



January 2016 Network

A networking tool for Activists and other interested parties

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Any copy for the February edition please email to me at: aine@mag-uk.org by 25th January.

EDITORIAL

My first task with this edition is to wish you all an extremely Happy and Healthy 2016



and, however you do it, throughout.

lots of safe and free riding

It has been pointed out to me that the article published in the December edition entitled “**Northern Ireland - Cyclists fined**” does, in fact, refer to the Republic of Ireland and not Northern Ireland. Apologies if this caused confusion to anyone. Having said that and having seen at least 90% of commuting cyclists when I travelled into the centre of the City for 20+ years running red lights I’m of the opinion we could follow Ireland’s example. In my humble opinion, of course.☺

I’ve included in this edition a New Year address from my old friend Anna Zee, President of FEMA. I know its not been an easy year to get FEMA back on track and thanks to those representatives from all Countries who’ve taken often difficult decisions to make this happen. Its a relief to me as I’d felt for some time that FEMA had veered from its original function. My personal opinion, of course, however when you’ve seen it evolve with, particularly, the sacrifices certain people like Simon Milward, made to get FEM and then FEMA established, it tends to become a bit of a personal thing. Well done Guys.

I’m not sure how I feel about learner drivers being allowed on the motorway albeit with a qualified instructor. To be honest, it would have been more sensible to stipulate a couple of motorway sessions with a qualified instructor after successfully passing the test. But then I guess only time will tell how this new legislation will pan out.

When I first read the headline ‘Mobile Phone Users to receive tougher penalties’ I thought ‘YES’. As you know this is one of my pet hates – it kills people, end of. However, four penalty points instead of just three and fines increased by 50% to what one newspaper described as ‘an eye-watering £150’ is a joke and is not going to make one iota of difference.

Catch you again next month. ***Ride free, AG.***

Deadline for the February edition is 25th January subject heading: Network to aine@mag-uk.org.

[Acknowledgements: George Legg. Tristan Foord. Leon & Lembit. Pat Healey. Dave Hammond. And anyone else I've forgotten]

Leon & Lembits Bits.

1. Leon reports that, thanks to excellent work by MAG teams across the UK and sharply focused coordination by our Central office staff, serious progress is being delivered and indicates a seriously positive trend. This can only have occurred thanks to MAG's increasingly efficient and effective work, so well done to one and all. If you'd like to discuss the options for your area, just get in touch with L&L via Central Office.

Recent successes include significant progress in Manchester during a follow-up meeting for Leon and Steve Blay, aka Blayz, with Cllr Roger Jones who probably has more influence over transport policy for Greater Manchester (GM) than any other elected member (including MPs). Jones is now convinced that motorbikes should have access to all bus lanes in Greater Manchester. He instructed his officers to draw up plans for a Trial Scheme during the meeting and has started to help MAG's Steve Blay, aka Blayz, and fellow activists to build support in all ten GM boroughs.

The trials of Armadillos in Salford are currently set to continue but officers in the meeting admitted that Stage 2 Road Safety Audits should have been done before the trial started but they had not been. This prompted a promise to do the Audits and send to Leon within a week – and for MAG to join in with Stage 3 Audits (on site assessments during day and night time). Neither promise has been delivered as yet so this remains a work in progress...

The outcome of Leon's presentations in Wales to support great work by Regional Rep Ian Williamson and Political rep Barrie Avery has prompted progress on a national scale. Formal recommendations were agreed that official guidance should be issued to advise all Welsh Authorities to allow motorbikes in all with-flow bus lanes – and that cycle lane segregation measures, such as Armadillos or Orcas, had too much potential as a hazard for trials on Welsh roads.

2. The Motorcycle Live National Motorcycle Show was a big success from a campaigning point of view. L&L were able to meet the relevant people from industry and elsewhere. Lembit adds 'it seems that the profile of MAG and respect for what we do is higher than ever now.' So, if you've got any specific links you'd like to develop with particular dealers or industry, it's possible that such contact has already been made – and/or we may be able to help – so please give HQ a call if L&L might be of assistance.

At the Show, Selina and Lembit had an excellent session with 'Get On' - and industry sponsored scheme to attract new riders to powered two wheelers. It fits well with MAG's own intention to get new riders into biking and into MAG itself. More to follow on this - and we aim to make it easy for you to get contact with the local opportunities on this to open the idea of riding to new people - and possibly new communities.

3. Lembit met Steve Baker MP to discuss biking matters in Mid-December. Mr Baker heads up the All-Party Motorcycle Group in Parliament, and is a very useful voice for riding in the Commons. There is likely to be a serious representation of riders' concerns about legislation, so that Mr Baker can pass our concerns into the negotiation process currently being conducted by the Prime Minister with his European counterparts. Let Lembit know if there are specific issues you'd like us to raise. We have some latitude to contribute on an on-going basis

4 MAG was invited to attend a meeting in the Department for Transport prior to formal consultations about future developments in government strategy for improving motorcycle safety which Lembit attended for L&L. Our primary aim was to ensure that note was made of an agreement in principle (from last year) that a DfT review of Road Safety Audits would begin – and compliment the TfL Handbook of guidance for scheme designers that is due for publication by the end of 2015. This was duly noted and we received a warm reception for promoting our manhole covers campaign. Formal consultations start in February 2016, and MAG will be playing a key role in those.

5 A lot of Leon's time has been focussed on tackling the problems facing London riders as the insane cycle super-highway schemes continue to take swathes of key road space from us – and without due consideration for the adverse impacts on congestion and vulnerable road user safety. Ironically, this not only includes bikers and scooter riders, as many aspects of the £billion program create new dangers for cyclists and pedestrians too. It's a big issue and needs to be addressed now as the benefits of motorcycling are quite literally being squeezed out from the Capital's road network.

Opposition behind the scenes has grown among some powerful entities including the Canary Wharf group and the London Taxi Drivers Association who are both engaged in developing legal challenges. Leon was invited to meet both sets of lawyers involved and has enabled them to better understand how key aspects of the Traffic Regulations Acts can boost the power of their cases. All of this work and planning for further action is 'sub judice' for now so cannot be discussed in public, but Leon reports that the adverse impacts on motorcyclist may play a crucial role in shaping the way these problems are eventually addressed.

Lembit is to assist Leon with this, as required. This campaign matters to you because what goes on in London has a habit of being exported elsewhere in the UK. It's a serious concern and will define the timetable for the campaign over the next weeks.

6. L&L are pleased to have served you for the last 12 months. With 2016 upon us, we'll be looking at the May national elections and London' Mayoral contest as a big opportunities to get our message across throughout the UK. Lots to do, and two eager likely lads to help us do it.

FEMA PRESIDENT'S NEW YEAR ADDRESS

In 2013 FEMA started on a long journey to reinvent itself. Motorcycling in Europe, and everything connected to it, is changing with time and as Europe's leading motorcyclists' organization we must not and will not stay behind.

In the process of change tough decisions have had to be made. We have moved to a smaller but more modern office in Brussels and we have parted with some members of staff. Hard, for the staff as well, but it had to be done.

Now, at the start of a new year, we have reached the end of the beginning and will focus wholly on the future of motorcycling.

FEMA is led by hard working board members who have earned their stripes in motorcycling affairs, assisted by our new secretary general, who started last February. All the national organizations that make up FEMA are also strongly committed to our European work and together we will keep defending motorcyclists' interests.

In 2016 we will make the FEMA team even stronger; we are currently in the process of employing a communications officer. Defending riders' rights is not one-way traffic, we need and want to be in constant contact with riders and riders' organizations not just to explain what we are doing, but also to hear and learn from you, the rider.

In the New Year we will also be actively looking for and talking to national riders' organizations all over Europe, inviting them to join FEMA. The European Parliament's Transport Committee finally recognized that motorcycling has a place in transport policy but that's not a guarantee of our future; we need to grow bigger and stronger to build on that recognition and face the threats to motorcycling that will inevitably arise in the near future.

More than ever before FEMA will stand up to promote, protect and preserve motorcycling. We will promote riders' interests and defend riders' rights throughout Europe and globally. But we will need you to get involved.

After all, we motorcyclists are the experts in motorcycling matters, and we *will* be taken seriously in all motorcycling issues. We will set the agenda where necessary and work with anyone willing to talk with us, not just about us.

Only if all of us join in and pledge to defend our rights and our freedom to ride how we want, where we want, can we ensure a great motorcycling future.

I wish you and those close to you the best 2016 possible, with the best motorcycle rides you can imagine, knowing that FEMA and all its member organizations are defending your right to ride in freedom.

Anna Zee, President.

New road safety plan includes tougher penalties for mobile phone offences

The government has published a new road safety plan which includes proposals to increase penalties for drivers caught using a mobile phone, and allowing learner drivers on motorways.

The government hopes that the plan will "build on Britain's excellent road safety record". All the specific proposals announced in the plan will be discussed in a series of consultations during 2016.

With regard to mobile phone offences, the vast majority of first time offenders will not incur a fixed penalty notice or penalty points but will instead be offered an educational course, at the discretion of the police.

For the majority of drivers and riders (cars, vans, motorbikes) the current three penalty points will be increased to four and the fine will increase from £100 to £150.

For drivers of larger vehicles such as HGVs, where the consequences of a collision can be much more severe, the penalty points will increase from the current three to six.

Other measures announced include £50m of funding to train the next generation of cyclists through the Bikeability scheme; and a £750,000 grant in 2015/16 for police forces in England and Wales to help them build drug-driving enforcement capability.

The road safety plan also includes the following:

- Consulting on options for a drug-drive rehabilitation scheme course and a high-risk offenders regime for drug-drivers.
- Consulting on legislative changes to improve urban cycle safety by ensuring that side guards and rear under-run devices are not removed from HGVs, but remain permanently fitted.
- Consulting on proposals to support safety for motorcyclists, who account for 19% of all road deaths, including better training and improved safety equipment.
- Consulting on ways to incentivise and reward the uptake of more pre-test practice, as first announced in the government's motoring services strategy consultation on 13 November
- Undertaking a £2m research programme to identify the best possible interventions for learner and novice drivers.
- Providing a broader range of 'real-world' driving experiences for learner drivers, including deregulating to allow approved driving instructors with dual-controlled cars to offer lessons on motorways.
- Undertaking a road safety management capacity review, to identify areas for improved joint working, local innovation and efficiency.

The RAC says the use of mobile phones by drivers is one of motorists' top safety concerns, and in October it expressed concern over "a worrying mismatch" between the level of mobile phone offences motorists see happening on the roads, and the number of prosecutions

Talking to the Telegraph, Patrick McLoughlin, transport secretary, said: "Using a mobile phone at the wheel is reckless and costs lives – I want to see it become a social taboo like not wearing a seatbelt.

"We will take action to tackle this persistent problem, with an emphasis on the most serious offenders. The message is clear: keep your hands on the wheel, not your phone. If you keep taking calls while at the wheel, you could end up being banned from the road."

Iain Temperton, Road Safety GB director of communications, said: "It is encouraging that DfT have seen fit to publish their proposals; this is an excellent 'heads up' for all of us who wish to influence the thinking in these processes.

"As the consultations are published we need to provide balanced and factual argument to further promote advances in road safety.

"No doubt our newsfeed will provide a forum for discussion of each of the issues, but we will also be engaging with central government to let them have our views as an organisation, on behalf of the road safety profession."

Talking to the Guardian, Steve Gooding, director of the RAC Foundation, welcomed the move. "One in five young drivers has an accident within six months of passing their test so putting the learning process under the spotlight has to be a good thing," he said.

"Mile for mile, motorways are our safest roads but can be intimidating places for novice drivers. Exploring ways of letting learners have controlled access to them is welcome. The important thing is the official seal of approval provided by the approved driving instructor who will accompany them down the slip road. This is definitely not the time to have mum or dad in the passenger seat."

- See more at: -: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/road-safety-statement-working-together-to-build-a-safer-road-system>

:- <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-unveils-host-of-measures-to-further-improve-road-safety>

:- <http://www.roadsafetygb.org.uk/news/4645.html>

:- <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/motoring/news/12059962/Drivers-caught-using-mobile-phones-face-150-fines.html>

Also,

The RAC has warned that so-called mobile black spots around the UK could be putting motorists' lives at risk.

The firm has revealed that almost 2.600 miles of road around Britain do not even have 2G signal, needed for the most basic mobile operations such as making a call or sending a text message.

This means that around two percent of the total amount of the country's road network has no coverage for motorists, meaning anyone suffering a breakdown would be stranded without being able to call for help.

The Scottish regions of Highland (452 miles of road with no coverage) and Argyll & Bute (293 miles) were in the top three worst-affected areas, as was the Welsh area of Powys (437 miles).

In England, Cumbria (252 miles), Devon (243 miles) and North Yorkshire (231 miles) were the least-covered regions, showing the sheer scale of the problem.

The RAC reported that some roads, including the A93 in Scotland, A149 in East Anglia, A494 in Wales and A591 in Cumbria, have no signal at all, making them a potentially risky destination for any drivers.

It also found that 14,554 miles of road (six percent of the UK total) has no 3G coverage, with an additional 111,679 miles of road (45 percent) only having partial 3G coverage.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, given these figures, more than half (56 percent) of Britain's road network was found to have no 4G coverage, with only just over a quarter (27 percent) having only partial coverage.

The firm is now calling for swift action to rectify the blackspots, with the country's phone networks urged to ensure their coverage reaches all parts of the country.

"Most of us like to think we are always just a mobile phone call away from help but even in a crowded, high-tech country like Britain the reality is somewhat different.

"Our work shows there are thousands of miles of road along which you would not want to break down or have an accident because calling the RAC, the emergency services or even home wouldn't be an option. Even where there is partial network coverage it might not be from your network provider," said Steve Gooding, director of the RAC Foundation.

"And it's not just in emergencies that we rely on our mobiles. Increasingly we drivers depend on our smart phones for everything from telling us how to get from A to B, to what the weather is going to be, to where the congestion is.

"The concepts of connected cars and drivers is at the heart of much thinking about how we might make our travelling lives easier. But the best ideas in the world will fall at the first hurdle if there are no bars on the phone."

Read more at <http://www.techweekeurope.co.uk/networks/networks-management/rac-britains-roads-phone-signal-181456#34ucVDcQJBb4TrVy.99>

Remember the Toby Bollards (Tombstones) in Clarence Road, Bristol?

Well, here's the improvement, pictures courtesy of Pat Healey.



Pat says: "Large gaps appx 3m, some with radius ends + many small gaps. I remember mailing Nick Pates at BCC requesting max gaps of 1.2 - 1.5m.

A massive improvement over the Toby Bollards but why the big gaps?

Easy access for BCC maintenance vehicles or to allow cycles to exit cycle path onto road?

According to the Daily Mirror **Rookie drivers** will only be **allowed to drive on motorways** with a fully qualified driving instructor, under radical new plans

Learner drivers will be allowed on motorways for the first time, under radical new plans.

Giving them the experience will reduce the toll of young people involved in accidents after they pass their tests, say ministers.

Learners will also be told to practise driving at night and in severe weather to improve their road-readiness.

The proposals are unveiled in a new road safety strategy published by the Government.

Learners will only be allowed on motorways with a fully qualified driving instructor beside them – unlike on other roads, where any experienced driver can accompany them.

RAC drink driving research makes sober reading

21st December 2015

More than a quarter (26%) of motorists aged between 17-24 years either think or know they have driven while over the drink-drive limit, according to research carried out for the RAC Report on Motoring 2015.

The figure, which equates to 706,000 drivers, is a 5% increase on last year's findings and 6% higher than the equivalent figure for all motorists.

The findings come from a large scale, in-depth survey of 1,555 motorists from all age groups. shows.

8% of young drivers surveyed said they are sure they have driven when over the limit, up 3% on 2014 – and a further 18% (16% in 2014) think they may have done so. 7% said they committed the offence shortly after having a drink while 13% believe they may have done so the morning after drinking.

The data also indicates that young men aged 17-24 years are more likely to have driven while over the limit than women of the same age. This tendency is also seen among the 25 to 44-year-old age group, with 15% of male drivers saying they have driven over the limit shortly after drinking in contrast to 9% of women.

13% of young drivers aged 24 and under say they have been in a car with a driver they have suspected to be over the limit shortly after drinking, in contrast to the 6% average across all age groups, a 5% increase on 2014.

Tristan's Trawl -

The removal of the Elephant and Castle roundabout has been causing chaos for commuters, with motorists complaining of queues of more than an hour.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-london-35026096>

A report commissioned by the Government into the effectiveness of Compulsory Basic Training has recommended a number of changes be implemented in order to make motorcycling safer for new riders.

<http://www.bennetts.co.uk/bikesocial/news-and-views/news/2012/2014/december/changes-to-cbt-on-the-way/#.VnnHknjA7-Y>

EIGHT 'long-lost' Brough Superiors together worth up to £340,000 have been discovered in a barn in Cornwall.

Read more: <http://www.visordown.com/motorcycle-news--general-news/the-340000-barn-find/30591.html#ixzz3v5ajyETt>

Doctor John Hinds, Irish road racing's 'flying doctor' who tragically lost his life at the Skerries 100 race in July, has been honoured by the BBC with a posthumous Sports Personality of the Year Unsung Hero award.

<http://www.motorcyclenews.com/sport/tt-road-races/2015/november/doctor-john-hinds-wins-posthumous-spoty-award-as-hems-gains-momentum/>

THIS is the just-launched RS 1.0 helmet which features a unique hinged shell system that is going to revolutionize helmet design, claims the maker, Australian company Vozz

Read more: <http://www.visordown.com/motorcycle-news--general-news/could-this-hinged-helmet-revolutionise-lid-design/30603.html#ixzz3v5Zxa5nl>

Film highlights consequences of driving without insurance

A short film launched as part of a campaign targeting uninsured young drivers has received more than 760,000 views on YouTube.

The video, part of the 'Gone in seconds' campaign, highlights the consequences of driving uninsured and carries the message 'don't lose your car, your friends, your freedom'.

The film tells the story of an uninsured young male driver on a night out with friends, when he is pulled over by a police car equipped with ANPR (automatic number plate recognition). The police seize the car, much to the annoyance of the driver's girlfriend and two other passengers who have to make their own way home.

The campaign was launched by the Motor Insurer's Bureau (MIB)* in September in response to an increase in the number of claims from collisions involving uninsured drivers.

The MIB says a decade of declining levels of uninsured driving since 2005, when police were granted powers to seize vehicles, had seen the level of uninsured driving reduce by 50%. However, this figure is now on the rise, and between July 2014 and July 2015 the MIB is reporting a 10% increase in the number of claims involving uninsured drivers.

The campaign microsite highlights the consequences of driving without insurance and provides tips to help drivers get the best deals on insurance cover.

*Motor Insurer's Bureau (MIB)

The MIB aims to reduce the level and impact of uninsured driving by working closely with partners across government and the insurance industry. The Bureau provides compensation to innocent victims involved in accidents with drivers who have no insurance, or who failed to stop.

The Motor Insurance Database (MID), introduced in 2001, is the only central insurance record of more than 37 million vehicles in the UK. The MID supports a range of users entitled to different levels of information about insured vehicles, including the police, solicitors, the DVLA and the public. All drivers can check their vehicle is recorded on the MID for free.

- See more at:- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xnp2tyzGtPk>

-: <http://www.goneinseconds.org.uk/>

-: <http://www.askmid.com/>

Around GB

Durham - 20mph limits being rolled out at Durham schools

Durham County Council has launched its 'Slow to 20 for Safer Streets' campaign which is seeing 20mph speed limits rolled out on roads near a number of schools in the region.

The campaign, launched at St Cuthbert's Primary School in Chester-le-Street, aims to encourage safer driving and promises to deliver a range of benefits to pupils and the wider community.

The council says studies show that for every 1mph reduction in average speed the number of collisions and casualties fall by 6%.

It also points to evidence which suggests that where 20mph speed limits have been introduced there have been fewer casualties and more people have been encouraged to walk and cycle to school.

The 'Slow to 20 for Safer Streets' campaign comes after the council's cabinet agreed to introduce part-time 20mph limits on main and distributor roads near 33 schools in the county where accident rates have been identified as being double the average.

The speed limits will be in effect at peak travelling times from Monday to Friday and drivers will be alerted by flashing warning signs.

St Cuthbert's Primary School is the first location where the new 20mph limit will come into force. A further 12 will be introduced this year and the remaining 20 in 2016.

Clare Swales, head teacher at St Cuthbert's Primary School, said: "Our school council has worked extremely hard over the last year to raise awareness among the community of the dangers of driving too fast on the roads around school.

"We are delighted that, in partnership with the council, St Cuthbert's has become the first location for the 20mph speed limit to come into force. Children and families are looking forward to the scheme greatly improving safety on the surrounding roads and benefitting everyone on the journey to and from school."

As part of the campaign road safety training will continue in schools, which includes child pedestrian training, Bikeability cycle training and road safety education. Pupils will also be helping to raise awareness in their communities by distributing leaflets to local residents.

Councillor Lucy Hovvels, cabinet member for adult and health services, added: "Slower driving speeds in residential areas will hopefully lead to a safer, healthier road environment. It can help improve road safety and help encourage people to be more active.

"Through time, as speeds in residential areas decrease there should be more and more positive outcomes for the local community."

- See more at: <http://www.durham.gov.uk/article/6740/Drivers-urged-to-Slow-to-20-for-Safer-Streets>

Drivers' behaviours cause 'ripple effect' on the road

A new study has concluded that aggressive behaviour on the road by one driver causes others to behave in a similar fashion.

The study, released last week by the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE) and the tyre manufacturer Goodyear, found that drivers' choices of behaviour on the road trigger what is described as a 'ripple effect'.

In a survey of nearly 9,000 drivers from 15 European countries, 87% of those surveyed agreed that considerate driving by others can prompt them, in turn, to be considerate to other drivers.

Conversely, 55% admitted that when irritated or provoked on the road by one driver, they may be more likely to take it out on another.

The report suggests a 'simple act of kindness or one of aggression can initiate a chain of events creating an environment that is either comfortable and safer, or stressful and more dangerous for drivers'.

Dr Chris Tennant, who led the research project on behalf of LSE, said: "Setting aside factors such as weather conditions or fatigue, the drivers around us provide an important context to which we respond as our journey unfolds.

"When negotiating road space with others, drivers frequently apply the logic of reciprocity. However, since many interactions are fleeting, the reciprocity is often indirect: our response is made to a different driver later on our journey – thus, the ripple effect on the road."

When reviewing video scenes of interactions on the road, the majority of those surveyed confirmed the importance of gestures of thanks, with fewer than 10%, typically, denying the importance of such acknowledgements.

In interviews, drivers readily admitted that when one driver neglects to say thank you, they are more likely to drive assertively in the next interaction.

The study found a whole range of behaviours likely to antagonise others, from merging tactics at busy junctions to tailgating, and from poor signalling to motorway lane discipline.

Yet in interview, drivers acknowledged that they perform these same behaviours themselves, usually inadvertently, potentially initiating the ripple effect of negative interactions.

The report says while other road safety research has drawn attention to the challenge of identifying specific problem drivers who are prone to dangerous behaviour, this study demonstrates the need to recognise how other drivers' behaviour can make anyone drive more dangerously – even if they would not otherwise be considered to be a problem driver.

Olivier Rousseau, Goodyear vice president, said: "The road is rarely seen as a social setting, particularly one wherein good manners should be used.

"In fact our road safety research shows that many drivers can see other cars on the road as anonymous machines, and not as vehicles containing another human being.

"We urge drivers to remember what strong effect their own behaviour has on the behaviour of others. Our study suggests that aggressive and combative driving behaviour by one driver can initiate a chain of reactions between other drivers and eventually cause a dangerous situation or even an accident some time later while the originator has already moved on.

"It is up to all of us to stop this ripple effect on the road."

- See more at: <http://www.roadsafetygb.org.uk/news/4757.html#sthash.T1RXHtr9.dpuf>
-: http://www.goodyear.eu/corporate_emea/news-press/articles/what-a-difference-a-little-kindness-on-the-road-can-make-this-holiday-season_180818.

Google's meetings with UK Government over driverless cars revealed

Internet giant has held five meetings with the Department for Transport in the last two years, documents obtained by the Telegraph show read more at:-

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/technology/google/12046720/Googles-meetings-with-UK-Government-over-driverless-cars-revealed.html>

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