

National Committee Attendance Sheet

National Committee Meeting				Date: 13/06/2015	
<i>Surname</i>	<i>First Name</i>	<i>Initials</i>	<i>Region/Post</i>	<i>Present</i>	<i>Apologies</i>
Armstrong	Michael	MA	Cumbria Rep	✓	
Bridgwood	Alex	AB	Lincolnshire Rep		✓
Carrott	Jane	JC	Minute Taker / National Reps Liaison	✓	
Cox	Tony	TC	North West Rep / Director TMAGL	✓	
Ford	Roger	RF	Warwickshire Rep		✓
Davison	Pete	PeD	Director TMAGL		✓
French	Jon	JF	South East Rep		✓
Gale	Aine	AG	Network Editor	✓	
Hammond	Dave	DH	Vice Chair / Eastern Rep		✓
Hughes	Bill	BH	North Wales Rep (Acting)	✓	
Lavender	Selina	SL	Chair / East Anglia Rep / Director Nice Employer Ltd / Director TMAGL	✓	
Legg	George	GL	National Membership Coordinator	✓	
Lewis	Gareth	GarL	Thames Valley Rep		
Liversidge	Neil	NFL	Director TMAGL	✓	
Lowe	Eddie	EL	West Midlands Rep	✓	
Vacant			East Midlands Rep		
Mannings	Leon	LM	Campaigns & Policy Advisor	✓	
Metcalf	Jon	JMe	Herts / Essex Rep (Acting)		
Mitchell	John	JM	Director TMAGL / Director Nice Employer Ltd	✓	
Mutch	Ian	IM	President / Editor "The Road"	✓	
Öpik	Lembit	LÖ	Director Comms & Public Affairs	✓	
Peregrine	Tim	TP	Southern Rep	✓	
Poole	Tim	TPo	South West Rep	✓	
Rose	Deb	DR	Western Region Rep	✓	
Rose	Oliver	OR	Clubs Liaison Officer / Yorkshire Rep	✓	
Turner	Paul	PT	Director TMAGL / Foundation Trustee	✓	
Wigham	Dave	DW	North East Rep	✓	
Williamson	Ian	IW	South Wales Rep (Acting)	✓	
Wykes	Steve	SW	Scotland Rep / Director TMAGL	✓	
O'Neill	Sharron		Observer (South West Deputy Rep)	✓	
Brown	Colin		Observer (West Midlands)	✓	
Mutch	Jack Moses Smiley		Dog	✓	

Motorcycle Action Group: National Committee Meeting
Date: June 13, 2015 Time 12.00 pm Venue: Wren Hall, CV35 7NF

1. Introduction and Register of Interests

SL thanked all for attending, noted that all meetings will now take place at this venue at a saving to MAG, and requested volunteers to do the sandwich run for future meetings. She also noted that a number of administrative tasks have now been delegated.

All attendees introduced themselves.

2. Apologies for absence:

Recorded on attached attendance sheet.

3. Appointments and resignations:

Paul Dore resigned from post of South East Region Rep.
Jon French appointed to post of South East Region Rep.

4. Adoption of NC agenda:

Adopted with revisions.

5. Ratification of previous NC Minutes:

Proposed: Ian Williamson; Seconded: Oliver Rose. Carried.

6. Matters arising from previous NC Minutes:

SL noted that Action Points are circulated immediately following each NC meeting and to close the loop these will be made available at the following NC meeting to check that the points have been actioned.

7. Campaigns:

Regarding the recent Election campaign, LÖ reported a good response from PPCs and that several political parties have expressed a willingness to revise or revisit their motorcycle policies. He also noted that it contact will be easier with a single party in charge.

Following much behind-the-scenes wrangling regarding the Cycle SuperHighways scheme, MAG is now the conduit between relevant organisations, including WCC.

LM has been in contact with the West Yorkshire Combined Authority, an organisation that describes itself as an overarching body with a remit to improve transport. However they had no mention at all of PTWs. Local activists contacted local MPs and councillors initially and following the latest meeting, there has been an acknowledgement that leaving out PTWs was a mistake. Four out of five proposals put to them have been subsequently agreed to.

SL and DH met with key players in respect to the London Demo, including WCC. It transpired that part of the problem WCC had with the demo was that they had perceived it as being against them. Once it had been made clear to them that the demo was about getting a message to the seat of Government, their views on the demo were dramatically changed.

MAG is now the conduit for opposition to Armadillos, and it was noted that Islington (a very pro-cycling council) is against them. It was noted that Armadillos are not approved for use by the DfT and that trials carried out did not replicate traffic conditions.

LM stated that letters need to be sent to relevant personnel (e.g. leader of the council, chief executive, local MP, etc) noting the safety concerns in respect to use of Armadillos.

NFL suggested that a request was made for details of council's insurance, as the insurers would be interested in any changes that could impact on the policy.

JM noted that even cyclists are complaining about Armadillos, in spite of the fact that they are being installed with them in mind.

It was further noted that Sustrans has a vested interest (i.e. 10% of income) in all the schemes they are involved with and approve.

DW noted that complaints were envisaged regarding safety when a Durham City centre was revamped as multi-surface and multi-level, but that subsequently none were received. LM observed that an experiment with pedestrians is a far cry from road traffic conditions.

It was further noted that if it is felt that a mechanism represents a hazard, it is up to the user/approver of that mechanism to prove that it doesn't and that liability increases where warning has been given.

Following a question regarding FOI, it was noted that TfL is a public body, and therefore information can be requested; however, TRL is not.

LÖ noted that that a number of relationships have been built in a number of areas regarding events, that a potential event venue has been identified and reminded all that requests for LÖ attendance at events, etc must go through Julie at Central.

A brief discussion ensued regarding road surface solutions, in particular manhole covers and grip. Brief points were also made in respect the Justice campaign, WCC and the work of SW in respect to the Bridge Too Far campaign in Scotland.

SL circulated a draft list of administrative counties and county boroughs. It is hoped to build up a picture of which LTAs are responsible for which roads so that Regions have the relevant information for their area and can encourage contact regarding Bikes in Buslanes, Armadillos, etc by active members.

8. Board meeting report:

Executive Officers' report, sample of proposed new membership card and Finance report all circulated.

Cashflow and general finances are much improved.

A possible deal with a motorcycle equipment company regarding prizes is being investigated.

Directors are sought for MAG Media. JM to take the lead for this, with RRs to help source personnel with appropriate skills/experience.

TC reported that the website is still an ongoing project, and will be simplified. Replacing the existing website is urgently required.

PT is looking at a restructure for the Foundation. Following contact with the Charities Commission, the Foundation has been granted six months of inactivity to carry this out.

The club affiliation pricing structure needs to be overhauled and simplified. JM to help review and bring progression to next meeting.

The working relationships with Back Street Heroes and 100% Biker are to be developed.

9. FEMA report:

SL attended and reported as follows:

Riderscan project has been completed and is due for release in September. FEMA own the database, which will be kept up-to-date.

The office has been cleared and staff reduction is an ongoing process. The Treasurer's report was submitted; the donated Triumph motorcycle will be sold; no increase to membership fees is planned at this time.

Discussions included the simplification of language used; common lobbying campaigns; use of the phrase "vulnerable road users"; intelligent speed assistance; concerns regarding road infrastructure; a new PPE directive and clarification thereof; exclusion zones.

It was noted that 4DLD is unlikely to be implemented in the near future; that there has been a drop in new motorcycle licence applications; that there has been a suggestion of a push for harmonisation regarding barriers and safety.

Trevor Baird was present and noted that he is looking to sell the Right2Ride website.

A competition was suggested to find the worst road in Europe!

10. Additions to emailed reports:

i. Regional Reps

British Independent Islands – vacant

Cumbria Report from Michael Armstrong, Cumbria RR

Furness MAG report.

Mainly preparing for Dead End Rally, Friday 10th – Sunday 12th of July.

Whitehaven MAG report

Had a good turnout for Ride and Dine. Presented the Media Award to Sarah Robinson, who is now keen to take her bike test.

RR report.

Helped Furness MAG to invite John Woodcock MP to their rally as a guest Judge and also trying to get Sue Hayman MP signed up to MAG. Tim Farron MP already signed up, five MP's to go. Helping Whitehaven MAG to deal with complaints from nearby residents adjacent to Keswick bike park – situation ongoing. Regularly attending Whitehaven MAG meeting's and keeping both groups up to date on national issues.

East Anglia Report from Selina Lavender, East Anglia RR & Chair

Attended AGC along with April Board & AGC meetings (see Chair report for additional activities).

Bury St Edmunds MAG continue to meet and have the occasional ride out. They are supporting the Jack & Rosie for charity Bike Show (which raises funds for MAG amongst other charities). They also have their own show planned in June.

West Norfolk MAG are trying to find a new venue and I've been most Wednesdays as their Rep Pete can't always make it due to work. It's been very tricky and they've still not settled on a venue, their current one closes in July.

I've set up a North Norfolk MAG FaceBook page as I had a couple of enquiries from that area. A chap called Colin is regularly posting stuff.

No membership chasing has been done in the region since the last NC. I did put out a call for a volunteer but I've had no takers. I intend to dedicate 1 hour a week to it after the next NC.

East Midlands – vacant

Eastern Report from Dave Hammond, Eastern RR & Vice Chair

I Attended AGC.

Attended post meeting where I was accepted as Vice Chair.

I have been on two 1 hour local radio slots promoting MAG, with an open invite to return anytime.

I attended a successful hustings which I set up at corporate member Wheels Motorcycles.

Led a ride to commemorate the helmet law 1st June in Fred Hill's name

Manned a MAG stand at MCN show

I attended a meeting with Hawksworth Securities PLC, which is the company who are proposing to develop the Westgate area of Peterborough city, to talk about secure Motorcycle parking

Continue to promote MAG throughout the region / using Facebook to highlight issues

21/5/2015 £400 sent to central from Eastern Region

Meeting with Cambridge council over cycle lane issues (4/6/15)

Holding bi monthly regional meetings

Greater London – vacant

Herts & Essex Jon Metcalfe

No report

Lincolnshire Alex Bridgwood

No report

North East Report from Dave Wigham, North East RR

Manning of National Stall in North.

We have been involved in training up key members with the key skills to man the MAG national stall in the North. For the North we had 4 Regional committee members trained at Into the Valley. This is not as simple as you might think because you need reliable people, that are handling person details, cash and stock. We are manning the MAG stall at FYP and training up a further NE Regional MAG committee member on membership, card payments, Direct debits etc. This same team will then look after the MAG stall at Stormin'. The aim is to have a competent team in place for all future events.

Marshal Recruitment

I am currently engaged travelling around groups trying to recruit extra marshals for Stormin' from the general population of MAG members. Most people will know that in order to reduce costs Stormin' are actively trying to recruit more marshals.

Re-Sprung Spring Thing

Steve and Denise Grey of Darlington MAG and 1772 tan Hill Bike Club organised a successful event at The Tan Hill (highest pub in UK) We worked this event. Though this event doesn't bring any funding direct to MAG it does allow us some excellent publicity and keeps our presence at a venue coveted by others. Steve and Denise are taking a year off so members of Durham MAG are taking over in order to raise some MAG funds.

Recruitment and retention.

After an unpleasant launch of our email campaign to contact lapsed members in 2013 we have re-launched this initiative. In 2013 we had some difficult conversations when we emailed addresses in good faith only to discover that we had contacted deceased members' partners, divorced partners and the fallout from ex members over the Number 1 rally.

It's probably too early to what effect the initiative is having but most feedback is generally positive.

Armadillos in the North East.

Things take longer to reach the North but Armadillos have finally got here on the Old A1, Gosforth. This has just happened within 24 hours of this report being written so things are a bit 'up in the air' at the moment. Newcastle City Council placed these without (as far as we know at this stage) any consultation with anyone and with no risk assessment for PTW users. Taking advice from L & L on best way forward.

Bus lanes

Bus lane success has taken a while to come through but signage and road markings in County Durham are now completed and as I type Newcastle City Council, the same council that laid the Armadillos yesterday is changing signs and road markings to allow bikes into bus lanes. The documents were signed on this last year but we have had to wait until road signs and markings were renewed as the cost of the changeover was prohibitive for cash strapped councils.

Traffic Calming measures

We have just been made aware of another traffic calming measure at Greenside which will require investigation. Again riders are being forced into the path of oncoming vehicles on a blind bend on a blind summit.

North Wales Report from Bill Hughes, Acting Rep

North Wales has only one active group that I know of, Abergele MAG. This group is struggling, but hanging in there. I have been asked to arrange an AGM for N. Wales, but in reality, with only one group which normally attracts about half a dozen members, an AGM would be a farce. However, we are still trying. The main problem is the same one that affects all organisations in N Wales, the topography. Bloody mountains. A what should be a 10 mile ride as the crow flies is actually 30 miles by the time you have gone round or over the mountain.

As I have said, the Abergele MAG group is trying. Two major biking attractions are Betws Y Coed and the Ponderosa Cafe above the Horse Shoe Pass, Llangollen. The group has started visiting these handouts one Sunday a month, on a bi-monthly basis to promote MAG and raise awareness of the group and MAG in general. Last month we had a great day at the Ponderosa, with rider cleaning us out of promotional material. Hopefully this will translate into interest in MAG and new members.

An issue we have had in Flintshire is the lack of consideration given to PTW's in the area with regard to road surfacing and parking provision in vehicle parks. This is something I have tried to tackle for years, going back to pre Flintshire days of Delyn. Last month I finally found out who was responsible for transport policy in Flintshire so I rang him to make an appointment to see him. When asked what I wanted to see him about, I replied Flintshire's transport policy with regard to PTW's. He said quote "I don't think we have one" to which I replied I rest my case. Result, I had an interview with him where we discussed the issues of parking and road surfaces with particular reference to manhole covers, the benefits of replacing with composite covers and also I took information on cover coatings for him to pass on to the Highway Engineers. I will write to him shortly and see what, if any, progress has been made.

On the social side, Abergele MAG group held their Late Spring Ride last Sunday, a route round some of the fantastic N Wales roads of about 150 miles. It was a great ride on a beautiful day supported by 10 bikes, an improvement on last year when we had 3, including the road captain who obviously had to be there and me. LOL. Am I being too optimistic thinking things might be looking up?

North West Report from Tony Cox, North West RR & TMAGL Director

10th April:- Board meeting Bridgewater Rugby Club

Attended the Board Meeting Bridgewater, Somerset minutes available at www.mag-uk.org

11th April:- MAG AGC held at Bridgewater Rugby Club

Attended the AGC at Bridgewater Somerset, minutes available at www.mag-uk.org

29th April:- North West Alliance Meeting at Millennium BC Clubhouse Leyland

I attended the meeting along with other NW local group reps. Gave reports on MAG activities and future events. It was decided that the Shameless sign that has been doing the rounds would be raffled off at the NABD rally with profits being split 50/50 between MAG & NABD.

3rd May Assassins MCC Bike Show, Station Inn, Ashton-Under-Lyne.

I took the MAG stand down to this show. It was a good turnout and plenty of interest in the MAG stand and products. Picked up a couple of members and distributed loads of information.

4th May: Salford Demo Ride to TfGM Chairman's house.-.

This demo was organised by Salford MAG in order to highlight the issues we are having in Salford and Greater Manchester. The Chair of Transport for Greater Manchester has refused to meet us to discuss and so we decided to go round and see him at his house. He did try to escape off in his car when he saw us arriving but we did manage to stop him at the end of his drive and hand him some information including the press release which had been sent to the local media. All in all a very worthwhile exercise.

7th-10th May: NABD National Rally, Astle Park

Once again we took the MAG stand to this event. Had a good result with a dozen or so new and renewed members and made a few quid selling second hand bike gear that had been donated.

22nd May: - 5th Warrington Wheels Youth Motorcycle Competition

Once again, NW MAG donated a trophy for this event held at Grappenhall School, Warrington. The competition is run by Bob Towler of the National Youth Bike Team, and the winner from this competition goes on to exhibit at the National Youth Bike Competition in Lincolnshire June 2015.

27th May: - North West Alliance meeting at Avernus MCC clubhouse, Chorley

I attended the meeting along with other NW local group reps. Gave reports on MAG activities and future events. Manchester MAG rep Jimmy Torrance announced his ideas for the 3Ms ride next year, details below.

Other news from around the region

It is exciting times in the North West as we have two new groups starting up. Liverpool MAG plan to have their first meeting on Monday 29th June and Macclesfield MAG plan to have their first meeting on Tuesday 14th July. In addition to this, following discussions that took place at the NABD Rally, we are breathing new life into Red Rose MAG with a re-launch at a new venue on Wednesday 17th June.

Salford MAG are continuing to pressurise TfGM and trying to open negotiations along with moral support from the BMF.

Blackpool MAG are busy getting ready for the annual rally, the 18th year we have put this event on, always on the same weekend but for the second year running the National Chopper Club have decided to put on a rival event 8 miles down the road so we will have to see how that affects the numbers this year as last year was a disaster in money terms, hence the reason for changing from a marquee rally back to a clubhouse rally at a different venue.

Manchester MAG Rep, Jimmy Torrance, is arranging a trip out next year, the 3Ms ride, Manchester to Minsk to Moscow. It has gained interest from others in MAG and may be labelled as a MAG event, July 2016.

Jimmy also has plans to arrange a form of treasure hunt for under 25's the treasure at the end being a MAG membership.

I am still very busy trying to sort out the mess we have found ourselves in with the new website and I am trying to get myself up-to-speed with the format it has been constructed in. The NW donated £2000 to Central funds last month which has cleared the NW account out and I have closed it down as we were getting a terrible service from RBS. The NW can manage without an account for now as the main money earner, Blackpool MAG, has it's own account and any donations from the rally will be sent directly from there. I will manage the NW accounts on a cash basis for now.

Best Regards,

Tony Cox, NW Regional Rep.

Northern Ireland – vacant

Scotland Report from Steve Wykes, Scotland RR & TMAGL Director

Mag Scotland Hustings 7th April follow up

Positive Feedback from all participants, with exception of the Green Candidate who did not respond, to the husting event hosted in Edinburgh by Lembit.

April 10th and 11th Attended Board, NC and AGC at Bridgewater

May 9th A bridge Too Far Demo ride 80 bikes and 90 riders and pillions attended and took part in the demo run which was enjoyed by all, sadly despite press release, no interest from the press.

May 14th met with David Stewart MSP Shadow minister for Transport and the Islands positive to our concerns regarding access to the existing bridge for learners once the new crossing opens, but still awaiting promised questions to the minister.

May 21st Attended Edinburgh Transport Forum queried position on access to bus-lanes in Edinburgh, council still awaiting a report back which is due following review of objections to the TRO from the usual pushie suspects.

Other activities formulating response to blanket 20mph limit proposed for most of Edinburgh, my feelings are that this is acceptable in residential areas and side streets but is not practicable on main roads and key inter district routes across the city. Looking for a steer from Leon on this before responding to TRO.

Attended Glasgow and Edinburgh MAG meetings.

That's about it folks.

South East Jon French, Elect Deputy however now RR as Paul Dore has stood down for personal reasons

South Wales Report from Ian Williamson, Acting RR

- Interview given on Radio Wales, with Jason Mohammed who was an complete moron, regarding casualty reduction and SMIDSY type accidents.
- Chaired panel held by Welsh Government to select projects for grant funding for two days in Cardiff. Chose the projects of most use to PTW users, Will revisit next month when issuing grants of £250,000.
- Cardiff branch ran a successful charity run for the Wallich, a homeless charity which raised the profile of MAG again.
- Brecon Branch are holding regular meetings and have organised a run to help a local animal shelter
- Aberystwyth branch has held an engagement day and signed up three new members. Also, monthly "Chip Shop" runs to provide a social side to the group, including one to a chippy run by MAG members in Newtown, Powys.
- Welsh Government have written a new Design Guidance Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013 which has stated that "Armadillos" are not traffic markings and as such do not need government approval prior to use.
- Raised the issue of "Armadillos" with Highways Engineers and they have written to the Welsh Assembly asked for the advice to be changed to remove "Armadillos" from use.
- Letters being sent to all lapsed members asking them to re-join as well as selective individual lobbying.
- Location markers are being printed by MAG and we are just going to put them out on the Highway as we have waited 4 years for action from Welsh Government.
- AGM in South Wales will be held in August

South West Report from Tim Poole, South West RR

Events in the region:

8-9th August Cornwall M.A.G End of the Road Rally

North Devon Bike Nights May, June, July, August.

Mid Devon Bike Nights, 3rd Thursday May to September

East Dorset Pet Food Run 14th July

Group Reps Reports:

Cornwall

Mike Baker has been given far too much grief recently, regarding the dates of the End of the Road Rally, by an ex-MAG member turned Patch club member. Mike has spoken to Ian Mutch, the Police & now the Rally committee, The Rally dates are not going to change.... For now!

East Dorset

Unfortunately all three of our local rallies have been cancelled, so although we are attending the two local bike nights handing out flyers we aren't reaching as many people as I would like

East Dorset is doing ok money wise with just under £400 in our account, due mainly to our monthly raffle at our meeting

We have our pet food run on July 14th and we are putting together a fund raiser for later in the year

North Devon

About £200 in our MAG account.

Mid Devon

£60.27 in the account, 24 patches, 7 lanyards and 5 EU Tshirts. Going to start bike nights again. Sent £100 towards AGC. Sarah is continuing as rep but is waiting for open heart surgery.

Taunton

3rd Tone Vale Tea Rally, May 2015. New venue worked really well, great bands, beer, cider & cake (as usual). Attendance numbers down significantly, really enjoyable weekend, including the weather! Even managed to organise an ice cream van at short notice!

Dale has been very active recently regarding Motorcycle parking in Somerset. I have a copy of the pillar to post email chain if anyone would like to have a read! Any advice on where to go with this will be gratefully received.

I have been busy reporting Diesel spills to the Police Non-Emergency No. 101 & Somerset Highways. Also a particular gravel spill, which I was informed about by an ex-MAG member, who I'm now working on! I'm sure that Somerset Highways does the work but, it's useless calling them! 101 appears to work very well.

Highways only attend to what the Police on 101 tell them

We didn't hold a Hustings prior to the Election in May but, we are in the process of inviting the newly elected MPs to a meeting to discuss bike policy

The remaining 31 MAG Lanyards we have, I've brought up for Central to control.

We have a member at Taunton (Lorna) who has supplied a sample MAG Neck Tube for NC to look at, what do you all think? Costs are:

100: £3.75 + VAT each

300: £3.50 + VAT each

500: £3.15 + VAT each

1,000: £2.90 + VAT each

Taunton MAG Account £150+pence

Rally Account £2120.82

SW Region Account £73.53 Cash ATM as No Account exists at present

I have heard talk of groups restarting! Nothing official yet.....

I am off to help at the FYP next weekend.

Southern Report from Tim Peregrine, Southern RR

- Basingstoke AGM
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- The Group is struggling on a week-week basis, although have decided on move.
- 2 Memberships renewals on the day and new DD sent to Joint members, who have sent to Central.
- Salisbury MAG Bike Show.
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- Large rideout from Southampton with about 60 from other MAG groups and other clubs
- Hugely popular and successful event, although difficult fund raising - 4,500 reported in local press.
- Some issues, however relations forged at hustings will help
- 12 Memberships/renewals from local and other Regions; Swindon, Bristol, etc.
- Salisbury Hustings.
-
- Six parties represented. Positive noises from PMPs
- 1 new Member.
- Salisbury Show Wash-up Meeting with Salisbury Council, Salisbury Police, Salisbury Rep, Members and Officers & Lembit.
- Two Regional Officers Meetings
- Attended fund raiser and ride out and Funeral of well known Biker, airlifted from M25.
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- Initial investigations of recovery and storage charges imposed on those, not physically injured, but traumatised and not able to continue riding after an incident.
- Attended Ride out to remember local 19 Year old killed in Southampton.
- Attended Ride out to Hastings Bike Show.
- Attended Ride Out to Bishops Waltham Bike Extravaganza.
- Portsmouth MAG AGM.
-
- Attending numbers have fallen and the Rep has faced a string of personal issues, which have challenged him and the Group.
- After a bit of a wobble, and some direct words, officers were elected a Member has volunteered to pursue lapsed memberships.
- Member has come forward to contact lapsed members and try to inject enthusiasm.
- Contact with the County Council over Armadillos and their use in Hampshire.
- Support for Southampton Rep in relationship with Balfour Beatty and their bike parking refresh in Southampton.

- Support for Winchester MAG Bike Show - a small event but positive.
- Support for Southampton MAG Bike Show - new venue, great weather over 300 riders attended. Local rep has developed local Club relations for venues for future
- To attend Hampshire's Central Road Safety Council meeting; 12th. Most mundane and not bike related, although good networking and knowledge building for aspects we need to approach; such as Armadillos.

Thames Valley Gareth Lewis, Thames Valley RR
No report

Warwickshire Roger Ford, Warwickshire RR
No report

West Midlands Eddie Lowe, West Midlands RR
No written report, verbal update at meeting

Western report from George Legg on behalf of Deb Rose, Western RR
Hi All

Deb Rose RR has asked me to send you her Regional Report:

Weston & North Somerset MAG (W&NS).

Local meetings remain well attended and this is an exceptionally hard working group with a vibrant social calendar!

Group Rep Mark Hamlin organised a very successful pre-election hustings with the help of group member John Bennett. The event was well supported by members from W&NS and neighbouring groups and regions. Candidates from the five main parties attended and an interesting and lively debate culminated in four of the candidates signing up as MAG members. Also, although the green party candidate did not take up membership, one of his supporters did!

Council liaison Bill Harding continues to attend local council and forum meetings and has been successful in "persuading" them to lower some recently repaired 'speed humps' that had been made to high and represented a hazard. These meetings allow us to have input into proposed road schemes/alterations and discuss their implications for P.T.W's.

Far from resting on their laurels W&NS continue to work (and play!!) hard. Plans are well in hand for the G.W.R Rally which W&NS host in September and members will be very much involved in the transport and manning of our stand at events to promote MAG over the coming months.

W&NS had the highest number of members from a group within Western Region in attendance at the recent AGC and also gained the award for highest MAG group attendance at Taunton MAG's Tone Vale Tea Rally.

W&NS continue to have a full calendar of social events which are all well attended (Yea go Weston & North Somerset got to love 'em!!).

Bristol MAG

Another exceptionally hard working group, with an exciting social calendar and well attended meetings.

Bristol Rep Taps also organised a successful pre-election hustings, despite being let down at the eleventh hour by two of the candidates, Taps led another excellent debate giving the three parties that did attend something to think about! All three candidates signed up as MAG members, although the UKIP guy was a tough nut to crack and had to be "leaned" on a bit by the Regional Rep! Bristol also work closely with their council and of particular concern at the moment are the "tombstones" or "Toby Bollards" being trialled in Bristol at present, watch this space!

Taps has also been busy printing flyers to use as a promotion aide on the stands and organising a regional raffle which will be drawn at our regional AGM. Bristol members have volunteered with help in the transport and manning of the stand at upcoming events.

Bristol has an exciting social calendar and continues to support other group's events, with good attendance at the AGC and Tone Vale Tea Rally. (Excellent work got to love these guys too!).

Gloucestershire MAG (Glos)

Positive news from Glos too!! Increased weekly attendance and a full, and more rounded committee have resulted in a more grounded, positive and focused group. Thankfully the issue of funds held by Glos has been resolved mainly due to the input from these new committee members. Increased representation on the regional Committee has helped foster better relations and co-operation at regional events.

Glos members recently manned the stand at the Prescott Festival and, although no new members were signed, volunteers reported that they had a positive day and felt awareness had been raised.

Glos seem committed to working hard and we have not been short of volunteers from this group for their help with transportation and manning of the stand at the planned events on our calendar. Glos may have been down but they are certainly not out! They are working hard and are back on the way up! (Well done Glos!!).

Mid Wiltshire MAG (Mid-Wilts).

A quieter and less active group, but with some hard working members. Notably their Rep Andy Kerr. Andy is key to ensuring the group continue to meet locally and is a valued member of the Regional Committee.

Despite dwindling numbers Mid-Wilts organised a ride out to Salisbury MAG's bike show recently and have been instrumental in arrangements for the stand at the Calne Bike Meet in July.

Mid-Wilts venue has changed and they are now meeting at The Fortune Inn (Chippenham). Apparently this is due to "and excessive rise in the price of beer" at their previous venue. Well done Mid-Wilts glad to see you've got your priorities sorted!!

Swindon MAG

Another quiet and less active group. Swindon does not at present hold regular meetings. Trace acts as a contact for the group and keeps the regional committee updated with developments in this area.

Trace reports that there is nothing significant at present. A difficult situation for Trace and we appreciate his hard work and dedication.

What's the Regional Rep been doing??

As many of you may know this has been a difficult time for me as I lost my brother-in-law after a long battle with cancer. So, with some good friends, a much needed respite in the form of a tour of Ireland drinking Guinness and watching Road racing.

This has meant I have yet to complete my proposed visits to all the groups in Western Region. However I have attended both W&NS and Bristol's hustings, attended the AGC and various local events, and still had time to cause trouble on the N.C List!! I will be attending all of the stand events on our calendar and will have made my proposed visits to local groups within the next couple of months.

See you all at the N.C.

Yorkshire Report from Oliver Rose

Right - I'll try and keep this short, as best as I can. It's been busy up here since AGC and pretty much all positive.

The first positive item is that we have a trial starting on bus lane access in Doncaster. This is all due to the new guys taking over in Barnsley and Doncaster, so they need to be recognised for the hard work there.

The other big thing is the upcoming transport plans for West Yorkshire.

It was discovered that there was a consultation ongoing which relates to the next 20 years of transport planning in the Leeds City Region (Leeds, Bradford, Huddersfield, Halifax, Wakefield and up to the York border).

The eagle-eyed amongst you would have noticed that that covers three of my most active groups, so the discovery that this planning document made no mention of powered-two-wheelers in any sense (not even the usual collision reduction) has lit a fire under them.

On the back of that, it's gone completely off the chain. I'm attending a meeting with Leeds city council on Thursday (11th) with Leon and a delegation from Yorkshire. Leeds also held their annual demo, focusing on this oversight which benefited hugely from the good weather. We got press coverage on Radio Leeds and Look North, and in the Yorkshire Post for this. We've also got letters of support from the local blood bike charity and the advanced motorcyclist group in West Yorkshires, plus a number of MPs and councillors also lending their support. I believe we've also been invited to the West Yorkshire combined authority transport workshops, but I'm not certain on that.

I've also got a few questions:

"Morning Just a thought, With the current spate of Bike thefts, it has been suggested that stolen Bikes are being taken abroad (Eastern Europe) . Would it be possible for MAG to try to get Customs and Excise to check all Bikes leaving the country have a V5, as we have to carry them anyway , like a passport for your bike checked at customs. This should also apply to any van carrying Bikes. It may close a route for criminals, as the Police don't give a TOSS. Let me know what you think. Phil."

In principle, this sounds like a good idea, but it would probably be hard to achieve.

We've also been invited to a meeting with South Yorkshire Police relating to Failure to Stop at RTC and the sentences which should be handed down in this situation. I don't know if we have an official position on this, so I'll pass it on to you guys to discuss.

SW noted a 20 mph blanked speed limit proposal for Edinburgh. Following discussion LÖ suggested that it is time to open a debate regarding harm to society outweighing safety/benefits and will investigate the potential for an alliance with other motoring organisations. TC reminded the meeting of the Motorcycle Alliance Party and will provide information.

JM reported that permission for Bikes in Buslanes has been obtained for the new Hastings bypass.

TP has attended a Road Safety meeting in Hampshire, where they are launching a Drink/Drive app. There is concern regarding this, as it records who has used it.

IW reported that the grid reference campaign is going ahead. NFL thanked S. Wales for this.

MA reported that Sarah from Whitehaven Press has been presented with her award, which was covered in the local press. He has also made contact with several MPs.

(JM and NFL leave the meeting)

SL introduced Colin Brown, a new volunteer who is assisting with the Brum Demo and regional campaigns. He has written to several councils in an effort to build relationships.

DW noted that marshals are required for Stormin' and Colin said that can assist in respect to SIA.

DW also reported that there would be an update regarding Armadillos on-list, that Prostate cancer charity patches are now available (proportion of profit goes to the charity) and that training for staff on the National MAG stand has commenced.

ii. Chair and Vice-Chair

Chair Report

Well what a busy few months, I've put as much as I can here and will fill you in at the NC if I've missed anything.

On my return home from AGC I started to talk to a few people and delegate some of the tasks I've previously done. As a result Jane (NRLO) is now asking for your reports and preparing the NC agendas. Steve Wykes will take the Board minutes, Tink is doing my trawl of the Internet for Network and Jo Streeton has found herself 'busier' as the East Anglia Dep Rep.

As a priority I also sent the Media Award up to a Cumbria for Michael and Paul to present to Sarah. At the guys request I wrote a letter to the newspaper in support of their coverage of MAG events and their reporter winning the award.

17 – 19th April, I attended the Blues and Bikes Weekend (North Lincolnshire) put on by Fat Skeleton (FS) and National Youth Bike (NYB). The main reason was to put on a MAG stand as Paul (FS) and Tony (NYB) are both avid MAG supporters. I also got a chance to chat with representatives from NABD (Lemmy), CMA (Ian) and BMF (Mitch). This was a great relaxed event and gave me the opportunity to introduce myself as the new Chair of MAG to groups we already work alongside. A couple of Memberships were taken (£54.00), Merchandise £68.00, Donations £5.00

21st April, I attended the Hustings over at Peterborough. This went very well and I think it's fair to say most attendees were surprised by the Green Party representative who has been very involved with the NorthWest 200.

26th April, visited my local scooter club at King's Lynn. I made contact after the comments made at AGC. They are a friendly bunch and happy to be notified of MAG events, they probably won't affiliate but they are happy for me to go back.

1 – 3rd May, Into The Valley, again manning the MAG stand. We had some new recruits to the stand from the North East. Both Avril and Kay have volunteered to run the MAG stand at Stormin' so they came along to learn the ropes and will be helping out again at the Farmyard Party. The MAG stand did really well, Memberships £1015.50, Merchandise £304.75, Donations (inc raffle of a helmet) £114.45

16 – 17th May, MCN (Peterborough). I was manning the MAG stand along with Peterborough MAG. A company that were previously corporates will be coming back on board later in the year when they release a new version of their product. We might do this at the NEC. I also have a meeting with Fat Skeleton pencilled in for NEC week to talk about how we can work better together. I made some useful contacts with Peterborough based members and organisations.

29 – 31st May, Rat & Survival Rally (Suffolk). Nik the editor of BSH puts on this event and offered us stand space for free so we went along. We took one membership and sold a patch to a Dutch guy. We spoke to lots of people who have been MAG members for a long time and appreciate what we all do.

London Calling

Using the details John supplied I made contact with the Metropolitan Police in regard to the proposed demo. The police advised me that I needed to deal with Westminster City Council (WCC) first, I asked for support via a few people I know to be more London aware than I am and via the Facebook page. I completed paperwork to the best of my ability and liaised with Leon. The paperwork was submitted and MAG now have a meeting with WCC. Unfortunately that meant postponing the demo for the time being. More on this as it happens.

In addition:

I speak to Central Office on average every other day, Leon once a week and Lembit once a fortnight.

I add 1 or 2 stories a day to the national FaceBook page and pick-up/answer queries, as and when I have the time to access it.

I made a big push to put event flyers up in month based albums so hopefully it's easier to find them to share them.

I've chatted with George about his Membership Coordinator role and we've shared ideas.

I've also been speaking to Oliver about the Club affiliation side of things.

I've written the Chair article for the FarmYard Party program and one for The ROAD. My 2nd BSH article has gone and my 3rd is due between now and the NC meeting.

I've had lots of contact with Stevie B in Yorkshire who is doing great work with the councils up there and keeps me informed and copied in. He has some great ideas for building training and getting more people 'active'.

We have a newly active member in the West Midlands called Colin and he's doing a great job pushing the Brum Demo and working with Eddie Lowe.

So much to do and so little time.

Selina

MAG Chair

Vice-Chair Report included in Eastern report under Regional Reps.

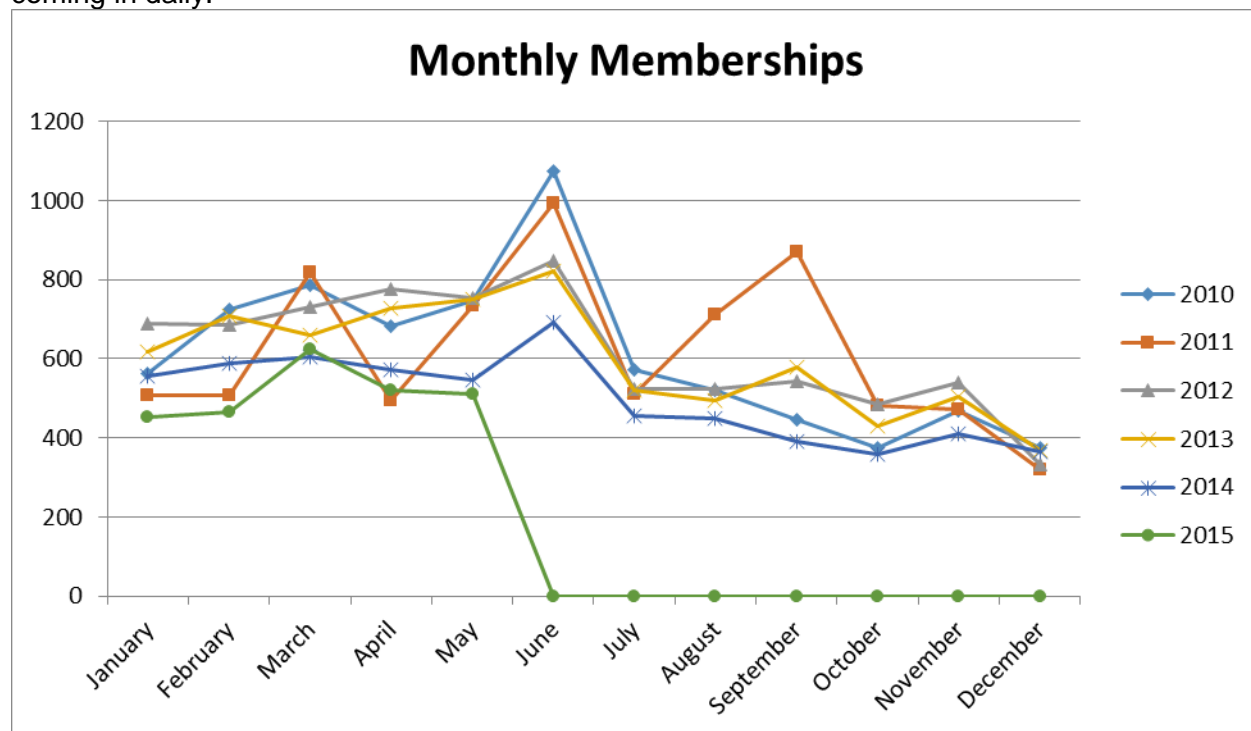
SL noted that monies raised from the Breast cancer charity patches are being processed and that her BSH articles will be available on Dropbox after the magazine has been published.

iii. Finance Officer

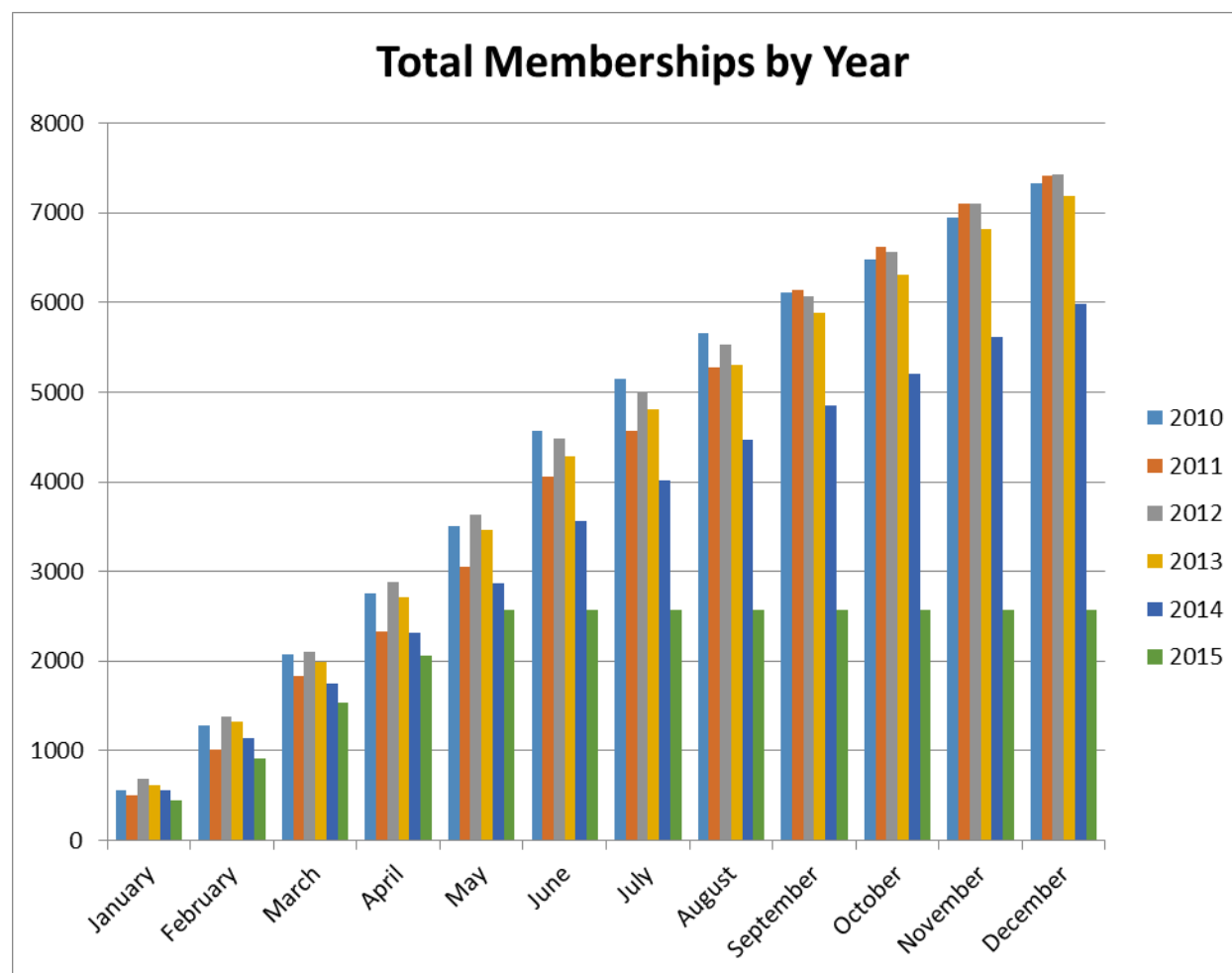
This is a brief report detailing any significant data which will allow you to see how we are financially for The Motorcycle Action Group Limited.

P R Booth & Co, MAG (UK) Ltd's liquidators transferred circa £21k of membership funds that were in the NatWest Standing Order account and that account is now closed. All financial information regarding MAG (UK) Ltd is held with the liquidator. There is approximately £81k of funds outstanding from MAG (UK) Ltd. With the receipt of the standing order funds cash flow has improved tremendously. Stormin' continue to donate £5k on a monthly basis and we have received the donation of £50k (inclusive of VAT) from MAP. We are still keeping all expenditure to a minimum and there will be a reduction of the office lease by 47%. This saving will be held as designated funds towards the cost of moving premises so will show in the accounts as designated reserves from June onwards.

The below graph shows that memberships by month have decreased but generally follow the pattern of previous years. Our Direct Debit numbers have increased as members have transferred from paying by Standing Order. Our biggest financial loss will be the donations paid by standing order payers but we are hopeful that they will also be transferred and continue to donate. Please note from the second week in April no standing order memberships were taken so will dramatically reduce the figures shown. I hope to show the improvement to these figures during June onwards as the Direct Debits become live transactions. We currently have just under 1500 direct debits set up and I am still working through the numbers that are coming in daily.



The monthly figures are improving with just over 40 lost members in April and 21 in May to compare moreso correctly standing orders would have made around 80 members per month, therefore realistically numbers are improving. To help understand the figures and their effects to our total numbers of membership please see the following chart showing each cumulative year by month. Please note that all membership figures are new/renewed memberships and exclude Life memberships and voting memberships of affiliated clubs or corporate members.



Cash balances as at today 08.06.15 or where indicated.

TMAGL	Lloyds – current	08.06.15	649.36
TMAGL	Lloyds – instant access	08.06.15	56006.81
TMAGL	Lloyds – standing orders	08.06.15	615.20
NEL	Lloyds – current	01.05.15	*1803.04
MAG Foundation	Lloyds – current	01.05.15	949.30
MAG Foundation	RBS – current	19.05.15	2727.21
MAG Media	RBS – current	21.05.15	4289.32

Note * Payments due to be paid

iv. *National Clubs Officer*

Mostly quiet from me this time around...

I've been to see the Goldwing Owners, as most of you already know, and they've renewed their membership.

Carol also tells me that the Vintage Japanese Motorcycle Club have come on board as a new affiliate, with another 5000 members.

As you'll see in my other report, I've been buried trying to keep up with the regional business, which is probably going to snowball within the next 3-4 weeks. I've also got nothing booked that I'm aware of for the next couple of months on club business. I'm intending to revamp the affiliation pack soon, so I'm open to suggestions on that front.

The main thing I am waiting for is board approval on the new pricing structure - John was championing that for me, but I've heard nothing for a while.

Current affiliate membership is 123 clubs, representing just under 45000 members.

Oliver Rose

National Clubs Liaison Officer

v. National Reps' Liaison Officer

Ongoing:

Draft of the new Reps'/Officers' Handbook circulated for comments/errors & omissions. "Official" Version 01 will be circulated shortly.

Continue to support Regional Reps with welcomes and provision of information.

Following request from Chair, have taken on admin duties in respect to requests/reminders for NC reports, Agenda items and Observers.

Looking ahead:

Develop an induction process for new officers. This will involve input from NC and I would like, barring any unforeseen circumstances, to see this process in place by year end.

Jane Carrott

MAG National Reps' Liaison Officer

vi. Executive Officer

Updates

Offices – As most will know there was a sudden change to date of reducing our space from mid/end of June to the 1st June, the notice of which was only just over three days (4pm on Tuesday 26th May) where the office had to be clear for the weekend of 30/31 May for redecoration. This was completed within the time limits and we have now received a reduction to our monthly lease of 47%. In addition (but prior to the date to relinquish) we were given two options to either vacate the offices giving 6 months notice or to again take on the whole block which the decision was made to move with the notice period ending on 18th November. I have found a good solution to our circumstances to reduce impact to the organization with offices at Hatton Technology Park (previously known as Nunhold Park) at a more realistic price. Negotiations will start nearer our end of term date – late August for availability options for a staged move again to reduce impact to the office/members. Another company has rented the large office but have not as yet moved in, I presume that these are the tenants who are interested in the whole block and will once established see if we can come to an arrangement to move sooner without additional costs.

IT – Work in progress please see Tony Cox. Website options need to be discussed.

MAG (UK) – All standing order monies have been transferred to us. All members paying by this method have been contacted and offered several different payment options and work is in progress as of writing this over 150 direct debits have been set up from transferring standing order payers, plus new standing orders have already been received or are on process of being set up. So far a good response from the mail out.

Staff – Alex Purton who was with us for work experience was let go early as it was not working out as expected for the office. Some interesting research was produced for LÖ which I am sure will be of use in the future. Cheryl Rowlands is work in progress with a more specialized remit being worked out for our

benefit for the members. LÖ has eventually been able to catch up from the madness of the elections and other processes have been put in place to maintain a more even keel.

Sub-Contractors contracts – Workload for LM has not reduced and I feel that we really need to either make a permanent commitment to a full time contract or something between the two and half days and five day week for a set term and suggest a review to re-assess. The current extension to LM's contract took us to the end of May so needs addressing. I can proceed as you wish me to but need a decision. IM's contract needs to be discussed going forward.

My role – I have not started to look at policies and procedures etc due to the first part of my report. A lot is still work in progress and is slowly getting there, but a benefit of the clear out and reduce filing and such is that we are prepared for moving with everything organized.

Bank Accounts – Bank account forms prepared for signing at Board meeting which includes the transfer of MAG Media account from RBS to Lloyds so that all accounts are operating most efficiently for us. This will include on line banking for payment authorization and statements.

Stationery – Prior to the office bombshell replacement stationery was ordered in the most rewarding quantity to value, covering our needs. Our headed paper includes our PO Box address and states the registered address as Oakslade, but as the move options are within the same postal district the PO Box address will not need to be changed just the actual delivery address to us. I also used my discretion regarding the membership card option and ordered sufficient to last until the new year, the design is exactly the same as the previous one.

The report was circulated. SL expanded on details regarding Central's move to new offices later in the year.

vii. Contractors

ROAD Print Bill

Well the bell ringing noise of great joy since the last report is that The ROAD is going to cost a good deal less to print. I got a print quote from a rival company in Wales that was about £1400 an issue less than Pensord were charging. I ran it past Pensord and asked them if they could see any catches with the rival quote. They said that it was all kosher but after a few days consideration they virtually matched it. Hence the ROAD will now cost about new quote £3255 for a 7000 print run instead of about £4,700 so a saving of over £8,000 a year.

If we can do some good deals with business partners and get the print run up dramatically we could find ourselves in a much more competitive position as compared with the Bauer Media commercial titles.

Of course I may just have pulled these figures out of the air and the bill will be just the same as before.

Super Rally

I felt we should be there partly because I continue to see the Harley market as low hanging fruit and more because the West London Harley Riders who organised it are v pro MAG and have made donations to MAG. In the event the carrot assessment that it would be predominantly foreign riders there turned out to be correct and the deal we had with the parking option in Lincoln probably made us a lot more money than the stand might have and with no cost. I only got up there Friday night for a couple of hours before going to bed. An effort only made to show my face really. Anyway that was that. The bigger HOG rallies in the UK are definite targets in my book.

I am appalled by my own failure to give more talks to HOG groups or get my film done promoting MAG. The more I think about it the more I think we should use a professional actress – good looking but not OTT sensuous. The ideal would be a sensible but attractive woman who looks as if she might ride or better still a celebrity woman who does ride and of course will do it for nothing. Will discuss with Lembit.

Don't know if anyone has used my MAG presentation that I put on Dropbox some months back together with the explanatory movie - anyone?

I think this issue is more pictorial than ever with more time spent on the event spreads - hope you think it works. The political content in this issue is the highest ever I reckon for obvious reasons.

Proofing was behind the curve again as most of my proofing team seem to have gone AWOL Doug Smith, Phil McFadden, and Selina are notable exceptions.

Anyway you may think it is all infantile shit and who can honestly blame you if you do. Still I enjoy producing it and it stops me hanging around in cafes leering at waitresses all day long.

Later

Mr M

IW advised that Cambrian Tyres have Nick Sanders DVDs available to use and will advise SL of a point of contact.

11. Any other business:

i. Update on WCC meeting/London demo

SL reported that the date for the London demo coincided with a cup final, meaning that even if WCC had been amenable there would have been no support from police. She further noted that there is an appetite for a demonstration, citing the Brum Demo as a positive “bikes are part of the solution” event.

The WCC demo will go ahead and a date following the parliamentary recess is being looked at. NC needs to look at premier event dates and come up with a “best fit” date for this to take place.

SL will provide an update on-list regarding progression of ongoing items.

(NFL rejoins the meeting)

Following NFL rejoining the meeting, he returned to the Finance report and advised that MAG is by no means rich, but it is financially stable. Income/expenditure are now in line, FEMA subscriptions are up-to-date and if premier events during the summer go well the coming year will not be so lean.

He then highlighted the point in the Executive Report regarding being owed £81K. NFL stated that this is the case in accounting terms but not in real terms. He went on to explain that MAG is technically owed a figure that represents varying periods of unexpired memberships belonging to M.A.G. (UK). These memberships were taken on by TMAGL and so an amount is “owed”. Everything is now in the hands of the Receivers, with TMAGL being a creditor of M.A.G. (UK), and a % of the amount “owed” will be received in due course.

(SW and DW leave the meeting)

ii. MAG champions

SL noted that small working groups are required to look after various campaigns and that position statements are required as a tool for activists to use.

This will be progressed on-list.

iii. Timing of AGC

SL suggested that, where an incoming Chair is new to the role with little or no experience of work at national level, the current starting point of April is difficult, being the start of the rally season where a Chair is expected to be high profile and encouraging all regarding campaign issues.

She further suggested that moving AGC back to a late September/early October date would both free up the April NC meeting and enable a new Chair to “find their feet” before the season gets under way.

Officers were requested to take the suggestion of AGC taking place on the 4th weekend in September back to regions for feedback.

If there is an appetite for doing so, the aim would be to introduce the new date for 2016.

iv. Disparity between car/motorcycle licencing: a potential campaign issue?

Item deferred to August NC meeting.

v. Building the membership: time for a coordinated campaign?

LÖ noted that MAG currently has a great story to tell and the potential for recruitment is considerable and should be made a national priority.

vi. Regional officers: do we take action in respect to extended inactivity?

JC asked whether action should be taken where a Regional officer is inactive for a considerable length of time, i.e. not attending meetings, not providing reports, etc.

TP said members should have an active Rep and NFL said that MAG cannot have “ghosts” in post.

BH said that “we can’t kick people out” and JC responded that there had been no mention of such action, and that the aim was to reactivate such officers and to have a mechanism in place to support the members if this was not successful.

It was agreed that a procedure needs to be formulated. Suggestions are welcomed and JC will draft a potential letter.

vii. Members’ suggestion on focal points

SL circulated a paper provided by member Steve Bolton regarding a number of key issues with suggestions on the way forward. She provided a brief run-through of the points raised, noting that Steve is a new member.

A brief discussion ensued, noting that the usual regional structure had not been followed (TP) but that a “fresh pair of eyes” can be a positive thing (NFL).

It was felt that Steve should attend the next NC meeting so that the suggestions can be discussed and potentially progressed.

viii. Handling of completed membership forms

SL noted that there had been a case of some membership forms being returned to but not reaching Central. It was suggested that details could be provided electronically as well as forms being returned in the post, perhaps by Recorded Delivery.

TC stated that RD cannot be tracked and Special Delivery would be better; however this incurs considerable cost.

NFL suggested that the problem is really quite small and that there was a danger of over-engineering a “solution”.

It was felt that a “best practise” document should be generated.

ix. Events reminder: Ride to Work/FYP/Cod Help Us/Brum demo/The Dead End

A reminder was given regarding dates and advertising for forthcoming events, along with the suggestion that they should have Facebook albums with posters, etc.

x. Potential new product

TPO circulated a sample neck warmer with MAG logo, which met with approval. He will provide costings via the NC email list.

xi. Template letters

It was noted that these will provide appropriate support to activists campaigning on relevant issues.

xii. Chasing memberships

It was noted that where a strong “no” has been provided in response to a chase-up, it should be escalated to Central so that an appropriate flag can be put on the membership details.

xiii. Yearbook

A yearbook detailing achievements over the last year is to be produced. A release date of 31/10/15 is envisaged.

xiv. Clarification re. PLI

BH sought clarification regarding PLI. The differences between affiliate club and MAG branch PLI was explained, and it was noted that PLI is a separate option for affiliated clubs, rather than part of the affiliation package.

Date of next meeting: Saturday 8th August 2015.

Report to NC and Board on key areas of work by Policy and Campaigns Unit

This version: 28th May 2015

Leon and Lembit

Once again, our report reflects the priorities determined by the Board, NC and our Line Manager. We continue to welcome feedback on these priorities at any time.

AGC

L&L felt the AGC was a very upbeat, focussed and outcomes-focussed event. We reported on our contribution to the political and campaigning outputs of the organisation across the previous 12 months. We had the impression that, overall, the membership was pleased with what we have achieved, and were broadly supportive of our agenda for the year ahead. We have attached a written version of the report we presented at the AGC.

General Election

The General Election delivered a result which almost nobody had predicted. We now have a Conservative Government, with a single party in power instead of a coalition. From a campaigning point of view, this makes everything much simpler. We only need to convince one set of Ministers instead of two about the merit of our proposals. Regardless of our personal political preferences, we can now direct our primary attention in a single direction to get the results we want.

The tremendous - and, frankly, almost dangerously exhausting - work of the last four months has built our profile enormously with all the key political parties. Leon has been busy assessing the new ministerial team, and L&L met on 27th May to formulate a game plan to influence these individuals.

The work on our manifesto for motorcycling is another outcome of the election. We now have a clear, easy to understand and reasonable agenda of requests, which we can now use to make a structured campaigning plan around.

The MAG activist base came up trumps in terms of engaging with local candidates and holding debates. These have been noticed at high levels in the parties. For example, in a conversation between Lembit and Green Party leader, Natalie Bennett, she announced that their party's policies towards motorcycling were out of date and invited MAG to meet with them to update them. This is doubtless as a direct result of the feedback received by Green Party candidates nationwide at MAG debates.

Looking ahead, we have all this to do again for the Scottish, Welsh and Northern Ireland elections. A key lesson is to organise everything at least six months in advance, to reduce stress and improve the efficiency of the travel plan.

MP members

We have restarted the recruitment of MPs and revised our criteria for counting them as members – and the expectations that they and we can have from such developments. We are approaching this methodically, building on what we have learned so far in the recruiting process. All parties will be welcomed, and our aim is to have senior members of each of the main political groupings on our membership list. Lembit usually aims to conduct these activities in the Houses of Parliament once a week – normally on Tuesdays. It is also worth noting that significant progress in and around Leeds has involved existing MP members and the prospect of new ones joining. Leon is now trying to follow up one in particular who was responsible for the surprise exit of Ed Balls.

DfT and TfL policy issues

With the new Government, we must now re-establish our presence in the DfT. This is normal. An election always causes a change in people, and in a way it's helpful, as we begin with a 'fresh' relationship. Leon remains our anchor man in the various political departments with the civil servants. The most significant change is that Leon's close contact at the top of the DfT has left the department which is disappointing in some ways but encouraging in others as he is now Director of the RAC Foundation – and keen to question prevailing orthodoxies.

The Civil Service extreme pro-cycling bias is underlined by the appointment of a minister with responsibility for 'walking and cycling,' further underlining the extent to which policy is driven by fashion. The same can be said of TfL, and Leon has now brought their policy bias to a head behind the scenes and may be advising that MAG takes this into the public domain via the submission of FOI requests and a well thought through campaign to deliver progress

Leon is maintaining close links with key groups who share some of our concerns about the adverse impacts of Cycling Super Highways etc. He has also arranged a meeting between senior members of Westminster City Council (who are one of those groups) and MAG's Chair and Vice-Chair to discuss TfL's excessive promotion of cycling at the cost of motorcycling and bikers and our overarching aims and objectives for bikers in the Capital.

Bus lanes Campaigns

An excellent example of successful campaigning and lobbying by MAG has emerged in Leeds and beyond. Three groups within the Yorkshire region have worked together to capitalise on

what started as a knock back about bike access to a new bus lane back in 2013. This precipitated a deal being struck by Leon with the Head of Policy in Leeds that is now in pay back time for MAG – and local activists have escalated the level of progress up to an unexpectedly high level.

These events have also led to the development of a blueprint type document of bullet points for MAG activists to use in fresh approaches to Local Authorities. This is a work in progress that includes a unified approach to bus lanes policies and it currently identifies what Leon has described as five pathways for progress.

L&L are seeking ways to encourage national guidelines on bus lanes policy to be implemented through the DfT. During the last term of Government, Minister Robert Goodwill expressed his support for the idea but as this is no longer part of his remit we will have to re gauge his support and take action accordingly.

The joint survey to candidates in the election delivered a 12% return – which is a high response rate. We are still processing the data.

Website

The new website is still not up and running. In response to instructions to develop content, Lembit commenced this process, completing approximately 25% of the task. However, it transpired that there was nobody to upload the new content, the previous designer (John Bayly) having expressed his unwillingness to continue with the project.

Lembit awaits instructions regarding next steps. He and Leon continue to hold the view that one person needs to oversee and be responsible for management and delivery of all necessary tasks associated with the creation of the new website. Lembit in particular is more than willing to deliver sufficient content to enable the website to be operational, but the future development of the site still needs to be resolved, together with a timetable. Leon is also concerned about a potential need to review the level of human resources and skills needed to keep the new website updated in as professional a way as MAG needs to optimise our reputation and powers to influence policy shapers.

Road Magazine

The Road remains a vital component in our campaigning activities. The Editor has increased the amount of space allocated to pictures, which has lightened the magazine in a positive way. It has been suggested that we should revisit the potential of selling The Road in newsagents. This is something we will take a look at as time allows. A virtual version of the magazine would also be desirable – subject to easy access through our website.

General Visits

Lembit has continued to visit many parts of the country, especially during the General Election, which required a great deal of travel to support MAG friendly candidates and to participate in election debates. We are trying to increase use of public transport as this is a better use to travel time. The regional media have begun to take an interest in these visits. For example, BBC Radio Leicester interviewed Lembit on account of his presentation to Fosse Riders in Leicester on 28th May 2015.

Lembit also visited Salisbury for a meeting with the police, to set up protocols for bike rallies. This was prompted by the police feeling overloaded when 4,600 riders of bikes and scooters turned up for the Salisbury event in April, causing the police to appeal to MAG marshals for help. There was no trouble, but this did provide an opportunity for MAG to take a proactive approach towards the relationship with the authorities. It is hoped the 'Salisbury Protocols' will have national application.

MCIA

Following the successful MCIA/BMF/MAG joint questionnaire to 4,000 candidates in the General Election, our relationship with both groupings appears to have improved greatly. This is assisting us in our work to increase the status of MAG in the sector – and, in turn, with the thought leaders who drive the industry. In the long term, this will benefit riders when we can work together with the industry to lobby Parliament. It may also open new channels of income over the medium term.

Meanwhile, Leon is developing relationships with key figures in the industry who understand the differences between the MCIA and MAG and who privately support our efforts to deliver progress in ways the industry can't.

Potholes & manholes covers

We need to return to the DfT to seek commitments from them – and from local authorities – to deal with the 5 million 'problem' covers – representing around 10% of all manholes in the UK. Although we did have such commitments from Labour, they lost the election. As such, we need to drive this with the new Government, and with Councils and local road safety campaigners.

Legal forum

Cheryl Rowlands, our chair of the Mag Legal Forum, attended the AGC and talked with members about the required services. This continues to be an area where demand exceeds supply. Cheryl will be returning to her studies in September and stepping down from that role so new options for continuing work in that area will need to be considered in due course.

Summary

The General Election absorbed an almighty effort, and with the polling over, the Political Unit is now beginning to return to normal, and catching up with the more regular work of the unit.

We are now in a period of consolidation, driving the projects forward at as sustainable a pace as possible and ensuring the work we have done so far is completed in a timely manner. It's never 'steady as she goes' in this job as it's unpredictable and often requires quick responses to unexpected events and opportunities. However, thanks to a good team effort, we're steadier - and going further – and MAG is achieving far more than some sceptics predicted or expected.