



A networking tool for Activists and other interested parties

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EDITORIAL

This month, because this edition is even longer, I'm going to write a really short editorial. The editorial, as you know, is purely my own personal opinion and does not represent MAG in any way.

This time round you'll find articles on Smart (not - imho) Motorways my personal opinion of which is that they are the most ludicrous decision, as presently executed by Highways England, taken on British Roads since the invention of the internal combustion engine. One article, issued on 29th January after the Panorama Programme, from Highways England is, in my humble opinion, a 'let's try and salvage something here', rather patronising statement which goes no way to addressing the danger of these roads as they are presently installed and which I doubt would have been issued had Panorama not highlighted the problems to such a wide audience.

Catch you next month, AG

[Acknowledgments:- George Legg, Colin Brown, Lembit Opik, MAG Central Office, Phil McFadden plus anyone else I've forgotten]

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Political Report from MAG's Campaigns Team

With the General Election, on 12th December 2019, delivering a clear result, politics is likely to settle down in the UK for the next few years. MAG's Political Unit Colin Brown and Lembit Öpik expect a return to business as usual – and here's what's going on.

No Doubt who's in charge

After one of the most important elections in recent history, we have a clear result. The Conservatives secured a commanding majority of 80 in the House of Commons. This means that a period of stability is likely to follow for the next five years, with Prime Minister Boris Johnson having the support to deliver his agenda. This has clear implications for motorcycling because we have clarity about whom we need to work with and we will soon know the policies we need to influence.

MAG continues to promote your freedom to ride, your access to all public road space and respect from policy makers & enforcers. All of this is under threat as other lobbyists seek to inhibit internal combustion engine vehicles for the sake of their own agendas. We

continue to fight the case for motorcycling in the interests of supporting a genuinely environmentally and economically friendly mode of transport.

Conservatives have a plan to eliminate ICE vehicles and this is a worry. However, they also committed to freezing fuel duty for now and will invest in the road network. Let's see if they put our money where their mouth is – to the tune of £28.8 billion investment in strategic and local roads. If they really do keep their promise to launch a massive pothole-filling programme as National Infrastructure, then that would be a good sign. There's plenty of work to be done by MAG's Political Unit in Parliament.

Motor Cycle Industry Association (MCIA) Chief to meet MAG's National Committee

Tony Campbell, the MCIA's Chief Executive Officer, has agreed to present his views in terms of the industry agenda to the Motorcycle Action Group. He has spoken much about the benefits of Private Light Vehicles – PLVs. In his view there is a case to promoting small three and four wheeled vehicles, which have nothing to do with traditional motorcycles but something to do with a future where cars are replaced by 'downsized' machines. We'll let you know how the conversation goes.

Parliamentary Questions and Adjournment Debate

After the disruption of the General Election, the Chair of the All Party Parliamentary Group on motorcycling, Chris Law MP is resubmitting the Parliamentary Questions that were 'lost' when the House of Commons rose to fight the election. Mr Law and his office team have been superbly helpful over the last year, and this is set to continue. We'll share the answers when we get them, and it's a good way of keeping motorcycling issues in the consciousness of MPs and Ministers.

In a further development, MAG is in talks with the MP and also the Department for Transport to seek a formal debate about the role of motorcycling in the transport mix. We'll have more for you on this shortly.

Virtue Signalling Arms Race or Sensible Transport Policy?

News stories are proliferating of ever more restrictive policies all around the country. Press headlines want to grab attention and breathlessly announce bans on private vehicles and races to be the first with ever more virtuous policies. There are stories of York banning all private vehicles and the councillors then pointing out that Edinburgh are copying their idea. Brighton and Hove are soon to debate a ban on private vehicles. Birmingham are to ban through trips across the city by copying segmentation systems from Ghent and Oxford are looking to introduce the most complex phased hybrid zero emission and ultra low emission zones known to man. All the media reports point to proposals that are actually often not as reported, but all of which are tortuously convoluted but rarely sufficiently detailed to consider the one transport mode that we represent.

We will attempt to keep on top of all developments and engage at every level before during and after consultation stages. We have already engaged on the Oxford ZEZ which it turns out applies to a tiny area that is almost entirely pedestrianised any way with just 3 streets totalling no more than 0.3 miles in length open to vehicles, none of which are through routes.

Weirdly 13% of vehicles using these streets are motorcycles, but a few quick questions revealed that they are all food delivery riders avoiding bus gates that they cannot use. Full marks to anyone guessing what we will be proposing to solve that problem.

Keep your eye out for our social media posts as many of the consultations seem to be very short so we need rapid responses on some of these.

This is time consuming and complex work, but keep us informed of any new proposals in your area. The biggest danger here is a poor precedent being set in a local authority that slips through our net.

We have yet to see the consultations launched in York and Edinburgh, but:

Oxford ZEZ consultation is here:

https://www.oxford.gov.uk/info/20216/air_quality_management/1305/oxford_zero_emission_zone_zez

Birmingham Draft Transport Strategy is here:

https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/info/20013/roads_travel_and_parking/2032/draft_birmingham_transport_plan

This consultation should open on 28th January, but there is a consultation on parking already live here: <https://www.birminghambeheard.org.uk/economy/parkingspd/>

Ride To Work Day 2020

Don't forget 15th June 2020: it's Ride to Work Day 2020! MAG is the official UK promoter of this international event, and we're asking you to encourage everyone you know to back it too. Northamptonshire County Council is supporting it, and credit to them for that. We're seeking support from other local authorities, police and employers to help remove barriers that prevent motorcycles being a natural choice for the daily commute.

Don't forget part of this event is about encouraging car drivers to be #FilterFriendly. Bikes reduce congestion for everyone and drivers should be grateful for bikers speeding up their journeys too.

Who's up for a demo?

We continue to engage with any police forces we can. The freedom of information requests will soon go out for the 2019 Police Force Bike Theft Rankings, and of course PCC elections are on the horizon in May this year.

Recent conversations with the lead for Northumbria Police's Operation Benelli revealed that a local demo ride did have an impact on the decision to revive this bike theft operation which had been shelved.

Colin is suggesting that bike theft demo runs in the middle of Police and Crime Commissioner election campaigns may be just the ticket if your force is not taking the issue seriously. Why not time a demo after all the candidates are announced (closing date for applications to run is 8th April) and invite all the candidates to attend?

If you decide to go for it, let us know at Central so that we can maximise exposure and keep the bike theft issue front and centre.

Boris the Biker

It turns out the Prime Minister got a motorcycle for Christmas, a Yamaha 125. Let's see if we can get him to back bikers, since he is one.



Thank you Motorsport:-

Formula 1's plan for green and noisy engines: two-stroke hybrids, running on synthetic fuel

Formula 1 is looking to introduce two-stroke engines that run on eco-fuel by the middle of the decade, as it develops plans to become carbon neutral.

The proposal is said to make the sport greener than electric racing series, such as Formula E, while still using internal combustion engines — with improved sound.

Current F1 hybrid engines will be replaced by a new specification of power unit from 2025 or 2026. It will play a significant role in Formula 1's **project to become carbon neutral in 2030**.

"I'm very keen on it being a two-stroke," said Pat Symonds, chief technical officer of Formula 1, at the Motorsport Industry Association's energy-efficient motorsport conference.

"Much more efficient, great sound from the exhaust and a lot of the problems with the old two strokes are just not relevant any more."

Related content

- [Plastics ban and green energy: F1's plan to go carbon neutral by 2030](#)
- [Lewis Hamilton to become carbon neutral](#)

The new engines are likely to remain hybrids but powered by synthetic fuel, made by combining hydrogen with carbon captured from the air, using surplus green energy.

As well as the cars, this e-fuel could power the planes that carry the cars and equipment to races, making a big dent in the sport's carbon footprint.

Research presented at the conference showed that electric racing cars could be responsible for twice the level of carbon emissions as hybrid racing cars, because of the amount produced when building the batteries.

"We need to look at what our future power units will look like," said Symonds. "At F1 this is what we are engaged in at the moment."

Symonds has started work on new engine regulations

He said that the sport's pledge to continue with the current engines until 2025 gave it the time to "make sure that the next step is a really good one".

"It might be that the next power unit we produce is the last one we do with liquid hydrocarbons," he said. "I think there's a very high chance that there might still be an internal combustion engine but maybe it's running on hydrogen.

"I certainly think that the internal combustion engine has a long future and I think it has a future that's longer than a lot of politicians realise because politicians are hanging everything on electric vehicles.

"There's nothing wrong with electric vehicles but there are reasons why they are not the solution for everyone."

Symonds said that he is currently visiting universities carrying out engine research to inform the new regulations.

He told the conference that he was struck by the amount of research going into two-stroke engines, which are better-known for their smoky and noisy performance in lawnmowers, rather than their potential at the pinnacle of motor sport.

"It's reasonably obvious that if you are going to pump that piston up and down, you might as well get work out of it every time the piston comes down rather than every other time the piston comes down," he said.

"The opposed piston engine is very much coming back and already in road car form at around 50 per cent efficiency.

"Direct injection, pressure charging, and new ignition systems have all allowed new forms of two-stroke engines to be very efficient and very emission-friendly. I think there's a good future for them."

Engine development could follow the same process as the new rules for 2021

Symonds is looking to set up a working group to develop the specification for the next F1 engine, mirroring the way that the **2021 chassis rules** were drawn up.

Teams would be encouraged to work collaboratively, as the design would be more prescriptive in an effort to keep a lid on costs.

Symonds says that synthetic fuel would be tailored to the engine, using an optimum blend of hydrocarbons, to improve efficiency and performance, while reducing particulate emissions.

The fuel would allow the engine to run with a higher compression ratio, improving efficiency by up to 2.4 per cent.

Before then, the sport is looking to introduce e-fuels that can be used in current engines as production capacity increases.

"As soon as there is enough around we should be doing it and we're not that far away from what we need," said Symonds.

story...

https://www.motorsportmagazine.com/news/f1/two-stroke-engines-eco-fuel-f1-aims-be-greener-formula-e?fbclid=IwAR0Vq0g8RNNjRIDqgLIH8z7THI0HclFPK_YyGqBIFzNs3Wprybxv8DISgSo

and on a similar theme a really interesting article :-

Green fortunes will be made as the economy is forced to decarbonise

By [Ambrose Evans-Pritchard](#)

15 JANUARY 2020 • 9:31 AM GMT

What issues are currently keeping the world's economists awake at night? A new Telegraph series reveals just that. Here, Ambrose Evans-Pritchard expounds the rapidly-changing investor sentiment on climate change – and the winners and losers it will create.

Two powerful shocks have hit the fossil industry and its financial ecosystem at the same moment: the more obvious one is Australia's six million hectare inferno and all it implies for shifting global opinion and future carbon curbs: the other is a watershed court case in The Netherlands that may have equally far-reaching consequences.

Five days before Christmas the Dutch supreme court ruled that the country's climate targets were not stringent enough. It ordered the government to slash CO₂ emissions much more deeply than it had planned – or is capable of doing without radical measures – and to do so by the end of this year.

The Hague is casting about trying to find ways to cut emissions by 25pc from 1990 levels, not 20pc as supposed, though that lesser target was already in doubt. Never before has a complex industrialised economy been forced to decarbonise so drastically.

The activist group Urgenda – victor in the long legal battle – is demanding the closure of three new coal plants built defiantly in 2015-16 for RWE, Engie, and Uniper without carbon capture; as well as Vattenfall's Hemweg plant in Amsterdam, already facing the chop four years early. Some €3bn (£2.5bn) of sunk costs are exposed.

The decision to sink €3bn into those plants just as the Paris Climate Summit was reaching its historic breakthrough must go down as one of the most myopic acts of financial self-harm in the modern energy age. "They needed their heads examined," said Mark Lewis, head of sustainability at BNP Paribas Asset Management.

Urgenda has prepared a '50 point plan' of cuts – backed by the Dutch parliament – with some low-hanging fruit: a faster switch to LED lighting; a cut in the 24-hour speed limit to 100 km/h; getting drivers to raise the tire pressure in their cars, therefore reducing fuel use: a day without meat each week.

What is unique about the case is the reliance on human rights law: the UN Convention and the European Convention on Human Rights. This sets a precedent and variants are spreading like wildfire.

A parallel case in Poland aims to shut down PGE's Belchatow coal plant, a 5 GW lignite monster with emissions to match New Zealand. The Philippines has already ruled that oil majors such as Shell and BP can be pursued for past damages based on rights law.

The dam broke on climate litigation cases in 2019. There are now 1,380 known lawsuits worldwide. "My advice to companies is that you had better have a 2050 net-zero strategy or you risk losing your societal licence to operate," said Michael Liebreich, founder of Bloomberg New Energy Finance and head of Liebreich Associates.

Litigation risk brings forward a perfect storm for the fossil industry – and not just for them – already on the ropes as the political vice tightens, renewable costs plummet to parity or below, and investors start to discount anything brown. Big Oil's 6pc dividend is a red flag, not a sign of health. "Nobody wants to be the last one holding a stranded asset so there is a rush for the exits," said Mr Liebreich.

Markets are neuralgic about long-tail legal liabilities and are quickly becoming the green enforcers. Some \$120 trillion of investment funds, pension funds, and wealth under management are formally linked in groups pushing for decarbonisation. Superficial "greenwashing" no longer cuts any ice. Company boards must give chapter and verse.

BNP's Mr Lewis says investors' first priority is to protect themselves against "obvious catastrophic risks" as the energy switch accelerates from a slow Waltz to a fast Tarantella, but it does not stop there. His bank has geared its whole €440bn portfolio to a Paris-compliant model, starting with an exclusion of thermal coal starting from January.

"We'll be looking at the carbon intensity of every company across our investable universe, and that includes steel, cement, and manufacturing. The fashion industry is going to get a lot of attention over the next year because it has a horrendous environmental footprint," he said.

The investor activist network includes Climate Action 100, the UN-backed Principles for Responsible Investment (PRI), and the City-based Institutional Investors Group on Climate Change.

The PRI – a \$90 trillion alliance – says societies will act to stop their leaders "sleep-walking" into an unliveable world and therefore that a regulatory sledgehammer is about to come crashing down. This is not in the distant future. It will hit before 2025 and then gather force. "People won't be allowed to drive a car with an internal combustion engine, and it's coming a lot earlier than many think," says Fiona Reynolds, the chief executive.

"The question for investors now is not if governments will act, but when they will do so, and what policies they will use," said PRI's latest report. The rapidly tightening deadlines of Ursula von Der Leyen's Green Deal in Europe must make very uncomfortable reading for Old Fossils and Old Autos.

The group tells its members to brace for "forceful, abrupt, and disorderly" action, all the more ferocious because it comes so late. It expects electric vehicles to sweep the market as soon as life-time costs plunge demonstrably below petrol and diesel, leading to peak global oil demand as soon as 2026-28.

Almost 70pc of the world's car fleet will be EVs by 2040 (not 15pc as suggested by BP and others). Oil use in road transport will collapse.

Carbon taxes/prices will rise rapidly to levels then asphyxiate high emitters. Thermal coal will go into free fall this decade and be "virtually non-existent" anywhere in the world by 2040. Asia will not come to the rescue as presumed in OPEC models.

The speed of change is staggering. "Three years ago the consensus view was that EVs were an interesting niche that wouldn't become mainstream for a couple of decades," said Mr Lewis from BNP Paribas.

"That has completely changed. The European car companies are betting the farm on them. Daimler says they will not invest a single dollar ever again in a new internal combustion engine," he said.

Equity brokers Redburn have de-rated the entire oil sector, with a double downgrade for ExxonMobil. They are starting to price in "existential risk", warning that establishment forecasts for crude demand are wildly wrong. They expect global oil use to decline by 2pc a year from 2025 onwards.

It is another universe from that inhabited by BP's outgoing chief executive, Bob Dudley, who insists that oil, gas, and coal will still make up 73pc of global energy in 2040, almost unchanged from today. That is broadly the view of OPEC and the International Energy Agency. But it cannot be squared with the stated policies of the world's governments and faces a forensic attack from high quarters.

Mark Carney, the Bank of England's Governor, says those betting on business-as-usual – implying a 3.7-8 degree world by 2050 – will be in for a rude awakening. A big chunk of their assets will be rendered “worthless”.

“A question for every company, every financial institution, every asset manager, pension fund or insurer: what's your plan?” he told the BBC last week.

He has flagged potential “losses” above \$20 trillion if companies drag their feet, although this should not be confused with economic loss – an entirely different concept.

Carney thinks the green switch can put excess global capital to work and act as a net growth accelerant for the world. But within that framework there will be winners and losers: those ahead of the curve may reap fat rewards: those that stall will undoubtedly be “punished”.

The nexus of investor groups is aligned with the ever-more stringent demands of the G20's Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosures (TCFD) – Carney's baby. For now TCFD rules are voluntary. Britain aims to go first and make them mandatory by 2022. This is already concentrating the mind.

Tom Greenberg, climate chief for Credit Suisse, says clients are looking at both the raw numbers and at their own reputational exposure. “They worry that some of these industries are running off cash flow and could potentially have no terminal value. And they don't want to be on the wrong side of history,” he says.

“The oil majors support a global carbon tax. They fear a disorderly populist backlash and disruptive taxes, where individual countries take their own action. It is better the devil you know,” he adds.

Elizabeth Warren has called for a US fracking ban in the Democratic primaries, which would in theory shut down 8pc of global oil supply and most of America's natural gas. The pledge is gesture politics since it would not pass Congress and would trigger an economic crisis if attempted. But a President Warren could ban drilling on federal land.

More plausible is something akin to HR 763, a bipartisan bill backed by the US economic fraternity from Left to Right for a “carbon fee and dividend” scheme that rotates the revenue back to households. The tax rises by \$10 (£7.62) a tonne each year until emissions plunge. This would be a torture rack for the old order.

The oil majors know that a Pigovian carbon tax is coming in one form or another and many see it – surprisingly – as self-protection. Companies are pencilling in a rising scale to \$40-60. Internal documents show that ConocoPhillips, for example, now requires that all future projects must be viable at a carbon tax of \$40 as soon as 2024.

Big Oil's main thrust is to crack down on emissions and methane leaks from their own operations (scope 1) and from their power supply (scope 2). What happens to their oil once it goes to consumers (scope 3) is a responsibility shared with the whole of society.

“Investors want to know how we are going to be viable in a low-carbon world. They want an inventory of all greenhouse emissions,” says Michael Rubio, climate chief for Chevron. His company is switching to solar and wind for its operations in the Texas Permian Basin.

In August it opened the world's largest carbon capture and storage facility, a \$2.5bn plant in Australia's Gorgon gas field. The CO₂ is pumped into a rock formation 2km below ground. This cuts emissions from Chevron's liquefied natural gas (LNG) operations by 40pc. The

company has teamed up with Bill Gates to snatch CO₂ out of the air in “direct carbon capture” for use in synthetic fuels.

Shell and Repsol are going radical with plans for net-zero by 2050, including scope 3. They will have to offset all the emissions of the actual oil and gas they sell. Global reforestation is one potential route.

These companies are going a long way to inoculate themselves against opprobrium as climate science tightens and Greta Thunberg captures the Zeitgeist, but how far can such steps shield their business models? A tidal wave of rival technologies is smashing into them whatever else happens.

BNEF estimates that new wind and solar are already cheaper today than new coal for two-thirds of the world’s population. The records for both have reached \$17 per megawatt/hour, with \$10 in sight by 2030. This is tantamount to free renewable power. Digging up coal – or indeed producing LNG for oceanic shipment – may become a cost absurdity.

The final tipping point arrives when “dispatchable” renewables (combined with quick storage back-up) undercut even the marginal cost of running natural gas plants. Carbon Tracker expects that to be fully achieved worldwide by the mid-2030s. That sets off the culminating cascade.

Attention is already shifting to whether – or how soon – green hydrogen from electrolysis will be cheap enough to start displacing fossil fuels in steel and cement (13pc of CO₂), shipping and trucking, heating for buildings, and – up to a point – in chemicals and fertilisers. Decarbonisation then hits another great chunk of human activity.

Kingsmill Bond, a former Deutsche Bank strategist now at Carbon Tracker, says paper losses will be eye-watering for those who linger on the losing side, and they do not have long to wait. “We are near the beginning of write-downs on a huge scale. What people are talking about now is just the tip of the iceberg,” he says.

“The fossil sector is the biggest system in the world. There is \$25 trillion of stuff above ground in pipelines, wells, refineries, or power plants that will have to be written off if we are going to get anywhere near Paris,” he says.

The technology is no longer a futuristic hope. It is already at hand. Carbon Tracker’s assumption is that market forces will sweep away the incumbents because they can no longer compete, much as canals gave way to railroads, or fixed telecoms to digital.

Brown fortunes will be lost. Bigger green fortunes will be made. It is the time-honoured brutality of technological disruption.

Here’s something passed on from Phil McFadden, South Wales Rep:-

Hi All,

Dr Carl Cater (Swansea University) is doing some research on motorcycle tourism - and has the following questionnaire for riders about motorcycle groups. The disclaimer/participation information is longer than the survey - so don't let it put you off!

If you wish to participate, click the link below:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSc6KZpLPOkWZ1rzwbzGD2JCmDX8B3HpgBmHG1VJbAFvfunz_Q/viewform?usp=sf_link Cheers! Katy

2019 Powered Two Wheel Registrations - The upward trend continues

MCIA: 08 January 2020

Powered two wheeler sales grow in 2019

In contrast to many retail markets, sales of motorcycles, scooters and other Powered Light Vehicles (PLVs) grew in 2019.

The year saw a total of 107,408 registrations, a 1.5% increase over 2018 and the continuation of the trend seen since the financial crisis.

Demand for traditional motorcycles from enthusiasts remained stable, but growth was particularly evident among smaller vehicles, often used by commuters and delivery services.

With their light weight, ease of parking, and ultra-low or zero emissions, more and more people are realising that powered light vehicles (PLVs) represent a perfect alternative to traffic-bound cars and vans, with the added benefit of reduced commuting costs and time. In addition, many electric PLVs feature removable batteries that can be charged at home or work, from a conventional wall socket.

More detailed registration information can be found at: mcia.co.uk/en/market-intelligence

Notes for Editors:

The MCIA is the body that represents the UK Powered Light Vehicle (PLV) industry. PLVs are defined as lightweight scooters, motorcycles, tricycles and quadricycles, typically with zero or low-emission power.

Also known as L-Category vehicles, they are an answer to the traffic congestion and air quality challenges created by personal and goods transportation.

The Route to Tomorrow's Journeys is the MCIA policy document highlighting the vital role that PLVs can play in future transport. It can be downloaded at mcia.co.uk/en/the-route

For more information about the work of the MCIA and Powered Light Vehicles, or to interview MCIA CEO, Tony Campbell, please contact Nick Broomhall, Communications Manager, at n.broomhall@mcia.co.uk or call 07590 168714.

Following on, I'm sure from that, this from Road Safety gb

Motorcycles a ‘perfect alternative’ to traffic-bound cars

(from:Road Safety GB: 9 January 2020)



While the overall new car market declined once again in 2019, the number of new powered two wheeler registrations increased for a second consecutive year.

Figures published by the Motorcycle Industry Association (MCIA) on 8 January reveal there were 107,408 new powered two wheelers (PTW) registered in 2019 – up 1.5% from 2018: <https://mcia.co.uk/en/market-intelligence>

This follows a 0.3% rise between 2017 and 2018.

Meanwhile, data published by the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT) earlier this month shows the UK new car market declined by 2.4% in 2019, with annual registrations falling for a third straight year: <https://roadsafetygb.org.uk/news/call-for-measures-to-increase-uptake-of-low-emission-vehicles/>

The MCIA figures show a 20% rise in the sales of 0-50cc bikes, while there was a small rise in the 51-125cc category.

The MCIA says more and more people are recognising smaller bikes provide a ‘perfect alternative’ to traffic-bound cars and vans – with their light weight and ease of parking.

It also points to the trend towards people favouring ultra-low and zero emission vehicles as another reason for the increased popularity of smaller bikes.

FEMA

European motorcyclists say: ‘let car drivers ride a light motorcycle’

- [FEMA news](#)

by [WimTaal](#) - January 8, 2020



A large majority of European motorcyclists want car drivers to have easier access to light motorcycles.

Motorcyclists say car licence holders should be allowed to ride an A1 motorcycle, as long as they take some motorcycle lessons to master riding a two-wheeled vehicle. The survey also shows that – according to motorcyclists – such a licence should be valid throughout the European Union.

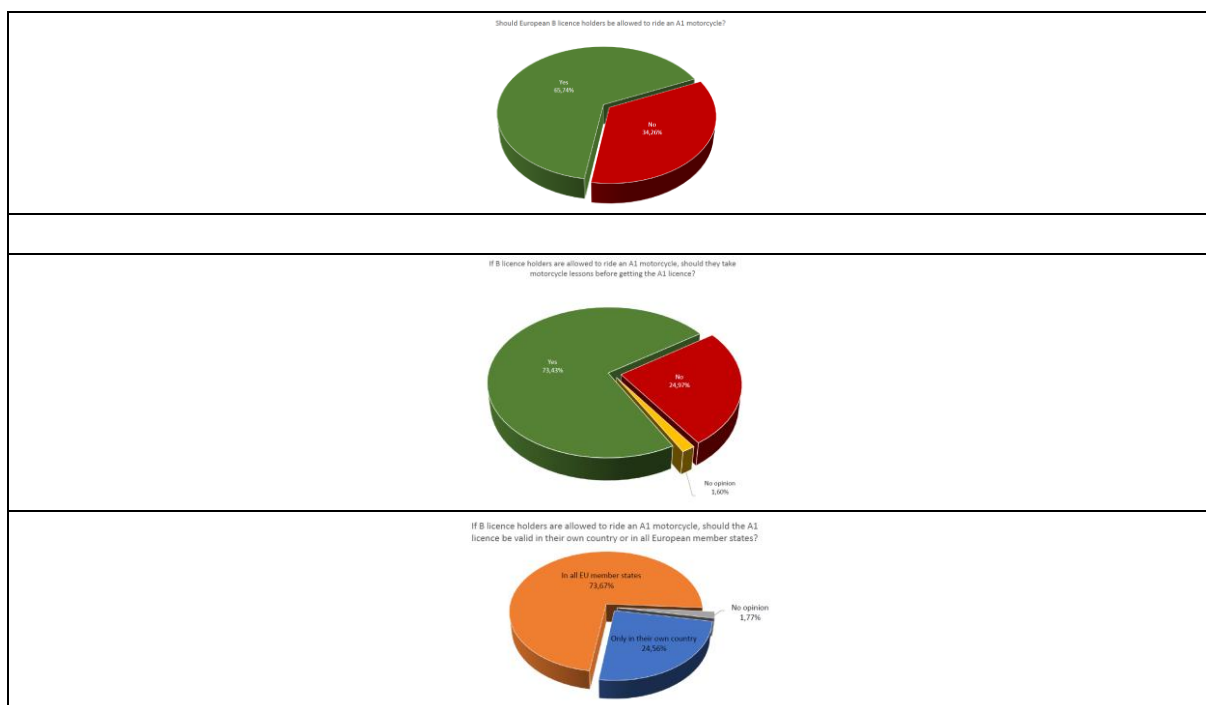
In some European countries, car licence holders (B licence) are already allowed to ride an A1 motorcycle, a motorcycle of 125cc, but there is no coherent European policy on this matter. FEMA conducted a small on-line survey to find out how European riders think about this. A total of 2,875 persons responded to the survey.

A1 motorcycles are bikes with a cylinder capacity not exceeding 125 cubic centimetres (7.6 cu in) and a power not exceeding 11 kilowatts (15 hp); and motor tricycles with a power not exceeding 15 kilowatts (20 hp).

An A1 licence can (in most countries) be obtained from the age of 16 years (17 years in the UK, 18 years in Denmark, Greece, Belgium and the Netherlands).

B licence holders in the following countries are allowed to drive A1 motorcycles within their own country (source: Wikipedia):

- Czech Republic (only motorcycles with automatic transmission)
- Germany (to be introduced, after completing 9 driving school units of 90 minutes)
- Italy (after a training of 10 hours)
- Latvia (after a training of 10 hours)
- Malta (after a training of 10 hours)
- Slovakia (after two years and only motorcycles with automatic transmission)
- Spain (after three years)
- Poland (after three years)
- Portugal (at least 25 years old or additional licence for mopeds)
- Belgium (only with a Belgian Driving Licence, after two years)
- Austria (after five years, training of 6 hours)
- France (after two years, a training of 7 hours)
- Luxembourg (after two years, training of 7 hours)
- United Kingdom (Compulsory Basic Training), a practical training without exam is needed



To download all the survey results as a pdf go to: http://www.fema-online.eu/website/wp-content/uploads/documents_library/FEMA_survey_BtoA1_results_January2020.pdf

Written by [WimTaal](#)

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

Swedish motorcycle organizations contribute to a sustainable society

FEMA News by [WimTaal](#) - January 13, 2020



“It is a huge success to SMC that the government and parliament stimulate the use of powered two-wheelers and see these vehicles as smart, space-efficient and environmentally friendly vehicles that contribute to sustainable cities”, says Jesper Christensen, general secretary from Swedish motorcyclists’ organization SMC.

Everyone who rides a powered two-wheeler understands our choice of vehicle contributes positively to the environment. Everyone is also well aware that there is potential for improvement in this area. Thus, the Swedish Motorcyclists Association SMC and the Swedish Motorcyclists and Snowmobile Association Svemo have written a joint sustainability report. It is a unique initiative since no motor organization has done anything like it anywhere in the world. 65,000 copies of the report have been sent together with SMC’s member

magazine to all SMC-members: http://www.fema-online.eu/website/wp-content/uploads/documents_library/SMC_Sustainability_Report_V2.pdf

The heart of SMC's and Svemo's operations are 150,000 members, hundreds of clubs and thousands of volunteers that make it possible to conduct motorcycle sports, motorcycle training, transport, commuting, rallying, information, public affairs, meetings and loads of activities for motorcyclists. The sustainability report describes the non-profit work within the organizations, the impacts from the activities on society socially and financially and also the efforts from the organizations to minimize environmental impact.

"Volunteers in SMC and Svemo invest hundreds of thousands of hours around the country, which gives the society huge profits, especially financially and socially. Our operations contribute to increased safety, community, diversity, equality and security in the society", say Per Westling and Jesper Christensen, General Secretaries of Svemo and SMC.

Emission requirements were introduced later for motorcycles compared to cars. Since 1999, emissions of carbon monoxide and hydrocarbon in Sweden have decreased by 94 percent and emissions of nitrogen oxides by 50 percent. Now, various electric motorcycles are starting to emerge in the market, both for competition and on the roads. In 2018 the Swedish government and parliament decided on several new regulations in order to stimulate the purchase of fossil free powered two-wheelers. One initiative was subsidies to all those who bought electric motorcycles and mopeds with €1,000. Another important decision from the government was that all motorcycles and mopeds can ride in all environmental zones in Swedish cities. One effect was that the proportion of new electric motorcycles in Sweden grew faster than cars in 2018.

"It is a huge success to SMC that the government and parliament stimulate the use of powered two-wheelers and see these vehicles as smart, space-efficient and environmentally friendly vehicles that contribute to sustainable cities", says Jesper Christensen from SMC.

"Svemo has been involved in strategic environmental work for over 20 years with a number of concrete measures. These include environmental certification of tracks and lowered noise levels. Outsiders are often surprised that motorcyclists from Svemo are invited by municipalities to ride in the nature around the tracks. A result is that the nature can be kept open without being sprayed by pesticides. The motorcycles cause a constant disturbance which means that no single plant can take over which means that the riders increase the biodiversity. Right now, a number of projects are taking place in Sweden where our clubs have received nature conservation grants for this work", says Per Westling from Svemo.

AA crews instructed not to stop on smart motorways

(from: Road Safety GB: 21 January 2020)



Image: Highways England

Following recent media coverage, the AA has confirmed its patrols are told not to stop on smart motorways – but says it is not alone in providing such guidance.

Earlier this month, the BBC's Inside Out programme featured a segment on smart motorways, during which former AA patrolman of the year Tony Rich said crews are instructed to wait for a broken down vehicle to be towed to a safer location by Highways England.

The story was picked up by the Express, who wrote: "smart motorway networks are considered so dangerous AA breakdown crews are not allowed to stop on the roads to help stricken motorists.": <https://www.express.co.uk/life-style/cars/1230896/smart-motorway-aa-highways-england-breakdown-road-safety>

Responding to that statement, the AA confirmed its crews are advised not to stop on smart motorways – but says this has been a long-held policy, which also applies to recovery agents from other organisations.

The AA – along with Highways England, the National Police Chiefs Council, the Home Office and several other recovery agents – are signed up to 'SURVIVE', where safety and best practice rules and policies for road workers are produced and applied: <http://www.survivegroup.org/pages/home>

The SURVIVE policy document says:

Should a technician come across a casualty vehicle or arrive at the scene of a live running lane breakdown on a motorway where;

- *the traffic officer patrol, police or other relevant transport authority are not attending*
- *or either a safe working area has not been created*
- *or, if applicable, the casualty vehicle has not been moved to a place of safety,*

they should not attempt to stop and provide assistance. The technician should instead call the police on 999 at the earliest opportunity and provide the details of the casualty vehicle and its location:

http://www.survivegroup.org/download_files/SURVIVE%20Best%20Practice%20Guidelines%20v418.pdf

Edmund King, president of the AA, said: “It is not safe for breakdown organisations to recover vehicles unless the lane is closed and has a physical presence sat behind the casualty vehicle.

“This is either the police with blue flashing lights or Highways England traffic officers with red flashing lights.”

Edmund King, AA president

Smart motorways – a controversial issue

First introduced in 2006 (on the M42), smart motorways use variable speed limits to manage traffic and tackle stop-start congestion.

There are two types of smart motorway in the UK. The first, often referred to as ‘dynamic’, is where the hard shoulder is opened to traffic during busy periods. The second is where the hard shoulder is open all the time.

The controversy surrounding smart motorways relates to safety – despite Highways England’s repeated assurances they are as safe as the wider motorway network: <https://roadsafetygb.org.uk/news/smart-motorways-as-safe-as-wider-motorway-network-highways-england/>

Statistics published by the Express reveal nine people were killed in collisions on the smart motorway network last year: <https://www.express.co.uk/life-style/cars/1230896/smart-motorway-aa-highways-england-breakdown-road-safety>

The AA has been a long-term cynic of smart motorways. Speaking passionately about the issue at the 2019 National Road Safety Conference, Mr King called for Highways England to double the number of emergency refuge areas: <https://roadsafetygb.org.uk/news/watch-smart-motorways-passionately-debated-at-national-conference/>

He also criticised the amount of time it currently takes to reach a vehicle which has broken down in a live lane.

Highways England has committed to reducing the distance between emergency refuge areas to one mile apart on new smart motorway schemes (beginning construction in 2020).

The Government agency also says it is enhancing emergency areas by installing extra signage, using the internationally recognised SOS text and marking the bays in a high-visibility orange colour to make them as easy as possible to spot.

Despite this, in October, transport secretary Grant Shapps announced that the DfT would conduct an “evidence stock take” to gather facts and make recommendations about the future of smart motorways: <https://roadsafetygb.org.uk/news/government-orders-review-into-smart-motorways/>

And, whether or not you saw the Panorama programme, here it is pretty much summed up:-

38 people killed on smart motorways in last five years, BBC Panorama reveals



(from:RAC: 27th Jan 2020)

Smart motorway infrastructure is “shockingly careless” and endangering people’s lives, according to a former government minister.

The number of people killed is surprisingly high for these hard-shoulder-free motorways that make up a small proportion of the road network in England.

The BBC also learned that smart motorway ‘near-misses’ have increased dramatically.

A stretch of one of England’s major roads has seen a 20-fold increase in these incidents in the five years since being converted to a smart motorway.

The hard shoulder was removed from a section of Greater London’s orbital motorway, the M25, in 2014 to make way for an extra driving lane.

The BBC found there have been 1,485 near misses since the overhaul – incidents “with the potential to cause injury or ill health.”

In the previous five years, there were just 72.

The BBC’s Freedom of Information (FOI) request also found a warning sign for the stretch of road had been out of action for 336 days.

Transport Secretary, Grant Shapps believes smart motorways are too confusing for drivers. “We absolutely have to have these as safe or safer than regular motorways or we shouldn’t have them at all,” he said.

Proposed Government reforms are set to be unveiled shortly, while planned improvements include fitting radar across the whole smart motorway network.

Currently, the stationary-car detection technology is only in use on two sections of the M25.

Stranded motorists wait an average of 17 minutes to be spotted on the motorway, and a further 17 minutes before they are rescued.

Meanwhile, former minister, Sir Mike Penning told the BBC he was misled about the risks of removing hard shoulders.

A 2010 trial featured emergency safety refuges, on average every 600 metres. Once rolled-out, however, the same refuge areas only appeared up to 2.5 miles apart.

“They are endangering people's lives... There are people that are being killed and seriously injured on these roads, and it should never have happened.”

Sir Mike Penning, former Minister of State for Transport

The RAC found that more than two-thirds (68%) of drivers in England believe removing the hard shoulder compromises safety for those who break down in a live lane.

Around 72% are worried about not being able to reach an emergency area if they break down.

An all-party group of MPs, led by Sir Penning, will publish a report condemning Highways England of “a shocking degree of carelessness”.

They believe smart motorway works should be suspended until further research has been completed.

Reacting to the BBC Panorama report that indicates smart motorways are to be fitted with radar technology and more SOS areas in order to improve safety, RAC head of roads policy Nicholas Lyes said:

“A commitment to install stopped vehicle detection technology on the whole smart motorway network would be a welcome step and something the RAC has called for consistently in recent years.

"RAC research suggests that more than two-thirds of drivers believe that permanently removing the hard shoulder compromises safety in the event of a breakdown:

<https://www.rac.co.uk/drive/news/motoring-news/68-of-drivers-say-smart-motorways-compromise-safety/>

“Simply ploughing on with the status quo regardless isn’t an option anymore. However, three years to install this across the network is a long time to wait and questions must be asked as to why this hasn’t already been rolled out universally to date.

“In the meantime, we would suggest Highways England gives consideration to installing extra cameras to help pick up vehicles in trouble on live lanes to help mitigate for the delay. It is vital that drivers have confidence in the road infrastructure that they are using.

“In addition to this, we have long said the distance between SOS areas was too big so we would welcome a commitment to install more to increase the chances of vehicles being able to reach one in the event of a breakdown and a widescale public information campaign.”

Smart motorways – our current position

Highways England has released the following statement to the media in relation to recent commentary about smart motorways.

Published 29 January 2020

From:

[Highways England](#)



A Highways England spokesperson said:

Any death on our roads is one too many, and our deepest sympathies remain with the family and friends of those who lost their lives.

The Transport Secretary has asked the Department for Transport to carry out, at pace, an evidence stocktake to gather the facts about smart motorway safety. We are committed to safety and are supporting the Department in its work on this.

Further information

Recovery operators

- Vehicle recovery operators are never expected to work in a live lane, and their safety – and the safety of all road users – is our top priority.
- Measures should be in place to ensure this is the case (e.g. emergency traffic management, reduced speed limits and Traffic Officer support) before recovery operators attend a broken-down motorist. Vehicle recovery operators can also get to broken down motorists in emergency areas on smart motorways which are safer than working on a hard shoulder as they are set back from the live carriageway.
- Smart motorways have safety mitigations that are not present on other types of high-speed road, for example variable speed limits and Red X, and we have also worked closely with the recovery industry to develop guidance on safe recovery. This involved carrying out a successful joint exercise to test different recovery scenarios.

Stopped vehicle detection

- Incident detection is already in place on all smart motorways.
- Stopped vehicle detection, operational on the M25 and in construction on the M3, uses scanning radar to identify stopped vehicles, set signs and alert our control rooms. It is effective in all weathers and at all levels of traffic.
- However, this is just one of the systems in place on smart motorways, including CCTV, incident detection, SVD and emergency areas – to keep drivers safe. The stopped vehicle detection system employed to date uses radar technology (radio waves) to detect stationary vehicles on motorways.

Red X signals

- It has always been an offence to ignore a red X.

- Police are now able to use cameras as part of the enforcement of red X.
Get further information about [smart motorways](#)

General enquiries - Members of the public should contact the Highways England customer contact centre on 0300 123 5000.

Media enquiries - Journalists should contact the Highways England press office on 0844 693 1448 and use the menu to speak to the most appropriate press officer.

Birmingham: cars could be banned from driving through city centre

(from:BBC: 13 January 2020)

Birmingham City Council's transport plan seeks to cut traffic and reduce pollution

Private cars will be banned from taking "through trips" across Birmingham city centre under plans to cut pollution.

Vehicles will be able to drive into the city, but would have to go back out to the ring road to access other areas.

In a newly published transport plan the city council is also looking at rerouting the A38 and bringing in a 20mph limit on residential roads: <https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/transportplan>

It said it wanted to encourage the greater use of public transport, walking and cycling.

Image caption The A38 could be rerouted to an "upgraded ring road" and the city's tunnels used for public transport only

The council, which has been given a "final warning" to improve its air quality, already intends to introduce a clean-air zone this year.

Under the plans, no private vehicles would be allowed to travel through the centre, and could only come in and out from certain areas.

The proposals mean:

- People can still drive into the city from certain areas but would have to drive back out using the surrounding ring road
- Journeys straight through the city centre would not be allowed
- Public transport would be the "preferred choice" for travelling in and out of the city
- City centre streets would be pedestrianised and integrated with public transport

In the document, cabinet member for transport and the environment at the Labour-run council Waseem Zaffar said: "The more journeys we take by walking and cycling, the more we will improve air quality and our health and the more we will reduce congestion."

The plan also says the council will look to introduce measures to reduce parking and could also redevelop some of its car parks.

The A38 could be rerouted to an "upgraded ring road" and the city's tunnels used for public transport only.

There could also be restrictions on lorries making daytime deliveries.

Richard Lobban, 36, a truck driver who lives in Moseley, said early starts for his job meant he could not use public transport to get to his depot in Aldridge, Walsall.

He said he and his partner had just put their home up for sale to move further out of Birmingham, but the council's plans meant he would now "only go into the city centre if I'm paid to or told to".

"I'm away all week with work and have to get up at about 1 or 2am sometimes and so public transport isn't going to work for me," he said.

"I see the area they're talking about getting bigger and any charges just getting bigger, so we want to be far enough out for it not to affect us.

"Everyone likes the comfort of their car, I understand that, and something has to be done, but it's only going to get worse on the roads because everyone will be on the same routes."

Caz Dillon, from Marston Green, who has been commuting into the city for seven months, said: "I think it would be great to see a city centre with no cars, reduced pollution, help with the emissions process, but there is absolutely no way on earth that we can do that because our public transport system is so atrocious and so unreliable.

"That is why people drive because you just cannot rely on our train service and until they get that sorted they haven't got a hope in hell to try and ban cars.

"In London, you have got no problems using the Tube but here, in the second city it is atrocious. Even smaller cities like Manchester are streets ahead of where we are with public transport."

Analysis - Kathryn Stanczyszyn, BBC WM political reporter

The car used to be king in Birmingham - the city council says that crown must now be taken by public transport.

By far the biggest headline of these plans is radical changes to how traffic moves through the city centre, with the possibility of the A38 closing to private vehicles, and access in and out allowed only from certain points on the city's ring road.

The Labour-run local authority says it's time to stop tinkering at the edges and make real change to improve air quality.

But critics are concerned that business will be hit hard, and that for the motorist - already braced for a Clean Air Charge and a workplace parking tax - it's a move that's too big to stomach.

The council said the measures were designed to reduce impact on the environment as part of its commitment to becoming a carbon-neutral city by 2030, eliminate danger on the roads and revitalise the city centre.

However, the Conservative opposition said it showed how "out of touch" the authority was.

Councillor Robert Alden said: "Their plans to close the tunnels will bring the city to a standstill, destroying jobs and pushing more congestion and pollution to the residential areas on the edge of the ring road."

Subject to approval by the council's cabinet on 21 January, a consultation on the plan will begin on 28 January.

Car ban and tram extension proposed in 10-year vision for Edinburgh

(From:BBC: 10 January 2020)

Large parts of Edinburgh's city centre could be pedestrianised and the tramline extended under a radical 10-year vision for the capital.

City of Edinburgh Council has published its draft city mobility plan in a bid to become carbon neutral by 2030:

<https://democracy.edinburgh.gov.uk/documents/s12642/City%20Mobility%20Plan.pdf>

George Street would be shut to vehicles by 2025 and the tram network extended by the end of the decade.

The council said it planned to reinvest money raised by a workplace parking levy in improving public transport.

The final vision envisages widespread commuting by bike, integrated public transport and a largely car-free city centre.

George Street would be closed to traffic as well as parts of the Old Town including parts of the Royal Mile, Victoria Street and Cockburn Street.

A review of the city's bus network could involve halting vehicles from Princes Street by creating hubs at either end of the city centre.

A "seamless" integrated ticketing system would allow passengers to use all modes of public transport, including the bike hire scheme.

Council leaders said they had drawn inspiration from cities such as Copenhagen, Sydney and Paris as well as UK-initiatives in Manchester and London.

If approved by the council's transport committee, an eight week public consultation will begin in February with finalised proposals expected later in the year.

Transforming Edinburgh - key milestones

2022

- Tram route to Newhaven will be complete
- A comprehensive review of bus routes in the city will have taken place
- The Low Emissions Zone will be in place

2025

- A comprehensive mass rapid transit plan for the city and region will be completed.
- The business case for a north south tram line will be agreed, linking Granton to the Bio Quarter and beyond
- A new bus strategy will be agreed, including stops, routes, and public transport interchanges.
- George Street will be transformed
- Air pollution levels will have been significantly reduced following the introduction of a low emission cordon around the city centre and the city boundary
- Income from a workplace parking levy will have been invested in public transport.

2030

- The mass transit network, including tram routes, will have been extended west to Newbridge - connecting the Waterfront to the Royal Infirmary
- The city's seven park and rides will be upgraded
- Arterial routes will be being used for "mass commuting by bike"
- The city centre will be largely car-free
- Iconic streets will be pedestrianised
- Seamless ticketing will allow passengers to move between different forms of transport.

'More liveable'

Council leader Adam McVey said: "We're already making great strides towards reducing carbon emissions in Edinburgh but, if we are to achieve our 2030 target, now is the time to be even bolder and more ambitious."

Deputy council leader Cammy Day said: "I think it's the right thing to do to make the city centre more liveable. It won't stop people from going to George Street."

The consultation includes a proposal to introduce congestion charging "if necessary" but the council leader said the administration had no firm plans for such a measure..

Green councillor Gavin Corbett said: "There is a huge amount to welcome in the draft plan which could and should improve quality of life in the city in so many ways: tackling congestion, pollution, poor health, social isolation and road safety.

"As the examples within the plan from across the world show, there is only one credible direction for Edinburgh.

"The status quo simply leaves the city further behind as other cities take dramatic steps towards public transport and cycling and walking."

Cardiff intends to impose a £2 daily congestion charge on all [vehicles](#) from outside the city under plans to tackle traffic and [pollution](#).

The city will target non-residents in an attempt to get more people to travel by train, bus and [bicycle](#).

A transport plan published by Cardiff council yesterday said that it favoured a London-style congestion charge levied on all vehicles that enter a restricted central zone. The charge is scheduled to be introduced by late 2024 under proposals to improve public transport.

A report published by the council said that Cardiff had dangerously high levels of nitrogen dioxide pollution, with up to 227 premature deaths a year in some parts of the city because of poor air quality. Road transport is "the main cause of air pollution", the report said.

As an alternative to the congestion charge, Cardiff could impose a "workplace parking levy" — a charge on city centre businesses to encourage commuting by public transport. Nottingham is the only British city with such a levy. Other proposals include an ultra-low emission zone which charges owners of the most polluting vehicles.

Towns and cities across Britain are drawing up measures to tackle pollution. [York has proposed](#) a ban on private cars in the city centre, Bristol wants to restrict diesel cars at peak hours, [Oxford is proposing](#) charges for all non-electric or hydrogen-powered vehicles and on Monday Birmingham announced plans for a ban on private vehicles travelling through the city. Durham has a £2 daily congestion charge.

A study by Birmingham University, published in *Environmental Research Letters* last month, found that Cardiff had the fourth-worst air quality in Britain relative to its size, traffic volume and population. London, which has imposed the toughest measures to cut pollution, was 73rd.

Cardiff's congestion charge could be enforced using automatic number plate recognition cameras. Motorcycles, disabled drivers and emergency vehicles would be exempt.

Central London introduced a weekday congestion charge 17 years ago, which is now £11.50 a day. Residents living in the centre are eligible for a 90 per cent discount. Last year an ultra-low emission zone operating seven days a week and costing owners of polluting vehicles £12.50 was introduced. Residents have an exemption until late next year to buy a compliant car.

Cardiff is consulting on the plans, which would include other measures such as a blanket 20mph speed limit. Caro Wild, a councillor, said: "Anyone who has been stuck in traffic in the

city knows that something has to be done. Inaction will only lead to more gridlock, more pollution and more damage to our health and the Environment.

Motorcycles, Disabled Drivers and Emergency Vehicles would be exempt.

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/outside-face-2-fee-to-drive-into-cardiff-212j79jrx?shareToken=0811bbdededeb7cb9134bb12512406f0>

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