



# June Network 2016

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

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## Editorial

I'm going to keep the editorial short this month because the most important thing in this edition, I feel, is the injunction granted to Harlow Council banning individuals from causing a nuisance by taking part in unauthorised ride outs involving motorbikes and motor vehicles.

This is the first time such an action has been granted so far as I know and, in my opinion, it has to be the last. MAG is working hard to get this rescinded. This can and should be the only outcome to this whole thing. Please keep an eye on the MAG website and face book page for updates as I can see this changing day to day.

There are facilities already in law to deal with anti social behaviour. If that is implemented appropriately there surely is no need for such wide reaching and draconian actions.

And, what is more worrying to me is this paragraph:- "The injunction will only be served and enforced on people who are gathering and causing a nuisance and carrying out antisocial behaviour." Who determines what 'causes a nuisance'?

So, I'll leave you to read the following - instead of increasing your blood pressure, Guys, read through to the end of this article on the, in my humble opinion, farcical Harlow Injunction or, again in my humble opinion, a sledgehammer to crack a nut.

As I go to print the latest is that Lembit had a meeting with Harlow officials which went well and the MAG Chair will be issuing a statement after the Bank Holiday. So, as I said, please keep a watch on MAG's face book page and the website.

Ride Free, AG.

[Acknowledgements: George Legg. Leon & Lembit. Selina Lavender. Colin Brown.  
And anyone else I've forgotten]

## Harlow Injunction.

A town-wide injunction is in force in Harlow for the next 10 months, which bans individuals from causing a nuisance by taking part in unauthorised ride outs involving motorbikes and motor vehicles.

On 19 May 2016, Harlow Council was successfully granted the injunction by the County Court at Chelmsford. The town-wide injunction, which is believed to be the first of its kind, runs until 31 March 2017.

The injunction bans groups of two or more people from taking part in unauthorised ride outs between 10am and 12midnight on any public land or public highway in Harlow. It covers ride outs involving both motorcycles and motor vehicles. Anyone breaking the injunction would be in contempt of court and may be sent to prison.

The purpose of the injunction is not and has never been about stopping those responsible riders or drivers from enjoying using their vehicles in a lawful manner.

- **Clarification statement (24 May 2016) in response to concerns and questions raised by the biking community**

Harlow Council and Essex Police have made it clear that anyone riding bikes lawfully in Harlow on the road to either meet up with friends, including driving in a convoy; drive through the town; learn to ride or teach others, or take part in a charity event, will not be served with the injunction. This is the same for anyone driving a motor vehicle.

If an event is to be organised for charity or any other occasion, which would mean a significant number of people attending, then the Council via [contact@harlow.gov.uk](mailto:contact@harlow.gov.uk) and Police should be informed so arrangements can be made to support the event.

The main aim of the injunction was to stop an unauthorised ride out event taking place on Saturday 21 May 2016, which would have attracted hundreds of young people on motorbikes and bystanders. Following a previous event held, both the Council and the Police had serious concerns about the danger this event would pose to the public, to those taking part and the wider impact on the community. Despite the Council and Police's attempts to work with and talk to the organisers there was no response. As a result of the injunction this event did not go ahead.

The injunction also aims to target a growing problem of groups of people creating a nuisance by riding bikes illegally on the streets, public highways and on green spaces in Harlow. Not only do these unauthorised ride outs cause nuisance to communities, it also puts the safety of the wider public and the riders at serious risk. Concerns are being raised by Harlow residents about persistent unauthorised gatherings causing a nuisance and antisocial behaviour, and the Council, supported by the Police, had to listen and act.

The injunction will only be served and enforced on people who are gathering and causing a nuisance and carrying out antisocial behaviour.

- **Injunction - unauthorised ride outs 19 May 2016 (pdf)**

The injunction forbids the following activities as part of an unauthorised ride out:

- Excessive noise.
- Danger to other road users including pedestrians.
- Damage or risk of damage to private property.
- Any nuisance to other persons not participating in the unauthorised ride out.
- Driving at excess speed.
- Driving in convoy.
- Racing another motor vehicle.
- Performing stunts.
- Sounding horns.
- Playing loud music.
- Dropping litter.
- Shouting or swearing at, or abusing, threatening or otherwise intimidating another person.

The injunction is one of a number of measures the Council and Police have in place to deal with a specific problem currently being experienced in Harlow. The injunction does not distract from the Police's existing powers.

This year the Essex Police have received 121 calls about motorbikes, quad bikes, pit bikes and mopeds being ridden illegally or in an antisocial manner in Harlow between March and May. This compares to 74 during the same time last year.

The Council and the Police have written to all parents of year 11 pupils in the town and attended school assemblies. The Police are also patrolling hotspot areas in the town, seizing bikes being ridden illegally and issuing warning notices under Section 59 of the Police Reform Act 2002. We are also working with petrol stations to crack down on petrol being sold to under-16s and are distributing leaflets to young people.

**<http://www.harlow.gov.uk/unauthorised-ride-outs>**

**FROM THE CHAIRMAN:** This is the text sent in email format on Monday 23 May re Harlow injunction:-

Ref: Injunction C00CM435

Copy list: Chief Executive of Harlow Council, Malcolm Morley. Chief Constable of Essex Police, Stephen Kavanagh. Police and Crime Commissioner for Essex, Roger Hirst. MAG Central Office.

I am contacting you in your position of Chief Executive of Harlow Council with genuine concerns on behalf of all members of the Motorcycle Action Group in regard to the Injunction issued to Harlow District Council by Chelmsford County Court, Claim no: C00CM435.

Our members wish to be reassured that by carrying out their day to day activities they will not fall foul of the injunction. Activities that the authors of your injunction do not seem to have considered include motorcycle training and general riding activities.

Motorcycle training: new riders have, by law, to pass a Compulsory Basic Training course before riding unaccompanied on the road. Part of this training includes riding on the road where a qualified instructor accompanies up to two learner riders. Also advanced trainers take licenced riders out of observed rides which involve two or more people on motorcycles riding together for the purpose of improving their road skills.

General riding activities: Unlike other road user groups, riders of mopeds, motorcycles, scooters, sidecars and trikes regularly enjoy meeting up to ride out together, be this to visit a café or embark on a longer journey for example a riding holiday.

Laws already exist giving the police powers to deal with those involved in anti-social behaviour. Effective policing should prevent prolonged anti-social behaviour and it should not therefore be necessary to seek the addition of an injunction.

Our members and all riders should be able to ride on the roads without fear of falling foul of an injunction just because another individual takes objection to it.

I look forward to hearing from you as I really hope I can convey a message back to our members that law-abiding riders are welcome in Harlow.

Regards, Selina Lavender  
National Chair of The Motorcycle Action Group Limited  
Tel: 01926 844064  
Fax: 01926 844065 [chair@mag-uk.org](mailto:chair@mag-uk.org). [www.mag-uk.org](http://www.mag-uk.org).

And on Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> May this MAG Statement:-

### **Harlow Injunction C00CM435**

MAG has been and continues to liaise with Harlow Council officials in connection with the issue of an injunction designed to address anti social behaviour by a minority of local motorcyclists.

MAG's discussions reflect the wide scale concern that the injunction will prejudice legitimate motorcycle gatherings, rides out and training exercises.

Harlow Council has now issued the following statement in order to clarify the situation.

"Harlow Council is very sorry that this issue has upset and angered the wider biking community. This was never our intention.....

Harlow Council and Essex Police wants to make it clear that anyone riding bikes lawfully in Harlow on the road to either meet up with friends, including driving in a convoy; drive through the town; learn to ride or teach others, or take part in a charity event, will not be served with the injunction. This is the same for anyone driving a motor vehicle. "

MAG Chair Selina Lavender said; "The clarification by Harlow Council is helpful and we welcome the included apology. We are cautiously confident that this injunction will not become an issue with implications broader than the one it was conceived to address, but we are calling upon the council to rescind this unnecessary court order."

MAG welcomes and encourages the continued support of the motorcycling community shown through membership. Please join at [www.mag-uk.org/en/membership](http://www.mag-uk.org/en/membership)  
<<http://www.mag-uk.org/en/membership>>

Alternatively contact us on 01926 844064

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## **Leon and Lembit (L&L) – MAG Policy Unit**

### **Into The Valley**

Lembit attended the opening major rally of the year, Into The Valley on the picturesque South Dalton Estate. 'I'm actually there for work,' explains Lembit, 'but it's impossible not to enjoy it. The main benefit is getting a sense of what the movement is thinking and feeling.'

### **Autonomous Vehicles and the future**

Lembit met representatives at the Department for Transport to assess the possible legislative impact on bikers of the push towards autonomous vehicles. 'I want to make sure we're not forced off the road for the sake of robocars,' explains Lembit. More to follow.

For now, Leon adds that the autonomous vehicle concept is admired by many in the UK Road Safety world. They firmly believe that taking driver's errors out of road use by replacing them with robots will make road use safer – and legislation is planned to enable it on UK roads. But, Leon's assessment is that production of *insurable* autonomous vehicles is not likely for many years to come.

### **Progress with MAG's Five Pathways proposals**

Leon has been supporting MAG's successful work to get motorcycling embedded in long term plans for improving transport in various regions. He has also been helping regional teams in fire fighting against Armadillo and Orca schemes.

A recent meeting with the policy officer of London Travel Watch revealed that in addition to removal of an Orca scheme in Brighton thanks to MAG, other schemes have also been removed – albeit with no news coverage at all. One was in the intensely pro cycling borough of Camden, and the other in the City of London.

Reasons for the first removal have not been revealed yet but we are told that the City of London scheme was monitored by CCTV which showed that over 50 pedestrians were tripped by the Armadillos in the first day(!) – so the scheme was swiftly but 'silently' taken out.

### **Local Elections: A promising political picture across the UK**

Local elections on 5th May elected members in the Scottish, Welsh and Northern Ireland devolved authorities, many UK councils and some Mayors.

The outcome in Scotland is good for MAG. The SNP remain the largest party, and MAG works well with them. Moreover, our influence on long term policy was boosted by a presentation in Edinburgh (see separate item) in Network.

In Northern Ireland, the main party, the DUP, has been engaged with regional activist Paul Wilson and Lembit, so that's good too. Labour dominates the Welsh Assembly, and, following effective work by Ian Williamson and Barrie Avery plus two presentations by Leon, the assembly looks set to proceed with trials of bikes in all bus lanes – and to shun any proposal for Armadillo or Orca schemes.

### **Follow up please**

Now that politicians have been elected for their next term of office, it is a good time to make fresh contact with them. L&L ask all activists to liaise via regional reps to make sure that key politicians are reminded that MAG exists and what we can do to help them deliver progress for their constituents.

Please download a suggested letter to send to elected politicians at [https://wiki.mag-uk.org/index.php/File:Election\\_congratulations.docx](https://wiki.mag-uk.org/index.php/File:Election_congratulations.docx). Or call HQ and we'll be happy to assist. 'Do write to your newly elected politicians,' says Lembit. 'This makes a huge difference to our credibility and profile. The benefit, measured in influence, lasts for years.'

### **Biker friendly London Mayor?**

Leon had a conversation about MAG and motorcycling by chance with Sadiq Khan before the election and Sadiq said it was very useful and informative.

Following that and our requests for statements from him and his nearest rival, Zac Goldsmith MP, London now has a Sadiq as the new Mayor – and he has made a range of promises to work with MAG and improve the way that bikers and motorcycling are treated in the Capital.

Pre-election promises for bikers are of course prone to sliding down agendas for action once results are declared. However, Leon has already set wheels in motion to start informal talks with the key people in the new Mayor's policy team – and to start an ongoing engagement with MAG including our new London Region Rep, Tim Fawthrop.

## **Edinburgh**

Regional Rep for Scotland and MAG Director Steve Wykes has worked tirelessly to get MAG's proposals for progress taken increasingly seriously for many years. The latest result of that work was a big step forwards. The Chair of Edinburgh's Transport Forum allocated an hour long slot for a presentation by Leon.

This was well received by most in the room but most significantly by George Lowder MBE. He was giving the next presentation and is the Chief Executive of a relatively new and highly influential body called Transport for Edinburgh. He instantly acknowledged the need for more attention to be paid to bikers and motorcycling – and invited MAG to help refine their strategy for improvement that is due for sign off and implementation in 2017.

## **23rd June: EU decision day**

The European Union referendum on 23rd June. MAG has chosen not to guide members how to vote, as this would be impossibly divisive. Lembit was given space in Motor Cycle News to outline MAG's position. In Issue 65 of The Road, two biking MPs, Chris Law (SNP for IN) plus Steve Baker (Conservative for OUT) make their views known.

## **Government Consultations**

Please check up for local government consultations in your area, because local authorities have lots of power to change laws for better or worse. If you're not sure how to do this, just get in touch with Leon and Lembit at HQ, and we'll happily assist. We do the same thing nationally each week.

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# **MAG Position Statement Autonomous Vehicles**

## **History**

Driverless cars and other autonomous vehicles have been discussed for decades. Politicians and road planners see many advantages to having a vehicle controlled by technology. However, history proves technology is not infallible.

## **Reality**

Technology has the ability to make road travel safer, for example with improved emergency stopping times. The UK Government seeks to lead the world in autonomous vehicle technology. Claimed benefits include denser use of road space, reductions in road casualties and convenience. The Department for Transport has laid out a non-statutory Autonomous Vehicles Code of Practice. The Code outlines the definition of an autonomous vehicle, considerations for manufacturers and operators and the status of such vehicles in law during the testing phase. Autonomous vehicles already operate in some locations, such as airports and factories, using various technologies.

There are drawbacks to reliance on technology, including the risk of systems being 'hacked' or overridden, the removal of human control in an emergency and insurance liability.

### **Currently**

The UK Government is in discussion with a number of manufacturers to allow autonomous vehicles on our roads. This includes regulation for commercial on-road use. This could affect human-operated vehicles – for instance allocation of existing highway space exclusively for autonomous vehicles, with human-controlled machines prohibited from entering these areas.

### **MAG position**

MAG does not oppose the freedom of the individual/individuals to choose the vehicle they wish to travel in. MAG has no objection in principle to the operation of autonomous vehicles on public roads -providing they can reliably detect all other road users and take necessary action regardless of the size, speed or angle of approach of all vehicles, persons or animals.

MAG does however oppose further erosion of road space to facilitate autonomous vehicles. This would generate congestion and infringe the rider's right to choose the desired route and freedom of movement. Evidence shows such restrictions are also counter-productive in terms of pollution, traffic flow and safety. Rather, the technology should integrate into existing road infrastructure arrangements.

For autonomous vehicles to operate on our roads the question of liability needs to be fully resolved beyond reasonable doubt. MAG is eager to participate in consultations and to work directly with the Department for Transport in a measured, data-based and equitable manner that balances developments with the rights of all road users, to have access to road space without prejudice favouring autonomous vehicles.

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## **Ride to Work Week - will highlight benefits of motorcycle commuting**

A week-long campaign, which aims to highlight the benefits of commuting by motorcycle or scooter, will take place between 20-26 June.

Ride to Work Week 2016 has been organised by the Motorcycle Industry Association (MCIA), who are adopting the campaign slogan #commutehappy.

The MCIA points to a report by the Office for National Statistics which shows that travelling to work via motorcycle, scooter and moped was found to have no negative impact on wellbeing on journeys up to 30 minutes long.

This was in contrast to those using the bus, cycling, driving or walking, who all experienced a negative impact after just 15 minutes.

Ride to Work Week will also be used to highlight other benefits including reducing congestion for all road users and saving time and money.



In the lead up to the event, the MCIA and the National Police Chiefs' Council have produced a framework of actions considering the idea that more powered two wheelers on the roads would increase awareness and reduce accidents.

During the week, riders will be able share their Ride to Work Week photos via the campaign's Facebook and Twitter pages to show why their mode of transport is so enjoyable.

Events will be held across the UK for the public and for employees at motorcycle friendly businesses. These range from 'bikers breakfasts' to VIP parking and free CBTs for non-riding staff.

The Ride to Work Week team will also put on a programme of events and 'Get On' free ride opportunities in Northamptonshire, where the county council is the first in the UK to actively encourage a modal shift towards motorcycling.

BikeSafe is holding a special 'Bridging the Gap' weekend workshop on 18-19 June, while the IAM is offering free 'buddy' advanced taster rides for licence holders who want to check out their commute with a local advanced observer.

Special hi-viz vests and t-shirts are available for those organising events. For more information contact Stevie Muir on 07989 378597.

- See more at: <http://www.roadsafetygb.org.uk/news/5074.html#sthash.djD2KCIK.dpuf>

Ride To Work: <http://ridetoworkweek.co.uk/>

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## **Concern over Britain's drug drivers**

GEM Motoring Assist is raising concerns about drug driving across the UK. In particular, GEM is worried by recent reports of 'sky high' recordings over the legal limit, and by inconsistencies in sentencing of offenders.

For example, Christopher Backhouse, who killed his friend in a crash while returning from a music festival, was more than 130 times over the drug drive limit. He was jailed for two years.

Audi driver Gintars Garkajs, who was caught with potentially the biggest level to date of more than 120 times over the drug driving limit for MDMA (commonly known as ecstasy), was jailed for 18 weeks and given a five-year driving ban at Cambridge Magistrates Court.

However, 42-year-old Zoe Davies, who took crack cocaine, walked free from court despite being 26 times over the limit when police stopped her.

GEM chief executive David Williams MBE said: "The new roadside drug testing kits introduced in 2015 make it simple for police officers to detect the presence of drugs in a driver's system. Furthermore, drug driving limits are set at very low levels, and there are also limits for some prescription medicines.

"Let's be clear driving under the influence of drugs is extremely dangerous and entirely inappropriate. GEM calls for greater consistency in sentencing, particularly, because it is vital to send a strong safety message to those who consider it acceptable to drive after taking drugs."

Figures published earlier this year showed the scale of the problem of drug driving, with as many as six motorists in ten who were subjected to roadside tests proving positive. Results provided by Cheshire Police showed an 800 per cent increase in the number of arrests made, following the introduction of roadside detection kits.

It is just over 12 months since new regulations were introduced giving specific limits to 16 drugs in the course of driving. Convictions for drug driving now stay on the licence for 11 years.

Motorists found guilty face a minimum one year disqualification, up to £5,000 fine and a criminal record.

GEM has published a short video on drugs, driving and the law, which sets out the legal situation as well as providing an explanation of the dangers: <http://www.motoringassist.com/motoring-advice/road-safety/road-safety-insight/drugs-and-driving-videos/>

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## F E M A

Riding with a trailer

Today we have added a new page to the FEMA website, about the specific national rules for riding with a trailer behind a motorcycle.

Read all about it (and please share it) at <http://www.fema-online.eu/website/index.php/consumer-information/riding-with-a-trailer> [www.fema-online.eu/website/index.php/consumer-information/riding-with-a-trailer](http://www.fema-online.eu/website/index.php/consumer-information/riding-with-a-trailer)

You will also find links to the page on our social media:

<http://facebook.com/Federation-of-European-Motorcyclists-Associations-193674387342050> <http://facebook.com/Federation-of-European-Motorcyclists-Associations-19367...>

<https://plus.google.com/106243774695464060841>

<https://plus.google.com/106243774695464060841>

<https://www.linkedin.com/company/fema-europe>

<https://www.linkedin.com/company/fema-europe>

<https://twitter.com/femaonline> <https://twitter.com/femaonline>

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## The REAL “House of Representatives”

(a View from the Veg Patch)

Everywhere you look just now – newspapers, telly, social media – you’ll see or hear stuff about the forthcoming (eventually!) Presidential elections across The Pond. All sorts of uncommon words and phrases abound (caucus, Super Tuesday, senate, House of Representatives, lunatic (oops! I typed that last one out loud didn’t I?!)).

Most of it seems (and, indeed, is) far away and, perhaps, not entirely relevant but I've an odd mind (as those who are familiar with my vegetative cogitations will testify) and I found myself homing in on the word "Representative".

As you all know, we in MAG have Representatives and I fell to thinking about what really makes for a good one (as opposed to the ones with a tour bus and a Spin Doctor)...

The role of Regional Rep should not be too onerous, and each one will make the role their own. There is no single way of working in this post (a lot of it is about what works for you as an individual); however, if you are considering taking on a Regional Reps post within MAG, there are a few things you will need to think about while deciding whether this post is the one for you:

There are six National Committee meetings a year and whilst you may not be able to attend every one, it is hoped that you will attend as many as you can (and there is a degree of expectation that you will attend at least some). Don't forget that you can appoint a Deputy Rep to assist you and, if you can't get to one of the meetings, hopefully they can.

MAG's structure enables information to flow between the National Committee and the membership so your role as a Regional officer should facilitate this. This may include tasks such as a regular email to your Branch Reps with updates, meetings with other regional or branch officers, and visiting affiliated and interested clubs in your region to encourage memberships and membership upgrades.

You will also need to be prepared to provide a report (via email) on activities within your Region prior to each NC meeting, whether you attend the meeting or not. This doesn't need to be long and complicated; just the basic facts and outcomes of any regional activity. For example you could report that X MAG Branch held a fundraiser over Christmas and raised squillions of pounds (well, we can dream a little can't we?!); or that officers met with Councillor Wyndbagg about secure parking for motorcycles in Little Piddleton and that Cllr. Wyndbagg has promised loads of free parking right under a CCTV camera.

You are not expected to hit the ground running, or to do it alone. The National Reps' Liaison Officer is available to provide you with support and guidance to help you get the best out of the role and enjoy doing so. The recently completely revamped Reps' Handbook has been written with you in mind and aims to provide friendly, easy-to-understand guidance to build your confidence and provide you with a framework to help you fulfil the role to the very best of your abilities.

Something else to consider is that, in taking on the role of Regional Rep, you may be learning or developing new skills and those skills are transferrable into the world of work so, you never know, they might come in handy one day when you're slaving over a job application or aiming for that promotion.

As it happens, we are short of one or two Regional Reps at the moment (specifically East Midlands and British Independent Islands) so if you reside in one of them and are now wondering "Could I maybe be the next one?" don't leave it there. Get in touch with me at

[nrlo@mag-uk.org](mailto:nrlo@mag-uk.org) with any questions you may have or reassurance you may be looking for before taking the next step. You're under no obligation by finding out more before you decide on the way forward. Oh, and remember, the only question I consider to be stupid is the one that isn't asked!!

There may, of course, be those of you who would prefer to try out other roles before committing to a Regional Rep's role so don't forget that there are plenty of other posts that you could put yourself forward for as many Reps have a team to help them; for example Deputy Rep, Secretary, Dealer Liaison, Political Officer and others.

I look forward to (hopefully!) hearing from some of you and helping you achieve the goal of sitting in MAG's very own "House of Representatives". Well, in a village hall in Warwickshire, anyway!!!

Ride safe, ride free, ride with MAG.

Jane (aka The Lady Rootveg). National Reps' Liaison Officer. [nrlo@mag-uk.org](mailto:nrlo@mag-uk.org)

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***An interesting response to a petition signed by Ian Williamson:-***

Dear Ian Williamson,

The Government has responded to the petition you signed - Make A2 motorcycle licence automatically upgrade to full licence after 2 years.

Government responded:

The changes to motorcycle licence categories were introduced to address concerns over the risks faced by motorcyclists, particularly young riders who face significantly higher risks than car drivers.

The Government held a public consultation on the proposed changes to the regulations governing the acquisition of a motorcycle licence in November 2009. After considering carefully all the views from the consultation, Ministers decided to implement the proposals set out in the consultation paper in January 2013. These changes ended automatic entitlement upgrades and introduced the requirement for younger riders to take an additional practical test before gaining access to larger, more powerful machines. Riders aged 24 and over can still take a test on a large motorcycle and gain access to unrestricted machines.

To relax the rules on motorcycle licensing would require a change in legislation; this is not something the Government is considering. To relax the rules would increase the risk of motorcyclists being killed or seriously injured.

Motorcyclists have the highest casualty risk of all road user groups they are 57 times more likely to be killed than a car occupant per passenger mile travelled. In the last five years 1,763 motorcyclists lost their lives on GB roads and the accident rate by distance travelled has not reduced over that period. Of all motorcycle incidents, casualties are most frequent among 16-20 year olds on low-powered motorcycles.

Department for Transport

Click this link to view the response online:

[https://petition.parliament.uk/petitions/119263?reveal\\_response=yes](https://petition.parliament.uk/petitions/119263?reveal_response=yes)

The Petitions Committee will take a look at this petition and its response. They can press the government for action and gather evidence. If this petition reaches 100,000 signatures, the Committee will consider it for a debate.

The Committee is made up of 11 MPs, from political parties in government and in opposition. It is entirely independent of the Government. Find out more about the Committee: <https://petition.parliament.uk/help#petitions-committee>

Thanks,

The Petitions team. UK Government and Parliament.

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#### **40th Brum Demo**

West Midlands MAG celebrates the 40th Anniversary of the Brum Demo this year. We are looking to make this a special event and want to celebrate all that is good about motorcycling as well as everything that MAG has done to promote riders rights over the last 40 years.

The region is running a motorcycle awareness campaign on social media inspired by the speech made in Australia by Senator Leyonhjelm - check it out on you-tube if you haven't already seen it : <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KZUxOYxOMRU&feature=youtu.be>

The social media campaign consists of a simultaneous social media posting of a short message by all supporters. This is run through a platform called Thunderclap. Thunderclap is a website that allows people to pledge to Tweet or Facebook a message all on the same time day - and at the exact same time - in order to achieve the maximum effect. Think of it

as an online flash mob in support of motorcycling. Please support this campaign by following the link : <https://www.thunderclap.it/projects/41855-i-m-a-biker-you-re-welcome>

Don't forget to share this with all your friends!

The demo run will be held on the 2nd July

The demo will as usual be supported by the Heart of England Rally. Pre order tickets here: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/west-midlands-mag-heart-of-england-rally-tickets-25272364322?aff=es2>

Don't forget the MAG National Slow Riding Championship will be decided at the HOE Rally.

You can order commemorative patches on ebay:

<http://www.ebay.co.uk/itm/301959533586>

and T- shirts at the West Midlands MAG online store: <https://teespring.com/stores/west-midlands-mag>

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### **Sat nav positioning is driving safety round the bend**

THOUGHTLESS positioning of sat nav devices on windscreens is posing a huge threat to road safety, says breakdown organisation GEM Motoring Assist. Today's large screen devices positioned in the middle of a car windscreen mean a potentially lethal reduction in driver visibility, especially on left hand bends and at junctions, GEM warns.

GEM chief executive David Williams MBE comments: "Sat nav devices are great for relieving a lot of motoring stress. But if in the process you're obscuring a vast swathe of your field of view, then you are taking a huge risk.

"A typical large screen sat nav device measuring nearly seven inches (17cm) wide by four inches (10.48cm) high has the potential to cause significant restrictions to a driver's field of view, especially if it's mounted in the centre of the windscreen below a large rear view mirror.

"A small screen device may seem to be only a minor obstruction from inside the car. However, it has the potential to hide a much larger area outside the car, depending on where you sit and the distance you are from it.

"Placing a sat nav right in the centre of the windscreen will block most of your nearside view, and will mean you miss all the hazards that might be there. This is particularly dangerous on left hand bends, at junctions and crossings, and in any locations where you may share the road space with cyclists and pedestrians."

GEM has assembled some simple tips to ensure your view of the road is not obstructed by a poorly-positioned sat nav:

- Ensure you position your sat nav so that won't affect your view of the road and your ability to drive safely.
- The safest place for a sat nav is low down on your windscreen, and to the far right, to minimise obstruction of your field of view.
- If this is not possible, then it may be acceptable in the centre of the windscreen, but you should position it as low down as possible.

- Make sure you choose the right seat height and position to suit your individual shape and size before positioning your sat nav.
  - Avoid fitting the sat nav to a location that could cause injury to a driver or passenger in a crash. This includes potential head strike zones on the windscreen, or other locations where deploying an airbag may contact them.
  - Never fit the sat nav high up on the windscreen. As well as severely restricting vision, this could interfere with the rear view mirror and sun visors, and will require power cords to trail across the driver's field of vision.
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### **Commission publishes first official serious injury figures as 275 MEPs back EU target** TISPOL 30/04/2016

The European Commission, for the first time, published a figure in April for the number of people seriously injured on Europe's roads : 135,000 in 2014.

The release of the data required the adoption, by all EU member states, of a standardised medical definition of what constitutes a serious road injury, as well as a standardised way of collecting the statistics.

TISPOL welcomes this long overdue and positive step in the right direction, but says a long term target and specific measures to reduce the numbers seriously injured are urgently needed. The European Transport Safety Council says that now the data are available, there is no reason to delay further. A serious injury target was postponed last year, and no new timeline has been set for its announcement.

The Commission said the majority of those seriously injured were vulnerable road users, pedestrians, cyclists and drivers of powered two-wheelers. Their proportion was even higher in towns and cities.

In a related development, 275 MEPs from across the political spectrum have signed a written declaration of the European Parliament calling for a serious injury target to be adopted by the European Commission.

A number of measures for reducing serious injuries are included in a new ETSC report published last month.

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### **London's new mayor outlines 'zero tolerance approach' to road casualties**

The new mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, has called for a 'zero tolerance approach' to road traffic casualties after his election success last week (5 May).

Mr Khan believes his package of plans, outlined in a letter to the London Road Safety Council (LRSC), will 'bring about a marked improvement on London's roads'.

Among the key points is a continuation of his long-term support for 20mph speed limits in the capital's residential areas.

In March 2014, the then Labour MP for Tooting received a road safety award from the charity Brake, recognising his commitment to increasing the number of 20mph speed limits in his constituency.

His support for 20mph limits, which he believes will reduce average speed, has been backed by the campaign group 20's Plenty for Us.

In his letter to the LRSC, Mr Khan also mentioned car-free weekends in central London, following the blueprint of a similar event which takes place in Paris.

Mr Khan's plans to create a 'better balance between all road users' include continued investment in cycling (including the next phase of Cycle Superhighways), more Quietways and enhanced cycle storage in residential and business areas.

In terms of pedestrians, Mr Khan is hoping to establish 'Safe Routes to School', identifying routes children can use away from the most polluted roads. He also wants to appoint a 'pedestrian champion' to lead on measures to promote walking across the city.

He also says he wants to work with cycle groups, TfL, businesses and local authorities to identify ways of cutting the number of the 'most dangerous' lorries on London's roads.

This is part of a push to make London's roads cleaner and safer for all users, which also includes widening the area covered by the Ultra Low Emission Zone and investigating bringing its proposed introduction forward from 2020.

In response, the Freight Transport Association (FTA) has urged Mr Khan to review the London Lorry Control Scheme which restricts the industry's ability to deliver at night.

The FTA has also called for a discount on the congestion charge for the latest generation of clean lorries and vans, to encourage these vehicles into London well ahead of the introduction of the Ultra-Low Emission Zone.

Zero Tolerance: <http://londonroadsafetycouncil.org.uk/londons-new-mayor-outlines-zero-tolerance-approach-to-road-casualties/>

LRSC: <http://londonroadsafetycouncil.org.uk/>

RSGB: <http://www.roadsafetygb.org.uk/news/3487.html>

20s Plenty: [http://www.20splenty.org/new\\_london\\_mayor\\_backs\\_20s\\_plenty](http://www.20splenty.org/new_london_mayor_backs_20s_plenty)

FTA: [http://www.fta.co.uk/media\\_and\\_campaigns/press\\_releases/2016/20160508-fta-says-logistics-can-help-new-mayor-and-assembly-deliver-cleaner-safer-and-more-efficient-london.html](http://www.fta.co.uk/media_and_campaigns/press_releases/2016/20160508-fta-says-logistics-can-help-new-mayor-and-assembly-deliver-cleaner-safer-and-more-efficient-london.html)

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### **Map sets out European driving laws ahead of big summer getaway**

A new interactive map which looks at driving laws across Europe has been developed to help British drivers travelling across the continent this summer.

Created by iCarhireinsurance, the 'European Driving Laws - In-country data map' helps drivers to make sure they know the key laws before visiting a country.

The map enables users to hover over a particular country to reveal information including the motorway speed limit, alcohol limit, licence requirements, side of road, winterisation, mobile phone fine and 'must-haves'.



For example, whereas in England the alcohol limit is 50mg per 100ml, Iceland adopts a no alcohol allowed policy. Countries such as Poland (20mg) and Greece (25mg) also have lower alcohol limits.

Those planning to drive in France this summer during the European Championships need to be aware that under French laws they must have with them headlamp beam deflectors, a warning triangle, a reflective jacket and a breathalyser.

iCarhireinsurance is keen to ensure drivers avoid any 'nasty shocks', issuing a reminder that a financial penalty or even a driving ban may be imposed if laws are breached.

The insurer's website reads: "If you're planning on driving in a country you're unfamiliar with, make sure you know the key laws before setting off.

"Negotiating the roads and highways in foreign countries is challenging enough, without factoring in the rules and regulations which must be followed. A financial penalty, driving ban or possibly worse may be imposed if one or more of these is breached."

- See more at: <http://www.roadsafetygb.org.uk/news/5062.html#sthash.Im64Mngr.dpuf>

MAP: <https://www.icarhireinsurance.com/infographics/european-driving-laws>

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