



Thanks for all your support!

The Motorcycle Action Group ends 2016 by offering a huge “thank you” to all of its members for their support during the year and wishing them many miles of happy riding in the year ahead. MAG Chair, Selina Lavender, said “MAG is only as good as its members and our members are very good! I want to thank each and every one of you for your support over the past year, wish you all a very happy festive season and I’m looking forward to helping take MAG forward with your invaluable support in 2017”.

Lembit Opik, MAG’s Director of Communications & Public Affairs, added “MAG members are amazing; without them we would only be achieving a fraction of what we are doing. I’d like to say a massive “thank you” to you all because you make MAG what it is: the country’s leading riders’ rights organisation and every MAG member should be proud of their contribution”.

Round-up of 2016

MAG has had a year characterised by real results. The biking world is in better shape at the end of the year than it was at the beginning. MAG was founded at a time when civil liberties were being compromised and the international situation looked very unstable. While history may be repeating itself in some respects on the world stage, the Motorcycle Action Group has had one of the most productive periods in its 43-year existence.

MAG’s Chair, Selina Lavender, is impressed with the level of output: “2016 has seen MAG change gear to become the clear voice of riders in a hugely credible way. We’ve established lasting relationships with decision-makers at local and national level.

Our work with the motorcycle industry has become strategic. We’re helping to spearhead the campaign to deal with motorcycle-related crime. We’ve challenged insane cycle-lane schemes which have harmed all powered traffic for little benefit to the economy, environment or society. We’ve submitted a significant number of responses to local and national Government consultations; possibly more than at any time in our history. And we’re being taken seriously in debates about the future of transport, in terms of autonomous vehicles, the strategic roads network and the environmental agenda. I’d say we’ve had a pretty good year.’

MAG’s focus for 2017 is more of the same. Selina adds: “A lot of the work we do is not glamorous, dramatic or newsworthy. Meeting local authority officers is very much a desk job, as is the submission of serious comments to Government consultations. That’s how we make progress. It’s hardly surprising we now have a growing network, with new groups in London, Northern Ireland and elsewhere. We can take nothing for granted; these achievements have been earned and the more we do the more we are taken seriously. It’s high-octane stuff “ and the results prove that riders are now being taken seriously in a way which was desperately needed. I want to thank everyone “ activists and professional staff alike “ for a tremendous year of progress. While the world has had its fair share of shocks and disappointments, most of what’s happened in MAG’s world has been enormously positive. Let’s keep that momentum going “ and let’s keep delivering results in the interests of liberty and riding.’



Halloween Rampage update



MAG is approaching the National Police Chiefs' Council to request a review of the rowdy events which were widely reported on Halloween night. MAG challenges the claim that order can be restored through restrictions on the liberties of law-abiding citizens. The Motorcycle Action Group is seeking a summit with representatives of the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) to gauge their willingness to find more effective ways of addressing the crime which caused fear and inconvenience to the public during Halloween 2016. Selina Lavender said *"The police rightly pointed out that the yobbish behaviour which took place in*

various cities on 31st October was nothing to do with legitimate motorcycling. This same message was shared by MAG on social media and also on the national news. However, the problem still persists, despite the introduction of some very harsh injunctions in many of the areas where the lawless behaviour took place. MAG has long argued that the introduction of such restrictive rules makes a mockery of existing laws. What's the benefit of banning two or more motorbikes from riding together, or of outlawing the use of a vehicle horn? It's not logical and could even compromise safety. Nor did it prevent the anti-social behaviour in any measurable way.'

Selina hopes the discussions with the police will lead to a serious review of these poorly-worded injunctions, with advice from the NPCC to replace the injunctions with more sensible measures. *"We're on-side with the authorities regarding tackling the anti-social behaviour. We just think it's better to approach the whole matter with enforceable, reasonable measures; not ones which turn vast numbers of law-abiding riders into criminals, whilst doing nothing to prevent the small number of idiots from doing what they like.'*

Bike Theft update



MAG has become a very active participant of the UK's Motorcycle Crime Reduction Group, in the light of dangerous developments in bike crime, with one murder in London and repeated assaults on riders by would-be bike thieves.

MAG has joined forces with the motorcycle industry, the police and insurance firms to tackle the crime wave that is affecting motorcyclists and scooter riders, especially in urban areas. Lembit Opik is MAG's representative on the Motorcycle Crime Reduction Group (MCRG): *"I've been instructed to take an active part in seeking solutions. With allies it becomes easier. We've agreed to create a joint approach involving riders, manufacturers and the authorities"*. The London Metropolitan Police found remains of 14 stolen

Honda 125s in a single raid. Liverpool police recovered a bike with frame number and engine number chiselled off, one of hundreds of similar cases. Riders have bought machines in good faith only to discover they had purchased stolen goods and a man in London was murdered by thugs who wanted to steal his bike from outside his own house. Violence has now become commonplace, with riders literally being pushed off their motorcycles in petrol stations by yobs trying to snatch their machines. *“What are we supposed to do? Padlock our bikes at traffic lights?”* asks Lembit.

The Motor Cycle Industry Association’s Chief Executive Officer Steve Kenwood summed it up: *“We’ve got to “privatise” the problem, and then present the solution to the State.’* Part of that solution is the Master Scheme, which tags bikes in a way which makes them instantly identifiable with the right equipment. This has measurably reduced theft of tagged bikes and increased recovery rates, though that might also explain the increase in thefts of older bikes.

Lembit adds *“The Chair of the MCRG is, I hope, going to address MAG’s National Committee in 2017. With organised crime heavily involved with these problems, this is a messy situation. Scooter-enabled crime is also up. It’s a battle we’ll have to fight as long as there are elements in our country who don’t give a damn about other people or their property.”*

Man falls off ladder – the end of motorsport?

Time, it seems, for the EU to spread a bit more Christmas joy. When Damijan Vnuk, a Slovenian, was knocked off his ladder by a reversing tractor he tried to claim against the driver. However, as the incident took place on private land, and hence the agricultural vehicle didn’t need insurance, he faced a problem. Good ol’ Damijan didn’t give up though and in 2014 the European Court of Justice ruled that the accident should have been covered by compulsory vehicle insurance. This means all vehicles, in all situations not just on roads, must be insured. A consultation document published by the Department for Transport on 20/12/16 has stated that until Britain leaves the EU we will be obliged to implement the ruling. This will mean compulsory insurance for mobility scooters, ride-on lawnmowers, dodgem cars, golf-carts, forklift trucks and Segways just to name a few. Plus, of course, that SORN’ed box of bits in your shed.



A response from both the Motorsport Industry Association and the Motorcycle Industry Association has described the move as *“ill-considered”* (which I think is putting it mildly). They added that compulsory third party insurance for vehicles which are never used on the road will *“bring closure to all forms of motor and motorcycle sport across the UK ... Insurers have made it clear to the government that (such vehicles) are uninsurable, not least because of the number of potential vehicle damage claims. (This) would at a stroke wipe out legal motor sport activity and destroy our industry.”*

A DfT consultation will run on this until March 2017. They have suggested that it may not be possible to implement the ruling before the UK’s proposed date of leaving the EU in 2019, if at all, due to the complexity of changing insurance laws. If implemented though a “sunset clause” will be added to abolish the rule once Brexit is complete.

North West Motorcycle Alliance

This is not a MAG organisation but a monthly meet for all bike clubs, organisations and interested bikers anywhere from Cheshire up to Lancaster. The next meeting is hosted by **Avernus MCC** at the **clubhouse, Mill Lane, Coppull PR7 5BW** at **8pm on Wednesday 25th January**. Here is the latest, up to date list of biker events this autumn which the Alliance has put together, which includes a few changes from the previous month.

19th Feb – NW Fred Hill Run – meet at Petre Arms, Langho for 1pm start

25th Feb - Millennium MCC 17th Anniversary Rock Night – Canberra club, camping available

19th March – BQRS Auto Jumble, Anchor, Liverpool Rd, Hutton PR4 5SL

9th April Salford MAG Autojumble - Bird in Hand, Liverpool Road Eccles, M30 0RY 12-5pm

22nd April – Red Rose MAG St.George’s Rock Knight – Goosenargh & Whittingham Club, camping available

May – Ibiza Run – dates/details to follow.

25-28th May – Big Barn Rally.

23rd-25th June – Blackpool Area MAG Rally

13-16th July Millennium MCC Caveman Bash

18-20th August – HAMC Bike Show, Rixton with camping and bands.

25th-27th August - Avernus Underworld Rally

25th – 27th August - Great North West Motorbike Festival, Winter Gardens, Blackpool

As ever, if you would like to have your say on anything vaguely MAG-related, or sell something bike related, just drop me a line at billgreen@madasafish.com and I'll put it into the newsletter next month.

Bill

NW Political Rep

A faded background image of a man in a military-style uniform standing next to a motorcycle.


13th Annual Fred Hill Run
Sunday 19th February 2017
Meeting at
The Petre Arms, Whalley Rd, Blackburn BB6 8AB
leaving at 1 pm.
Details of run dependant on the weather.
All riders welcome.
Fred Hill died in prison, still fighting for his beliefs that bikers should have the freedom to ride. Each year we remember him, and continue the struggle.
"The price of freedom is eternal vigilance!"
Contact Bill on 07754891485

North West
MAG
the heart & soul of biking

A dark background featuring a white and blue motorcycle with purple and pink light trails behind it.

Manchester
BIKE SHOW
THE NUMBER ONE MOTORCYCLE SHOW IN THE NORTH

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9:30AM – 5:00PM

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 An  event

7th WARRINGTON WHEELS YOUTH MOTOR CYCLE COMPETITION 2017

ARE YOU A YOUNG PERSON?

ARE YOU INTERESTED IN MOTOR CYCLES?



HERE'S YOUR CHANCE TO ENTER A LOCAL MOTOR CYCLE (OR MOTOR CYCLE RELATED VEHICLE) BUILDING COMPETITION TO TAKE PLACE AT WOOLSTON BROOK SCHOOL, WARRINGTON, CHESHIRE, WA1 4JL ON FRIDAY 26th MAY 2017. (11.30am-2pm)

ENTRANTS CAN BE TEAMS OR INDIVIDUALS AGED 18 YEARS OR UNDER.

ENTER AS MANY VEHICLES AS YOU CAN BUILD.
(Any type of bike, running or not)

ENTRANTS WILL ALSO BE GIVEN THE OPPORTUNITY TO ENTER THEIR EXHIBITS IN THE NATIONAL YOUTHBIKE COMPETITION (www.youthbike.com) HELD IN LINCOLNSHIRE JUNE 2017

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, CONTACT BOB TOWLER
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01925 818549

Or E-mail bobtowler57@hotmail.co.uk

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2017
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