

May 2024

Motorcycling Matters

A Manifesto for Motorcycling and the future of transport.



National
Motorcyclists
Council



Motorcycling and the future of Transport

Motorcycling represents an accessible, affordable, cleaner, and greener transport option than most other powered modes of transport. If properly supported, it will foster social mobility, economic growth and improved safety. This manifesto offers a pathway for policy which can unlock the benefits that motorcycling brings to the future of transport.



There are roughly 4,500 motorcycle licence holders per parliamentary constituency. Your constituency is also likely to include some part of the 50,000 people and over 5000 businesses which make up the £7 billion motorcycling sector. Motorcycle sport, alone valued at £1 billion, the classic motorcycle sector and the economically important social, lifestyle and sustainable touring aspects of motorcycling include a range of activities which directly support local businesses and attract international visitors.

Motorcyclists are passionate about the sector as both an essential mode of transport and a social pastime and lifestyle choice. About two thirds of the distance travelled by motorcycles, scooters and mopeds, also known as Powered Two Wheelers (PTWs), is for practical reasons. Only 0.47% of the UK's total domestic transport emissions are contributed by motorcycles. With zero emission models on the market place and the motorcycle sport sector at the forefront of eFuels development motorcycles have an important part to play in reaching net zero. But an approach to decarbonisation that utilises all technological pathways, not just battery electric, is needed to ensure sustainable transition whilst protecting rider choice.

Motorcycling also plays a positive role in social mobility and quality of life, not just in urban areas, but also in those rural locations where public transport is inadequate and walking/cycling are not realistic options. In both urban and rural areas, PTWs provide affordable, low-emission and accessible transport solutions.

Safety needs a renewed focus. Current rider licensing regulations have not improved safety and there is a pressing need for reform to the training, testing and licensing regime. Investment in infrastructure is inadequate and riders face a vulnerable roads environment, facing not just potholes and broken roads, but also poor junction design and visibility to



other road users. Riders are also not fully benefiting from investment in 'Safe Systems' measures and need to be given default access to bus lanes. Traffic regulation in both urban and rural areas are also in need of reform and reinvigoration.

PTWs must be fully integrated into the mainstream of future UK transport policy, fully recognising the benefits that motorcycling provides in terms of greater energy efficiency, lower congestion, significantly reduced levels of air pollution, and more efficient use of road space than other modes of transport, as a key and sustainable future transport solution



Unlocking the benefits of Motorcycling - Key Policies



▪ Genuine Choice for Future Transport

Bring motorcycling into the mainstream of transport policy.

UK Motorcycling is a sector worth over £7 billion to the UK economy and with 3.5 million licence holders, the contribution to the diversity of the UK transport system is clear. Motorcycle use helps reduce congestion and pollution, while offering lower cost transport choice and mobility for work, education, leisure and tourism. Motorcycling is a key part of the future of transport, which contributes to cleaner, greener and more mobile cities, whilst increasing options for rural transport. Motorcycling needs to be brought into the mainstream of transport policy, recognised and facilitated as a positive low and zero polluting form of transport for commuting, logistics and leisure.

A Government strategic framework for motorcycling is needed, encompassing strategic actions in the areas of safety, access and transport planning as set out by the NMC in Motorcycling and the Future of Transport Policy. In other words, the full integration of motorcycling within headline transport policy.

▪ Improve Licence Training and Testing

Make acquiring a licence less complex and less costly. Invest in safety.

The core purpose of motorcycle testing and training for novice riders is to improve safety. Successive licensing regimes from the 1980s to 2000s did exactly that, but since 2013 progress has slowed on safety and, in the case of motorcycle deaths,

these have started to rise again (see 'Key Facts' below). Between 2009 and 2013, the testing and training regime saw significant changes. Complex and bureaucratic stepped licensing requirements were introduced, including multiple repeats of the same test.

Since then, there is clear evidence that the planned gains in motorcycle safety have not materialised. The riders' position on licensing is based on the following principle; to make the licensing regime easier to understand and access – removing complexity, repetition and high costs, while maintaining the UK's high road safety standards in training.

The process of reform needs to start now to deliver a new regime which can deliver improved safety for motorcyclists – among the most vulnerable of road user groups. The National Motorcyclists Council position 'A Fresh Approach to The Motorcycle Licence' sets out a full range of proposals for licensing and also illustrates the importance of post-test training.

▪ Ensure better and safer roads for riding - tackle the scourge of potholes

Reduce Rider Vulnerability

Roads infrastructure design guidelines for motorcycles is in urgent need of updating. This should be a safety priority for government. Motorcycling must also fully benefit from investment in 'Vision Zero' and 'Safe Systems' measures, with support matching that given to walking and cycling. Major

Statistically, motorcyclists are among the most vulnerable of all road user groups. Yet, Governments past and present have not always prioritised the safety of riders in their overall approach to road safety. That is why this NMC manifesto is so important – because it brings together the voices of the sector with a common purpose: To save the lives of motorcyclists.

IAM RoadSmart



infrastructure projects, such as Smart Motorways must be safe for motorcyclists and we support the cancellation of the roll out of this initiative and support the plan to review and evaluate the actual performance of existing smart motorways.

Action is needed now to remove the significant danger to motorcyclists and other road users from poor roads maintenance and potholes. Government must support the aims of the Pothole Partnership which brings together road users and the construction industry. There must demonstrated greater urgency by accelerating and increasing spending of the £8.3bn pothole funding for England in the first three years, making repairs permanent and precise – with total clarity on the distribution to local authorities, with ringfencing and transparency on the monitoring and progress of repairs.

▪ **Adopt a technology neutral approach to decarbonisation**

Support innovation in all technologies, protect rider choice

The road to net zero must be proportionate, pragmatic, and realistic. Internal combustion engine (ICE) PTWs contribute just 0.46% to the UK's total domestic transport emissions. Mopeds and motorcycles have an important transitional role to play in accelerating towards net zero and all political parties should embrace a variety of current and developing emissions reducing technologies, including e-fuels and hydrogen, so that rider choice can be maintained for a range of diverse journey types as decarbonisation progresses. The motorcycle sport sector is leading the way on developing clean fuels.

A more holistic approach to decarbonisation is needed, moving away from focussing exclusively on zero emissions at the tailpipe, and considering the whole life cycle of a vehicle's emissions. In many cases, ICE motorcycles produce substantially fewer emissions over the course of their lifetime than many electric cars. The joint position of riders and industry is set out here.

Protect and improve access to all types of highways, both sealed and unsealed, including default access to bus lanes

The Green Road network provide unique access to the countryside and needs greater recognition, protection and celebration of this public access asset which is being depleted. Trail Riding on Green Road's is an integral part of Britain's cultural heritage that delivers significant health and wellbeing benefits as a form of active recreation, as well as delivering significant social and economic value to local and national economies.

Trail Riders Fellowship



▪ **Access All Areas**

Access to the full road network, designed to keep motorcyclists safe, needs to be secured and protected.

There must be better and more equal treatment of motorcycling in the statutory regulation of traffic on both sealed and unsealed 'green roads', ensuring that all roads can be accessed at all times by motorcycle.

Motorcycle access to bus lanes needs to be made a default measure to improve the safety of riders and to resolve the current patchwork of access across the UK's road network. Adequate free and secure parking provision must also be provided across all local authorities. Road traffic schemes designed to support walking and cycling must not be introduced to the detriment of motorcycle safety or act to restrict road access by motorcycle.

There need to be firm guarantees from the Government that will ensure a bright future for our great motorcycling heritage. There must be no restrictions on riding, with security of fuel supply for older motorcycles put in place under decarb policies. Current VED and MoT exemptions for bikes older than 40 years must remain in place.

Vintage Motor Cycle Club



▪ **Celebrate motorcycle sport.**

Recognise and support the £1 billion sector

There needs to be greater recognition and support for the UK's £1 billion motorcycle sports sector and its position on the world stage. The same is needed for grass-roots sport and also the tourism economy. Regulations need to be amended to ensure that a level playing field of high-quality standards apply across the sport.

The positive social engagement opportunities, particularly for youth, need to be recognised in DCMS policy.

▪ **Recognise the cultural importance of the historic motorcycle sector**

Protect National Heritage

As an important part of the UK's cultural heritage, sport and recreation, there should be no time limit introduced on how long older bikes can be ridden on any road. Access to all highways needs to be maintained and the 40-year cut-off for historic vehicle status kept in place.



Public policy must not result in threats to Off Road Sport, or discourage people from competing. The next administration must also bring clarity to regulation, so that only the internationally recognised motor and motorcycle sports bodies can issue permits for sports events, ensuring that minimum standards of safety can be policed and managed across all facets of the sport.

Auto Cycle Union

Motorcycling in 2024 – The Key Facts

The Motorcycle Market

- New motorcycle registrations are nearly 20% higher than those registered as an average of 2010-2014
- 113,589 new motorcycles of all kinds were registered in 2023
- 4,063 mostly commuter electric motorcycles were sold in 2023 – approximately 3.5% of the overall market.



How Motorcycles Are Used

- Motorcycles represent up to 3% of transport – much higher in some urban locations
- Motorcycle usage has risen by approximately 10% in recent years. 1.5 million people regularly ride. Around 3.5 million people hold full motorcycle licences
- Nearly 2/3 of motorcycle use or other practical reasons.



Environmental Benefits of Motorcycling

- Motorcycle use can more than halve Co2 from private transport. The average Co2 from motorcycles is 99g/km. For cars this is 210g/gm
- Approaching half of all motorcycles registered in the UK and Europe are commuter types, with average Co2 emissions of 64g/km
- Motorcycle use cuts traffic congestion – a 10% modal shift to motorcycles can reduce congestion by 63%. Motorcycling also reduces pressure on transport infrastructure and parking



Motorcycling's Contribution to the Economy

- The motorcycle sector in the UK was valued at over £7 billion prior to the pandemic.
- Motorcycling supports up to 50,000 people in over 5,000 businesses across several sectors of society.
- In 2021, the UK and EU industry was valued at 21.4 billion Euro, supporting 389,000 jobs. UK motorcycle sport was valued at nearly £1 billion in 2016.



Road Safety and Motorcycling

- Long term trends have been positive - all kinds of motorcycle casualties have fallen by 37% over the last 30 years.
- Deaths have fallen by 42% since year 2000 and the number of casualties per mile travelled has fallen by 40% over the same period.
- But since 2013 and the introduction of the current motorcycle licensing regime, deaths have risen by 5.74% and progress on other measures of to reduce casualties have slowed. Reform of licensing and proper investment in motorcycle safety under 'Safe Systems' is urgently needed.



It's time for government to fully integrate motorcycling into all transport and planning policy.

British Motorcyclists Federation





**Bringing the voice of UK
motorcyclists together**

A coalition of motorcycling representative organisations

About the NMC

The National Motorcyclists Council (NMC) is the UK coalition of motorcycling representative organisations, which works together on commonly held positions about issues where motorcyclists seek to change or influence government policy. It also researches issues to both inform campaigning and support the individual work of its members.

The NMC's mission:

'Working together to help assure a positive and sustainable future for motorcycling'

Members and Partners

The NMC's current members comprise almost all UK motorcycling representative organisation, plus the sport and road safety interests. NMC members have a combined membership of around 200,000 individual riders. The NMC also has wider partnerships with industry and riders groups internationally.

**National
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