

National Committee Attendance Sheet

National Committee Meeting				Date: 13/12/2014	
<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		✓
Carrott	Andy	AC	Lincolnshire Rep	✓	
Carrott	Jane	JC	Minute Taker / National Reps Liaison	✓	
Cox	Tony	TC	North West Rep	✓	
Ford	Roger	RF	Warwickshire Rep	✓	
Davison	Pete	PD	Director TMAGL		✓
Dore	Paul	PDo	South East Rep	✓	
Gale	Aine	AG	Network Editor		✓
Hammond	Dave	DH	Eastern Rep		✓
Hughes	Bill	BH	North Wales Rep (Acting)		
Lavender	Selina	SL	Vice Chair / East Anglia Rep / Director Nice Employer Ltd / Director TMAGL	✓	
Legg	George	GL	Western Region Rep	✓	
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	✓	
McFadden	Phil	PM	South Wales Rep / Director TMAGL		✓
Metcalf	Jon	JMe	Herts / Essex Rep (Acting)		
Mitchell	John	JMC	National Chair / Director TMAGL / Director Nice Employer Ltd		✓
Mutch	Ian	IM	President / Editor "The Road"	✓	
O'Kane	Steve	SOK	N. Ireland Rep (Acting)		✓
Öpik	Lembit	LÖ	Director Comms & Public Affairs	✓	
Peregrine	Tim	TP	Southern Rep	✓	
Rose	Oliver	OR	Clubs Liaison Officer / Yorkshire Rep	✓	
Turner	Paul	PT	Director TMAGL / Foundation Trustee	✓	
van Aalst	Pat	PvA	Finance Officer / Director TMAGL		
Wigham	Dave	DW	North East Rep		✓
Wykes	Steve	SW	Scotland Rep / Director TMAGL	✓	
Poole	Tim	TPo	South West Deputy Rep	✓	
Williamson	Ian	IW	Aberystwyth Rep (for PM)	✓	
Merrelt	Paul	PMe	Thames Valley (for GarL)	✓	
French	Jon	JF	S.E. Deputy Rep	✓	

Rose	Debs		Observer	✓	
Streeton	Pete		Observer	✓	
Streeton	Jo		Observer	✓	

Motorcycle Action Group: National Committee Meeting
Date: December 13, 2014 Time 12.00 pm Venue: Shrewley Village Hall, CV35 7AN

1. Introduction and Register of Interests

SL thanked all for attending and gave a reminder that NC meetings are to be considered confidential (with the exception of today's training section). All attendees introduced themselves. Goodie-bags were distributed with a request to replace all old stock.

2. Apologies for absence:

Recorded on attached attendance sheet.

3. Appointments and Resignations:

Appointments: DH, SW and TP re-elected. OR newly elected as Yorkshire Rep.
Resignations: JMV and TS.

4. Adoption of NC agenda:

Adopted with revisions and changes to the running order.

7. Ratification of previous NC Minutes:

Proposed: NFL; Seconded: AC. Carried.

8. Matters arising from previous Minutes:

Two matters arising had already been dealt with.

5. Campaigns:

LM reported increased influence with local and central Government; improved links between L&L and MAG groups and a start to work in respect to the forthcoming General Election.

Informal contact has been established at Director General level with the DfT, resulting in increased influence and a new agenda regarding the treatment of PTWs with influence from the DfT to Central government.

Our membership of PACTS highlights the value of MAGs input and is building alliances.

The current Road Safety Audit system has been shown to be unfit for purpose and personnel changes have rekindled a review process which should drive changes resulting in equal treatment. TfL has started a review of its audit procedures following continuing pressure from MAG highlighting these issues.

TP asked how local authorities can be stimulated into looking to the DfT for guidance and LM said that planning for this will start in 2015, but may be via the National Motorcycling Committee.

LÖ reported improved links between L&L and local groups. He has been accepting as many media opportunities as possible and “shoehorning MAG references into most of them”!

He said that contact with the media is very important and they are looking to get the membership on board to be spokespersons for MAG regionally and locally.

A number of groups have been visited and he noted that it is the direct “first-name terms” contact that really influences.

LM reported breakthroughs with TfL regarding key issues that have resulted in meetings regarding challenging the adverse impact of cycle schemes; research into modal shift from car to PTW; the role of PTWs in cutting pollution; and the role of MAG, ACPO and the motorcycle industry in promoting new evidence that more PTWs improves safety. There is also an environmental benefit.

LM further reported that the head of the PACTS Committee had taken the trouble to visit the Bike Show and had been suitably impressed.

LÖ noted that in respect to the forthcoming General Election, MAG needs to get influential people on board and ensure that their transport policies reflect our own needs. Their policies regarding other issues are not relevant to us. He reported that we now have MP members covering five main political parties (Conservative, Labour, Liberal Democrats, UKIP and Scottish National Party). He mentioned that MAG was the first organisation to invite Nigel Farage to speak after his election as party leader, leading to his interest in the organisation.

He stated that we need to evolve our policy document, simplify the work list, improve our media systems and increase support from all political parties.

In response to a question about parity of licencing between cars and PTWs (i.e. stepped system for PTWs but not for cars) LM stated that is something that politicians won't go for. NFL chipped in to note that the issue is perception and reality and the parental vote (i.e. that many people perceive motorcycles as dangerous and want their youngsters to be driving a car because they perceive that as safer.

It was further noted that although there is no high-profile public campaign, ongoing work is being done.

(TP, IM and Jo Streeton join the meeting)

9. Matters for discussion:

AC sought clarification regarding OR's proposal for a charity status membership. OR stated it would be a reciprocal arrangement and would only be offered to bike-related organisations with charitable status.

OR and AC will work on the wording for a formal proposal.

10. Board meeting report:

Some tough choices are having to be made regarding finances. A membership coordinator is required to cajole RR's into chasing renewals/lapsed members via their local Reps.

Rent and floor space was discussed and a move to new premises is likely.

There may be changes to the format and frequency of The Road.

The server is currently on hold.

Staff appraisals have been completed.

It was agreed that all branches should endeavour to hold a "MAG Night" each year to raise awareness and funds.

A new National Finance Officer is required and Manifestos need to be submitted by 31/12/14 latest.

Procedures in respect to use of social media need to be tightened.

RRs to receive current and lapsed membership lists. JC to provide sample letter for use in following up lapsed memberships locally and regionally.

6. Training session:

NFL opened the training session by complementing the employees, providing a brief history of how MAG has got to where it is now and noted that problems are caused by weaknesses and that there is a need to eliminate negatives.

He then noted the core principals of MAG, i.e. that it is a libertarian organisation, that members are not vetted and that there is no logical reason not to engage with any political party to promote our own values.

He further noted that we are currently looking for new premises in a bid to reduce overheads, that The Road may well change format to A5 and/or become a quarterly publication and that our support for FEMA stands unchanged.

AC said that members need to understand the "helmet issue" inasmuch as it was the issue that directly led to MAG being formed and is about its founding principal of "freedom of choice". IM backed this up stating that we need to find a context to enable the point to be understood intellectually.

NFL went on to note that self-discipline in an organisation is always preferable to discipline and that certain behaviours, if unacceptable in a work context, are equally unacceptable in MAG. He said that RRs need to take responsibility and that training will enable them to do so effectively.

LM and LÖ then provided a presentation regarding the way forward in the following areas:

- Campaigns strategy
- Our vision for the future of motorcycling
- FEMA and MAG
- The "trade" and MAG
- Local groups and meetings
- Stands and fundraisers
- Increasing profile
- Chasing up lapsed members

In brief, points covered included the following objectives:

- Securing MAG policy implementation at local and national level
- Parity of respect for riders' rights
- Raising awareness of MAG and its agenda

Strategies will include:

- Defining policies in a clear, understandable form
- Identifying allies, parties and relevant road user groups
- Using media as a tool
- Presenting motorcycling as part of the solution

Developing and maintaining mutually respectful relations
Working on areas of mutual interest
Generating a community of unity
Developing warm and intelligent engagement

The presentation has been made available in Dropbox.

NFL noted "Bikers are Voters" will be launched on 02/01/15, and that the LGEP needs to be reinvigorated.

He also explained that in encouraging people into local and regional posts it would be good if it is pointed out that in taking up such a post they will learn transferrable skills that will be useful in other areas.

11. Reports:

i. Regional Reps

East Midlands

There's not much to report for the region.

Membership in the region has fallen further. I did send an email fairly recently to expired members but received very few responses. A couple were down to financial difficulties, one was because his membership alone didn't entitle him to a vote. I don't know whether he appreciates the practicalities of eg proxy voting. The others all refused to renew while Neil Liversidge is involved. This is not because I have 'poured poison in their ears', but because they have seen his behaviour first hand.

I attended the Leicester AGM, when it was decided to close the branch due to lack of members.

I haven't visited the Peak & District branch but have remained in contact with the rep. The branch plans to continue for now, but I don't know about long term plans.

Rutland MAG is currently dormant. If there is enough interest they will be trying to restart the group in the spring.

I have attended the Derby MAG meetings (my local branch). The rep, with very little effort, managed to organise a piss up in a local brewery (in fact several other local breweries on the same night) as a Christmas do, which I also attended.

Juliet Macve

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Western Region MAG Report

Bristol MAG

Julian Trust run was on October 5th, well supported by Bristol bike clubs with plenty of food and over £300 donated.

Bristol MAG AGM was fairly well attended - about 20? and we now have former group rep Tim Derrick as Bristol Council Liaison Officer, and Sally Smart as Club Liaison, both of which should really help MAG's profile.

Planning for the next 12 months is underway.

Taps and Sally are off up to the NEC on November 23rd to help man the MAG stand.

The Bristol MAG Christmas curry night is on 29th and well subscribed.

The website & Facebook are still proving effective, with a new member (formerly of Southampton MAG) now travelling over from Bath having found us via the website.
Cheers. Alec (Taps) Groom. Bristol MAG Rep

Mid Wilts MAG

There are plans for a Christmas Party in January; otherwise the group is ticking along quietly.

Not Avon MAG

At their recently held AGM a discussion took place over the future of the group as nobody wanted to be Rep, but it was considered to be better to have a group still meeting in the South Gloucestershire area and try to recruit new members, and hope someone comes along to take on the Reps position.

Weston & North Somerset MAG

W&NS MAG held its AGM where Deb Rose and Keith Hillier stood down from their roles, and Mark Hamlin and Baz Bagwell were elected as Rep and Treasurer respectively. The meeting was well attended and Keith and Debs were thanked for all their hard work, which has left the group in a strong position for the future. Also the membership agreed to take steps to increase the profile of the group next year in order to attract new members.

A vote was taken to run the GWR rally next year and a committee was formed.

The group has had a good year socially with a successful GWR, several well attended rideouts and MAG events supported, for instance the ride to Littledean Jail, and Bristol MAGs Soup Run and the Bristol Bike Show. Sat 29th Nov is our Xmas Dinner in W-S-M. The Wednesday meetings are generally well attended, and a vote was taken to make the Burrington Inn our permanent home for the foreseeable future.

Mark, Group Rep.

Western Region NC Liaison Officer

Observed at Local group AGMs, Bristol and Not-Avon, also at the SW MAG AGM.

Took the Regional MAG stand to Chepstow for the 'Hoggin the Bridge' event where we were kept busy with enquiries.

Next year we have invites to put stands on at 'National Bike Safe' held at Castle Coombe race circuit and Somerset Bike Weekend held at the Haynes Motor Museum.

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Cumbria Region Report

From September's Q and A hustings at Whitehaven. Myself and Paul Turner met up with two local County Councillors, one of which is on the roads committee and a manager from Cumbria's Highway Agency. It was a meeting with a positive outcome and a full report in this month's *The Road*.

For charity event's, Cumbria MAG held it's annual two tins run for Age Concern and animal charities with 70 bikers attending.

MAG fighting fund - Whitehaven MAG ask for a small donation when local events ask for manpower from Whitehaven MAG. Also Whitehaven MAG is sending £1000 to central funds and Furness MAG is sending £1200.

Both local groups have social nights organised over the winter period.

Michael Armstrong
Cumbria RR

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Eastern Region Report Dec 2014

Attended Peterborough MAG Rock night, sponsored by Bennetts.

Attended and worked at Peterborough 'Ay up Pie Night.'

Attended a Remembrance Sunday ride.

Represented MAG Foundation at a 'National Motorcycle Safety Seminar' full report with Paul Turner.

Eastern Region AGM where I was returned as RR, Andy Carrott as NC Observer (Minutes Included.)

Marshalled for Peterborough MAG 'Wood Green 4th Christmas Toy Run.'

Informed by Alex Moore that he has stood down as Rushden & District Rep, Jan & Nick Meads to keep it going into the new year when they can hopefully get some more committee members.

As you will have seen on the list Towcester MAG has folded (There has always been a lot of support for the old staff in the west of the region).

Dave Hammond

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Scotland Region

Principal campaigning issue in this period has been our campaign to try and get a ban on learners using the existing Forth Road Bridge when the new Motorway Standard Forth Crossing opens. Letters have been written to the Transport Minister, asking if he will consider permitting learners to use the existing bridge, Transport Scotland seeking details of the consultation and Alex Rowley MSP backing his parliamentary question concerning the lack of impact assessment. The Minister has not as yet replied to my letter of 10th October and is due a follow up letter shortly. Transport Scotland have provided limited information on the consultation process and details of the road transport bodies contacted are still being sought. A survey of learners and other permitted vehicles using the Forth Road Bridge has been carried out and plans are in hand for A Bridge Too Far Demo on Saturday 9th May.

In addition participated in Board and NC meetings in October, Attended Edinburgh MAG and Glasgow MAG meetings over the period and held the MAG Scotland AGM on 25th October where the existing committee were returned.

A Halloween rock night was also held, but numbers were not as good as expected and we only just broke even, which was disappointing. Glasgow MAG are planning a rock night in January which will hopefully provide a boost to funds.

Edinburgh MAG has sent a donation of £1500 to MAG central.

That's about it folks see you at the Board and NC meeting.

Best Regards

Steve

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Lincolnshire Regional Report

We have two things on interest on the political front at the moment. We have recently completed a consultation response in respect to a "Plan for Central Lincolnshire". The plan is centred around planning, growth, accessibility, transport, health, etc. Not with standing there was no mention of the county's own Motorcycle Strategy, the word motorcycle is not even mentioned once. The donkey work for this was completed by Lincolnshire Region Political Officer Trevor Bridgwood with support from Leon. We have yet to receive a response. The second is perhaps even more interesting in that we may have an opportunity to get motorcycling issues in a manifesto for the local elections that take place in May alongside the national elections. A local MAG officer has been accepted as a candidate for one of the major parties and hopes to put motorcycles in his manifesto.

At a branch level it is very quiet at the moment. Turn out at meetings has been low for both the Mid Lincs and Lincoln branches but I hope this will pick up in the New Year. There is a quantity of money sitting in the NE Lincs MAG account and we are attempting to get the details changed so the money can be sent to Central. We have a combined stand with Peterborough MAG at a show in February and this month two clubs are holding a joint charity event where some of the proceeds will be donated to MAG.

The Boston Motorcycle Riders Association (MAG affiliated) has been promoting a 'Mud on the Roads' campaign set up by a local councillor (and ex rider). It's a big issue here in rural Lincolnshire.

I'm sorry to say that I lost an active local officer over the Farage membership issue and as a result I am now having to take on extra Facebook administration.

I have attended meetings of Mid Lincs MAG, held a Regional Officers meeting in November and also observed at the Eastern Region AGM.

Andy Carrott
Lincolnshire Regional Rep

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Yorkshire Region Report - October - December 2014

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Reps report

Elected to post at AGM in October, observed by Selina on behalf of NC. Since election, have visited branches to introduce myself to members who had not attended AGM and may not be familiar with me.

Treasury

Donated £10,000 to central funds following AGM. A further £5,000 is currently in the process of being released to central funds at the time of writing following the call from the acting finance director. When discussed, the general opinion among Yorkshire members is that although these funds were raised for central anyway, other regions also need to pick up the slack when asked. This extra funds transfer may also result in a smaller donation following the 2015 AGM, subject to the success of local group fundraising activities during this period.

Branches

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Barnsley & Doncaster held a reasonably successful race night, and are currently working on a calendar to raise funds. Also had recent success with opening up bus lanes in Doncaster to motorcycles, with a trial starting in April. Attendance is stable at 6-8.

Huddersfield – Members attended Salford Demo, Assisted at NEC and local events. Local politics is focusing on unlit traffic islands, and is building a positive relationship with Kirklees council through that campaign.

Typical attendance is between 7 and 12.

Sheffield members here also attended Salford Demo. Local politics is generally quiet, although the branch is represented on the local safer roads partnership. Planning is in early progress to run the rally next summer again, hopefully with a better result to last years minor loss. It would be significantly easier if we had support from other local groups.

Typical attendance is between 4 and 6.

York - OR attended York branch meeting 2/12 - no sign of rep or other attendees. Will attempt to make contact and see if group is still operating. Venue in Road/Website is incorrect, but I've left it off the corrections list with the aim of seeing if the group intends to continue in the new year.

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South East Region

It's been a busy few months after I took over the region from John Mitchell, & I've been out to see most of the groups in my area to see how there doing.

Brighton is still a strong group in the patch & there still in talks with brighton council trying to get more bus lanes open & sort out secure parking for bikes in the city.

Chichester is a very upwardly mobile group & have had good lesaion with West Sussex council & have managed to get almost all the roundabouts on the main a27 bypass re surfaced as they were dangerous to bike, also as a knock on from that West Sussex have looked at there manhole policy & we're now seeing grippy covers on other roads.

North kent group, I paid them a visit on a cold & damp Monday & there was only a few there so we're working out a plan to get people out & a few wkend meets will be in the offing in the new year when the weather is better.

East kent group, the old rep let his membership lapse so I had to appoint his deputy to the reps position (tony wall) he is also the se membership sec. & he has a deputy (Richard shortland) & we're going to hit a few places & organise some ride outs with north Kent to see if we can inspire some people to join!

I haven't managed to see East Surrey group as yet but I will get there as soon as!

Alex the Brighton rep is making more inroads with local scooter clubs so hopefully with have another group signed up just after xmas. As a region we've got a lot of work but we have a goal & I would like to be able to put in a tender to hold the AGC in our region in a few years.

Paul Dore
S.E.Area Rep
Motorcycle Action Group

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NW Report October-November 2014

11th October: – National Committee meeting, Shrewley Village Hall

I could not make this meeting and unfortunately my stand in, Dave Smart was taken ill and so there was no representation from the NW at this meeting, minutes on www.mag-uk.org

10-12th October: – Mobile Chaos Rally.

Kevin Hyde, Morecambe MAG local group rep, was running the MAG stand at this event. I went to support. David Morris MP for Morecambe and Lunesdale and current MAG member, was in attendance on the Friday night showing his support for this event that has suffered a lot of opposition from some residents from the village of Silverdale.

16th October: – NW Alliance Meeting, Rogue Riders, Lymm

This regular monthly meeting went well. I reminded the group about the planned Salford demo and reasons behind it, which went down very well, even got an unexpected round of applause!

18th October: – Diesel Spills Stickers, O'Reillys Transport, Heysham.

David Chambers, the General Manager of O'Reillys Transport, Heysham, contacted me concerning the supply of MAG Diesel Spills Stickers for his fleet of trucks. It was suggested that we could make a good PR event of this at an open day they was planning when O'Reillys were taking ownership of 30 new trucks. Lembit was available and together with David Morris, the local MP and MAG member, it was a very successful day with pictures and a mention in the local press.

25th October: - Salford Demo, Salford Manchester

It was a good turnout and the demo went well. Lembit was in attendance and we got a good write-up in the Salford Star. Details in the write-up in the Road

1st November Blackpool MAG Halloween Bonfire Party

The event went well, made a profit, all enjoyed themselves, enough said!

8th November: - Rixton Motorcycle Auto-jumble MAG Stand

Blayz and I ran the MAG Stand at this event. Quite a small event but well worth supporting as run by the Talisman Brotherhood who are MAG supporters.

9th November: - Ring of Red, M60 Manchester

Attended this event with Smartie the Blackpool MAG Rep and there were plenty of other MAG reps at the event. An amazing turnout, getting bigger year on year.

10th November MAG presentation at Hatters HOG Meeting, Manchester.

I was asked to give a presentation to the Hatters HOG Chapter in South Manchester. Oliver, clubs Liaison, also attended. It seemed to go well and managed to answer most questions. The Chapter is in limbo at the moment as there may be a new Harley Dealer soon in Manchester and the Hatters don't know if they will be allowed to stay as an official HOG Chapter. Sounds a bit bizarre but who am I to question?

19th November: - Blackpool MAG meeting, Fleetwood RUFC

A number of us went to Fleetwood Rugby Club to discuss the possibility of running next year's rally at this venue. At the end of the evening it was a unanimous vote to move to Fleetwood RUFC.

26th November Alliance Meeting, British Bulldogs, Hindley

Reports on the recent demo discussed. I got chance to discuss forming a new Cheshire based MAG group with some members from the Rogue Riders.

28th November: - Funeral "Disco Don" Lytham-St-Annes

Don was a local Biker from St Annes and his sister had asked for as many bikes as possible to turn up for the funeral cortege. It was a good turnout and was well supported by Blackpool MAG. Sad day but good send off.

1st December: - Salford MAG meeting with Salford Council

Steve Blay and Owen Morris from Salford MAG met with members of Salford Council and Urban Vision to discuss a number of items pertaining to PTW use in the area. It was a good meeting and Steve will issue a report as soon as available.

Other news from around the region

I have been in discussions with members of the Rogue Riders MCC who want to start a local MAG group in the Lymm area of Cheshire. It is the first time I can remember that we will have had a group down here.

I have started communicating with a Facebook based group, NWUK Bikers, who contacted me after the recent Salford Demo. There are over a thousand in the group, many being young 'L' riders so seeing it as a good opportunity to introduce them to MAG.

All local groups are functioning well. Plans are afoot to host next year's NW AGM at the Duke of York in Eccles.

There will be no donation from the NW this year as the NW funds will now be used to fund the main shows we attend at Manchester Central and Manchester Event City instead of them being funded as National Shows as they have been before. Blackpool MAG funds will be used to kick-start the summer rally.

Bill, the Red-Rose Rep is still managing to get the monthly newsletter out and getting some good feedback from it

Best Regards
Tony Cox, NW Regional Rep.

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MAG South Wales Region Report Dec 2014

RR

In this quiet time of year, apart from the last NC and Board meetings I've attended very few other events, though I chased Mr. Spam along the M5, planning to do a stint at the NEC, where we were met by a host of other officers and staff so that this enjoyable task was easily shared. It rained legendarily heavily for both legs of the 212 miles of my journey there, and not having bothered to spray my gear for a couple of months had a predictable effect. Spam only had to ride half that distance, so he was only soaked. It was only bitterly cold on the way home and as Spam had only one pair of sodden gloves he is probably still suffering.

A couple of weeks ago I had a nasty off on a wet cattle grid over an M4 slip-road, leading to cracked tail-light fittings, scratched helmet and cracked ribs. I still await the S. Wales Trunk Roads Authority's response to my complaint.

I've put a bit of effort into helping with the main MAG FB page, answering queries etc, and did a lot of proofing of the December ROAD.

The Welsh Transport Plan was yesterday released with a 3-month window, in which we hope to make any useful comments. A quick skim of some of the 193 pages reveals that the Welsh Assembly has got one over on other Government bodies, as there are mentions of motorcycles in this!

Ian Williamson is attending the December NC for S. Wales, and I hope to join the Board Meetings via Skype.

Local Groups

Aberystwyth Group has continued their series of novelty days with a Moto-Gymkhana, demonstration and repeated their usual help at the NEC stand, did their community service by marshalling the Aberystwyth Christmas parade and formed a local Blood Bikes group. Plans are gradually drawing together for the 2015 Rally.

As I'm on sick leave I cancelled Pembrokeshire local meeting, on a filthy night where no one else was likely to come anyway. Unfortunately the Pembrokeshire meeting is dwindling, hopefully we'll revive it in the Spring.

Carmarthen & Llanelli MAG has a new Acting Rep in the form of fiery Shonie Malone, who promises nothing though everyone expects him to deliver. Again, in the Spring I hope to assist in this group.

Torfaen MAG are slowly uncoiling with ideas to raise our profile, and having spent much of the year in ribald debauchery they need to make some ground.

Cardiff MAG continue to work with the City Council's unofficially confirmed bikers in bus lane access (-though everything was agreed the transfer of the power of "Enforcing Authority" to the Council was until now delayed by the Welsh Assembly) it looks to be held over until February. Spam and others are investigating options for a S. Wales Politicians' Question time event early in the New Year.

Phil McFadden

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East Anglia Regional Report Oct/Nov 2014

5th October visited the Copdock bike show where Bury St Edmunds MAG had a stand with a couple of fundraisers. Guess the weight of the item and guess the number of items in the jar. I won guess the weight of the item although even my guess wasn't that close but it was the closest.

10/11th October attended Board and NC meetings.

19th October attended Yorkshire Region AGM as observer. Oliver Rose is now the Regional Rep all was in order.

Stayed on for MAP AGM. MAP need SIA people for their events next year (I was planning to volunteer before my incident). Anyone interested in helping out at any MAP events do get in touch with Pete Walker.

26th October had an incident involving a newly purchased combo and a ditch resulting in a fractured wrist.

9th November members from West Norfolk and Bury St Edmunds groups attended the Remembrance service at Duxford Imperial War Museum.

10th November visited MAP in Yorkshire to get together stand items for NEC Motorcycle Live show.

12th November Chaired and acted as official observer for West Norfolk MAG AGM. £300.00 was donated to the fighting fund.

15th November members from West Norfolk and Bury St Edmunds groups attended the Mayors Ride in King's Lynn, the main aim of which is to provide food for those in need.

21st - 30th November manned the MAG stand at the NEC along with Oliver & Pete (husband).

Much of the time between meetings has been taken up with planning and preparation for the NEC Motorcycle Live show. The stand was very well supported with volunteers, staff and contractors. It was a very 'clean' stand. The general vibe was very positive from all those who stopped by and I believe memberships were up on previous years. We signed up a new corporate and have generated some interest from other exhibitors.

I have attended West Norfolk MAG meetings however not made it to Bury St Edmunds. I have been in touch with Jo over at Bury and she did do a day on the stand at the NEC and will be joining us on Saturday deputising for East Anglia as I am in the Chair.

I continue to view posts from the A11 RAG FaceBook Group (Simon Frampton aka Sam Mullins and Andy Baker) however I am not active on this. The feeling is very mixed in the region regarding this group. I believe I remain on a friendly basis with Simon and I do let members know about their rides. The individual members make their own decisions on their level of involvement. I say all this because I am aware of some of the rumours that say otherwise.

Vice Chair Role

A lot of the work I do in this role goes on very much behind the scenes as I work to support John. We talk and email frequently about all manner of things that never see the light of day on the NC list. In addition I do try wherever possible to answer NC members emails that come directly to me in a timely manner without burdening others.

All in all it's been a very busy 2 months. I thanks all the staff with whom I've been in more regular contact than usual.

Selina

AC noted that his Deputy Rep, Alex Bridgewood is standing in local elections.

IW is offering motorcycle training to interested politicians.

SW has received a response regarding the Forth Road Bridge.

GL noted that Gloucester MAG will be holding an AGM in January.

PDo mentioned Bikes in Bus lanes in Eastbourne.

TP noted Portsmouth bus lanes; New Forest branch has a new meeting location; Hampshire Road Safety meetings have been attended; looking to arrange a hustings regarding the General Election.

ii. *Chair and Vice-Chair*

Chairman's report – December 2014

Well, it's been a busy few months. Not having done a report for October, I think I'd best put one together here.

I must admit I'm looking forward to some time off work over the Xmyth period as you can imagine.

Let's start at the end... in a manner of speaking. On the last Saturday of November, I was at the NEC bike show, spending time on the MAG stand with Selina and Pete, Oliver, Blayz, Lembit and Leon, and the others who volunteered on the day. I was decidedly impressed with the feedback we were getting; people coming up to shake our hands, saying 'keep up the good work!', and that sort of thing. The NEC was buzzing and we had our busiest day of the week so far from what I gather. I'd like to hope that it was in part to do with the posters/leaflets I'd designed for the stand. Sorting those out took up a fair bit of my time recently, designing them, buying the images, sourcing the printing and writing up the notes for anyone volunteering so everyone was on the same page. I try to keep MAGs costs down and get the best prices where possible, even trusting suppliers found on ebay if necessary. So far, this has paid off.

I'm still working on ways to capitalise on the success of the London demo in August. As yet, sadly, no-one has come forward to start any branches, so I might have to bite the bullet and do it me'sen in the spring (Any excuse to ride my bike to work). My job has the advantage of me being in London of an evening, so all I need to do, I guess is find a suitable venue and get things going.

I've managed to properly hand over the South East region to Paul, now – not that I have any more time to deal with other things (as I feel – as much as anyone – I'm entitled to 'time away' from MAG work) and there's plenty to fill in the gaps. I'm happy to say we've got a donation from the Lock Up Your Sheep Rally (which isn't a massive amount of money but it's something, and still leaves us enough for next year).

Besides the NEC, I also attended the FEMA meeting in Brussels back in October, which was a fantastic opportunity to meet up with all the European rider organisations (making some new friends) as well as Anna Zee, my opposite number in the BMF – who has agreed to work closer with MAG on future campaigns. Sadly, FEMA has been going through the same ructions as MAG but it's getting there – though there may be another setback on the horizon to do with Riderscan project, so I for one hope that it is a success.

I'm still using my train journey to work on MAG housekeeping and articles I need to write. I can't deal with everything straight away but things get done in good time.

It's not all been a bed of roses of course... some things in MAG would try the patience of a saint. Trying to deal with people who are passionate is one thing, but when things get silly as they have done on social media of late, makes me wonder why we go through what we do.

Then I get on the bike...

There are protests/rides out there, which we should be running, that get a larger attendance than the average MAG demo (we're lucky sometimes if we get a hundred people turn up) and then we wonder why memberships are just below the 2011 level. They then get the media attention we should have and it's quite galling reading about what they're doing in the biking media and I wonder 'why isn't MAG leading that?'. I aim for that to change in time, and for people to realise MAG's the best hope for biking in the UK.

MAG members come from a wide range of political views. Some of them aren't palatable to others and vice versa, but we have to rise above that and get on with what we do best – fighting for riders rights.

I feel that if factions of the membership carry on bitching, flouncing and generally scapegoating others, we will lose sight of what we're trying to do and other groups will come along and take the glory. MAG loses at the end of the day.

I'm pleased to see – after one bout of social media silliness, that Mid Devon MAG is back in good hands and has a bright future. The local members have got together behind Sarah Sherwood and it is now getting back to where it was last year, an effective local MAG branch fighting local issues and able to see the bigger picture.

I'm also absolutely horrified by the way that Bev Taylor's case has been handled by the police investigating her son Greg's death. I'm glad that MAG is able to help with this and that Selina and I agreed for Lembit to attend the meeting with the Crown Prosecution Service, with Bev. I understand that the case will be going for a Serious Case Review in the future but there are still too many questions to answer.

I currently see the future of MAG in a balance, with the scales tipping in our favour, but it still needs work.

John Mitchell
National Chairman

– Vice Chair's report in her region report.

SL noted that she has submitted a Manifesto for Chair but that this does not mean she no longer supports JMC.

SL further noted that MAG was well-received at the NEC Bike Show, with a lot of positive feedback including interest in corporate membership. She said that all volunteers had done a tremendous job over the duration of the show.

iii. National Finance Officer

SL reported that a new NFO is required and that interim reports are being provided by Julie Sperling. She also noted in response to a question from AC that membership figures do not include life members.

iv. Clubs Officer

Clubs Officer Report - October - December 2014

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Generally quiet in this period in terms of club activity. Panther Owners club have expressed their intention not to renew when next due, as a decision made at their AGM. There was no prior discussion with us in relation to this decision, so we had no chance to pitch our case.

Triumph Owners MCC will also be leaving when their membership renewal becomes due - by all accounts from their MAG rep, the national committee is friendly with what he calls old guard MAG, which I've taken to mean former staff members and lackeys of theirs. I've said that if the rep wishes to take the matter to their membership, we would support them in helping them make the correct decision (by which I mean staying affiliated).

Lembit attended Honda Owners Club AGM at their request - seems to have been positively received. I was scheduled to attend also, but was called to Yorkshire Regional meeting and MAP AGM instead due to a proposal for the latter which needed discussing.

Attended NEC show as clubs officer. Mostly positive in interactions, but no new clubs signed up directly from this. Clubs pack issued to Southern region clubs rep and to East Yorks clubs rep for further distribution.

v. Executive Officer

Nice Employer Ltd and The Motorcycle Action Group Limited Report from Julie Sperling Executive Officer.

Updates

Database – No further investment required currently until server is upgraded.

Website – Server issue have recommendations to be discussed at Board meeting.

MAG (UK) – Liquidator nearing the final stages for repayment of membership fees at least. NFL may have more to add to this.

Audit – Draft accounts forwarded to me today will be forwarded separately for consideration.

Staff – LO and CF appraisal completed this week. To forward to NEL Directors upon completion for final sign off. LM's delayed until January as hours need to be discussed and approved by Board.

No other staffing issues at present, the office remains busy and the requirement for part time intern has not changed. This is a priority to alleviate admin for LO and LM, LO is following up local universities and colleges.

Office chairs have been assessed and adjusted where necessary, there was not a need to purchase new.

Dongle required for mobile internet access for Lembit – this was agreed at a previous Board meeting but not actioned yet by JS.

Sub-Contractors contracts – deadlines to be agreed with Ian. As above where LM concerned as the Board agreed a two month full time extension to contract at last meeting requiring decision again. The current extension takes LM up to end of February 2015.

My role – my workload has not decreased but have managed to take a two week break to re-charge the batteries. Need to check out that all transfers of trademarks have been completed as per payment and request to IPO.

Currently looking at the Reps handbook that the Carrott's have been working on, some minor changes are required/needed to ensure smooth running in the office.

All policies and procedures to look at including staff handbook, but waiting until the database repairs are complete and the need to add the new way processing card payments over the phone. Staff handbook will start to go through with SL as workload settles – no movement on this to date.

Bank Accounts – In process of change over from RBS for Media and Foundation accounts to Lloyds for ease of access. Need to look at signatories for these.

Stationery – New pads produced for membership processing for groups/regions etc. Seemed to work well at NEC, better process for handling for the office and member and a good addition to reduce risk. SL has asked that a pack be produced for all groups and regions to go out at this NC.

New card options – LO investigating Triumph for a possible two year deal to cover the cost of the production of the membership cards thus saving in the cost of the membership card stationery which equates to approximately £2.5k per year.

vi. *Contractors*

Never a dull moment as my old mate corrugated Dave was wont to say. Well I finally managed to get out of the country for the first time since 2012 though only as far as mid Spain.

This was possible as I have found a young couple who have moved into my street and love Jack. I give them my house to live in they look after Jack - it's a result. I can also boast that I have a gorgeous young girl sleeping in my bed and there is no need to add anything to that sentence. The fellah is an IT boffin who is putting all my books on kindle.

I think I announced the thrilling news that my new book Gandalf's Garden is now available on kindle and so far I have sold a staggering total of ... No copies whatsoever! Still it's early days.

I had planned to ride down to Rome which I still haven't seen but it was not to be. My views on the way the SW rebellion was handled are a matter of record, some of it a wee bit sarcastic. I decided to go no further when that kicked off and stayed in Manzanares el Real for 12 days where I had good internet access.

Anyone no-one has agreed with me, so the PR/social media vetting committee is dead in the water and I am a figure of richly deserved contempt. No matter - onwards.

The Spanish trip actually assisted the progress on the ROAD as I didn't have to walk Jack twice a day and had fewer distractions as I cannot speak Spanish and the Spanish app has disappeared from my phone which is more or less an inexorable piece of incomprehensible shit.

I have sustained my policy of interviewing MAG members who have excelled in areas unrelated to MAG in order to enhance the perception of MAG members by those who might encounter our magazine on or off line. I think the Colin Speedie interview works quite well in that regard.

Many thanks to Phil for his proofing, most of the proofing team ignore me but there are a few exceptions Phil being foremost among them.

Back in the UK I discovered that I had promised to give a talk to the Bristol Advanced motorcyclists which went well I thought and my host who put me up for the night gave me a £100 for MAG and my expenses. Naturally I have trousered almost all of this .

And so to castle Penny in surrey where I was invited to a party at the spectacular home of Lembit's girlfriend Penny. As I have stolen a Monet from the wall of my bedroom MAG's financial problems are now resolved. Now hen who knows a trustworthy art fence ? I spent almost a whole week at the NEC which rather sent the magazine back from a strong position of being way ahead to being a bit of a flap toward the end. I take my hat off to those who can stand there for hours dealing with some pretty dim people. I met two of them who grinned at me and said C̄EI don't have to join I get all the information via some mate or reads enough on line or whatever it was, Then he told me MAG is affiliated the Hells Angels and I said MAG is not affiliated to the Hells Angels and he got all smug and pompous and said MAG IS affiliated to the hells angels as if he was a teacher and I thought oh please please go away and then I started looking at my phone and he got the message and went away.

A thousand blessings on Lembit's mum for putting us up for two nights and feeding us though I had to complain about the lack of cheese after dinner and Lembit said that he was going to have a quiet word with his mum and see if something could be done about it. He may wish to make his apologies to the entire committee in due course. Actually I am so upset about the cheese shortcomings that I can't write any more

Mr M

SL advised that Network Officer and National Reps' Liaison Officer's reports would be included from February 2015 meeting onwards.

12. Any other business:

i. AGC Awards 2015

SL noted that only two nominations have been received so far and that more are required. RRs to take to their regions.

ii. AGC 2015

It was confirmed that AGC 2015 will take place in Bridgwater, as per previously approved submission.

iii. MCN Pothole Campaign

LÖ noted that support for this would be good. LM said in his experience of MCN campaigns they tend to be short-lived and that there needs to be a change in their attitude towards riders' rights organisations.

SL noted that the FixMyStreet website works very well.

In closing it was noted that Nice Employer Ltd requires more Directors.

Date of next meeting: Saturday 14th February 2015.