

# National Motorcyclists Council

## “Bringing the Voice of UK Motorcyclists Together”

### 1. What is the NMC?

The National Motorcyclists Council (NMC) is a coalition of motorcycling interests, which works together on motorcycle public policy issues where there is a common policy on how these should be approached.

It provides a common ‘working place’ for such issues where common approaches can be agreed and appropriate outputs decided. These can range from an agreement to campaign individually, but with common key messages, through to deciding to develop NMC background research to inform the lobby (think tank and thought leadership), through to deciding to use the NMC itself to jointly coordinate and conduct campaigning on issues where a single voice is deemed the best way to manage an important issue.

### 2. Why is the NMC needed?

History reveals that the motorcycle lobby has been at its most effective when it combines to present clear and unified key messages. A previous and differently organised National Motorcycle Council did just this and achieved several successes in the 1990s which later led to a Government supported motorcycle strategy (2005). Arguably, the lobby lost ground after this, as the various motorcycling organisations reverted to individual lobbying, perhaps considering the job done. The old NMC became inactive at this point. The setting aside of the motorcycle strategy by the Gvmt after 2010 was a consequence.

Government today is at best ambivalent about motorcycling and in the main ignores the role of motorcycling in transport. Despite individual successes on various issues, no organisation



working on its own has been able to achieve breakthrough in terms of gaining full and equitable recognition for motorcycling in public policy - despite the clear positives for society of doing so. Indeed, the current policy of ignoring motorcycling, often using safety as a reason, has arguably led a more vulnerable environment for biking in safety terms than should be the case. The ‘safety in numbers’ argument is widely supported today and shows that the more road users who see and experience motorcyclists around them, the safer it becomes for those on two wheels.

A notable part of the problem is that public policy is often prioritised according to ‘voice’ and ‘constituency’. The larger both, the better the chance of success. Five organisations independently lobbying on one issue will not generate the impact of a single voice reflecting the views of all. Many voices can indicate lack of consistency or agreement, which experience teaches us, provides the opportunity for government to ignore all of them. One voice of many thousands represents constituency which is more difficult to ignore than many different voices of a few thousand each. Natural allies exist in Parliament, but supportive MPs have on several occasions said; ‘why can’t the motorcyclists lobby get together to provide us with one clear message we can support?’ This kind of feedback is difficult to ignore.

The motorcycling community has many interests and specialist areas. There will always be a need for different organisations to represent and serve these individual aspects on specific issues. But there are also many areas where the interests of all align. The National Motorcyclists Council brings these interests together on the riders side and creates a strong voice for all.

### 3. What are the NMC's mission and goals?



The NMC's Strategic Mission is :

**“Working together to help assure a positive and sustainable future for motorcycling.”**

The NMC's Goals are:

- To research, inform and debate the sustainability of motorcycling, and secure fair treatment for motorcyclists and motorcycling
- To provide single voice positions on issues of key importance to the motorcycle world as a whole
- To provide thought leadership on a range of issues that impact upon motorcycling
- To act as a force multiplier by combining organisations strengths

### 4. How will the NMC work in practice?

The NMC will work to create the means to lobby on issues of key concern. It will provide resources, analysis and opportunities to support lobbying activities. This will be done though:

- The creation of consensus positions and key messages for both the NMC and individual member organisations
- developing policy papers, research, think tank style inputs/outputs, to help inform debate (developed either internally, through commissioned research or through partnership with educational institutions)
- Providing materials, agenda items and discussion points for Parliamentary activity
- Organising events (presentations and debates), in Parliament and elsewhere
- Providing a focal point for lobbying on agreed cross-community matters, where this is deemed to be the best approach
- Creating collective vigilance and information sharing
- Encouraging thought leadership via articles, comment and debate

### 5. What are the issues that the NMC will be working on?

There are seven core areas where the motorcycle community agrees on their public policy objectives. These areas may change from time to time as the NMC evolves its work.

1. A positive position for motorcycling in transport policy, both now and in the future
2. A positive road safety policy and rider licensing regime for motorcycling, taking account of the five pillars of the Safe Road System
3. Quantify and highlight the benefits of motorcycles in the context of 3 pillar sustainability model (Economic/Social/ Environmental)
4. Protection of heritage - the right to continue to ride older machines and better protection for heritage venues/access
5. Be part of the debate on future transport, decarbonisation and new technologies
6. Motorcycle access to both urban and rural areas, including green roads and for motorcycle sport
7. The position of motorcycling in a range of regulatory and enforcement areas

The NMC will agree common key messages and also agree how the membership will express these – either through same message individual lobbying, or, on some fundamental matters, through mandating the NMC to act as the coordinating voice. Or to provide support to an individual organisation's work on a specific matter.



## 7. How is the NMC Structured?

The NMC is constituted as an 'association' on a non profit model. It is managed day to day by a management committee and executive staff, with a policy council of all members which will determine NMC policy. There will also be specific policy support groups from time to time which will consider specific issues in more depth.

Any representative national motorcycling organisation is eligible to join the NMC and corporate supporters are welcome to support the NMC's work. Organisations interested in membership, plus anyone who wishes to support the NMC's aims, should email [info@uknmc.org](mailto:info@uknmc.org).

The NMC wishes to foster good relationships across the motorcycle sector and among other stakeholders and looks forward to regular and positive dialogue with a range of interests.

## 8. Who are the NMC members.

The NMC's initial members are:

- The Auto Cycle Union
- The British Motorcyclists Federation
- IAM RoadSmart
- The Motorcycle Action Group
- The Trail Riders Fellowship

### What are the NMC's immediate priorities?

The NMC is currently laying the groundwork for activities going forward now that the 'roadmap' out of the Covid-19 pandemic has been announced. As part of this, the NMC calls for the restarting of motorcycle training and testing as a matter of priority, given that a backlog has developed for both. Leisure motorcycling must also return as soon as possible. The NMC also has other early priorities:

- Threats and opportunities assessment
  - This will bring together existing work in various areas to provide an overarching assessment.
- Develop detailed positions on specific issues
  - This will vary according to the issue. The Council will determine lobby positioning as part of the detailed strategy and work plan which will arise from progressing the areas identified by the assessment.
- Initial Outputs
  - A motorcycling community position document, outlining the core policies of the

combined motorcycling community lobby in more depth.

- Developing a range of membership benefits going forward.

### Working towards a new government supported motorcycling strategy.

The key issues of common concern to NMC members outlined above cover several important public policy areas, spanning several Government departments, where motorcycling needs to be taken into account in a way that is not done at present. These policy areas are:

- The UK transport and road safety strategy
- Sustainability (economic, social, environmental)
- The future of transport
- Heritage
- Accessibility, both urban and rural
- Sport and leisure
- Regulation and enforcement

All underline the need for a key NMC objective: a **new Government Motorcycling Strategy**, which should contain the following Themes.

- Motorcycling within government transport policy, plus policy advocacy
- Improved access to motorcycling through a better licensing regime
- Better motorcycling through safety and training – pre and post test
- Motorcycling access to bus lanes and other priority measures
- Environmental challenges and opportunities
- Financial incentives to support motorcycle use
- Motorcycle crime and security
- Accessibility to a full road network designed to keep motorcyclists safe
- Rural green roads and motorcycle use in rural communities
- Gvmt regulation as it relates to motorcycle sport, plus realising the social and economic potential of the sport
- Improving use of statutory regulation of traffic – both sealed and green roads
- Protection of heritage