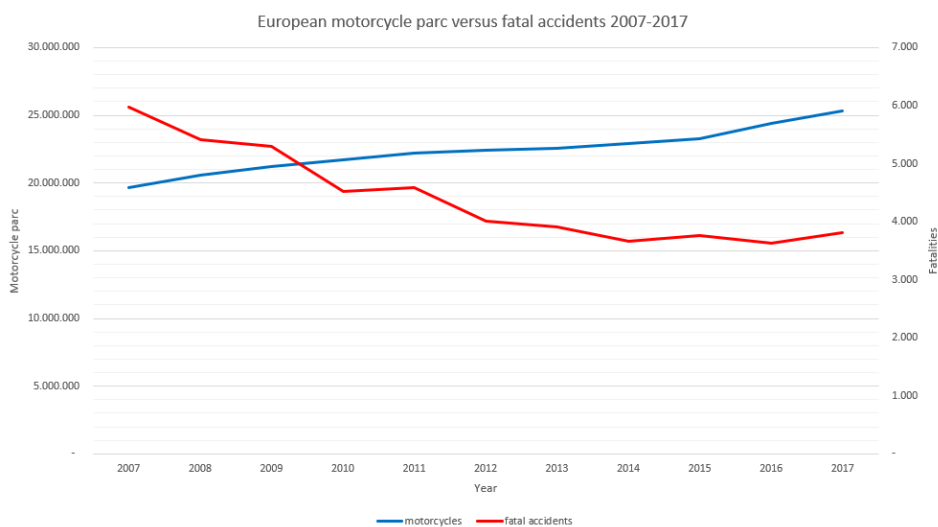
Motorcycles have always been important for mobility. From the end of the 19th century until today they were used by (para-)medics to visit their patients. In fact, in many European cities the motorcycle made a come-back in the end of the 20th century as ambulances and are still used that way; In Ireland and the United Kingdom they are also used for medical dispatches. In the United States, the first motorcycles were already used by the police in the early years of the 20th century. The military started to use them on large scale during the first world war. It can't be a coincidence that many early motorcycle manufacturers were also gun manufacturers. Soon motorcycles were also used by the happy few for leisure and racing. Mobility clubs started to use them for roadside assistance. After the second world war motorcycles were used by many workers as a relatively cheap vehicle for daily commuting and leisure. And this situation still exists.

Despite a heavy lobby from environmental and safety organizations for a future with only automatic driving cars, public transport, cycling and walking, motorcycling is still on the rise. The motorcycle industry in Europe reports a growing number of sales year after year. In 2019 the increase in sales was 8%. This, contrary to the car industry, where we see a decline in sales. Not only the number of new motorcycles rises; more and more people get a motorcycle licence. We also see more and more women choose a motorcycle.



Motorcycling is often ignored by policy makers, road authorities and practically all organizations that deal with mobility. We are buried under loads of publications that tell us to switch to public transport, cycling and walking. But we have a different view. Road users in Europe recognize the advantages and joy of riding a motorcycle, they get their licence and buy a motorcycle. And, with good reason. There is no quicker way to move to and in the cities than a motorcycle. FEMA members have proven this in 2014, 2017 and 2019 with the mobility tests. From time to time newspapers and magazines perform such tests too and come to the same conclusion.

One of the arguments used against motorcycling is the risk of having an accident and getting seriously injured or worse. We cannot deny that this risk exists. After all, motorcyclists do not have a protective cage around them like car drivers do. However, notwithstanding a growing number of motorcycles and riders, the fatal accident curves are lowering. Look at the graph, comparing the growing European motorcycle parc to the declining number of fatalities, and draw your own conclusions.



Development of fatal accidents in Europe

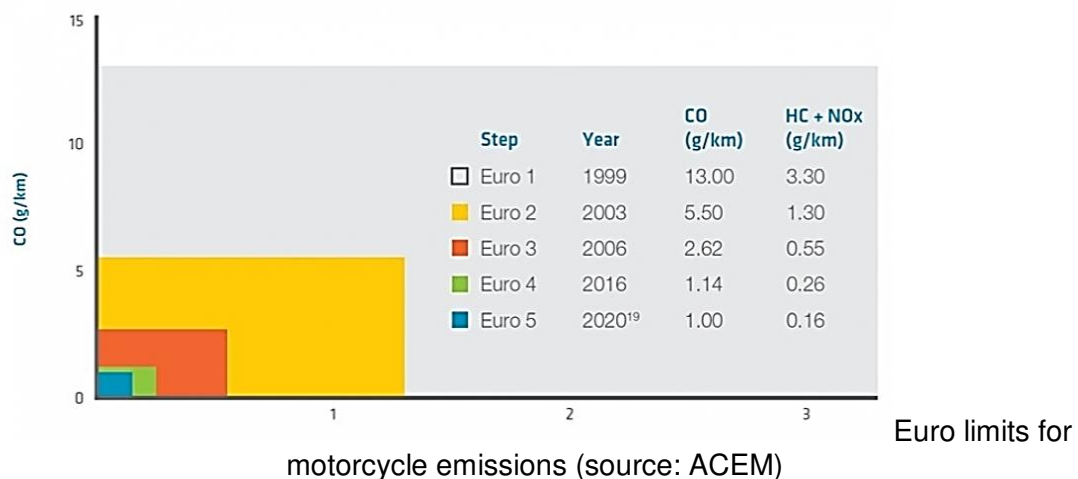
The number of accidents have declined thanks to safer motorcycles (almost every new motorcycle in Europe – except for the smallest category scooters – has ABS). Much is invested in better training, both pre- and post-licence, and more awareness by both the riders themselves and other road users. We're not there yet, there is still room for improvement. We as a motorcyclists' rights organization, but also the industry and other stakeholders have worked hard to make motorcycling safer and we are still working on safer infrastructure, safer motorcycles and better education and training.

'It is easy to understand why so many people switch to motorcycling'



As for infrastructure, FEMA and its members work on a European, national and local level to enhance the infrastructure, by having roadside barriers fitted with motorcycle protection systems, remove dangerous obstacles, redesign crossroads, have roads better maintained. We work on better initial rider training and road safety awareness by motorcyclists and other road users. Some FEMA members even give traffic education to young people in schools. We also participate in European committees that deal with the development of automated driving cars to make sure that they are also safe for motorcycles. To make certain that motorcycles on the road stay safe, we disseminate the motorcycle recalls from the European Commission and we give fair information to riders about new developments.

Not only the safety of motorcycles and motorcycling has improved. We also see that motorcycles have become much cleaner. Emission limits have dropped spectacularly in the last twenty years. With the implementation of the Euro 5 standards this year, motorcycle emission limits are comparable with those of petrol cars and in some respects lower than that of Diesel cars. The graph shows how emissions have declined in the past 20 years from Euro 1 to Euro 5.



With the fast development and availability of electric motorcycles we are also heading to a situation where motorcycles and other powered two-wheelers are even more clean and silent. In some cities it is already possible to rent a moped-scooter for use inside the city boundaries. This has proven to be not only a fast way of travelling, but also cheaper than most other ways of travelling.

Combine all this with the agility of motorcycles, the possibility to keep moving where cars, trucks and buses are stuck in traffic jams, the little space needed to park, the low energy use because of the lesser weight and the lesser wear on roads, again because of the lesser weight, and it is easy to understand why motorcycling is the best option for travelling in urban and rural areas. It also makes it easy to understand why so many people switch to motorcycling.

Written by DolfWilligers

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Check yourself before you wreck yourself – Birmingham's clean air zone delayed by website errors

RAC: 13th Feb 2020

A faulty government online vehicle checker has delayed the launch of Birmingham's Clean Air Zone (CAZ).

The city council announced it will not begin enforcing the low emission zone until the new vehicle checker tool, launched last week, is working correctly for six months:

<https://www.rac.co.uk/drive/news/motoring-news/will-you-be-charged-in-a-uk-clean-air-zone-online-vehicle-checker-launched/>

The CAZ was set to charge older, high-polluting vehicles in the city centre from July 1.

But as it stands, the website incorrectly tells owners of early Euro 6 diesel vehicles that they will have to pay the £8 daily fee.

The RAC led the calls for a vehicle checker for over two years. Spokesman Rod Dennis said: "This is a confusing time for drivers, so having certainty about whether they face charges or not is paramount. Anything short of a single, definitive online vehicle checker isn't really acceptable."

He added: "It's somewhat unfortunate that the only thing holding Britain's second biggest city back from reducing vehicle emissions is a website."

A Birmingham City Council spokesman said: "The Government has recognised the teething problems with its clean air zone vehicle checker and is working to iron out any issues as quickly as possible."

"Once those issues are resolved, there needs to be a period for motorists to check and prepare – and it has been suggested that this be a six-month period in fairness to all concerned. This remains in line with the previously-stated CAZ launch estimate of summer 2020."

"The key message is that if you are driving a Euro 4 petrol vehicle or Euro 6 diesel your vehicle will be compliant with Birmingham's CAZ."

Leeds' low emission zone was due to go live in March, but has also been postponed until at least July, due to an infrastructure delay.

Bath and Sheffield will introduce their own CAZ schemes within the next two years.

Vehicle emissions have covered numerous column inches of late, with the government being accused of moving the goalposts for petrol and diesel car sale bans once more.

Transport Secretary Grant Shapps revealed that a ban on the sale of new vehicles powered by internal

The news came shortly after Boris Johnson announced plans to bring the ban forward by five years from 2040 to 2035: <https://www.rac.co.uk/drive/news/motoring-news/new-petrol-and-diesel-vehicles-will-be-banned-from-2035/>

Mr Shapps explained that the Government is investing around £1.5 billion for the shift away from petrol and diesel.

He said there are “now more public charging locations than petrol stations in this country” and “electric cars are coming and we want to help the country transition”.

A Department for Transport spokesperson said: “We are consulting on a range of possible dates to bring forward the end to the sale of petrol and diesel cars and vans.

“The consultation proposal for this is 2035 or earlier if a faster transition appears feasible, as well as including hybrids for the first time.”

Find out everything you need to know about the Birmingham Clean Air Zone: <https://www.rac.co.uk/drive/advice/emissions/the-birmingham-clean-air-zone-what-you-need-to-know/>

Sadly, an extremely good magazine – gone. Thank you 100% Biker for some excellent reads.

“It is with great sadness that I have to confirm that Jazz Publishing has decided to close 100% Biker with immediate effect, meaning the current issue, #256, is the last.

There are so many people I have to thank for transforming 100% Biker into a magazine which combined the very best in both amateur and professional builds, as well as providing the most comprehensive coverage of shows, rallies and events to be found anywhere, so please bear with me.

Thank you to my merry band of talented freelancers (which included some of the world’s most renowned custom motorcycle photographers) for providing a constant supply of top quality motorcycle, events and engineering features. With you there would have been no magazine. With you it was an excellent magazine.

Thank you to everyone who allowed us to feature their bikes, to everyone who invited us and welcomed us to their events and to our advertisers.

Thank you to Grav who not only admin’d (and hopefully will continue to do so) the 100% Biker Facebook group but who also contributed to the magazine, not least with his ever-entertaining and informative monthly Tailpiece column. I learned something new each month; I hope you did, too.

But, most importantly of all, thank you to everyone who bought, read and loved 100% Biker. Thank you so much.

To finish I can do no better than to quote the final lines of John Keats' very last letter: 'I can scarcely bid you good bye, even in a letter. I always made an awkward bow.' Blue."

This is a piece by El Presidente that he has been asked for numerous times and which may help you with recruitment:-

So what of 2020?

This is to be the year of breakthrough for MAG. Just as the darkest hour is followed by the dawn, so will a new age of positive thinking blossom. MAG has tens of thousands of affiliate members in addition to its core full paying individual members. I've given talks to some of these clubs over the years and when doing so am often asked – “so what do we get for our money.”

In the case of the biggest club this amounts to 3.75 pence per member per year. So, when I get asked that question, I take a deep breath and, steering well clear of my lamentable weakness for indulging sarcasm, patiently explain that MAG is essentially a political lobbying group for riders. We are your voice in Westminster, your hope that your interests as a biker will be represented at the highest level. We are your tugboat steering the super tanker of legislation with subtle exertions, to achieve as cheerful an outcome as possible for the future of motorcycling. To this end MAG employs two professional lobbyists. Both are articulate, intelligent, well informed and dedicated operators. During those exceptional times when they take my advice, they represent a force of irresistible intellectual potency. By way of simple concrete illustration, I sometimes refer to the victory over the EU 100bhp limit, the credibility of which we successfully debunked.

I explain all this and many other examples of ways in which we have helped influence policy architects in the transport sector. Having done so I cast my eyes around my audience of sceptics whereupon without fail a hand rises and a voice asks; “yes but what do we get for our money?”

This is when I must exert maximum self-control and resist the temptation to ask; “so you want to know what you get for your 3.75p per annum? Well I'm sorry to tell you there are no wafers, let alone a chocolate flake.”

At such times I think of the hundreds of MAG volunteers who spend countless hours shivering at entrances to rally sites, taking gate money, directing people, erecting fences, hanging on to marquee poles in gales, dealing with the myriad of questions, complaints and insane expectations of wafer hunters. These volunteers have often given up holiday time to work for nothing – and you ask with challenging petulance; what you get for your 3.75p a year?

So why, you may ask, are we looking at a new dawn? Well these doubting Thomases and impecunious value seekers are going to come to their senses and say as one; “verily verily

£27 a year for full individual membership is in truth a very small price to pay for a service of such sophistication and relevance to my interests.”

They will then go online to www.mag-uk.org and cough up just a tad more than the cost of a tank full of petrol that will equate to the approximate 50p a week that such a commitment will represent.

This will happen not just because I have written this or because the movement of the planets dictate it, but because all of you who are in clubs will go along to your next meeting and say. “Guys guys come on, time to get with the programme, you all need to become members. Never mind that old, ‘I think I’m a member via the Artichoke Riders Association,’ stuff. Come along now MAG needs another 50,000 members. When do we need them? Altogether . . .

Ian ‘Lord Kitchener’ Mutch

UK government puts new “smart” motorways on hold

The UK government has stopped the roll-out of motorways modified so that the emergency lane or hard shoulder is used as a running lane. The review of the policy was announced after figures revealed in a [BBC News documentary](#) showed a significant number of deaths had occurred following incidents of cars stopped in the middle of the road.

The original safety case in the UK for so-called “smart” motorways was based on a trial that included emergency refuges for vehicles in trouble every 500m and a lower speed of 40 mph (64 km/h). But modified motorways delivered since ended up with refuges every 1.6km and could run at the usual UK motorway speed limit of 70 mph (113 km/h). A promised stopped-vehicle detection system was also not put in place across the network.

ETSC’s UK member PACTS has [written](#) to the government calling for more frequent spacing of emergency refuges, rapid introduction of stopped-vehicle detection as well as better enforcement and education for drivers.

The Netherlands has developed a similar system of [active traffic management](#) on motorways covering roughly 100km of short sections of road across the country. But refuge areas are placed every 500-1000m and there are cameras covering the entire system to enable rapid response for stopped vehicles. The system can only be activated during congested periods, and cannot be used if there is reduced visibility due to adverse weather conditions.

7th May 2020 Elections

The 7th of May 2020 will be a busy electoral day as elections will be held for:

- 118 English local councils;
- 8 directly elected mayors in England;
- 40 Police and Crime Commissioners (PCC) across England and Wales;

- plus, there is an election to the London Assembly in conjunction with the London Mayoral election.

It is likely that one or more of these elections will affect you directly, whether in terms of the area in which you live or where you work. If you live in the area you should receive a polling (voting) card, provided you are over 18 years of age and registered to vote at your current address.

Every election represents an opportunity for you to engage with candidates that have the potential to influence your life. Get in touch with them and ask questions about their views on the things that affect you, and about what they plan to do should they be elected. Ask them if MAG can publicly share their responses. Ask them if they will meet with MAG should they be elected.

If you want any assistance or would like to share any of their responses with us, please contact central-office@mag-uk.org

Your vote matters!

Up for election: 40 of 41 PCCs, 108 of 343 local councils and 8 of 24 directly elected Mayors.

Note: at the time of putting together this article, not all candidates had declared their interest; we are therefore unable to provide a complete list.

Some websites you may want to visit:-

Press release: DVLA warns motorists to be aware of scams

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/dvla-warns-motorists-to-be-aware-of-scams>

Guidance: Information on driving licences (INS57P) (Last updated 26 February 2020)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/ins57p-information-on-driving-licences>

ETSC: Lower motorway speed limits coming in Luxembourg and The Netherlands

<https://etsc.eu/lower-motorway-speed-limits-coming-in-luxembourg-and-the-netherlands/>

ETSC: 336 lives saved on French roads thanks to 80 km/h limits

<https://etsc.eu/336-lives-saved-on-french-roads-thanks-to-80-km-h-limits/>

Guidance: Driving in the EU from 1 January 2021

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/driving-in-the-eu-from-1-january-2021>

Open consultation: Consulting on ending the sale of new petrol, diesel and hybrid cars and vans

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

Press release: DVLA hits the road with clear warning to tax it or lose it (Last updated 18 February 2020)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/dvla-hits-the-road-with-clear-warning-to-tax-it-or-lose-it>

RAC: A European safety council wants to ban SUVs from built-up areas to reduce deaths

<https://www.rac.co.uk/drive/news/motoring-news/a-european-safety-council-wants-to-ban-suvs-from-built-up-areas/>

ITV: Bristol's most congested roads revealed as city named among UK's worst for traffic

<https://www.itv.com/news/westcountry/2020-01-29/bristol-s-most-congested-roads-revealed-as-city-named-among-uks-worst-for-traffic/>

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