



The Price of Electricity?



The government announced this week that sales of new petrol and electric vehicles will be phased out by 2040 (not exactly news as we are already committed to this under the Paris Climate Agreement 2016 but, hey, why not brag about it?). This is not even that radical – India will ban them by 2030. Before then plans are being drawn up to increase taxation on older, more polluting vehicles plus a possible scrappage scheme to encourage owner to switch to “cleaner” modes of transport. A big advantage seems to be the lower running costs with around 3p a mile being touted for electric cars, much less for a motorcycle. So

are we looking forward to a new world of cheap driving/biking? Not necessarily.

At present, the government earns £28 billion a year from fuel duty – that’s about 50p for every pound spent on petrol or diesel. An electric car charged from the grid will currently generate just 5p in VAT for every pound spent. If the car is charged directly from solar panels on a garage roof, the Treasury is likely to go empty-handed. That’s a big chunk to lose from public finances. To help plug the gap, the Treasury could increase VAT on energy to 20% - not likely to be popular with homeowners. Vehicle Excise Duty (Road tax) could be increased, including that on electric vehicles which are currently exempt. However, this is a tax on car ownership which is unlikely to be popular, especially with green campaigners, who would prefer to tax the use of cars. With Vehicle Excise Duty you pay the same whether you’re clocking up 100 000 miles a year or it’s just sitting in your garage. It’s unfair and, more importantly to some minds, it’s inefficient.

We’ve all sat in traffic jams and like you I’ve also had the pleasure of cutting through them on my bike. A traffic jam is essentially a queue for a limited resource – road space. In Europe this fact has been recognised for many years and they’ve addressed it through “road pricing”, otherwise known as toll roads. Travel along French or Italian motorways and you’ll be used to shelling out for the privilege. In this country we’ve never taken to the idea, with the exception of the M6 toll and a few bridges. However, faced with losing the equivalent of 2/3 of the national defence budget long-term planners are reconsidering the idea. It has it’s advantages over a flat Road Tax.

1. You only pay for what you use. Occasional users would not be “subsidising” heavy users. Harking back to the old wartime poster “Is Your Journey Really Necessary”, it would force you to think about how often you use your vehicle, much the same as the price of fuel does now.
2. It can be targetted to reduce congestion. As with train tickets now, you would pay less to travel “off peak”. This combined with driverless technology would move most long-distance freight haulage to the middle of the night. It could also target “rat-runs” by simply putting up the price to travel on them. It is infinitely flexible.
3. It’ll be fairly easy to implement. Unlike the continentals, we’ve skipped the awkward necessity of building toll booths and could monitor the movement of each vehicle via GPS. All you would receive is a monthly bill. This may raise concerns about the invasion of privacy that this would entail. It is worrying but let’s face it, you’re kidding yourself if you think that your every movement isn’t tracked already through CCTV, ANPR and that GPS in your satnav and phone.

Like it or not we’re living through a ‘transport revolution’ at the moment, where the basic ground rules are being rewritten. Road pricing is only an idea but it’s being taken seriously in some quarters. Where motorcycles will figure in this brave new world no-one can tell yet. Luckily we’ve got MAG keeping its eye on the situation to make sure that bikers get a fair look in.

This Month – Blackpool MAG Bike Show 2nd July



Great weather, fantastic turnout

It ran as sweet as it looks

They say that nothing is certain in life but death and taxes but I'm beginning to think that you could add "sunshine at the Blackpool Bike Show" to that list. This year the fine weather attracted a big crowd, not just bikers but also the interested public. A big thanks to Blackpool Area MAG for putting it on.

This Month – Millennium 2000 BC Caveman Bash 13th-16th July

Long-time MAG supporting club **Millennium 2000 BC** kindly invited us along to their latest Caveman Bash rally at Salmesbury. It was a real pleasure to be there as they always put on a good party. Sadly, there is currently not to be a Bash next year but hopefully it'll return in the near future.



Millennium custom show

The MAG stand got a nice quiet spot

Next Month – The Great North West Motorbike Festival 25th – 27th Aug

For the first time in over half a century, a major Motorbike event will return to the Blackpool Winter Gardens, being officially opened by motorbiking legend Carl Fogarty.

From 26th–27th August 2017 motorbike enthusiasts from across the UK are set to take over Blackpool, as a 2-day festival featuring a range of major exhibitors, independent traders, live music and much more takes place at the Winter Gardens Blackpool.

Over the 2-day festival motorbike enthusiasts will have a chance to browse the latest bikes from major manufactures Including BMW, Harley Davidson, Honda and Ducati, plus many more whilst live demonstrations in bike maintenance including a build from scratch will be hosted by Myerscough College. Live Q&A's with industry experts and stars including the most successful racer of all time Carl Fogarty will take place giving fans a unique and rare opportunity to be up close and



personal with the motorcycle legend. An exhibition of classic bikes will be on show throughout the Floral Hall in association with the Morecambe Bay Classic Bike Club featuring bikes throughout the ages, plus fans can take a range of rip roaring challenges in a modern simulation zone. The bank holiday weekend festival will also be accompanied by live music from popular tribute the AC/DC Experience. For more details go to: <http://gnwmf17.co.uk/>

MAG welcomes custodial sentences for bike thugs



MAG has applauded the stiff sentences handed out to the organisers of and participants in acts of hooliganism in Leeds and elsewhere on Halloween in 2016. MAG has expressed its support for the jailing of thirteen thugs who used motorcycles to disrupt Leeds city centre last year. Together, they have been jailed for a total of almost fifteen years. Prison spells of between twelve months and two years were given to the organisers of the event, which saw more than a hundred riders on motorbikes and quad bikes disrupting traffic

and riding through pedestrianised areas in Leeds.

One of the hooligans, David Armitage, who organized the event through social media, was filmed during the incident encouraging "carnage" and telling riders to "shut down" the city centre. He was jailed for two years.

Selina Lavender, MAG's Chair, has backed the verdict and the sentences. *"As senior police correctly observed last year, these people aren't bikers. They're just hooligans and idiots who happened to be on two wheels. MAG does not recognise or welcome such people as part of the biking community, and the sentences are an appropriate indication of the treatment people can expect if they disrespect the need for responsible use of bikes. Nobody involved came out of that incident in a good light."*

MAG is committed to working with the authorities and the law enforcement agencies to ensure that proper bikers are not dragged down by the idiotic antics of a reckless few jobs who thought it amusing to frighten and intimidate the general population. *"We love biking not trouble,"* adds Selina. *"That's the genuine biker's charter, and it's at the heart and soul of the kind of riding MAG has promoted for over 40 years."*

"Acid attack" protest blocks central London 18th July

This month hundreds of scooter and moped riders brought Westminster to a standstill by staging a major protest against a recent spate of acid attacks across London. Activists blocked Parliament Square to call for a crackdown on acid attacks and motorcycle thefts. Couriers and delivery drivers met in Whitechapel, at midday before riding in convoy to central London.

A series of motorcycle crime prevention groups met outside the Ace Café on the North Circular before travelling into Westminster for the protest, which began at about 2pm. Moped riders used their vehicles to block up the roads around Parliament Square and beeped their horns during the protest.

Ashraf Ahmed, 38, a Deliveroo driver from Bromley, said he was threatened with a knife while he was out on his moped this month. *"I have kids, I have a wife, I have my family and no-one's bothered. I'm scared. We want to stop acid attacks, and motorbike crime. That's why we are here."*

Meanwhile, the Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, has today called for the Government to introduce a "zero-tolerance approach" to combat acid attacks following a number of assaults in the capital.

"While acid attacks are relatively rare occurrences, there has been an increase in incidents in the capital in recent months. This is particularly frightening for those who ride a scooter in London."

In particular, the mayor wants to see tougher sentences for those who carry acid; a clarification of sentencing guidelines for judges so that *"those found guilty of committing acid attacks get the punishment they deserve"*; and a clampdown on the sale of corrosive substances.

"Acid attacks are callous and horrific and my thoughts are with all those affected. The emotional impacts of disfiguring and lifelong scarring are truly devastating for innocent victims. The Metropolitan Police takes these attacks extremely seriously and is doing everything in its power to tackle them. However, we need a new zero-tolerance approach as a country if we are to rid the streets of this scourge."

Tim Fawthrop, MAG's London Representative, is like most London motorcyclists and is getting



increasingly frustrated with the plight of the city's riders, who are under increasing threat from bike thieves who present a violent threat to the capital's 200,000+ riders. Motorcyclist Ricky Hayden was senselessly murdered on 13th September 2016, after he and his father were stabbed by thieves who were attempting to steal his moped from outside his home in Chadwell Heath, East London. Tim Fawthrop says *"the situation has got completely out of hand...The police seem ill equipped to assist, and the criminals know it. MAG is now working with riders in the city to put together some responses to this issue. We want to work with the police, councils and governing bodies to prevent further thefts and harm to riders...We can't wait any longer - we need riders and the authorities working together to prevent further harm."* MAG has been working with the UK's Motorcycle Crime Reduction Group to find lasting solutions to thefts and robberies which have seen riders being physically assaulted by these thieves.

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 **Road Reapers MCC** at the **Elsmere Rd Rec Club, Bolton BL3 3JT** at **8pm** on **Wednesday 30th August**. Please check the NW Alliance website for any last minutes changes to venue/dates– they do happen! 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.

Regular monthly events

HAMC Liverpool Open night 3rd Saturday of month, open 7.30 'til late

HAMC Manchester Open night last Saturday of month, open 7.30 'til late

Black Diamonds open night every Friday at the clubhouse in Hindley

Allegiance MC Open Night first Saturday of month at the clubhouse Aintree

Salford MAG meeting – meet at Bird in Hand, Eccles, last Thursday of month - **suspended for time being**

Red Rose MAG - meet every 1st&3rd Wednesday, Petre Arms, Langho nr Blackburn

Ecclestone Delph Bike Meet every Tuesday until end of season, café open till 9pm.

MT Heads Meet – Flying Horse Rochdale 8pm every Monday, donations to "Hounds for Heroes"

Gypsy Divas meet – 3rd Wednesday, Woolpack, Haslingden from 8.00pm.

Rigby's Guardians - meet every Sunday 6.30-9.00 at the Gardener's Arms, Hollin Lane, Middleton M24 5LE

Road Reapers MCC - meet 1st Sunday 1pm & 2nd Wednesday at 7.30 at the Elsmere Rd Rec Club, Bolton

Brotherhood Quest Bike Nite – every Monday (except last in month) 7-9pm Anchor, Liverpool Rd, Hutton PR4 5SL

Bury the Hatchett MCC - meet at the Two Tubs pub Bury at 7.30 last Thursday of month

Ronin MCC - meet every Thursday at the Grey Horse Hotel, Glazebury, Warrington.

Avernus MCC Open Night 2nd Saturday each month, at the clubhouse, Mill Lane, Coppull PR7 5BW

Hell's Belles WMC Open Night last Monday of month at clubhouse Radcliffe – Everyone welcome - The Cauldron, Globe Industrial Estate, Darbyshire St, Radcliffe, M26 2TA

Cogheads MCC meet every Thursday (except 1st) at 8pm, Forts Arms, Clayton-le-Moors

Road Slayers Brotherhood meet every 2nd Friday at Rock Hotel pub, Peel Green Rd, Barton M30 7AY

Accrington MCC meet at Poplar Club, Wellington St. Accrington every other Sunday (after 16th April) at 8pm.

Chorley Wildhartz MCC – meet first Thursday of month at Seaview Inn, Preston Rd, Chorley

Known upcoming events –

30th July Barton Aerodrome, Liverpool Rd (A57) – Veterans Garage Fundraiser 11am (supporting ex-services)

4th-6th August Yorkshire Pudding Rally Escrik Nr York – pre-book only – **SOLD OUT**

18-20th August – HAMC Rock & Bike Fest, Rixton, Warrington WA3 6EA – custom show, camping and bands.

25th-28th August - Avernus Underworld Rally – Hamilton House Farm, Tarnacre Lane, St.Michaels PR3 0TB

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

28th August MT Head's Bike Show – Rochdale Town Hall car park

2nd September Last Bastion MC Open Night at HA clubhouse, Cotton St. Liverpool

3rd September Millennium 2000BC Bike Show Baron's Rest Chorley PR1XA

9th September Farm Wars Festival – Hope View farm Astley M29 7LH

15-17th September Jesters Rally Whittington & Goosenargh Social Club

23rd-24th September Ramsbottom Motorcycle Show

28th October Accrington MCC Fright Night Poplar Club Wellington St, Accrington

28th October Millennium 2000BC Halloween Rock Night, Canberra Club

4th November – Blackpool MAG Halloween Party Night at Blackpool Rugby Club

25th November Cogheads Frightmare Before Christmas Poplar Club, Wellington St, Accrington

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



World's oldest motorcycle discovered in Topeka, Kansas.

UNDERWORLD RALLY 2017

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WINTER
CARNIVAL
BLACKPOOL

The poster features a close-up, low-angle shot of a motorcycle's front end, including the headlight, mirrors, and handlebars. The background shows a hazy, outdoor setting. Text is overlaid on the image in various orientations and colors (white, red, black). The top text provides dates for previews and the main event. The central text is the main title of the festival. Below that, a list of activities is provided. A website URL is in the top right, and the event's name and location are in the bottom right.