

BMF News Round-Up May 2026

Political & Lobbying

- **Road Safety Strategy Consultation**

The BMF has now formally responded to the consultation on the Government's new Road Safety Strategy. We did so as part of a comprehensive joint response covering the motorcycling sector. This was co-ordinated by the National Motorcyclists Council (NMC), the Motorcycle Industry Association (MCIA) and the National Motorcycle Dealers Association (NMDA) bringing together the collective views of riders, manufacturers, retailers and rider training and safety organisations across the motorcycling sector.

In the response to the consultation, we put forward detailed proposals for reform of the current training, testing and licensing regime, supporting the development of a new "progressive access" regime to allow riders to upgrade their licence categories through structured training courses rather than repeated practical tests. At the same time we have made clear that, whilst the proposed consultation is welcome, what is needed is a commitment from government to develop a stand-alone motorcycle strategy; one that delivers not only improved rider safety through better training, infrastructure and road design, but that also fully recognises motorcycling's contribution to decarbonisation, congestion reduction, and the development of more efficient urban and rural transport model with powered two wheelers forming a key part of a sustainable future transport model.

Ministers will now consider the consultation responses received, as well as the outcome of separate discussions held earlier this year between the motorcycling sector and the **Road Transport Minister Lillian Greenwood MP**. The Government's aim is to publish their response to the consultation in the autumn, which will include details of what will happen next with indicative timings.

- **Potholes**

The BMF attended a meeting with Simon Lightwood MP (Parliamentary Under Secretary of State Minister for Roads and Buses) as part of a high-level delegation of the Pothole Partnership to press for a resolution to the current pothole crisis. We have called for the delivery of a new approach, both nationally and at local level, to deliver better quality permanent pothole repairs together with more effective monitoring of those repairs. The aim should be to ensure local authorities are targeting pothole funding appropriately and fully meeting their performance targets. The Minister accepted the real risks motorcyclists face in riding on poorly maintained roads. He said that the Government's new transport strategy "Better Connected" would focus on an approach that prioritised long-term preventative roads maintenance supported by a new delivery and compliance framework. The overall aim was to deliver better road safety outcomes for all road users.

- **Compendium of Motorcycling Statistics**

The BMF is currently co-funding a piece of work through the National Motorcyclists Council (NMC) being carried out by Agilisys, a well-respected research and analytical company with expertise in public health, transport and behaviour change. Agilisys is particularly known for its work on road safety research. They can provide detailed road safety analysis that is evidence-based and can help in the development of strategies to reduce safety risks on the roads. We are particularly interested in working with Agilisys to develop a detailed compendium of motorcycling statistics which we can use to better understand some of the key safety issues affecting motorcyclists today. Currently, there are areas where data is sparse or absent, such as, for example, what category of licence is held by those motorcyclists involved in collisions, and what training, if any, they have previously undergone? Plugging the gaps in the current data will enable the NMC and the BMF to lobby more effectively for future improvements in motorcycling road-safety based on evidence-based analysis to drive real change.

Other Key Meetings Attended

- **PACTS Vehicle Design Group**

Transport For London gave an update on motorcyclist casualties in 2024 (340 fatalities in total, representing 21% of all deaths on the road). In terms of the specific body areas of riders suffering serious injury during collisions, 24% involved the rider's abdominal area, suggesting the mitigation potential from inflatable protective motorcycle jackets. There was currently a mismatch between injury zones affected by collisions and levels of protection afforded by the majority of motorcycle PPE, with more focus by manufacturers on rider extremities, such as shoulders, knees and hips.

There was also a presentation about next steps for the Autonomous Vehicle Act which received Royal Assent in 2024. Next steps include the development of statutory guidance and secondary legislation alongside wider international legislation. The UK's Safety Framework around AVs is expected to be based on full regulations issued by the UN. Full implementation of the Act is expected in late 2027. The BMF continues to take a close interest in AV development and input into this work to ensure that the future development of AVs does not compromise the safety of motorcyclists.

- **PACTS Road Environment Working Party**

The Government has published guidance for Local Authorities (LAs) to develop their Local Transport Plans. These should align with the central government Road Transport Strategy "Better Connected" with LAs working in partnership with local stakeholders, including emergency services, to develop their plans. There are plans to also update the current "Manual for Streets" and wider guidance on the setting of local speed limits, where the majority of respondents to a recent survey supported greater levels of enforcement to deter dangerous behaviour on the road. There was concern that National Highways have been declining to release detailed data on road collisions that is hindering the development of improved road safety mitigations.

- **PACTS Road User Behaviour Working Party**

There was a discussion around the Government's recent consultation on Road Safety with some members voicing disappointment that a system of graduated licences for young drivers was not currently on the Government's agenda. It was agreed that the focus needed to be on enabling young drivers to develop a more comprehensive driving skillset before they were able to drive solo. TyreSafe gave a presentation on how illegal tyres adversely affect ADAS systems, a fact which needed to be more widely publicised. Leeds University gave an update on work they are taking forward to improve road design specifically for neurodivergent children.

- **ROSPA National Road Safety Committee**

There was a discussion on the continuing development of fully self-driving cars. It was stated that most of the public accept that the technology is "safe" but many people continue to question the actual need for it. A separate presentation on accidents involving company drivers highlighted the fact that the majority of companies were not collecting data on collisions and near-misses, or the identification of poor driving standards by their workers. Without such data it would be impossible for companies to target interventions to improve worker and other road user safety. The Health & Safety Executive (HSE) had separately recently launched a consultation on the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) at work which closes on 30 June 2026.

- **Transport Focus**

Featured various reports from National Highways about the work they are doing. This includes improving charging facilities for electric vehicles, motorway services user surveys, needs of road user segments such as lorry drivers and coaches, etc. etc.

The BMF has asked for information on how they are planning to replace wire rope barriers; they will certainly be replaced when the barriers themselves need to be repaired. We have asked if they might be replaced if other work is required on that stretch of road and if there is an actual plan to replace them otherwise.

An interesting item was the work being done to improve the Variable Message Signs which display information on travel times. More signs will include place names together with junction numbers. This work was started when someone suggested that adding compass directions might be helpful, but research found that it was not. One got the impression motorway users don't seem to know what compass direction they are heading in.

- **SMIDSY presentation**

An employee of a company in Bristol was killed when riding a motorcycle and the company asked Phoenix Training to give a presentation to all driving employees about why drivers don't see motorcyclists and what they should do about it. The BMF was happy to be included in a presentation and discussion about the result. Phoenix, working with the University of Nottingham, hope to present this course more widely. It looks pretty good; really this ought to be something included in all driver training. Phoenix are also working on a variation of this which can inform motorcyclists similarly.

- **The Motoring Organisations' Land Access & Recreation Association (LARA) AGM & SCM**

The Active Travel (AT) Rural Design Guide was supposed to be published last year but there is still no sign of it; it is not entirely clear why. There is a suspicion that AT are having trouble defining it.

Defra seems to be suffering from a lack of direction and LARA are now meeting the 7th Public Rights of Way Officer in 2 years.

The Planning Inspectorate is not doing anything about consulting on Rights of Way.

The Green Lane Association (GLASS) have been working with the Trail Riders Fellowship on legal affairs, both with a view to heading off possible issues asap. Currently GLASS has no active legal cases.

National Landscapes: the management plans for National Landscapes etc. are being reviewed. They do vary quite a lot, not universally completely anti-motoring.

Other News

- **Wire Ropes Campaign**

The IAM RoadSmart led campaign to have the last of the old-style cable barriers removed is now live. Cable barriers, often called "Cheese cutter" barriers, pose a serious and avoidable danger to motorcyclists. In a crash they can cause severe trauma to motorcyclists, including life-changing injuries and fatalities. Nearly 150 miles of cable barriers remain on England's roads. The campaign is calling for these barriers to be removed and replaced with safer, motorcyclist-friendly alternatives. BMF Members can sign the petition via the following link or by googling IAM Road Smart and logging onto their website.

<https://www.iamroadsmart.com/safer-barriers-for-safer-roads>

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