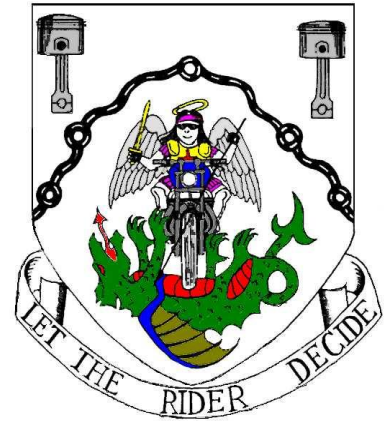


Basingstoke M.A.G. Minutes

27/01/2011



Rep Keith:

Emails:

Local transport White Paper ignores motorcycling

Dear Chaps

I was at Oxford Castle on 20th January 2010 to see Norman Baker launch the DfT local transport White Paper *Creating Growth, Cutting Carbon* (Cm. 7996). I attach a .pdf copy, which is also available for download from <http://www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/regional/sustainabletransport/>.

The White Paper reflects Norman's consistent and effective support for walking, cycling, buses, trains and light rail. I welcome all of that.

However, its appreciation of motorcycling is minimal. A pie chart on page 18 recognises that motorcycles produce only 0.5% of UK transport emissions, and an example on page 82 describes Wheels to Work helping one 17-year old to borrow one moped for six months and then buy his own vehicle. But apart from those two items, in the White Paper's 95 pages make no mention or appreciation of motorcycles, motor scooters, mopeds or PTW's. It's pathetic.

The White Paper has sections on taxis, community buses and car sharing as well as walking, cycling, buses and trains. Crucially, Annex A (pages 89-92) has sections each analysing public perceptions and attitudes towards travelling by car, bus, rail, foot or cycle. The lack of any section analysing public perceptions and attitudes towards the option of travelling by motorcycle is a serious flaw in the DfT document.

In the question and answer session at the White Paper's launch at Oxford Castle I pointed out that in Oxfordshire there is about one motorcycle to every 20 private cars and therefore a modal shift to motorcycles already in existence could cut congestion by up to 5%, and secondly that mopeds, scooters and small-engined motorcycles are more popular in urban areas and therefore could significantly contribute to emissions reduction, but that most towns and cities have an acute motorcycle parking shortage that suppresses motorcycle use. I therefor asked Norman whether in the circumstances the DfT had not "*missed a trick*" by failing to give motorcycling as much treatment as other congestion-reducing modes in *Creating Growth, Cutting Carbon*.

Norman replied slightly defensively at first and then suggested that any local authority is welcome

to invest in motorcycle parking if that is what it wants to do. This answer is not adequate. I politely replied to Norman that the success of Wheels 2 Work helping people to get motorcycles will be limited if there is no DfT policy to encourage councils to solve the acute shortage of motorcycle parking.

Oxfordshire County Council officers tell me that any council can submit multiple bids to the £560 million Local Sustainable Transport Fund, but no council will be awarded more than one successful bid. Motorcyclists are heavily outnumbered, so proposals to promote motorcycling would have to compete with ones that have wider appeal such as encouraging walking or cycling, introducing more hybrid buses or improving local railway stations.

I still cherish my copy of *The Government's Motorcycling Strategy* from March 2005, whose very apt motto was "*the mainstreaming of motorcycling*". Given *Creating Growth, Cutting Carbon's* failure to fulfil that objective, I believe the White Paper should be subtitled "*the sidelining of motorcycling*".

Nevertheless, the BMF has made a news release welcoming the support for Wheels 2 Work in *Creating Growth, Cutting Carbon*. I have e-mailed Jeff Stone and other BMF national officers saying how much and why I disagree with their decision not to issue any public criticism of the White Paper.

I searched MAG's national website this morning but not found a MAG news release about the White Paper yet. **Rob and Andy:** please will you ask MAG UK to make a news release that criticises the White Paper for almost completely ignoring motorcycling?



whitepaper.pdf

BBC E-mail: Motorbikes 'to get safety system';

Little Red saw this story on the BBC News website and thought you should see it.

** Motorbikes 'to get safety system'; ** Collision detection systems and other safety features found on cars may soon be appearing on motorbikes, researchers say.

< <http://www.bbc.co.uk/go/em/fr/-/news/technology-12266406> >

** BBC Daily E-mail **

Choose the news and sport headlines you want - when you want them, all in one daily e-mail < <http://www.bbc.co.uk/email> >

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<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/help/4162471.stm>

Nich's response to my spotting of the BBC piece yesterday:

This popped up from our political monitoring service today.

I've had a look at the news sections on the MIRA and Saferider websites but can't see anything new that would have prompted BBC so it may just be filler.

I attended a presentation about the Saferider findings last November, there is a final report due that spells out which of the technologies tested are likely to be developed and over what time-frame.

The conclusions of the November conference was that very few of the 'safety' systems could be developed quickly, many would take 10 plus years if at all so I believe the quote from MIRA about some systems being developed in 18 months should be taken with a pinch of salt - the comments probably refer to the fairly predictable navigation, communications and entertainment systems that the project looked at.

The idea of putting strain on the throttle cable to warn a rider when they exceed the speed limit is not mentioned in the BBC report and at the November presentation it was said that this 'force feedback throttle'

system had failed to prove to be worthwhile. The 'haptic handle' referred to in the BBC item is a device mounted to the throttle handle which causes a rippling feel under the riders hand, it does not close the throttle either.

Here are weblinks for MIRA <http://www.mira.co.uk/> and Saferider <http://www.saferider-eu.org/>

Nich

BBC Piece

Motorbikes 'to get safe driving aids'

Motor bike in traffic, BBCThe safety systems created a "bubble" of awareness around a rider

Motorbikes could soon be sporting collision detection and other safety features more usually found on cars.

Research is testing ways to put these systems on motor bikes and how best to alert riders to dangers on the road.

The systems tested include warnings about speed limits, the tightness of road bends and information about other vehicles to aid lane-changing.

The first bike-based safety systems could be appearing on motor bikes within two years, say researchers.

Proof of concept tests on the Saferider systems, as they are known, have been carried out in simulators and on road bikes by Mira (formerly known as the Motor Industry Research Association), which acts as a testing and innovation centre for car makers.

"Saferider takes the driver safety systems that are becoming standard on cars and tries to adapt them to the unique needs of motorcyclists," said Jonathan Moore, an ITS consultant at Mira, involved in the Saferider project.

Statistics gathered by Mira suggest that about 22% of all road accident fatalities involve bike riders and it is the only mode of transport which is seeing a rise in the number of deaths.

Mr Moore said making safety systems on motor bikes useful was "challenging" because of all the distractions to which riders are subjected.

"One of the most difficult things is getting the rider's attention," he said. "There's a high level of ambient noise and vibration to deal with and we really don't want motor cycle riders looking down at the handlebars any more than they need to"

http://news.bbcimg.co.uk/media/images/50936000/gif/50936170_bikewidesquare.gif

<<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/technology-12266406#play>>

The Saferider system allows motorcyclists to send SOS alerts and warns of potential hazards. Video courtesy of Saferider developer, Mira.

Bubble wrap

Mira has been investigating how to use haptic, tactile feedback systems to safely get the attention of riders and warn them about other vehicles, prepare them for the road ahead or give help at junctions.

Mira engineers outfitted a Yamaha Tenere and a Triumph Sprint with the safety systems so they could be tried out on a test track.

The systems include laser scanners, haptic handles and gloves, a vibrating seat, lights, smart helmet cameras and radar as well as a pannier full of the electronics that analyse data gathered by the sensors and pump out warnings.

One system tested works out if riders are travelling too fast to negotiate upcoming bends. Mira has developed software that acts as a "co-pilot" which, with the help of a digital map, knows what speed they should be travelling to make it round a bend.

"One system under test based around radar constantly monitors the blind spots around and behind riders," said Mr Moore. "Vehicles behind or to one side of a bike can be hard to spot because the helmet restricts visibility and riders must remember to move their head regularly to check."

"We put a motor in the cheek pad of the helmet so if you do not notice the object it will vibrate and give you a tactile warning that there's something to the right or left," said Mr Moore.

The system can also help give a rider information about traffic further behind in adjoining lanes to help with over-taking or lane-changing.

Motorbike collision detection systems developed by Mira warn a rider about an imminent impact and let them take action by slow sharply down or, in the case of a vehicle travelling in the same direction as the bike, following it while slowing.

The safety systems could be a boon to less experienced bike riders.

"They do not give the attention to the road they should or have the experience to deal with problems," said Mr Moore.

The prototypes demonstrated by Mira showed it was feasible to fit such safety systems on motor bikes, said Mr Moore. He speculated that manufacturers would start to put them on bikes within the next 18 months to two years.

SAFERIDER is a collaborative R&D effort that is part of the European Commission's Seventh Framework Programme. Participants include Mira, Yamaha, Porsche Engineering and Fema among others.

Motorcycle tax evasion

Letter from Nich in response to a chaps enquiry about the misleading VED (Vehicle Excise Duty) evasion figures.

Other abbreviations not explained: DVLA (Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency), DfT (Department for Transport), NAO (National Audit Office), PAC (Public Accounts Committee)

Dear Richard

Thanks for your enquiry about the VED evasion figures.

I have brought your email to the attention of the Department for Transport (the department responsible for the DVLA) as an example of the continuing need for older research to be presented in the context of any major changes to the information on which they are based. This is especially important in the case of undated papers that could be mistaken for current or recent findings, such as the Electronic Vehicle Identification study you have seen.

The DVLA and DfT websites are not unusual in that reports and studies are archived as originally published - very rarely do updates or errata get added.

These points have been taken up with DfT and DVLA at the time of publication and at several times since. DfT were asked to print an explanation for the changes in the Compendium of Motorcycling Statistics for that year, but instead deleted all explanatory notes that helped readers to understand the basis of the data presented. At the time the reason for this was given as cut-backs in staff available to do the work.

This was particularly disappointing given the findings of the House of Commons Public Affairs Committee in 2008. At the time I was Director of Research & Statistical Services at the Motor Cycle Industry Association, on whose behalf I submitted evidence which is reflected in their report 'Evasion of Vehicle Excise Duty' Second Special Report of 2007-08 (Report HC 557) Published on 19 June 2008.

Although the Government of the time did not issue an apology to the motorcycle community, the following comments from the Parliamentary body responsible for overseeing VED gave clear vindication to us as you can see from the following extract from their conclusions...

"8. A fall in the motorcycle evasion rate from 45.9% to 20% between 2002 and 2004, followed by a rise to nearly 40% over the next two years, is so improbable that the Department should have known there were serious errors in the surveys. Indeed we understand that motorcycle bodies had repeatedly made this point to them. Given this, the Department should have made clear to us that their figures for road tax evasion could not be relied upon.

9. We find it disingenuous to suggest that a change in methodology that involved almost exclusive use of cameras and enabled the results to be properly checked for the first time was not a change in kind. Even if they were unable to give us any early indications of the results of the June 2007 survey, the Department should have made clear that the nature of the survey had changed significantly.

10. We also find it incredible that from June 2007, when the data were collected, through publication of a NAO report, a PAC hearing and publication of the PAC report, the Department neither suspected that the figures were wrong nor gave any indication to the Committee, but instead apparently waited until February after adverse publicity to release new figures.

11. We are disappointed that the National Audit Office did not scrutinise the Department's figures more rigorously. The Committee does not have the resources to check the detail of evidence put before it: we therefore expect the National Audit Office to maintain its usual high standards in all cases.

12. Parliamentary scrutiny of the executive is an important part of the constitution. It is dependent in large part on the accuracy of evidence provided by witnesses. Government departments are particularly responsible for ensuring that Members are not misled, even inadvertently, by the evidence they provide. As this case shows, offence can also be caused to law-abiding sections of the community by the provision of inaccurate evidence: this in turn can adversely affect the standing of Parliament in the eyes of the public"

If I remember correctly MCN covered the story at the time.

I hope this helps, I will of course let you know about the response from DfT.

Sincerely

Nich Brown
General Secretary, Motorcycle Action Group.

Hello,

Just been on the DVLA's website looking at RFID (radio frequency identification device) and the report regarding whether it is likely
> that they will be introducing these little number plate "bugs" in the
> future. The report is interesting especially as it will cost millions
> of pounds to implement, but my concern was diverted when I see they
> still haven't corrected their figures on motorcycle road tax (VED)
evasion.

> They still state that 37.8% of motorcycles were untaxed in 2006! This is

> untrue and has not been corrected or any acknowledgement of a mistake
> stated, so to anyone looking at these figures they still think that a
> huge amount of motorcyclists in 2006 were not paying their tax.
> On the 16th Feb. 2008 the DfT owned up to say that they had got the
> figures wrong and said a figure of 6.5% was more likely the current
> figure on DfT's website is now 3% of m/cs are untaxed. No public
> apology was forthcoming and the name of motorcycling was tarnished yet

> again through adverts on radio, t.v. etc Why haven't the DVLA changed
> their report?

> As a motorcyclist of 25 years plus I have always paid my road tax ,
> after all it's not a great deal to fork out so can't see the point in
> running the risk of being caught, and know that most other bikers I
> know, feel the same.

> I do not like the fact that anyone can access this site and be misled

> to think that nearly half of all motorcyclists aren't paying their
> way, this leads to drivers thinking that we shouldn't be on the road.
> As a MAG member I will bring this up with head office to see what can
> be done to change these incorrect, public accessible figures.

> Anyone else feel like doing the same?

> Richard,

> North Tawton,

> Devon.

Anti Tamper Poster Ideas

Looks like the idea's for posters are coming in - any additional ideas from across the region??
The one attached is Mutchie's draft,



Phil from South Wales thought this could be a badge for the bike with a red line through it, whilst Tony Cox the North West Rep thought would be a good picture to use....



antitamperingposter.
pdf

Sorry if it is confusing Nich's responses are embedded in with Steve's questions.
Red

On 26/01/2011 17:12, Farrell, Steve wrote:

Hi Nich

Hi Steve, I've been looking in to this in some detail so your enquiry is quite timely.

I've responded to some of your specific points and also added some comments from our own advice to activists which is going through various channels over the next couple of weeks. I've also attached the internal Ealing report to cabinet the decision was based on.

What are your thoughts on this? It's raw casualty data from Ealing Borough Council. It shows they scrapped the trial of motorcyclists in bus lanes despite concluding it had led to a fall in their collision rate.

For one thing, any statement about numbers of collisions 'in bus lanes' may well be false - you will see that the table sub-titles refer to 'collisions in vicinity of a bus lane', this is because the STATS19 data is generally only capable of identifying that a collision happened on a road where there is a bus lane, NOT whether a collision happened 'in' a bus lane.

The data for the periods before and during the experiment is interesting, I've attached the report to the cabinet members at Ealing which appears not to contain any comparative data tables or detail about the nature of the collisions. This might make sense from a management information point view but does nothing for transparency.

The experiment began in January 2009, the data covers the year 2009 and compares this against the year 2008 but it only covers Jan-Sept 2010. The results were an increase in collisions during the first year of the experiment, but the year-to-date 2010 figures suggest that increase was tailing-off both for motorcyclists and for pedal cyclists.

In fact what they're calling rate isn't actually the rate at all. Instead it's collisions on bus lanes routes as a percentage of collisions across the whole borough.

I agree, it is an expression of the 'share' of all collisions involving motorcycles or bicycles in the borough. There is no consideration of whether the amount of motorcycle traffic or bicycle traffic changed (either in terms of total distance travelled or cordon counts).

The report to cabinet members of Ealing (attached) shows that Ealing's officers relied on assumptions made in the TfL's report about whether the change in collisions was out of proportion to any change in traffic levels and some subjective thoughts about whether cyclists had changed their behaviour - interestingly, TfL decided to conduct a new experiment allowing motorcycle access because they took the view that the problem probably lies in the behaviour of car drivers at junctions.

The Ealing report states "Whilst there were no direct collisions between a motorcycle and a pedal cycle, it is suggested that there must be a causal link given that the only change between the data-sets was the motorcycle experiment. The hypothesis is that pedal cycles are reacting to presence of motorcycles in bus lanes by travelling nearer to the kerb than before, making them less visible to vehicles turning across their path."

There is no analysis of the nature of the collisions in Ealing to support the wholesale adoption of TfL's suppositions about what might have been happening elsewhere.

Many junctions on London bus lanes do not meet the design standards laid down by DfT that are intended to ensure good visibility and separation of vehicles around junctions, so we have asked TfL to look at whether changes to junction design would improve safety around junctions.

It's very bizarre and seems to suggest they haven't actually taken account of vehicle mileage.

Do you think they are placing cyclists' safety over motorcyclists'?

Ealing's officers are explicit that this is one of their main arguments, they state in the report to Cabinet that the experiment

"...would appear to be contrary to Ealing's ambitions to become a leading Biking Borough, and would put the borough's challenging cycling objective at risk."

In our view this is short-sighted and detrimental to the safety of motorcyclists, another vulnerable road user group on urban roads such as these, which the Council has decided is not worthy of the same consideration as cyclists.

TfL's decision to try a new experiment designed to address the problems faced by all road users at and around junctions is the only responsible course of action. If Ealing were genuinely concerned about road safety they would be supporting this attempt to get at the root causes of a much wider problem. Instead, they intend to not only confuse matters by withdrawing access to Ealing controlled bus lanes, they also want to undermine the TfL experiment by withdrawing access to TfL bus lanes that pass through Ealing.

The report to cabinet members at Ealing suggests that the only consultees asked about the recommendation to abolish motorcycle access were the Council's own officers, therefore interested parties such as local MAG members and other riders were prevented from challenging the report before a decision was taken.

The council set-up a Motorcycles in Bus Lanes Scrutiny Committee which recommended the original experiment, this does not appear to have been reconvened and it does not appear to have had any representation from motorcyclists.

Nor does it appear that accident data was presented to members of cabinet for closer scrutiny.

Whether this reflects the officers confidence in their recommendation, or the cabinets lack of interest is difficult to tell. The press comments by the Council spokesperson certainly smacked of an emotional rather than rational decision.

We have to consider the strong possibility that the decision to end the experiment while the TfL trials are ongoing and before having all the facts available was ideologically driven.

Before Ealing can close bus lanes to bikes they will have to put-up notices along the bus routes and in the Town Hall. They will be doing this over the next weeks and months. MAG is calling on riders who use Ealing's bus lanes to write to the council objecting to the removal of access on grounds that the Council has not shown it has given due to consideration to their safety or to the efficient use of the local road network. Riders should join MAG to call on the Council to hold its hand until after the outcomes of the current TfL experiment are known at the end of this year.

I hope that helps

Nich

Regards
Steve Farrell

Hi Steve,
The data is in the attached table.

Please note:

1) In order to compensate for the increase in motorcycles and pedal cycles on the road (which would increase the number of accidents in any event) - you must compare the rate of accidents in bus lanes with all accidents - see the comments column.

2) The Councils decision was not based solely on accidents data in Ealing - we looked at various indicators in order to come to a balanced view.

For a statement:

A council spokesperson said: "Our overriding concern is for the safety of all road-users."

Regards,

Jennifer Wood

Media and Communications Officer

Marketing & Communications

Ealing Council

Tel: 020 8825 8049

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Email: woodj@ealing.gov.uk (<mailto:woodj@ealing.gov.uk>) Follow Ealing Council on

Twitter: www.twitter.com/ealingcouncil Hi Jennifer Any decision on whether we can see the casualty data for motorcyclists before and during the trial?

Regards

Steve Farrell

Bikes now account for 20% of all auto theft

Hello

Although the number of bikes being stolen in the UK is falling slowly, improvements to car security systems mean the statistics now show that one fifth of all vehicle theft is of a motorcycle. Compared to the fact that motorcycles make up only 1% of traffic, this figure is shocking and is certainly ammunition for our campaign to get more secure parking spaces for bikes in our towns and cities.

Alarm system or not, the fact remains that a bike can be lifted into the back of a van relatively easily and securing it to a fixed ground anchor of some type is the only way to reduce the risk.

Even though figures are falling, the result is that bikes have gone from representing 16.8% of all vehicles stolen in 2006 to 21.69% last year.

The figures, derived from the Police National Computer by Retainagroup Ltd, show the number of bikes stolen has dropped from 26,608 in 2006 to 21,928 last year.

A.O.B.

Keith: I got some thank you cards from the children home. The children all were very please with their presents. On the down side to this, there was a letter telling me that the home (Crossways) will be closing on the 31st march. They thanked Basingstoke MAG for all the gifts they received over the long period that Basingstoke MAG have been coming there.

Fred Hill run. Meet at The Royal Oak at 10.45am 5th Feb to leave at 11am.

We now have the car park to hold the Basingstoke MAG 21st Anniversary Bike Show. Which will be on Saturday 18th June.

Reading MAG Easter bike show is on Sunday 24th April. At Reading Abbey Rugby Club.
Salisbury MAG bike show is on 3rd April
Southampton MAG bike show is on 15th April

Sammy: My bike has just reached 100.000 miles on the clock.

Cheryl: Just got a news letter update on the donkeys we adopted. Shell we have a ride out again to see them.

14th May

Is the date for our ride out to see the donkeys. Time to meet will be set near the date.

Red: Is there any dates for sea fishing and the clay pigeon shooting.

Keith. Will come back soon with some dates.

2011 Events

Friday, February 4, 2011 - Sunday, February 6, 2011 - The 25th Frozen Nuts Rally

Organiser: Dangermouse Rally Club

Same site, live band and disco. £12 pre book or £15 on the gate send cheques to: PO Box 582, Enoch House, Scotia Business Park, Stoke on Trent, ST6 4RG contact Orko on: 07960451573 or Bones: 07990500688 or Rich: 07812580337.

Location: Bignall End Cricket Club, Boon Hill, Bignall End, Stoke On Trent, ST7 8LA

Web: <http://www.dmrc.co.uk>

Saturday, February 5, 2011 - Fred Hill Run

Organiser: Thames Valley MAG

Annual memorial run into Oxford. Depart 1200pm.

Location: Depart Chieveley Services, J13 M4, 1200pm.

Enquiries: Any queries, please call Rob - 07905 003585

Saturday, February 5, 2011 - Thames Valley Regional AGM

Organiser: Thames Valley MAG

3pm. Follows Fred Hill Run. All members from region welcome. Please remember to bring your current MAG Membership card. No card - no vote.

Location: H Cafe. Berinsfield, Oxfordshire, OX10 7LY

Enquiries: Any queries, please call Rob - 07905 003585

Sunday, February 6, 2011 - Fred Hill Memorial Run

Organiser: MAG Cornwall.

Ride around Cornwall to remember Fred Hill, finishing at Truro War Memorial for laying of flowers and explanatory poster.

Location: 10am Smokey Joes cafe near Blackwater Cornwall.

Saturday, February 19, 2011 - East Anglia Regional AGM

Organiser: East Anglia MAG

Arrive from 14:00 for a 14:15 start Remember your Membership card - no card, no vote.

Location: 11 Short Drive, Manea, Nr. March, Cambridgeshire PE15 0GF

Web: <http://east-anglia-region.mag-uk.org>

Basingstoke MAG 2011 AGM. 24th March, 8pm at The Royal Oak.

Basingstoke MAG 2012 AGM. 22nd March, 8pm at The Royal Oak.

