



Right To Ride

Riders - Bikers - Motorcyclists - Scooterists - Full Control

www.writetoride.co.uk

Focusing On Northern Ireland

The representative voice of motorcycling in Northern Ireland is in a vacuum at present, that has left riders vulnerable to anyone who believes that we have no right to be on the road.

This is a fact and the constant changes in laws from Europe and Westminster make it harder for riders to enjoy the simple pleasure of motorcycling.

The greatest risk that riders' organisations face is forgetting their grass root members and by getting too close to industry, too close to the orthodox views of government and research institutes that think they know better.

With years of fighting in Westminster and in Brussels, riders have learnt that knowledge is power and understanding how to walk in the corridors of power without compromise is an art form that takes years of skill and learning.



Giving riders a voice by using a fresh and alternative approach with the backing of individual riders, clubs, trainers and anybody else who cares enough.

No deals on insurance, travel or cheap clothing. No membership fees, nothing but the support of riders, to put the case for riders in the corridors of power.

A not for profit company consulting with riders in Northern Ireland to find out from riders what issues are important.

Who Is Behind Write To Ride - Right To Ride?

Trevor Baird: Born and raised in Northern Ireland was Chairman of a local motorcycle club for four years in the 1990s.

From taking part in the Bigger than Borders demo in 1995 he eventually became the Motorcycle Action Group (MAG) UK's Regional Representative for Northern Ireland, before moving to mainland UK in 2002 where he worked as a full time employee for MAG UK, first as Director of Public Affairs and then as General Secretary.

During this time Trevor was also a representative at the Federation of European Motorcyclists Associations (FEMA) which is made up of twenty four national rider organisations from 19 countries across Europe.

In 2008 Trevor left MAG UK and became FEMA's Technical Officer representing an International Coalition of organisations from Europe and the USA at the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE).

Elaine Hardy: PhD: Born in Australia and moved to England in 1992.

In 2003 Elaine joined MAG UK and became the organisation's Research Officer, also representing MAG UK at FEMA from 2004 to 2007.

In 2007 she became FEMA's Research Officer and procured research

What About Ye

Welcome to the first issue of the Write To Ride newsletter.

We intended to launch Write To Ride by getting the website up and running, then to seek support from motorcycle clubs, to finish off the Motorcycle Safety Consultation document and finally to publish our first newsletter.

This launch was fast forwarded when we were contacted by riders from Newtownards for some assistance, regarding discriminatory signs at a petrol station in the town, aimed at motorcycles.

This campaign was a victory for common sense: the signs have now gone.

Our objective is simply to promote, protect and advance the interests of motorcycling in Northern Ireland.

Trevor (Headin' Home) Baird

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contracts for this organisation. She has also written numerous papers on motorcycling issues for both MAG UK and FEMA.

Elaine's background is vehicle data analysis and has worked for many years with government agencies especially in the area of vehicle crime research.

We hope that the skills we have gained in the corridors of power can benefit Northern Ireland riders.

Contact Details

Trevor Baird: email info@writetoride.co.uk

Elaine Hardy: email research@writetoride.co.uk

If you wish to talk to either Trevor or Elaine

Please call +447747604119

Consultation - Motorcycle Safety In Northern Ireland - The Rider's Perspective

The consultation document "Motorcycle Safety in Northern Ireland – The Rider's Perspective" aims to provide legislators, decision makers and motorcyclists with information that collates the expertise of motorcyclists, based on years of experience, consultation and lobbying.

It also aims to be a starting point for discussion and debate to develop a strategy for motorcycle safety in Northern Ireland by encompassing all stakeholders including the motorcycle community, individual riders, clubs, groups and associations.

Motorcycle Safety

"The most important piece of safety equipment on a motorcycle is the grey matter between the rider's ears."

The issues within this document are linked to the priorities for motorcycle safety identified during the International Transport Forum/OECD workshop on Motorcycling, held in Lillehammer, Norway in June 2008.

The twentieth priority summarized the importance of collaboration amongst all stakeholders:

'working together to achieve common objectives'

Road safety has become a priority within the U.K. and targets set by the European Union drive policy for national governments and local authorities.

While the objective to reduce road casualties is honourable and important, the whole business of safety has become an industry which has taken on a life of its own.

Virtual Library

The Virtual Library is a resource page that will be used to inform politicians - decision makers - authorities and anybody who needs convincing that we, the riders are the experts concerning motorcycling.

The library contains documents, reports, videos and external websites from other organisations and individuals.

Most challenges these days seem to revolve around road safety and we can contribute to this debate, by providing legislators, decision makers, safety experts and road engineers with the expertise of motorcyclists.

Most of the documents featured are from Great Britain and Europe with more information from other parts of the world.

The measures and solutions that are put on the table are not necessarily the right ones because of the vested interests of the various stakeholders.

Motorcycling is complex, there are many aspects of this mode of transport that are not understood, not only by decision makers and legislators, but even within the motorcycle community.

The debate about motorcycling as a mode of personal transport needs to be based on evidence and facts for the benefit of the people of Northern Ireland.

Trevor Baird

info@writetoride.co.uk

How to Respond

Comments, suggestions for improvement, and any additional information you feel should be included, should be sent to

info@writetoride.co.uk

Deadline for Responses is 29th June 2009

This consultation will be circulated to Agencies, Government, Interested Parties and Individuals. If you have any suggestions about others who may wish to be involved in the consultation, please let us know or you may wish to forward this link to them.

When replying, please state whether you are responding as an individual or representing the views of an organisation, agency or government.



If responding on behalf of an organisation, agency or government please make it clear the name of your organisation, agency or government department.

A summary of responses, including the next steps, will be published at www.writetoride.co.uk. A copy of the summary, which will have a list of respondents, will be sent to everyone who responded to the consultation.

Information provided in response to this consultation, including personal information will not be disclosed to third parties. Read our Disclaimer on the website.

If you want information that you provide to be treated as confidential please make us aware of this in your response.

Links: www.writetoride.co.uk/motorcycle_safety.html

www.writetoride.co.uk/Motorcycle_Safety_in_Northern_Ireland_2009.pdf

Loss Of Motorcycle Licence Entitlement

Has your motorcycle entitlement been removed from your driving licence after being returned from the DVLNI? What response have you had from the DVLNI?

Email info@writetoride.co.uk

There are very few examples of documents specific for Northern Ireland.

This is something we hope to address and a motorcycle strategy for Northern Ireland would be a target to aim for.

If you have a document or report that you think should be included, please send us an email to info@writetoride.co.uk

Link: www.writetoride.co.uk/virtual_library.html

Campaign - Shop 4 U - Now Back 4 US - Success

We were contacted on the 18th of March (2009) by a group of bikers from a motorcycle club in Newtownards, who expressed their concerns about what was seen as discriminatory signs at a petrol station in the town aimed at motorcyclists.

The group chatted with the supervisor of the petrol station who explained that the reason was to give notice that anyone with a motorcycle who wished to fill up with petrol, would have to pay beforehand.

The supervisor stated that there was a problem with motorcyclists not paying, but admitted that this was minimal. He said that there were cases of car drivers not paying but because they mainly get cars in the petrol station, but they couldn't ask all car drivers to pre pay.

When the riders explained that pre-payment was difficult because most motorcyclists use debit or credit cards and tend to fill their tanks, therefore could not know the exact amount, which would mean returning to the pay station and standing in a queue to get a refund.

The supervisor replied "Get your petrol elsewhere".

We understand that the petrol station has to protect its livelihood and its staff and we welcomed an amicable solution to the situation so that motorcyclists could be treated with the same respect as any other customer.

However what annoyed us about the notice was the possible reaction of other people and what they might think of bikers after reading the sign on the petrol pumps, which implied that all motorcyclists are potentially dishonest customers.

Riders come from all walks of life and ride a variety of motorcycles from custom - sports - touring and scooters using them for various means from commuting to leisure and pleasure. Throughout the year motorcycle clubs, supported by individual riders, do their hardest to collect for charities and go about their legal and peaceful business.

We contacted the British Oil Security Syndicate (Boss) www.bossuk.org Their document entitled, "Crime Reduction Toolkit For Service Stations" states the following regarding pre-payment:

"From the customer's point of view this can often be seen as discriminatory as it deters the minority at the expense of the majority. In addition, unless implemented uniformly it is often the cause of serious customer unrest."

One of the riders from Newtownards wrote to the petrol station's head office and the reply he received was, "... This sign was not sanctioned by Head Office and is not our Company policy. We have since instructed the branch to remove the signs which they have now done. We do hope you and your family now feel able to continue to shop with us and we would like to apologise for any inconvenience caused....."

Europe: Small Signs, Big Trouble - News of the campaign reached Norway: "That is why we riders all over Europe must give our support even to the small campaign in N.I. Next time we may be in need of support in our own backyard. Or we may all have to rally in Brussels because our rights may be in peril." <http://www.mc-addict.com/apps/blog/show/731746-europe-small-signs-big-trouble>

Helmets Off - "Removing helmets before filling up or entering to pay" we want to hear your opinions on this - info@writetoride.co.uk

Near Miss Survey – Coming Soon

Studies related to motorcycle accident causation such as the Hurt Report* have found that human factors are the primary accident contributing factor which indicates that vehicle operators are largely responsible for accident causation.

While post crash analysis identifies how and where collisions occur, there is a lack of analysis of "why" collisions happen. Near miss (or pre-crash) data can offer a rider's perspective.

Information on the decisions that riders make, could provide a new opportunity to understand their perceptions and processes.

The combination of behaviour data could supplement other information about road, vehicle and traffic conditions and could facilitate a new level of understanding about how riders interact with their environment.

The objective of this survey is to provide evidence as to why collisions with other road users and road infrastructure occur. This could support evidence from projects already sponsored by Department for Transport in Great Britain, such as the 'On The Spot' study.

The link between accidents and near misses is currently not available and it is proposed that the results from this survey would initiate developing the link between the two.



Before we got started, it all finished and a big thanks must go to Syd for highlighting the problem in the first place and Brian for his letter writing, both from the Lone Wolves Brotherhood.

Of course a big thank you for all your support, especially Quay Vipers MCC and Twisted Sisters for having the information on their web forum and website.

Read the full campaign at www.writetoride.co.uk

*Also known as "Motorcycle Accident Cause Factors and Identification of Countermeasures", H. Hurt et al. 1981

Support

As a Club, Group, Association or individual rider, you can now sign up to support "Write To Ride - Right To Ride".

No membership fees just your commitment.

The supporters page features the Clubs/Groups/Associations details - including logo and website - please fill in the supporters form first.

We need your commitment because not only is knowledge power, but numbers from the motorcycle community give representative power.

Please download the support pdf and pass it on to your mates and fellow riders.

The following Clubs/Groups/Associations support Write To Ride:

- Ancestors MCC**
- Coyotes RC**
- Frozen Bones MCC**
- Lone Wolves Brotherhood**
- Lone Wolf MCC**
- Quay Vipers MCC**
- The End Of The Line MCC**
- Twisted Sisters**



Support

Support Page www.writetoride.co.uk/support.html

Support Form www.writetoride.co.uk/Support_WTR_2009.pdf

Post a Message of Support <http://users4.smartgb.com/g/g.php?a=s&i=g44-30749-b5>

Club websites at www.writetoride.co.uk/supporters.html

Comments on the Carole Nash Theft Survey 2008

Northern Ireland has the lowest level of motorcycle theft in the UK (includes scooters and mopeds).

A study carried out by Carole Nash is the most comprehensive annual study of its kind since the Home Office last published the Motorcycle Theft Survey in 2005.

The study analysed over 230,000 claims from their customers and used this data to assess the biggest risk areas. North West London was named as the top spot for motorcycle theft in the UK, with residents there 5 times more likely to have their bike stolen compared with the country's average.

The safest region to live in regarding motorcycle theft was Northern Ireland, where owners are 6 times less likely to have their bike stolen than in London.

Even if the statistics tells us that Norn Iron is the least likely place in the UK to get your bike stolen, it still helps to take advantage of security measures available, but beware, professional thieves can circumvent alarm systems and don't care about any of the marking systems, because a professional will either ship the bike out of the country or



the bike will be sold for parts, which can fetch ten times its value.

Use a ground anchor, a strong chain and a reliable lock and if you have a garage, use it, if you can get your bike into your shed, do it, if you can't do that, use a strong chain and wrap it around a lamp post or fence where there is lighting.

Thieves will always look for the easiest and quickest option.

Other methods such as an angry dog, wife/husband and/or witchcraft may help.

The bottom line is, do your best to secure your bike, because if it does get stolen, the insurance companies will do

their best to avoid paying out, either by finding any excuse not to pay or by increasing your premiums to such a degree that it'll make you lose the will to continue riding.

Whatever you do, don't lie to them i.e. don't tell them you've got a garage if you haven't, because they will check.

According to the study, the Honda SCV100 lead scooter is the model most likely to be stolen.

Scooters and mopeds showed a much higher risk of being stolen than other models infact the overwhelming number of thefts of bikes are and have always been these types, because they are easier to lift and generally owned by young people, who may not have the same opportunities to protect their bikes.

The least likely style to be stolen was the tourer, 6 times less likely to be stolen than a scooter or moped.

Elaine Hardy

Research

Write To Ride Right To Ride

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Links

Carole Nash Press Release www.carolenash.com/pr/theftsurvey2008/

Theft Survey Table pdf 77kb www.writetoride.co.uk/theftsurveycarolnash2008.pdf

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