



North West Newsletter

February 2017

Where have all the young bikers gone?

I don't know about you but when I was a kid I lived and breathed bikes. I couldn't wait for my sixteenth birthday so I could (legally) get on the road. Then I couldn't wait to be 17 so I could get a proper machine. These days I'm not looking forward to the birthdays as much but I still feel the same about the bikes. Sadly, fewer and fewer youngsters these days feel the same. The law hasn't helped by piling restriction upon restriction on which bikes can be ridden on which (ridiculously hard to get) licence. But when kids get the bug, they still love motorcycles.

For some years now, Youthbike has tried to help the next generation of bikers develop the passion and confidence to create their own machines. In our region Bob and Liz Towler have worked tirelessly, but each year it gets harder. Now they're asking for your help. Liz has penned a plea (below) for bikers who care about biking's future to get involved. So think about it seriously – it may turn out to be the most fun you've had in years!

This Month – Fred Hill Run & NW AGM – 19th Feb

Massive thanks to all who turned out for the 13th consecutive NW Fred Hill Run this month. It wasn't so much raining as low cloud (you know, the fine stuff that soaks you through) but that didn't stop MAG supporters from all over the region from rolling up for the ride out. Once we got to the cathedral we discovered that the local press were waiting. Now, strictly speaking they weren't waiting for (or even expecting) us – it was the day of the Man. Utd vs Blackburn Rovers match and they were there to cover any trouble. Luckily for us the fans were impeccably behaved and so we made the more interesting story. We're always grateful for any good publicity!
http://www.lancashiretelegraph.co.uk/news/15104564.IN_PICTURES_Bikers_brave_the_Blackburn_n_rain_in_memory_of_activist_Fred_Hill/

The NW AGM was really well attended, with special thanks to Oliver who came over from Yorkshire to act as observer. The various branches, and the region as a whole, was able to report a successful 2016 and look forward to an exciting 2017. There's going to be a lot going on in the North-West so watch this space!



The future of biking needs you!

Liz Towler writes:

I often read articles, or listen to conversations, lamenting the future of biking: namely the decline in the number of young people getting involved. There is something you can do about it....

You will doubtless have heard of Youthbike. You will probably have seen their stand at a host of rallies and biking events. You may have stopped to chat to the volunteers who work tirelessly to promote the event. You may have been one of the kind souls to have dropped a donation in the collection bucket. You may even have attended the fantastic Blues and Bike Rally in Lincolnshire (created to raise money for the Youthbike charity) The Youthbike event began over 20 years ago and was the brainchild of former youth worker

Tony Nightingale, who responded to a request from the young people at his youth club who told him they wanted to 'build a motorbike.'

I first discovered National Youthbike over 15 years ago when I attended their competition weekend. I went there with my (now) husband who had supported the event since its conception. It was a vibrant and bustling competition with a host of teams from all over the UK, proudly exhibiting their creations.



The weekend ended with a packed presentation ceremony in a crowded hall, where budding mechanics received trophies and accolades for their hard work and determination. I must admit, it brought a lump to my throat watching these entrants, many of whom who had negative experiences in the school system, hold their heads high as they collected awards. Many of these youngsters have stayed involved in biking and gone on not only to ride motorcycles, but train as mechanics or secure employment in the industry. Perhaps they have even become more competent riders as a result of their mechanical skills and a deeper knowledge and understanding of how their machine works?

Inspired by the good work of Youthbike and with their support, my husband started up the Warrington Wheels bike show (a north west one day event for under 18s) This was intended to be a feeder event and a taster for the main Youthbike weekend show. (More information can be found at www.bobsbikeclasses.co.uk) One of the initial aims was to encourage teams to go on to compete at the Youthbike residential. Although attendance at the one day show is always good, unfortunately teams rarely take their entry to the main Youthbike event a month later.

Since my first visit, I have attended Youthbike every year and have been lucky enough, through my job in education, to take a team of young people annually. They have camped (often for the first time), met other young people, forged friendships and received recognition for their hard work. Their self-esteem has soared as they have chatted to judges about how they created their bike. Ofsted even praised the school for their involvement. The range of talent at the competition has always been huge. From children as young as 5, with their families, who had made simple novelty modifications to a motorcycle-based vehicle, to students in further education



who exhibited paint jobs of professional standards and some real feats of engineering. Over the last few years, numbers of entrants have fallen. This is predominantly due to the decimation of the youth service – I could go on a political rant here, but I won't! There are still a few die-hard entries from families, schools and colleges who understand first-hand the positive impact this project has on their students. Here's where you come in.... Put a team together! Whether it's your own kids or grandkids, a local youth club or school, or organised through a bike club. The only restriction is that the team members have to be under 21. The entry can be a runner or non-runner; as simple or technical as your team desires. The first team I took covered a mini-moto in fun fur and called it a 'Covasaki Mootorcycle!' (they were 10 years old) You can even offer sponsorship or put your name to a trophy.

It's heart-breaking to see such an important event dwindle in entries. There is still plenty of time for you to put a team together. The event is taking place 23-25 June 2017 at the rather wonderful Thorpe Camp, near Woodhall Spa, Lincolnshire -the former Dambusters base with a great little museum on site too. You can find out more by visiting the National Youthbike website at www.youthbike.com They can offer advice about entering and sometimes provide a donated bike for your team to work on if you are stuck. So why not support a young individual or a team in building something to enter? You'll have a great weekend at the event – kind of a family friendly junior bike rally! It's only £5 to camp, but the smiles on the teams' faces are priceless.

(Both NW MAG and the NW Motorcycle Alliance will be sponsoring trophies at Warrington Wheels.)

Bike thieves caught by technology



Two men have been sentenced in Merseyside as a direct result of using a new DNA defence spray, adopted by the Police to identify offenders on stolen bikes. Connor Gibney, 18, and Isaac Senior, 19, were spotted on a Kawasaki KX250 in West Derby on October 9th last year. In a dramatic world first, a Merseyside Police Officer deployed the *SelectaDNA Defence Spray* to mark the two men after they led police and a force helicopter on a reckless, two-hour high speed chase across Liverpool.

Liverpool Crown Court heard Gibney drove at an officer's car, before his masked passenger Senior kicked out at its wing mirror. The pair went through multiple red traffic lights and the wrong way across junctions, but could not avoid an officer who sprayed them with the DNA defence spray.

SelectaDNA Defence Spray is a compact, easy to use offender marking spray which emits a harmless, colourless solution that is invisible to the naked eye. It works by spraying the offender with an invisible solution of unique synthetic DNA code and UV marker that clings to skin and clothing for months.

Vnuk judgement consultation

The UK government has expressed disappointment with the European Vnuk judgement, which would make all vehicles to have insurance, not just those used on the road. As previously mentioned this would potentially have a massive impact for millions of UK citizens and could kill off motorsport in this country. The government is therefore carrying out a consultation and impact assessment before deciding how to proceed. If you would like to take part in this it can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/motor-insurance-consideration-of-the-vnuk-judgment>

This consultation closes at 11:45pm on 31 March 2017.

Driven to Distraction?

MAG backs tougher measures to discourage irresponsible hand-held mobile phone use whilst operating a vehicle. A survey by the National Roads Policing Intelligence (NRPI) Forum about the ban on mobile phone use while driving has enabled bikers to express their views. MAG has already helped promote a survey into the public's views on dialing-and-driving set up by the National Roads Policing Intelligence (NRPI) Forum. Richard Davin of the Forum comments: *"We launched the survey to capture everyone's views regarding the legislation changes around using a hand-held mobile phone whilst driving. We wanted to gauge awareness of the change in law and the*



data collected will help plan future campaigns. We really appreciate all those who filled in the survey and shared it on social media."

Part of the motivation is a change to the official position regarding penalties for using a hand-held phone when controlling a vehicle. Mr Davin explains *"the government is changing the Fixed Penalty Notice and penalty points for the use of a hand-held mobile phone whilst driving. The new legislation will come into effect on the 1st of March 2017. Under the new rules drivers will receive six points on their licence and face a £200 fine."* Tony Cox, MAG's North West Regional Representative, adds *"Because many of us responded, more bikers' opinions will be taken into account. Everyone I know has had a near miss or worse because a driver is chatting instead of driving properly. By being involved in surveys like this we helped ourselves and others."*

MAG has plenty of evidence to prove that accidents have occurred as a direct result of phone usage in vehicles. Steve Mallett, MAG's Deputy South East Representative, runs a regular vigil to highlight the importance of concentrating on driving rather than dialing, an initiative that has generated a lot of media coverage in Kent.

MAG invites riders to run their own local campaign. All that is needed is a few people, a large inflatable phone, a sign with a suitable slogan (e.g. 'Don't drive and dial') and a way to record how many 'driver-dialers' go past during the hour or two you are at the roadside. Taking a photo could help gain publicity for the campaign and it may help to reduce the jeopardy we face for the sake of a careless call. For tips on how to run the campaign, just get in touch with Steve Mallett through MAG.

Contact MAG at 01926 844 064 or central-office@mag-uk.org

Don't ban legal riding because of hooligans!



MAG is currently looking at injunctions taken out by a number of local councils in a bid to reduce anti-social behaviour undertaken on motorcycles. Steve Bolton, one of MAG's Liaison Officers, commented *"Motorcycling is an activity enjoyed by all who take part in it. It draws people from all backgrounds and age groups, with an eclectic outlook on life. Unfortunately it is also an activity that, from time to time, attracts elements of society who exhibit some degree of over-exuberance and high spirits. It always has and, no doubt, always will - but nothing on the scale of what has*

been witnessed recently from these hooligans, who often organise and promote their activities via social media. MAG unconditionally distances itself from this anti-social behaviour, which we have seen at different times and in various locations around the country. We are about to embark on a series of meetings and conferences with Local Authorities and the National Police Chiefs Council (NPCC) to ensure that bikers going about their daily lawful business do not suffer as a result of mismanaged or misdirected enforcement of these injunctions. The enforcement strategy must target those whose misdemeanors have created the need for these injunctions and no one else."

MAG seeks to meet with the NPCC to cover these points and agree a way forward that doesn't depend on blunt and indiscriminate injunctions that potentially outlaw legal riding alongside the true targets of the legislation: the hooligans who break existing laws in mass numbers and happen to be doing so on two wheels.

Meanwhile MAG has held a joint session with the Chair of the Motorcycle Crime Reduction Group (MCRG), Kevin Howells, at MAG's National Committee meeting on 11th February, 2017, in Warwickshire. Mr Howells talked about the shocking crime statistics affecting biking. *"There are over 26,000 bike thefts a year in this country,"* he explained. *"That means that during my presentation three or four bikes will have been taken in the UK. What the MCRG does is find ways to put people off stealing bikes. Tagging them is the most important one, and it's got a good track record. With a system like Datatag your bike is 60% less likely to be stolen, and the recovery rates are a lot better. That's one thing we can do and the industry has taken that up."*

The meeting looked at what can most effectively reduce crime for bikers. MAG's London Representative, Tim Fawthrop, reported that the Mayor of London, Sadiq Kahn, has blamed bikers themselves for not being careful enough; Tim observed that it's hard to see how you can protect against being pushed off your own bike in a petrol station, likening it to blaming someone for not having chained all their property down in their house in case a burglar breaks in. Mr Howells surprised the group by revealing that a lot of stolen bikes are built around used frames with log books sold by the insurance industry. These are then sold back into the dealership network. Selina Lavender, Chair of MAG, said: *"Kevin's talk was very informative. Fighting bike theft needs to be a joint initiative so whilst it is encouraging that some manufacturers such as Triumph are fitting additional security as standard, there also needs to be an improvement in crime detection."*

It was agreed that MAG and the MCRG will continue to work together, with the industry and the police in an effort to reduce bike crime which, suggested Mr Howells, can provoke riders into giving up bikes because they get fed up with losing them.

Contact MAG at 01926 844 064 or central-office@mag-uk.org

Looking ahead – Manchester Bike Show – 25th/26th March

The Event City show is on again this month and MAG will be there as usual. As the clocks go forward on the Saturday night (start of spring?) it makes it doubly feel like biking season is here again. This is a decent show that always seems to have something interesting going on and stands that cater to all tastes. The MAG stand will be staffed exclusively by NW volunteers, all eager to inform and assist - so swing by for a natter as you're passing.

The price is £17 on the door (£1 off if you're an OAP!), and a very reasonable £4 for kids.



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 **A59ers RC** at the **Petre Arms, Whalley Rd, Langho, Nr Blackburn BB6 8AB** at **8pm on Wednesday 22nd March**.

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.

4th March – Allegiance MC Open Night at the clubhouse, Aintree.
 11th March Crisis Crew MC Patch Party – Ship, Irlam M44 6AJ - all welcome
 17th March – Road Reapers St. Patrick's Rock Night for Air Ambulance – Ellesmere Club
 19th March – BQRS Auto Jumble, Anchor, Liverpool Rd, Hutton PR4 5SL starts 10am
 8th April – BDMC Diamonds Night with Circus Freak at the clubhouse, Hindley – free entry and free food.
 9th April - Salford MAG Autojumble - Bird in Hand, Liverpool Road Eccles, M30 0RY 12-5pm
 14th April - Westsiders Good Friday Party Banner pub, Hindley with Sin City, free entry, free food
 16th April - Lionhearts MCC Charity Run and clubhouse opening, Tram St. Wigan 11am start
 22nd April – Red Rose MAG St.George's Rock Knight – Goosenargh & Whittingham Club, camping available
 28th-30th April - Into The Valley at new weatherproof site with heated inside area – pre-book only
 5th-7th May You've Been Nabbed – new site: Cheshire Show Ground, Flittogate Lane, Tabley, Knutsford WA16 0HJ
 6th – 21st May – Ibiza Run – £250-270 pp, see Ant from Avernus MCC if you want to go.
 12-14th May Leyland Eagles Rally – the Showground, Whorles, nr Kirkham
 26th May - 7th Warrington Wheels Youth Bike Competition – Woolston Brook School, Warrington, WA1 4JL
 25-28th May – Big Barn Rally.
 16th-18th June Farmyard Party – Helmsley, North Yorkshire
 18th June Rising Moon MCC Bike Show - Euan Fields, Hyde
 23rd-25th June – Blackpool Area MAG Rally, Fleetwood Rugby Club – the North-West's Premier Riders' Rights Party
 30th June Crisis Crew MC Rock Night at the Ship, Irlam.
 2nd July - Stanley Park Bike Show Blackpool – all proceeds to the MAG fighting fund.
 1st-2nd July – Crisis Crew MC Bike Show at the Ship, Irlam.
 8th July - Limefest
 13-16th July Millennium 2000BC Caveman Bash
 4th-6th August Yorkshire Pudding Rally Escrick Nr York – pre-book only
 18-20th August – HAMC Rock & Bike Fest, Rixton, Warrington WA3 6EA – custom show, camping and bands.
 25th-28th 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



“You have to think anyway, so why not think big?”

Donald J. Trump

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, (1.30pm-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
C/O WOOLSTON BROOK SCHOOL, GREEN LANE, WARRINGTON, WA1 4JL
01925 818549

Or E-mail bobtowler57@hotmail.co.uk

HAPPY BUILDING!



www.bobsbikeclasses.co.uk



Red Rose MAG
presents the



St. George's Rock Knight



Saturday 22nd April 2017

**Whittingham & Goosnargh Social Club,
Old Hospital Grounds, Whittingham, Preston PR3 2JE**

Live music from 5TH ELEMENT

Free Camping

Raffle

£5 on the door

**All profits go to the Motorcycle Action Group Fighting Fund
Defending Riders' Rights!**

MUSIC DRINKS

**SALFORD MAG PRESENTS
M/CYCLE AUTO-JUMBLE
SUNDAY APRIL 9TH
FROM 12 NOON - 5PM**

**REAR OF THE BIRD IN HAND PUB
304 LIVERPOOL ROAD ECCLES
M30 0RY**

**PLOTS AVAILABLE FROM
£10.00. for more info contact
salford-rep@mag-uk.org**



2017
 Previews 25th August 2017
 Opens 26th August & 27th August 2017
www.gnwmt17.co.uk

**A BRAND NEW FAMILY FESTIVAL FOR 2017
 CELEBRATING THE BEST OF BIKES**

Exhibitors Traders Live Music Demonstrations Gaming & much more

WINTER GARDENS MANCHESTER



Manchester

BIKE SHOW

THE NUMBER ONE MOTORCYCLE SHOW IN THE NORTH



25TH & 26TH MARCH 2017
9:30AM – 5:00PM

EVENTCITY, NEXT TO THE INTU TRAFFORD CENTRE, MANCHESTER, M41 7TB
 ADVANCE TICKETS AVAILABLE FROM WWW.MANCHESTERBIKESHOW.COM
INFO@MANCHESTERBIKESHOW.COM | 01484 667776

EventCity As featured on **Focus** event