

BMF News Update September 2025

The monthly news round-up, brought to you by the BMF



Lobbying Update

Following the recent Government re-shuffle new DfT Ministerial responsibilities have now been confirmed. The roads brief and related transport issues have now been split between three ministers with Lillian Greenwood remaining the key Minister for road safety. The new division of Ministerial responsibilities is as follows:

Lilian Greenwood:

Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State (Minister for Local Transport, including Road Safety and Active Travel)

Kier Mather

Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State (Minister for Aviation, Maritime and Decarbonisation)

Simon Lightwood

Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State (Minister for Roads and Buses, including AVs)

We still await the outcome of the Government's Integrated National Transport Strategy, to which the BMF and the National Motorcyclists Council (NMC) previously provided detailed responses, and of the new Road Safety Strategy, where any meaningful consultation with stakeholders is yet to take place. The Government's proposed date for publication of both strategies remains the end of this year. The BMF has been advised that the long-awaited review of motorcycle licensing and training is still under "active consideration" by Ministers but as yet no further details have emerged.

We have pressed officials for an update on all of these important issues for motorcycling and voiced the BMF's frustration at the lack of any tangible progress to date. The BMF and NMC continue to press for clarity from Ministers on the development of future transport and road safety strategies and we continue to make clear that future road policy development must be underpinned by a genuine partnership approach with the motorcycling sector. The Chair of the BMF, Jim Freeman has also written officially to senior DfT officials setting out the BMF's concerns and frustration at the apparent lack of progress. The NMC and BMF will be seeking a meeting with Minister Lillian Greenwood to discuss matters further and seek both clarity and ambition from government on its future plans for motorcycling as part of a genuinely integrated future transport model.

The BMF's Anna Zee submitted a detailed response to the Government's "Call for Evidence" on preparing a statement of safety principles for automated vehicles which will support the regulatory framework for the future roll-out of automated vehicles on the UK's roads as set out in the Automated Vehicles Act 2024.

Meetings Attended During September

- **Motorcycle Strategic Focus Group**

DVSA gave an update on the recent Ministerial reshuffle and the effect on DfT.

Paul Morgan, representing the NMC and BMF, said that there was considerable frustration across the motorcycle sector with the lack of progress on motorcycling issues. It was made clear that the NMC and the BMF were keen to work with the Government on developing ideas and proposals in respect of the various government strategies and reviews, with motorcycling able to make a significant contribution to the Government's road safety and future integrated transport plans and decarbonisation goals. With the Prime Minister having recently announced "Phase 2" of the Government's "Plan for Change" which was to be focused on delivery, now was the time to fully engage with the motorcycling sector.

- **PACTS Road User Behaviour Working Party (RUBWP)**

Members heard about proposed future training initiatives for young drivers and the need to further develop future micromobility options for commuting, including e-bikes and e-scooters. There was a proposal to de-regulate the motorcycle sector to enable manufacturers to better innovate into the light vehicle space. Agilysis Consultants gave an update on Road Safety Education planning at a local level with an emphasis on better training provision through improved data, evidence, evaluation and local interventions.

- **PACTS Road Environment Working Party (REWP)**

Update provided on the English Devolution and Community Empowerment Bill and its implications for Local Authorities, which will see the current responsibility for road safety development devolved to Strategic Authorities and Regional Mayors with implications for future BMF lobbying strategies.

There was an update on Project Camber will look to better connect data gathering systems to deliver better safety outcomes for road users.

- **PACTS Vehicle Design Working Party (VDWP)**

Presentations delivered on the improved design of HGVs and buses with an emphasis on improving the safety of pedestrian and other vulnerable road users through innovative design of vehicles, in particular front cab design and the further development of audible warnings to drivers.

- **LARA Steering Committee Meeting**

Various updates were provided regarding progress on various challenges by LARA against Local Authority TROs which were increasingly being used to close off access to green roads for motorised transport.

There was a wide discussion on the Government legislation on protected landscapes designed to support the Government's push to promote wider access to nature, as part of its wider Plan for Change. LARA were currently reviewing various National Landscape Management Plans issued by local authorities to identify any threats to the continued use of public vehicular highways for recreational use.

The LARA Business Plan 2024/25 to 2028/29 setting out LARA's overarching strategy for the next 4 years was agreed and signed off.

- **MCIA Off-Road Bike Sport Group**

Various updates provided by the various sporting bodies, including concerns about the current price of racing tyres with some competitors dropping out because of excessive costs. There was a discussion about continuing concern over rogue importers who are able to significantly undercut legitimate bike sellers by not paying the required VAT and import duties. A meeting will be held with HMRC in the next couple of weeks to discuss and hopefully address the issue through robust government action.

- **Road Safety Vision Zero Action Plan 2: Transport for London (TFL)**

TFL presented a draft version of their latest Action Plan and have sought detailed comments from the NMC and BMF. The plan is centred around the five pillars of the Safe System approach: Safe Speeds, Safe Streets, Safe Vehicles, Safe Behaviours and Post Collision Learning and Criminal Justice.

There was general discussion around 20 mph speed limits across London, which are seen by TFL as a generally a positive development supported by evidence showing they save lives and reduce serious injuries. While some drivers find them inconvenient, 20 mph limits also lead to benefits such as improved air quality, reduced noise, and fewer economic costs from collisions.

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In Other News

Some good news to kick off with this month - **Snake Pass** has been saved! The legendary A57 over the Pennine was facing complete closure thanks to landslips which were undermining the twisty tarmac. The Department for Transport has now stumped up £7.6 million for stabilisation and other improvements. Meanwhile, **Surrey Police are cracking down on illegal driving and riding** – Operation Downsway, an annual summer campaign across Surrey and Sussex. Surrey Police stopped 407 motorcyclists and 394 drivers. Downsway targets speeding, not wearing a seatbelt, phone use while driving, drink/drug driving and careless driving.

The Welsh 20mph limit appears to have reduced casualties. Not everyone loves the 'Welsh 20,' but since the limit was introduced in September 2023 (yes, it's been two years already) casualties across Welsh roads have dropped by 25%, with 14 fewer deaths. Welsh local authorities now have greater powers to revert to a 30 limit where appropriate. While speed limits head downwards, there are **fewer police on**

UK roads – the number of traffic police has fallen by over 20% since 2015. Less than 4000 now compared to just over 5000 a decade ago.

Sadly, the closure of motorcycle dealerships continues, and the latest appears to be multi-outlet dealer M&P. One of Britain's leading dealerships, M&P was bought by an investor group earlier this year, but its Swansea outlet and H-D dealership have since closed, and the company's website is now under 'temporary closure,' putting this down to a store update or website maintenance. Whilst we're on gloomy news, the **electric race series MotoE has been put on hold** until further notice. The FIM and organisers Dorna Sports blamed a lack of following to continue with the 2026 season. And **the training industry is suffering from a shortage of instructors**, according to Phoenix Motorcycle Training. Phoenix reckon they could have trained up more new riders this year, if they'd had enough instructors.

And finally, how did you pay for your bike? PCP, traditional finance, buy outright? **Well now there's another option – leasing**. Leasing comparison site Leasing.com, which already offers lease deals on cars and vans, is now offering a similar service for motorcycles and scooters – a Honda CB1000 would set you back £177 a month. It's currently for fleets only, but leasing for private buyers is on the way.

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