



**A networking tool for Activists and other interested parties**

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## **EDITORIAL**

One of my pet hates is SMART Motorways which I think are probably the most dangerous thing Highways England (HE) have thought up yet.

A recent survey resulted in 68% of drivers saying 'removal of the hard shoulder compromised safety', however, HE's response to this is:- "While one accident is one too many on any motorway, the stocktake concluded that smart motorways in most ways are as safe as, or safer than, conventional motorways they replace.

"We are taking forward the measures set out in the stocktake and are determined to do all we can to make our roads as safe as possible."

How can they say this is the case when there is no safety margin for road users to take in the case of emergency, not to mention, access of emergency vehicles to get to the passengers/vehicles that require assistance? And, in case you feel the lane will be shut down in an emergency try telling that to those who've been broken down and the lane has remained live.

I believe, also, the AA and RAC have banned their recovery drivers from attending emergencies in live lanes.

In my humble opinion, if this is the best HE can do then their organisation needs a quick re-think, preferably sooner, rather than later.

The argument for the default speed in Wales to be 20mph has been recommended by Road Safety GB – watch this space.

Maybe though, an even bigger space to watch is in Paris. The City are responding to complaints of motorcycle noise with sound cameras and frequent on the spot checks with decibel meters. The way the French react to what they see as an intrusion into their way of life is magnificent to behold - mass demonstrations and whilst Madame la Guillotine, Madame Defarge and her attending Tricoteuse may not be so PC at the moment, French bikers do their demonstrations in real big style. I see one on the horizon which makes me smile.

Ride free, be safe, *AG*

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## **CAMPAIGNS TEAM REPORT – LEMBIT AND COLIN**

*As the Covid-19 lockdown shows signs of reducing, the story is very mixed across the land. One common and clear message is that, as long as we are trying to stop the virus from spreading, we should be promoting the use of motorcycles. MAG's Political Unit – Lembit Öpik and Colin Brown – are working consistently to present this sensible, calm and logical message throughout a period where logic and common-sense have appeared to be absent in London and elsewhere. Here's the latest on campaigning for riders' rights during a continuing period of unusual policy making and questionable calls on road use.*

### **Thanks to all who responded to the Internal Combustion Engine ban consultation**

A big thanks to everyone who replied to MAG's appeal for submissions to the threat to ban the internal combustion engine as a permitted source of power for our private transport by 2035 or earlier. The next phase is a period of consideration by the Department for Transport. After that, they will publish their initial conclusions.

Be assured we are at the start of a long and challenging campaign here. What they propose is technically unachievable. However, they continue to try and achieve it.

This has been a very vague consultation with little clear definition on what exactly is being proposed. We take the view that the most likely outcome will be the one proposed by the Committee on Climate Change – i.e. a ban of all petrol diesel and hybrid cars and vans and motorcycles by 2032.

We will continue to seek opportunities to engage on this issue – the DfT's Transport Decarbonisation Plan consultation is still ongoing and the sales ban is certain to be a strand of that overall Decarbonisation Plan. Therefore we will not be sitting back and simply waiting for bad news.

### **Has anyone stolen a road near you?**

Politicians are listening to the demands of the cycling lobby to hand over vast amounts of road space to assist a 'green recovery.' It is clear that the support for the demands of the cycle lobby is deeply entrenched in government policy. We do not have a fundamental issue with the support for increased use of active travel, but there does seem to be a blinkered fanaticism developing that leads to poor application. Interestingly even Grant Shapps, the man responsible for the Government money and encouragement of these 'temporary' schemes, has had to take a contrary position wearing his constituency MP hat. He has actually opposed a scheme in his constituency. This demonstrates that however admirable the intent, application of these schemes must consider the needs of all. The majority of journeys are not suited to cycling. Unsurprisingly therefore a majority of British citizens have stated they have no intention of cycling more. As such, any attempt to force a shift to cycling

by making other transport options less viable should be resisted. Any scheme that makes motorcycling less viable should be challenged.

Why is this happening? Cycling is being portrayed as some sort of magic solution to all transport, health and environmental challenges. The argument goes that a 'green recovery' needs 'green transport' and cycling is somehow forced into this agenda as if it has some great relevance to this ambition. In reality, it is not a silver bullet that solves all issues. The data suggests that cycling has mainly been used as a recreational activity – even during the Covid-19 pandemic when everyone has been told to avoid public transport.

Misunderstanding of the reasons for the increase in cycling is resulting in the large-scale theft of road space from legitimate road users with powered machines, including motorcycles. This action is taken under 'emergency' powers, meaning they don't bother consulting properly and just stick these new and highly restrictive new lanes for cyclist in place almost overnight. This can in some cases serve to choke up other traffic, increase congestion, and leave tracts of road almost unused, especially when it rains, as cycling fails to achieve expected increases. TfL predict a '10 fold increase' for London. Actual data is showing a very different picture.

Modal shift to motorcycles presents a credible way to reduce congestion, travel long distances and save money. From a Coronavirus perspective, it also offers a clear opportunity to reduce virus spread due to the very nature of biking.

Please write to your local authority – that's your local councillor or the head of the council and your local MP asking them to confirm they agree that those who can ride motorcycles should use them in the interests of cutting the spread of the virus.

Centrally we are communicating with every Local Authority in England via the Local Government Association to push our three demands positions of allowing motorcycles to use all new bus lanes and modal filters, and to make all new cycle parking dual use and accessible to motorcyclists. We are also seeking a similar route to authorities in the devolved administrations.

We still need local activists to raise local concerns directly with their local authorities. The pace and sheer volume of schemes is impossible to address centrally. We will assist local activists where we can and will be keen to hear of successes and best practice examples where they occur so that these can be shared and highlighted in all regions.

Let us know what action you are taking and what results you are getting, by phoning or emailing us at:

01926 844 064, or [email: central-office@mag-uk.org](mailto:central-office@mag-uk.org)

## **Changes to Rights of Way**

There are regular updates to the changes that have been approved to rights of way. Here's the link, and it's worth having a quick look in case something has changed to affect off road riding. If it's a problem, it's worth highlighting locally, and also to MAG HQ and we'll take it further if you'd like us to assist.

Here's the guidance, known as the '2020 Rights of Way order information: Decisions and maps (Last updated 6 July 2020):'

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/2020-rights-of-way-order-information-decisions-and-maps>

We hope you find it useful – especially in more rural areas.

## **A happier Hawes**

Following discussions between MAG and the Leader of the local Council, Cllr Jill McMullon (featured in June 2020 edition of The Road), it seems bikers have become a bit more considerate when visiting the lovely Yorkshire Dales town of Hawes. Thanks, everyone, for your consideration and respect for local people. It's made a big difference.

If you have local problems with stress or differences with the local community, don't just ignore it. Tell MAG and reach out to the local politicians. Together, we have proved we can alter behaviour in modest, sensible ways, and coexist with our hosts - as the Hawes experience has shown. We can do this elsewhere too. It's the secret of success for biking to have friends in local places. Let us know if you know of issues, and we'll find ways of building those bridges.

## **Khan's massive money muck-up affects bikers too**

MAG remains amazed by the lack of concern by London Mayor, Sadiq Khan, for common sense and motorcycling. Despite repeated appeals to reason, Mr Khan continues to allow the charging of older motorcycles the punitive Ultra Low Emissions Zone tax, which makes the use of older machines essentially unaffordable. For a typical old Honda C90 the cost increases by over 1,000% for those depending on their old steed to get to work.

It seems that Khan has managed to rack up a debt of hundreds of millions of Pounds, and is now desperately trying to plug this financial hole.

In this mess, it's hard to separate reality from fiction. Why, for example, does that Honda C90 owner face a £12.50 penalty to riding into town, for a journey that used to cost about a quid and produced almost no pollution? Khan has pretty much admitted he has to find money from somewhere, anywhere. This has perverted the policy-making process, and has caused this cynical opportunism to distort any semblance of common sense policy making.

Kahn also continues to be incapable of explaining why charging Covid-safe motorcycling is in any way consistent with the Government's instruction to travel with private transport wherever possible. We believe this is because there ISN'T any logic to it – it's. The claim that charging old motorbikes is good for health is plainly laughable.

While Government Ministers consistently agree motorcycling is a good form of social distancing, Khan has no answer to these searching issues. Let's remember, it was he who stated that motorcycles 'generate far less pollution, save time and money for the rider - and don't create congestion.'

If you've been affected by the ULEZ tax on your old motorbikes, let us know at

01926 844 064, or [email: central-office@mag-uk.org](mailto:central-office@mag-uk.org) because we are not going to let this matter rest until it is resolved, one way or another.

## **MPs on side**

We're glad to report that a number of Members of Parliament appear willing to become members of MAG. This massively increases our firepower, and we invite you to tell us if your local MP seems bike friendly. Let us know and we'll do the rest – or ask them yourself, and whatever their answer let us know.

Also, be aware that MPs are responding to bikers' requests to ask questions in Parliament. We've never had such a high profile for motorcycling in the House of Commons. So, please ask your local MP to ask questions on our behalf and let us know if they agree. It makes a big difference to our profile as a road-using sector. And that's the best way we can protect your right to ride.

## **Calling riders between 16 and 24: survey closing date extended**

We have mentioned this survey before. The end date has been extended to the 31st August 20.

MAG are part of the National Young Rider Forum as the importance of getting new motorcyclists and retaining them in the sector is not lost on us. The difficulties in getting responses to this survey demonstrate the difficulty in communicating with new riders. This is an issue for MAG as an organisation too. Most of us are not getting any younger.

Please put your thinking caps on to come up with any ways to promote both this survey and more generally MAG and the work we do to younger riders. We want them to get on bikes, stay safe on bikes and keep riding bikes for many years. How can you reach out to new riders? Please let us know of any ideas and suggestions you may have.

You'll find out more regarding the survey here:

<https://roadsafetygb.org.uk/news/young-riders-sought-for-short-survey/>

The survey itself is here.

<https://shinysideup.co.uk/nyrf/rider-survey/>

Closing date was 10<sup>th</sup> July, but is now 31<sup>st</sup> August. Thanks for your help.

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## MAG PRESS RELEASES

### **The Coalition of Motorcycling Organisations thanks motorcyclists for their responsible actions 2/7/2020**

The members of the Coalition of Motorcycling Organisations have issued a statement thanking motorcyclists for their restraint and responsible actions so far. Ahead of further - and more complex - changes to the lockdown regulations in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland this weekend, the Coalition points out that the guidelines on meeting in public are not changing to any significant degree. The Coalition's existing COVID-safe guidelines will be kept under review.

The statement reads:

“The Coalition of Motorcycling Organisations is pleased that the vast majority of motorcyclists have adhered to Government Coronavirus guidelines. We appreciate that the restrictions have had a significant impact on motorcyclists in terms of the sport, social and utility aspects of riding. We are pleased that the ACU are able to begin scheduling motorcycle sporting events, but much of the social side of motorcycling is still severely restricted. We hope that riders will continue to follow Government advice with the assistance of our tailored motorcycling guidelines, and look forward to motorcycling returning fully to normal when the virus is defeated. We are confident that motorcycling will continue to be a vital part of our lives after the pandemic and, indeed, will be so for greatly increased numbers in the new normal that emerges.”

With detailed aspects of the Government's COVID-19 rules and guidance changing on 4th July, the Coalition urges all motorcyclists to think carefully about how these impact aspects of motorcycling. The Coalition urges all riders to follow its guidance (<https://bit.ly/COVIDRideV2>). Riders should also use their good judgement in relation to the way upcoming changes to legislation now apply to their riding plans.

Camping and use of hotels and hostels will be allowed in England, provided social distancing and hygiene standards are maintained; pillions from within larger family 'bubbles' will be allowed too. Ferries are opening but quarantine for returners to the UK will apply; organised motorsport at private venues controlled by clubs will be allowed but the limit of people gathering outside in public space will still be six and social distancing must be maintained.

Although there are also expected to be some relaxations in Wales and in Scotland, the different restrictions that apply in these parts of the UK will continue. There may also be local lockdowns, as seen this week in Leicester. The Coalition asks all motorcyclists to remain COVID aware and COVID secure at all times and not to try to 'stretch the envelope' of what the new arrangements now allow. The pandemic is still far from over and the public image of motorcycling is still very much on the line. If riders have any uncertainties they should consult the Government's guidance, which is accessible at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-outbreak-faqs-what-you-can-and-cant-do/coronavirus-outbreak-faqs-what-you-can-and-cant-do> .

Issued on behalf of the Coalition of Motorcycling Organisations by the Motorcycle Action Group

Press and other enquiries c/o MAG at 01926 844 064 or [central-office@mag-uk.org](mailto:central-office@mag-uk.org)

ENDS

*[The Coalition of Motorcycling Organisations membership consists of representatives from the Motorcycle Action Group (MAG), the Vintage Motorcycle Club (VMCC), the Trail Riders Fellowship (TRF), the British Motorcyclists Federation (BMF), IAM RoadSmart, the Auto Cycle Union (ACU), the Triumph Owners' Motorcycle Club (TOMCC) and Biker Down UK.*

*The original White Paper "Riding COVID safe: a discussion paper" submitted to the Secretary of State on 14th May can be accessed here: <https://bit.ly/2LqZSrt> ]*

### **MAG's "Three Demands" letter writing campaign starts to gain traction. 13/7/2020**

MAG's Chair, Selina Lavender, has claimed that the "Three Demands" letter writing campaign has started to gain traction. Engagement has begun between the Department for Transport and the Motorcycle Action Group, but there is still a long way to go, according to MAG's political team.

The Motorcycle Action Group is calling on the Government to take three simple actions to help motorcyclists play a fair role in the post-lockdown transport restart. The three demands are:

1. Specifically recognise and encourage the role of motorcycles and scooters as a socially distanced, congestion busting, and sustainable transport mode for post-COVID travel in all Government transport messaging.
2. Mandate all local authorities to immediately allow motorcycle and scooter access in all combined bus and cycle routes.
3. Mandate all local authorities to immediately provide emergency secure two-wheeler parking facilities that can be used by both motorcyclists and cyclists.

The Motorcycle Action Group asked its members to write to their local MPs requesting support for the demands. Many MPs did write to the Secretary of State, and there have been a number of formal Written Parliamentary Questions raised.

Selina Lavender commented:

"We are delighted by the response of our members to our rallying call, and by the heed taken by many MPs. The number of responses and questions being raised has had an undeniable effect. I am pleased to say that we have now opened communications directly with officials in the DfT. I wish we could say that our demands have met an unqualified welcome, but that is not the case. We have, however, made a start to reshaping the Government's thinking about motorcycles."



The Department has told MAG that their External Affairs Team have committed to doing a “deeper dive” into the motorbike sector, and hope to build stronger relationships with key stakeholders. They are also looking to reflect the role of motorcycling more in their Safer Transport campaign, as well as - in the longer term - working with the sector more in their “Think!” campaign.

MAG’s Director of Campaigns & Political Engagement, Colin Brown, has been leading on the engagement with the DfT. He said:

“This is indeed progress, as my contacts have confirmed that this is a new stream of work resulting from ‘concerns raised’. They have realised that they could be more engaged in this area. Unfortunately, it is clear that there is not going to be a rapid change to thinking yet on the emergency reallocation of road space. The Department is directing me to the Local Government Association and local authorities to discuss things on a case by case basis. We do not have the manpower centrally to deal with each case individually. So, again, we will be turning to individual members and local reps, asking them to take the issue to their local councils. We will try to get some consistency agreed with the LGA, but ultimately this is a disappointing reaction from central Government, claiming an inability to influence how its’ money is being spent.”

Selina Lavender concluded:

“We will continue to push for a direct dialogue with Ministers rather than officials. It is clear that decisions need to be made at the top. We are already making plans to take this all the way up to the Prime Minister.”

Contact MAG at 01926 844 064 or [central-office@mag-uk.org](mailto:central-office@mag-uk.org)

### **MAG brands motorcycle theft data accuracy as questionable. 14/7/2020**

Motorcycle theft data accuracy is questionable, according to MAG. The Motorcycle Action Group has pointed to serious concerns with the accuracy and consistency of motorcycle theft data. The data was received via Freedom of Information applications to the UK’s 45 territorial police forces.

The annual report looks at motorcycle theft for the year 2019. MAG compiled responses to Freedom of Information requests from all but six UK police forces. The report ranks the theft issue in terms of thefts per thousand registered motorcycles in each area. MAG uses FOI data combined with the published numbers of registered motorcycles in each force area.

The results

London ranks last. The Metropolitan and City of London forces are further behind solving the bike theft issue than any other police force. Not only that, but the gap is getting bigger. The theft rate for London is almost twice that for the next worst police force area.

In contrast, the most improved force areas include Cleveland, Nottinghamshire, West Midlands, Merseyside and West Yorkshire. All these forces were ranked in the bottom seven for 2018. The Metropolitan and City of London Police combined performance moved in the opposite direction. Figures for Greater Manchester - the last of the bottom seven ranked forces in 2018 - were not available.

MAG's Director of Campaigns & Political Engagement, Colin Brown, said:

"The fact that Greater Manchester figures are missing is extremely frustrating. But, the fact that the MET is now even more isolated than before in its dubious position is a more pressing concern. We hope that the MET will redouble its efforts to deal with its uniquely bad motorcycle theft problem. But I do not say that this is solely down to the MET to solve. With the current transport restart emergency measures depriving riders of secure motorcycle parking facilities, I fear a renewed motorcycle crime epidemic. We can implore owners to lock their bikes, but without the secure parking facilities, owners will face far greater issues with securing their motorcycles than before."

#### Reporting inaccuracies

Additionally, the report raises concerns that the theft problem could be worse than is being reported. MAG analysed all recorded motor vehicle theft reports in 2018 from the Metropolitan Police. MAG's count for motorcycle theft was more than 15% higher than had been returned in the FOI response. Colin Brown explained:

"It seems that the accuracy of entries for make and model is poor. Just one example was a Yamaha YS125 being recorded with Ford as the manufacturer. Obviously Ford don't make motorcycles. Interrogating the theft entries for motorcycle thefts, all Fords would be filtered out from a search. Errors like this thus lead to an under-reporting of motorcycle thefts. A simple solution would be for each theft recorded to include the vehicle class. Even if the person recording the theft cannot tell the difference between a Yamaha and a Ford, they should be able to count the number of wheels."

The Motorcycle Action Group has campaigned on the issue of motorcycle theft and secure parking provision for many years. MAG is a member of the Motorcycle Crime Reduction Group and engages directly with many police forces and Police & Crime Commissioners. Local MAG activists - lobbying councils and private parking operators to provide secure parking rails and ground anchors - have achieved many local successes over the years.

MAG offers a reward scheme for information leading to the conviction of motorcycle thieves who steal members' bikes and, in addition, runs an ongoing "Lock It or Lose It" campaign that aims to advise riders on security issues. The MAG Foundation runs a "Lock to Lock" campaign promoting a 'daisy chain' practice for motorcycle chains where no ground anchors are provided and has also financially supported a number of stolen motorcycle recovery groups.

Contact MAG at 01926 844 064 or [central-office@mag-uk.org](mailto:central-office@mag-uk.org)

Notes for Editors:

The MAG National Police Force Bike Theft Rankings 2019 report can be found here:  
[https://wiki.mag-uk.org/images/3/37/Rankings\\_July\\_2020.pdf](https://wiki.mag-uk.org/images/3/37/Rankings_July_2020.pdf)

The MAG Foundation is an independent registered charity.

## **Northern Ireland's Department for Infrastructure accepts wire rope barriers pose hazard to motorcyclists. 15/7/2020**

During a meeting with MAG Northern Ireland on 2nd July 2020, the Northern Ireland Department for Infrastructure accepted that wire rope crash barriers, whilst effective for larger vehicles, pose a hazard to motorcyclists' safety. This is welcomed by the Motorcycle Action Group.

Motorcycle Action Group UK's Northern Ireland Representative, Martyn Boyd, and MAG UK Director, Ian Churchlow, recently had a positive meeting with NI's Dept. for Infrastructure (DfI) officials. The meeting was held specifically to discuss MAG's concerns about the continued use of wire rope style crash barriers on the trunk road network across the province.

The meeting with infrastructure procurement and roads engineering officials Stephen Bradshaw and Stephen Hughes was positive, enlightening for both sides and very helpfully facilitated by Kellie Armstrong, Chief Whip of the Alliance Party, and Rachael Woods of the Green Party of Northern Ireland and Chair of the All Party Group on Climate Change at the Northern Ireland parliament at Stormont, through her representative Ricky Bamford.

Martyn Boyd and Ian Churchlow gave an informed presentation explaining the reasons for motorcyclists' concerns about wire rope crash barriers. In turn, the DfI officials explained the regulatory issues and the difficulties associated with alternative rigid systems, that currently make it difficult for an immediate unilateral cessation of their use. Nevertheless, they understood and accepted our perspective. At the end of the meeting, the DfI:

- accepted that wire rope and steel post type crash barriers are hazardous to motorcyclists' safety in a collision with one;
- agreed to actively promote, through NI road restraint systems standards, the wider use of much safer Motorcycle Protection System barrier installations at high risk locations which are or could be particularly hazardous to motorcyclists; and
- agreed to work with the local universities on any research projects, with the goal of developing a crash barrier system that is much less harmful to motorcyclists but still effective against twin-track vehicles.

MAG's objective remains a complete end to the use of wire rope crash barriers and so, to that end, we are willing to work constructively with the DfI in Northern Ireland to achieve this goal as soon as practicable.

MAG Northern Ireland Rep, Martyn Boyd, said: "I am delighted that we had a positive meeting and that our perspective was accepted. Clearly there is much work still to be done, but this is a good step forward. I would particularly like to thank Kellie Armstrong and Rachael Woods – the only MLA's who showed interest in this road safety issue - for making this meeting possible. We look forward to continuing constructive dialogue with the

Department.”

Contact MAG at 01926 844 064 or [central-office@mag-uk.org](mailto:central-office@mag-uk.org)

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Central Office. The Motorcycle Action Group Limited. Tel: 01926 844064. Fax: 01926 844065

### **MAG outraged by latest Highway Code consultation announcement – 28/7/2020**

The Motorcycle Action Group has expressed outrage at the lack of consideration for motorcyclists in the latest review of the Highway Code announced today. The consultation - entitled “Review of The Highway Code to improve road safety for cyclists, pedestrians and horse riders” - makes no reference to the statistically most at-risk vulnerable road user group.

The consultation on proposed alterations to the Highway Code was published on the 28th July and is open for responses until 27th October 2020. The consultation website page states that the consultation is “seeking views on proposed changes to The Highway Code to improve safety for vulnerable road users, particularly the groups of: cyclists, pedestrians, horse riders”

MAG’s Director of Campaigns & Political Engagement, Colin Brown, said:

“This is a shocking demonstration of the lack of care for the welfare of the most vulnerable road user group on the roads. As motorcyclists, we have to face the accusations and vilification of our legitimate choice of transport mode, whilst simultaneously suffering a near complete lack of interest in making the roads safer for us. We take no issue with moves to improve safety for other road users, but this systemic and sustained process of turning a blind eye to the needs of motorcyclists is unforgivable.

It is little wonder that motorcyclists get angry about this kind of thing, and we fully share their outrage. We consistently campaign for improved motorcycle safety and bend over backwards to support the limited number of initiatives designed to reduce motorcycle casualties, but the mere title of this consultation reveals the depth of the problem we face. How can it be that the most vulnerable road user group is the one road user group that is ignored?

We are calling on the department to immediately revise the wording of the announcement to include motorcyclists, and then to develop meaningful discourse on what amendments can be made to the Highway Code to help improve the safety of riders. We will be writing yet again to the Secretary of State for Transport and urging our members to write in the strongest terms to their MPs.

We are aware that our latest letter writing campaign calling on MPs to support our three reasonable demands for post-COVID transport restart upset the Department, but the Department should prepare for more upset in the coming weeks. We will not be silent until our rights for a safe road environment is recognised.”

## **Annual Group Conference (AGC) 2020:**

### **POSTPONED**

As published in issue 89 of The ROAD: In light of ongoing Government-imposed restrictions on large gatherings, due to Covid 19, MAG's National Committee (NC) has- in accordance with Constitutional requirements -suspended the sections of the Constitution relating to holding its Annual Group Conference and has taken the decision to postpone AGC 2020 until further notice. Our members come from all four countries of the UK and until we are all permitted to meet indoors, in numbers, we are not able to re-schedule the event.

The Annual General Meeting (AGM), which takes place *within* the Annual Group Conference, is a legal requirement of the Company. In lieu of a physical meeting we will issue the following reports in the next issue of The ROAD:

- Political report
- Finance report
- Board report
- NC report

All reports will be an overview of the year 2019/2020.

We invite members to submit any questions to the Board or NC via email using [central-office@mag-uk.org](mailto:central-office@mag-uk.org) and we will endeavour to answer them alongside the AGC reports. Questions will need to be submitted prior to the 10<sup>th</sup> of September to meet publication deadlines.

The NC are bound by the constitution to meet at least every three months, due to the postponement of the AGC that would have left a gap of four months between meetings. The NC have therefore re-instated our October meeting. The June meeting was held via Microsoft Teams, and the August and October meetings will be in the same format. If you would like your Regional Rep to bring anything to the NC, then do let them know; they are your representative at a national level.

*For a full copy of the Constitution visit the MAG wiki and look under 'Toolbox'*

<https://wiki.mag-uk.org/index.php/Toolbox#Constitution>

## MAG Notice Board

**Next ROAD  
deadline  
10th September**

**NEW  
MAG Website  
Has been  
launched  
Work in progress**

**\*\* New \*\*  
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See details in Network & The ROAD**

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\* \* \*

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With many events cancelled MAG income will suffer this year. This special edition T-shirt recognises the lost events. Deadline to order midnight 30th September. Please note all orders will be sent out week commencing 19th October.

Sizes S to XXL £15 and 3XL & 4XL £16 price includes P&P.

To order visit [www.mag-uk.org](http://www.mag-uk.org) or call Central Office 01926 844 064

## PORTSMOUTH MAG

This month Portsmouth City council announced that from autumn 2021 a Class B CAZ would come into force for some parts of the city, for the moment this is limited to the following:-

HGVs, buses and coaches, taxis and Private Hire Vehicles that:

- Do not meet Euro 6 emissions standards (so are Euro 5 or older) if they are diesel
- Do not meet Euro 4 emissions standards (so are Euro 3 or older) if they are petrol

Representatives from Portsmouth and the Southern region MAG have been involved from the start of the consultation process, which included a council steering group to help understand the impact a CAZ would cause to the city and it's residents. We could not stop this coming into force, but we did have a say at what type of CAZ was installed.

MAG remains concerned that Portsmouth City Council and DEFRA could turn around and enforce a higher level of CAZ which would mean a significant change in the number of vehicles, including motorcycles, that would be chargeable. MAG will continue to monitor and attend meetings where we can and make sure motorcycles are a part of the SOLUTION and not the PROBLEM.....

There is a further consultation going on about charging and potential exemptions within this zone, and more information can be found at the following website..

[www.portsmouth.gov.uk/cleanairzone](http://www.portsmouth.gov.uk/cleanairzone)

**Richard Buchanan, Portsmouth MAG Rep**

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### Free Magazine Offer

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Affiliated Club Officers: please could you promote the above offer to your members via your newsletter or magazine? Your affiliate members do not normally get to see a copy of The Road and might like to receive a copy.



# FEMA

## New helmet rules from the United Nations

FEMA News: July 2, 2020



The United Nations have approved changes to the regulation that describes how your motorcycle helmet has to be produced and tested. These are the first changes in almost twenty years. FEMA's WimTaal explains the most notable changes.

The UN regulation No. 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 UN Regulation No. 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 have been voted on in June 2020 but for now regulation 22.05 is still in place. 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 accepted proposal and amendments of UN Regulation No.22 can be found at:<http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/trans/doc/2020/wp29/ECE-TRANS-WP29-2020-060e.pdf>

This document also includes all the test methods.

Regulation No. 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. Also new in the proposal is the demand to have the year of production of the helmet mentioned on the helmet. For the most important features go to: <https://www.femamotorcycling.eu/consumer-information/ece-22-05-helmet-stickers/>

*Written by WimTaal*

*Top photograph courtesy of Cardo Systems. This article is subject to FEMA’s copyright.*

## **Bikers protest exclusion of motorcycles in Parisian transport plans**

FEMA News July 20, 2020



Several thousands of motorcyclists protested paid parking for powered two-wheelers on Saturday 18 July. Instead of making motorcyclists pay more, the Parisian city council and mayor Anne Hidalgo should favour them.

French FEMA member FFMC was the organizer of this demo ride in Paris. The riders want to make clear that motorcycles are important in Paris for commuting. With 2.3 million inhabitants, Paris is a relatively small city. But as middle-class workers, who cannot afford to live in the city itself, have moved to the suburbs, the region accounts in reality for 10 million citizens! The distances are too large to cycle and public transport isn't always an option, if only because it doesn't run all day and night and the frequency is decreasing very fast outside the subway zone. For many commuters private motorized transport is the only alternative and often the motorcycle the only affordable option. To ban motorcycling or make it more expensive would lead to social exclusion and loss of jobs, because for many commuters there is no affordable alternative.

### **‘Motorcycles are far more efficient than cars’**



City legislators should include powered two-wheelers in their transport policy, because motorcycles are far more efficient than cars. With their smaller size, less weight and less fuel consumption they are also from an ecologic perspective the better alternative to cars. Especially when in France cars run mainly on Diesel fuel, which is very bad for the air quality in the cities. The Parisian motorcyclists, represented by FFMC Paris, ask to be consulted and involved in the plans to transform city traffic, in order to have motorcycles and other powered two-wheelers included in these plans. Furthermore, they ask that promises that mayor Anne Hidalgo has made in her first term to maintain free motorcycle parking spaces are respected. The Parisian bikers are prepared to fight long to be heard and keep it possible to ride their motorcycle in the city and to stop what they see as a witch hunt on motorcycles. Of course, it would be much better if the Parisian city council uses common sense and starts talks with the motorcyclists.

See also the video of the demo that was made by MOTO Magazine at:  
<https://youtu.be/QB1zcPTMluY>

*Written by DolfWilligers*

*Photo and video courtesy of MOTO Magazine. Photo Anne Hidalgo: Facebook.*

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## Powered Two Wheeler registrations, June 2020

MCIA: 07 July 2020

MCIA today publishes the registration statistics for new Powered Two Wheelers (PTWs) for the month of June.

Having been denied much of the first two months of the traditional season by the virus lockdown, motorcycle and scooter dealers benefitted from a rewarding June, with eager buyers pushing the month end figure up 14.8% on last year to 13,361.

Within these figures scooters were up by 43.1% and motorcycles by 8.0%, when compared with June 2019.

Although these encouraging figures will no doubt include those who would have ordinarily bought during the months of lockdown, the big increases in the sales of scooters and commuter motorcycles suggest that many buyers are those who have been deterred from using public transport and for whom walking and cycling are not viable. These new riders have now experienced the many benefits of PTWs, including their agility, avoidance of traffic congestion, ease of parking and low ownership costs. They will have discovered a shorter commute that puts extra time into their day, money in their pocket and takes away stress. Consequently, MCIA continues to call on Government to fully endorse PTWs and to prioritise them in transport planning.

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## Pothole-related call-outs persist during coronavirus lockdown despite 60% drop in traffic

RAC: 17th Jul 2020



Despite the country being in various stages of lockdown from April to the end of June in its fight against the coronavirus, RAC patrols still had to go to the rescue of 1,766 drivers whose vehicles had fallen foul of potholes.

While overall motor traffic volumes were down by as much 60% in the second quarter of 2020 according to government data, pothole-related call-outs during this period still made up 1.1% of all breakdowns attended by the RAC<sup>1</sup> – the same proportion as were attended in the second quarter of 2019, perhaps indicating that road surface quality has not significantly improved.

In contrast to the first quarter of the year when RAC patrols went to the aid of 3,426 drivers who suffered damaged shock absorbers, broken suspension springs or distorted wheels (equal to 1.6% of all breakdowns), the drop in the number of pothole breakdowns between April and June is, however, significant.

RAC head of roads policy Nicholas Lyes said: “On the surface, these statistics appear encouraging because they make it seem as though the quality of our roads hasn’t worsened, but when you consider how few vehicles were on the road, they are a real cause for concern.

“We would have hoped to have seen a far bigger drop in the share of pothole-related breakdowns than we would do normally at this time of year, but instead it was just the same as usual.”

The RAC’s Pothole Index<sup>2</sup>, which is probably the most accurate long-term indicator of the health of the UK’s roads available, suggests the overall standard of the roads improved very slightly in Q2 2020 with the Index reducing from 1.65 to 1.59, down from 2.04 in the same period last year – the lowest since Q1 2008, the point at which the state of the UK’s roads began to grow steadily worse. This means drivers are now 1.5 times more likely to suffer a pothole breakdown than in 2006, when the RAC first started collecting data:

[https://media.rac.co.uk/blog\\_posts/rac-pothole-index-80333](https://media.rac.co.uk/blog_posts/rac-pothole-index-80333)

The worst time for potholes – or ‘peak pothole’ – occurred in Q1 2010 when drivers were 3.5 times more likely to break down as a result of pothole-related damage than they were back in 2006. At this time pothole-related call-outs accounted for 1.9% of the RAC’s entire fault mix – a percentage which was topped in Q1 2017 with a figure of 2.7%, also making it one of the worst times for encountering potholes on the UK’s roads.

Nicholas Lyes continued: “Looking at our breakdown data in regard to pothole damage the long-term trend is clearly down which is good news for everyone who uses the roads.

“But we were very surprised by how many of these call-outs we dealt with during lockdown considering the vast majority of our work in this period was helping motorists with flat batteries at home as a result of vehicles being used so little.

“Those who did need our assistance away from home between April and June must have been very annoyed that their vehicle had been unlucky enough to have fallen victim to a pothole, particularly as many local authorities took advantage of the quieter roads during lockdown to repair poor road surfaces.

“With council budgets under significant pressure, it is important that our local roads are not left behind as the UK’s economic recovery will depend on high quality infrastructure. This is why we want to see councils given the same certainty of funding for road maintenance and improvement as major roads in England and Wales have through the National Roads Fund which ring-fences money from car tax – vehicle excise duty – for that purpose.

“This could easily be achieved by putting aside 2p from the existing 58p a litre duty on the sale of petrol and diesel. Over five years this would generate nearly £5bn of additional funds which will help bring our local roads back to a fit-for-purpose state.”

To report a pothole, or to find out if you suffer from damage from one and wonder if you can claim for compensation, visit the RAC's pothole online guide:  
<https://www.rac.co.uk/drive/advice/road-safety/report-a-pothole/>

*This story was originally on the RAC Media Centre: <https://media.rac.co.uk/>*

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## **Obscured road signs: what to do and how to reduce risk**

Posted on July 9th, 2020 by GEM Motoring Assist



GEM Motoring Assist is encouraging drivers to report any road signs hidden by trees or bushes. Hidden road signs are at best a nuisance for drivers, and at worst can be misleading and dangerous, according to GEM.

The safety call comes at a time when roadside vegetation is at its thickest and maintenance of signs may not be a priority for already stretched authorities.

GEM chief executive Neil Worth comments: “Road signs provide vital information for drivers, who will plan their speeds and actions based either wholly or in part on what the signs tell them.

“If you can’t see a sign, then your ability to make safe decisions is compromised, especially if you’re on unfamiliar roads. Nourished by recent rain, vegetation at this time of year tends to be at its most prolific, meaning more and more signs risk being partially or completely covered. It’s a growing menace that puts road users at risk.

“We can help highways authorities and local councils to know where the problems are by using the reporting facilities they provide. It is vital for road safety that trees, bushes and branches are not allowed to obscure important information, and that everyone using the roads has a clear view of speed limit and other signs.”

GEM encourages drivers to report obscured road signs to the appropriate local authority, and to remember that a limit of 30mph usually applies to all traffic on all roads with street lighting, unless there are signs to say otherwise.

The problem extends beyond local roads. A survey last year by Transport Focus revealed that nearly a third of drivers had missed a motorway exit, either because of concealed or poorly-designed signs.

## What you can do

For England and Wales, use the Government website to determine the local authority responsible for a sign location. You will then be given a link to the home page of the appropriate local authority, but it will then be up to you to find your way to the right page: <https://www.gov.uk/street-name-sign>

In Scotland, Transport Scotland is responsible for motorways and trunk roads. Local authorities maintain other public roads: <https://www.transport.gov.scot/>

Northern Ireland's NI Direct Government website takes you straight to a page where you can report a problem with a sign. If the sign has already been reported, you can add your name to a list of people reporting it: <https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/services/report-issue-road-sign-or-marking>

If you're reporting a sign on a motorway or trunk road in England, you could also use the TransportFocus 'Sort My Sign' website. Just enter the location, road name or post code and enter details of the problem. Your report will be sent to Highways England: <https://sortmysign.transportfocus.org.uk/>

## How you can reduce risk

- Sometimes knowing the shape of a sign is all you need. For example, 'Stop' is the only octagonal-shaped sign, and it means exactly that. Your wheels must stop turning.
  - 'Give Way' is the only upside down triangular sign. So even if you can't read what it says, you know that you are approaching a junction.
  - Be ready for a change of speed limit. If you're on a country road, look far ahead. If there are houses, a church, or other buildings in view then you can be ready for a change of speed limit to 30mph.
  - If a hidden road sign means you miss your turning off a motorway or trunk road, don't take risks by making a last-minute swerve onto the slip road. Carry on (usually to the next junction) and turn when it is safe and legal.
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## Increase in serious collisions on some smart motorways a cause for concern

- The rollout of smart motorways has led to a "concerning" rise in major accidents, with one stretch of road in the West Midlands reporting six times as many serious collisions per year.
- An investigation of Highways England reports reveals that incidents had worsened within a year of upgrades for half of the sections of road analysed.
- Highways England defines a serious collision as "one in which at least one person is seriously injured but no person (other than a confirmed suicide) is killed".
- On the M1 between junctions 39 and 42, there was previously an average of 1.3 serious crashes per year, but this increased to 5.0 in the 12 months after a smart motorway upgrade.

- Similarly, junctions 10a and 13 on the M6 reported just one serious accident a year before the change, and six in the following year.
- Transport Secretary Grant Shapps said he is: “greatly concerned” by the number of crashes.
- However, analysis by New Civil Engineer magazine found that fatal accidents had also dropped on six of the eight smart motorways analysed, while there was even a drop in the number of slight collisions.
- All-lane running (ALR) smart motorways are created by removing the hard shoulder on roads to boost lane capacity. Overhead gantry signs warn of accidents in lanes ahead and emergency refuge areas are provided up to two and a half miles apart for vehicles to pull off the road.
- Nicholas Lyes, head of roads policy at the RAC said: “It's very concerning these reports have identified an increase in serious collisions.
- “The findings won't be a surprise to the majority of drivers who believe the removal of the hard shoulder compromises safety in the event of a breakdown.”
- More than two-thirds (68%) of drivers in England questioned by the RAC said [removing the hard shoulder would compromise safety](#) for those who broke down in a live lane.

Highways England said these recently published reports are part of a “considerable amount of evidence” forming part of a wider smart motorway “stocktake” analysis, which was published in March.

- **Smart motorways – what are they and how do you use them?**
- **Explained: how the RAC deals with smart motorway breakdowns**
- **Motorway cameras – what you need to know**

A spokesperson for Highways England said: “While one accident is one too many on any motorway, the stocktake concluded that smart motorways in most ways are as safe as, or safer than, conventional motorways they replace.

“We are taking forward the measures set out in the stocktake and are determined to do all we can to make our roads as safe as possible.”

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***NOISE..... AGAIN – As I go to press this on the BBC website. More to follow I have no doubt because French Bikers are renown for getting up off their butts and protesting in astronomical numbers:-***

## **Paris takes on bikers' noise**

The lockdown experience in our cities has led many people to be much more aware of noise pollution.

After the birdsong and the silence, the sound of engines and sirens seems all the more invasive.

In Paris, authorities are taking the opportunity to step up their campaign against vehicles – particularly the two-wheeled variety – that break the law by being too loud.



**More at:-**

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/av/world-europe-53521561/paris-police-step-up-anti-noise-patrols?fbclid=IwAR3OV7ZgQ-kV9xP6g7rA2asz1vmxxLHG6GHn7E54nJ2X8zlkRUElxKNmMp4>

**WEBSITES YOU MAY WANT TO VISIT**

News story: Mandatory MOT testing to be reintroduced from 1 August

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/mandatory-mot-testing-to-be-reintroduced-from-1-august>

Guidance: Coronavirus: MOTs due from 30 March 2020 (Last updated 29 June 2020)

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-mots-for-cars-vans-and-motorcycles-due-from-30-march-2020>

Scotland: E-bikes to help charge Scotland's green recovery

<https://www.transport.gov.scot/news/e-bikes-to-help-charge-scotland-s-green-recovery/>

RSGB: Warwickshire Police purchases 'next generation' speed cameras

<https://roadsafetygb.org.uk/news/warwickshire-police-purchases-next-generation-speed-cameras/>

ETSC: PIN report - Lockdowns resulted in an unprecedented 36% drop in road deaths in the EU

<https://etsc.eu/pin-report-lockdowns-resulted-in-an-unprecedented-36-drop-in-road-deaths-in-the-eu/>

RAC: UK roads revealed to be second safest in Europe

<https://www.rac.co.uk/drive/news/motoring-news/uk-roads-revealed-to-be-second-safest-in-europe/>

RAC: Vehicle thefts soar to highest level in 4 years - how safe is your area?

<https://www.rac.co.uk/drive/news/motoring-news/vehicle-thefts-soar-to-highest-level-in-4-years-how-safe-is-your-area/>

***[Very interesting reading, below, is a link to what the Association of British Drivers think of the Governments proposed ban on ICE vehicles].....***

ABD: ABD Response To The Proposed Petrol, Diesel and Hybrid Ban

<https://www.abd.org.uk/abd-response-to-the-proposed-petrol-diesel-hybrid-ban/>

News story: Ride Free: new online motorcycle training to improve road safety

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/ride-free-new-online-motorcycle-training-to-improve-road-safety>

FEMA: New speed limits for motorcycles in Dolomites.

<https://www.femamotorcycling.eu/new-speed-limits-for-motorcycles-in-dolomites/>

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