



## It could be you!

As a small thank you to our loyal members, MAG is pleased to announce a monthly prize draw, to take place during 2021.

As MAG Chair Selina Lavender says *“The Prize Draw is open to all current MAG members so we would encourage you to check that your membership is still live and will not have run out before our Prize Draws take place each month. So long as you are a paid-up individual or joint member at the time of the draw, you will be eligible. Our members have been so wonderfully supportive of MAG over the last year, which has been difficult for everyone and will continue to be for some time to come. This is our chance, in a modest way, to say thank you. We are also extremely grateful to our sponsors, who have made this possible.”*

Each draw will take place on the first working day following the last day of each month. Several individuals and organisations have generously donated prizes, including Bikesure, Ian Mutch, RIDEto and the MAG Foundation.

Full details regarding the Draws, including Terms & Conditions, can be found at

[https://wiki.mag-uk.org/images/0/0b/Monthly\\_Draw\\_2021\\_terms\\_and\\_conditions.pdf](https://wiki.mag-uk.org/images/0/0b/Monthly_Draw_2021_terms_and_conditions.pdf)

For more information on how to join MAG or renew your membership:

<https://www.mag-uk.org/motorcycle-action-group-membership/>

Contact MAG at 01926 844 064 or [central-office@mag-uk.org](mailto:central-office@mag-uk.org)

## Fred Hill 2021



At the risk of stating the obvious, we won't be able to hold our annual NW Fred Hill Run this year – a shame as it would have been our 17th consecutive event and 37 years since MAG hero Fred Hill died in Pentonville jail. Fred believed that in matters of personal safety the choice of the individual should be paramount and he was one of those rare people who refuse to compromise on their beliefs. They locked him up but they didn't break his spirit.

These days we may not be fighting exactly the same battles as Fred Hill did all those years ago but we still cling to the same core beliefs and try to show the same resolve. That's why we remember his life every February. Last year Storm Ciara tried to stop us but failed – let's not let Covid beat us this year.

This year's run would have been on Sunday 14th Feb. At around 1pm that day, wherever I am, I plan to stop what I'm doing for a minute and remember the life of Fred Hill. I invite you to join me.

## MAG argues against discrimination to learners

Many workers, including key workers and couriers, who need their bikes for their jobs are being unfairly treated under the lockdown, MAG has told the government. Many are finding that as their CBT certificates expire they are unable to renew them and the government is refusing to allow an extension. In a letter to the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State, Rachel Maclean MP, MAG asks for redress. Motorcyclists are the only road user group facing this restriction for legitimate travel during the lockdown.



In the letter, MAG states:

*“For many, including delivery riders and those who access schemes such as Wheels to Work, this is their only viable transport choice for making essential trips, working as a key worker in health or social care, or as a delivery rider delivering items ordered online by those obeying the government guidance to avoid non-essential travel.”*

MAG is not asking for a permanent change to the two-year renewal regulation. The call is for a temporary intervention of similar style to the first lockdown’s extension of MOTs. Director of Campaigns & Political Engagement, Colin Brown, said:

*“We have no data on the numbers of riders being impacted. But we are receiving many calls from members asking that something be done. I have*

*spoken directly with the DVSA, and they are unable to provide accurate data on this. On average, around 6,000 CBTs will expire each month. Many of those riders will have passed their test or stopped riding. Some will, however, choose to continue riding without taking a full test – and this is a legitimate choice. It would be easy to say that the problem affects very few riders, but it is not fair to discriminate against those few. We do not accept that this would be hard to administer. If there is a will to avoid this unnecessary discrimination, the Government must find a way to do it.”*

## French fines finish

One effect of our leaving the EU is that the “cross-border enforcement directive” will no longer apply to the UK. This allows authorities in, for instance, France and the UK to share data about those caught on speed cameras – so, in effect, owners of British registered vehicles won’t now receive fines on their return home. However, on the spot fines by the police (including vehicle seizure) will continue.

In France alone last year 444,000 Brits were fined up to 1500 euros each for speeding. The change could cost France up to 60 million euros annually. Predictably this is one “trade deal” they are keen to negotiate quickly.

## Low traffic schemes over-ruled

Over £1 million of public money has been wasted on “cycle-friendly” road schemes that were later removed because of opposition from locals. All the schemes were in London but, as we all know, what happens down there soon spreads up here. Research has shown that one in six of these “low traffic neighbourhoods” have had to be altered after implementation, with one in ten being scrapped altogether. Complaints have come from taxi drivers, who claim their trade is severely limited, as well as police, fire and ambulance services who have had their access to areas restricted. London’s black cab drivers have taken local councils to the High Court saying such



schemes fail to recognise their role as public transport rather than just normal traffic. The judge ruled that Transport for London and Mayor Sadiq Khan should “substantially amend” their plans.

Another concern is that the widening of pavements and addition of cycle lanes leave less room for other traffic and the resulting narrower lanes make filtering all but impossible for motorcycles.

## Drink drive limit to drop?

A government report has recommended a reduction in the drink-drive limit after a halt in the decline of cases over the last decade. Many road users now seem to think that the drop in number of traffic police means that they are less likely to get caught. The fact that the number of roadside breath tests have declined by 63% between 2009 and 2019 seems to confirm this.

The current limit of 80mg alcohol per 100ml blood in England and Wales has stayed the same since it was introduced in 1967 although it has already been reduced to 50mg in Scotland and N.Ireland.

In some European countries you are allowed no alcohol at all.



## Council cash cow?

Despite road-users' concerns the Dept. for Transport plans to allow almost 300 local authorities to impose fines directly for traffic offences such as stopping in box junctions or straying into cycle lanes. This move is because of falling traffic police numbers. Many suspect that the powers could turn into a cash-cow for hard-up councils. Ealing Council issued over 7000 penalty notices in one month in its "low traffic neighbourhood", netting it nearly £1million in fines. The government has told councils to issue warning notices for a period after the new powers come into force but has allowed them to issue fines in the first instance after that.



## Bus lanes for all?

Cambridge and Nottingham are poised to allow all zero-emission vehicles to "stray into" bus lanes without incurring a £130 fine. Such vehicles can be identified by their green number plates. This begs the question, with the ban on other types of vehicle in 2030, whether bus lanes will be open to so many vehicles that they cease to be fit for purpose? From bikers' point of view, whose access to bus lanes has long been fought for by local MAG groups, this just means yet more cars to avoid.

## Scooter saga continues

Police are threatening to confiscate any privately owned e-scooters they find being used on the roads or pavements. Only rental e-scooters are legally permitted. This comes as police have stopped a 34 year old man riding an uninsured, unlit e-scooter down a rainy dark M1 in the wee hours of the morning. In another incident a 20 year old woman ran a red light and crashed into an unmarked police car while three times over the drink drive limit.

These things seem to attract idiots who don't realise that the rules of the road apply to them as well. The trouble is that real bikers (and real scooter riders) can get tarred by the same brush.

## Motorway speed limit on hold

Trial 60mph speed limits on some motorways, designed to reduce pollution, have been dropped because of the Covid epidemic. The lower limit on stretches of the M1 and M6 will be discontinued and further plans for the M5 and M602 not taken forwards. Highways England has said that reductions in traffic over the last year have made the restrictions unnecessary. They will be reinstated in future as traffic levels rise.

## The Future is driverless

A government study has predicted that almost three quarters of new cars will be capable of autonomous driving by 2035 - so long as the public has the confidence to buy them. The rapid development of such technology means new cars to be "driverless capable" even if the driver chooses not to activate it. Whilst it is said that this will improve safety and efficiency for the drivers, it is unclear as yet how this will impact bikers who have to navigate around them. Meanwhile a new housing development in Essex, Chelmsford Garden Village, is being built with driverless vehicles in mind. Individual parking spaces are designed to allow easy conversion to new uses whilst a large parking facility on the outskirts can provide spaces for autonomous vehicles to take themselves off to when they're not needed. It is envisioned that in future private parking spaces will become redundant and can be better used for other things. Like bikes?

## "Smart" saga continues

A safety radar system, which can detect broken down vehicles within 20 seconds has been installed on "smart" motorways. The bad news is that at present it only covers 37 of the 200 miles of such roads in the country. It is planned to expand the system to cover all stretches by March 2023. This comes as a coroner rules that the lack of a hard shoulder contributed to the death of Jason Mercer, killed by a lorry on the M1 as he exchanged details with another driver after a knock in 2019.

This should not be unexpected - the Chief Constable of South Yorkshire, David Crompton, wrote to the government in 2013 to warn that the "improvements" to the M1 would make such incidents more likely.

## Electric future

Researchers at Penn State University in the USA have developed a battery that will last for 200 miles and can be recharged in 10 minutes. The battery uses lithium iron phosphate rather than cobalt, which is both expensive and in short supply. It is hoped that the development will help reduce the high price of electric vehicles. "Rare earth metals", such as cobalt, have been called "the oil of the 21st century".



Their use in batteries to power cars, phones, computers etc. makes them a vital commodity – a commodity that China is attempting to gain a stranglehold on. Remember Donald Trump offering to buy Greenland from Denmark? Not as daft as it sounds as Greenland has some of the largest reserves of rare metals in the world. China mines a lot of its rare metals at home but also in Africa – much of the world's cobalt is produced by thousands of children in Congo. While the UK races towards electric vehicles it is far from clear whether they're actually any cleaner than fossil fuelled vehicles, once you factor in the battery.

Producing 1kg of cobalt can entail mining 1200 tonnes of rock and use an enormous amount of energy. The pollution caused by this often ends up in Chinese lakes and has resulted in so-called "cancer villages" nearby. It has rightly been said that "clean energy is a dirty business". Equally filthy is the process of recycling such batteries, which could be the next "diesel scandal".

Back home it has been estimated that the UK's commitment to carbon-neutrality by 2050 will threaten twice as many jobs in the Midlands, North and Scotland as in London. In some of the country's poorest regions over 40% of jobs are in "high-emitting" industries such as oil, gas, chemicals, auto and aerospace.

## 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. However, under the current circumstances, very little on the calendar will actually be taking place.

**Please check the NW Alliance FB page for any last minute changes**

**Regular monthly events in normal times!**

**HAMC Liverpool Open night** 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of month, open 7.30 'til late

**HAMC Manchester Open night last Saturday of month** – **Not running at the moment**

**Red Devils MC Manchester Open Night** every Friday at the clubhouse in Hindley

**Red Rose MAG** – meetings suspended until new venue found

**MT Heads Meet** – Flying Horse Rochdale 8pm every Monday

**Road Reapers MCC** - meet 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday 1pm & 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday at 7.30 at the Ellesmere Rd Rec Club, Bolton

**Ronin MCC** – every Saturday night @ the Plough, Hazel Grove

**Road Slayers Brotherhood** every 2<sup>nd</sup> Friday at the Veterans' Garage Barton – **restarts 2<sup>nd</sup> week in September**

**British Bulldogs MCC** – every Wednesday at the Balcarres Arms, Wigan WN2 1PA

**Spartan MCC** meet every Thursday at Railway & Linnet pub Middleton, M24 1GQ

**Brigantia Rebels MCC** meet at the George, Southport 1<sup>st</sup> Saturday at 7pm & 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday at 3pm

**Leyland Eagles MCC** meet 3<sup>rd</sup> Mondays at Leyland RAFA Club

**Avernus MCC** – meet at the Red Herring, Mill Lane, Coppull PR7 5AN every other Friday

**RBLR** meet 2<sup>nd</sup> Mondays at St.Chad's Club, Whittle-le-Woods

**Life Behind Bars MCC** meet every other Sunday – Hare & Hounds, 170 Outwood Rd, Radcliffe

**Lioness MCC** 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday @ Hope View farm, Astley M29 7LH – free food!

**Throttle Twisters MCC** every Monday – North Chadderton Social & Bowling Club, open night every 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday

**Veterans Garage** open at Barton Aerodrome every Monday 6pm onwards

**Accrington MCC** meet every other Sunday at the Poplar Club, Accrington

**Boggarts MCC** meet every 2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday at Hope View Farm, Astley M29 7LH

**Hell's Belles WMC** meet last Monday of the month at the Cauldron, Radcliffe

**Phoenix Rising MCC** meet 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of the month at 3pm Tempest Arms, Chorley Old Rd, Bolton

**Coyote MCC** – meet every Tuesday Old Cock Inn Oldham Rd Middleton M24 2EB

**Pist'N'Nuts MCC** – meet every Thursday 8pm @ The Pear Tree, 431 Hadfield Rd, Hadfield SK13 1PY

**The Sisterhood** – meet first Tuesday of month @ 7pm at The Cart & Horses, Astley M29 7SD

**Millennium 2000BC** meet at Broadfield Arms, Leyland, every other Monday

**Shieldmaidenz MCC** meet at the clubhouse, 198 Liverpool Rd, M44 5DB 1<sup>st</sup> Friday of the month

**Road Kill MCC** meet at the clubhouse, Unit 10, M44 5AZ, Irlam every Tuesday evening about 6pm.

**Rally Rebels RC** meet at the Cock & Rabbit, Manchester Rd, Southport every other Sunday 3-5pm

**Antagonist MCC** meet every Wednesday at the Church Inn, Chadderton OL1 2RR

**Union Riders MCC** meets at the Malaga Drift, Eccles M30 0DY every 1<sup>st</sup> Friday from 8pm  
**Gawsworth Jesters MCC** meet at the Harrington Arms, Church Lane. Gawsworth SK11 9RJ, Weds evenings from 7.00pm.  
**Heathens MCC** – meet at the Top House, Oldham OL4 5TB first Wed of month @ 8pm  
**Wiccan Wolves MCC** meet @ Radcliffe Cricket Club M26 3RF every other Friday  
**Known upcoming events –**  
**Nothing until further notice!**

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](mailto:billgreen@madasafish.com) and I'll put it into the newsletter next month.  
Bill NW Political Rep



**MAG**  
*Safety & Security* Foundation

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**WE are Supporting a Number of Stolen Bike Recovery Schemes**

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