



# Bedfordshire & Luton **motorcycle strategy**



**Bedfordshire  
and  
Luton**

**Motorcycle Strategy**

**2006**

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<b>CONTENTS</b>	<b>PAGE</b>
<b>FOREWORD</b>	
<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</b>	
<b>1.0 INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2.0 POLICY CONTEXT</b>	<b>2</b>
National Policy	
The Regional Level	
The Local Level	
<b>3.0 THE NATIONAL AND LOCAL PICTURE</b>	<b>4</b>
The National Picture	
The Local Picture – usage	
The Local Picture – Road Safety	
Problems and Options	
<b>4.0 DELIVERING THE STRATEGY</b>	<b>9</b>
Road Safety	
Training	
Use of Bus Lanes by Motorcycles	
Use of Advanced Stop Lines by Motorcycles	
Motorcycle Parking	
Motorcycle Theft	
Highway Design and Maintenance	
Development Control and Travel Plans	
Wheels to Work	
Publicity and Promotion	
Policy and Integration	
Trail Riding and Off-Road Riding	
<b>5.0 CONSULTATIONS AND PARTNERS</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>6.0 MONITORING AND REVIEW</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>7.0 FUNDING</b>	<b>18</b>

**References**

**Further Information and Contacts**

## FOREWORD

Motorcycling is an important mode of transport but one that has not received adequate consideration and support at either national or local level. Despite this the number of people motorcycling has grown considerably. There are clearly many advantages and benefits of motorcycling. It is relatively cheap, clean and quick; and can be fun too. It can reduce congestion, is a fairly 'green' mode of transport and can provide much needed accessibility to jobs and other facilities for many people. However, least we forget, motorcycling can be dangerous. It is sobering to remember that one in five deaths on the road is now a motorcyclist and yet this user group represents only 1% of the total road users.

The Government published their *Motorcycling Strategy* in February 2005 and this is supported with new guidelines for motorcycling by the Institute of Highway Incorporated Engineers that seeks to improve safety through engineering and integration. In support of these documents and of our own *Local Transport Plans*, we are now pleased to publish this *Bedfordshire and Luton Motorcycle Strategy*, which covers the period up to and beyond 2010.

The Strategy covers many aspects of motorcycling including training, promotion, publicity, safety, infrastructure design, policy issues, road maintenance, motorcycle theft and secure parking for motorcycles. Many of these issues are those raised by actual motorcyclists in our area.

We are particularly pleased to have produced this Strategy in partnership with the Bedfordshire and Luton Motorcycle Forum *Motorcycle Matters* and other key stakeholders. It is only by working together that we will make a real difference to motorcycling in Bedfordshire and Luton.

Cllr Andrew Strange Portfolio Holder for Environment Luton Borough Council	Cllr Tom Wootton Cabinet Member for Highways and Waste Bedfordshire County Council
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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. Motorcycle use has increased by around 50% in the UK in the last 10 years and plays an important role in our transport system. Unfortunately, motorcycle use has much higher casualty rates and severity than other modes of transport. This Strategy seeks to set out policies and actions that anticipate greater motorcycle use and respond to the potential safety implications of this increase. This Strategy has been prepared in collaboration with Motorcycling Matters together with other key stakeholders. It is only with the full participation and ownership of actual motorcyclists that the maximum benefits of this Strategy can be realised.
2. The casualty record for Luton shows that on average there are over 45 casualties per year involving motorcyclists. Six motorcyclists have been killed in Luton over the last 6 years; around 20% or 1 in 5 fatalities on Luton's roads are motorcyclists. In Bedfordshire there have been an average of around 175 casualties per year involving motorcyclists. 31 motorcyclists have been killed in Bedfordshire over the last 6 years; around 17% or 1 in 6 fatalities on Bedfordshire's roads are motorcyclists. The road safety record of motorcycling needs improving. This will include road safety education, training and raising awareness of motorcyclists for all road users. The strategy to improve road safety for motorcyclists will also include an investigation of any motorcycle safety (accident) 'hotspots' and the implementation of measures to address any identified problems.
3. Within Bedfordshire and Luton, motorcycle training is generally met by commercial organisations. There are also refresher and advanced training courses available from most motorcycle training organisations and the BikeSafe initiative run by the Police. The Councils will publicise and promote motorcycle training schemes and continue to support the BikeSafe concept.
4. The current Department for Transport advice on bus lanes recommends against allowing motorcycles to use bus lanes. The Councils will formally consider the use of bus lanes by motorcycles in light of the Government's review of their guidance.
5. There is a need to provide convenient on and off-street parking for motorcyclists in town centre locations and at other key destinations. A major concern for many motorcyclists is theft and therefore secure parking is a serious issue. The Councils will seek to provide sufficient, secure and convenient parking for motorcycles at key destinations.
6. Bedfordshire Police only have recent data for thefts by vehicle type. The data provided by the Police show that there were 288 thefts in about 9 months - roughly one a day in Bedfordshire. In partnership with key

stakeholders, the Councils will seek to reduce the theft of motorcycles.

7. Motorcyclists can be more affected by highway design and maintenance issues than other road user groups. Surveys by Bedfordshire and Luton Councils continually demonstrate that repairing existing roads and footways are at or close to the top of local peoples priorities. Help line numbers, web and defect cards are used to assist the public in reporting faults and are supported by initiatives such as the BMF Report-a-Road where motorcyclists can report defects. The needs of motorcyclists will be considered as part of the Councils highway design and maintenance work
8. As part of the planning process, the Planning Authorities will seek to ensure the needs and requirements of motorcyclists are fully considered in new developments where benefits can be achieved e.g. secure parking.
9. Publicity is important in order to maximise the benefits of this Strategy and its proposed actions. The benefits and facilities associated with motorcycling need to be more widely recognised and some of the concerns and myths of motorcycling allayed. Road safety education and publicity will need to be carried out as an integral tool in improving the poor road safety record of motorcycling.
10. The illegal use of motorcycles and scooters off road, on pathways and recreational land is becoming a growing problem. Such illegal use can be dangerous and does not give a good image of law abiding motorcyclists. The Councils will work with the Police and their other partners on initiatives to combat and reduce the illegal use of motorcycles.
11. There is clearly a need to monitor the effectiveness of the Motorcycle Strategy and this will be carried out by monitoring the following:
  - No. of motorcyclists killed or seriously injured
  - No. of motorcyclists with slight injuries
  - No. of publicly available secure motorcycle parking places
  - Theft data
  - No of motorcycle trips.
12. This Motorcycle Strategy will be reviewed on an annual basis and updated where appropriate. This could be in light of new guidance or best practise but could also be due to the performance monitoring. Where targets are not on schedule to be met, remedial action will need to be taken and where targets are met early, stretched targets may be appropriate. A full formal review of this strategy is anticipated at the end of the LTP2 period.

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Motorcycle use has increased by around 50% in the UK in the last 10 years and is a growing part of our transport system. Unfortunately, motorcycle use has much higher casualty rates and severity than other modes of transport. It is important to stress that increased use of motorcycles does not necessarily lead to an increase in casualties. The growth in motorcycling and its poor road safety record has been recognised by Bedfordshire County Council and Luton Borough Council. This Strategy seeks to set out policies and actions that will anticipate increases in motorcycle use and respond to the potential safety implications of this increase.
- 1.2 Motorcycling can provide an alternative to the private car for trips where public transport is limited and walking or cycling impractical. Motorcycling can be relatively cheap and prove quicker in congested traffic conditions. Motorcycling also compares favourably with other classes of vehicle in most environmental parameters. Many motorcyclists also enjoy the experience of using their bikes for both pleasure and work related trips.
- 1.3 The latest *Full Guidance on Local Transport Plans* advised that local authorities should take account of the needs of motorcyclists and find ways to ensure their safety. As part of this process the Bedfordshire and Luton Motorcycle Forum *Motorcycling Matters* was set up. This Strategy has been prepared in collaboration with *Motorcycling Matters* together with other key stakeholders. It is only with the full participation and ownership of actual motorcyclists that the maximum benefits of this Strategy can be realised. Some of the key issues raised by the Forum addressed in this Strategy were as follows:
- Use of bus lanes by motorcyclists
  - Road safety
  - Road maintenance practices including over-banding. (Joint Sealant in road resurfacing work)
  - Mud on the road
  - Utility companies and inspection chambers
  - White lining
  - Excessive signing
  - Secure parking.
- 1.4 This Strategy covers all powered two wheelers including motorcycles, scooters and mopeds. The Strategy concentrates on Motorcycling on-road, though it is fully accepted that there are real issues with off-road motorcycling. It is envisaged that these issues will be addressed in the Councils' *Public Rights of Way Strategies*. *Rights of Way Improvement Plans* need to be completed by November 2007.

1.5 The key aims and objectives of this Strategy can be summarised as follows:

- To reduce the number and severity of motorcyclist casualties
- To support motorcycling as a transport mode within the general traffic mix, though not at the expense of more sustainable modes of transport
- To improve access and facilities for motorcycle users
- To improve road safety awareness in respect of motorcycles, of riders and of other road users
- To increase the number of secure motorcycle parking facilities and to review other motorcycle parking provision
- Meeting the objectives of both Councils' second *Local Transport Plans*
- To encourage greater integration of motorcycling within transportation and land-use policy and planning
- To fully incorporate motorcycle safety into highway design and maintenance through our safety audit procedures by involving motorcyclists.
- Promoting local training schemes for all riders especially novice and return riders.

## 2.0 POLICY CONTEXT

### National Policy

2.1 The Government's White Paper on the future of transport, *A New Deal for Transport: Better for Everyone*, 1998 acknowledged some of the benefits offered by motorcycling;

*'Mopeds and motorcycles can provide an alternative means of transport for many trips. Where public transport is limited and walking unrealistic, for example in rural areas, motorcycling can provide an affordable alternative to the car, bring benefits to the individual and widen their employment opportunities'*

2.2 The Government's *Transport 2010 – The 10 Year Plan* published in 2000 recognised the role which motorcycling has in an integrated transport policy. The 10 Year Plan noted the advantages that motorcycles have over cars in terms of flexibility and affordability and that motorcycles can make more efficient use of road space in congested conditions. The use of motorcycles as an important alternative mode of transport for people on low incomes and those in rural areas was also noted.

- 2.3 The Government's current transport strategy is set out in the Transport White Paper *The Future of Transport, a network for 2030* (July 2004), which updates the Transport 10 Year Plan. This again recognised the benefits of motorcycling but also acknowledged that motorcyclists have the highest fatality rate of all road users. The White Paper emphasised the need for central Government to continue to work with the motorcycle industry, user groups, the Police and others to address road safety issues and to better integrate motorcycling into Government transport strategy.
- 2.4 There is no specific guidance in respect to motorcycles in the *Planning Policy Guidance on Transport (PPG 13: Transport)*.

### **The Regional Level**

- 2.5 The *Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act, 2004*, has introduced a new system of strategic planning, replacing *Regional Planning Guidance* and *Structure Plans* with *Regional Spatial Strategies* (RSS). A draft *RSS 14 – The East of England Plan* was sent to the Deputy Prime Minister on the 25 November 2004 and at the time of writing is undergoing Examination in Public. The RSS sets out a strategy to guide planning and development in the East of England to the year 2021. It covers economic development, housing, the environment, transport, waste management, culture, sport and recreation, mineral extraction and implementation. The RSS has a bearing on almost every aspect of the way we live in the region. It aims to improve the quality of life and sets out proposals that will influence where we choose to work and live and how we move about the region. It also seeks to address issues such as social exclusion, the need for regeneration and the impact of climate change. In respect to motorcycles, the Plan states:

*'There is inconsistency across the region in the management of powered two-wheelers. In some areas they are seen as a preferred option to cars (and may be afforded some priority) because of lower emissions and the use of less road space. Elsewhere the noise and safety aspects of this mode of transport mean it is not given any favoured treatment. Powered two-wheelers are of greater significance in the East of England than nationally, but they still only account for 1.5% of journeys. No specific need for a regional approach to their management on the regional road network has been identified, though more should be done to address noise and safety issues so that their use could be further encouraged.'*

### **The Local Level**

- 2.6 The *Bedfordshire Structure Plan 2011*, the *Borough of Luton Local Plan* and other *District Local Plans* constitute the statutory *Development Plan for Bedfordshire and Luton*, although as mentioned above, these are

expected to be superseded by RSS14. These documents make little specific reference to motorcycling.

- 2.7 *Guidance on Local Transport Plans* (LTP's) in 2000 advised local authorities that all relevant aspects of LTP's should take account of the needs of motorcyclists. The *Full Guidance on Local Transport Plans* in 2004, advised that local authorities should take account of the needs of motorcyclists and find ways to ensure their safety.
- 2.8 The *Bedfordshire Local Transport Plan 2006/11* notes that the number of motorcyclist casualties in Bedfordshire has been increasing over the LTP1 period. It is acknowledged that motorcyclists have particular needs and that one action in the *Road Safety Strategy* has already been delivered which was to create a local motorcycle forum. Due to the fact that recent trends in motorcycle casualty numbers are a problem in Bedfordshire it was envisaged that this forum would initially focus on casualty reduction. Beyond this, the forum will decide what issues to focus on, but this is expected to include rider training and secure parking. The LTP states that best practice from elsewhere will be used to help, including the new guidelines produced by the *Institute of Highway Incorporated Engineers*.
- 2.9 The *Luton, Dunstable and Houghton Regis Local Transport Plan (LTP) 2006-2011*, prepared by Luton Borough Council in association with Bedfordshire County Council, accords motorcycling the sixth highest priority for attention after public transport, walking, cycling, freight access and taxis but ahead of private hire vehicles and cars and through traffic.
- 2.10 Through the development of this Strategy and by working with the Bedfordshire and Luton Motorcycle Forum *Motorcycling Matters* it is hoped that the profile and wider awareness by other modes of motorcycling can be raised through the life of both LTPs (2006-2011) and that this important mode of transport can be better integrated into the overall transport strategy.

### **3.0 THE NATIONAL AND LOCAL PICTURE**

#### **The National Picture**

- 3.1 In order to put this Strategy into context, it is important to have an appreciation of national and local usage and trends and to compare these to other modes of transport. Motorcycling in Great Britain has increased from 3.7 billion vehicle kilometres (vkm) per year in the mid 1990's to 5.6 billion vkm in 2003 – an increase of over 50%. While this only represents 1% of all traffic, it accounts for around 20% of deaths and serious injuries (KSIs); one in five deaths on the road is now a motorcyclist! Based on

accident fatality rates, motorcyclists are 25 times more likely to be killed than car users and five times more likely to be killed than cyclists. Whilst more women are taking up motorcycling, most riders are still male, and perhaps not surprisingly, only 11% of motorcycle casualties were female.

- 3.2 Age too has an impact on motorcycle casualties. Accidents involving younger riders tend to occur in urban areas and involve less powerful vehicles whereas accidents involving older riders (over 25) are more evenly spread between urban and rural areas and involve more powerful machines.
- 3.3 The number of KSI motorcycle casualties has increased significantly over recent years. When the increase in the use of motorcycles is taken into account, the actual rate of KSI casualties has fallen. This indicates that motorcycling has become relatively safer, however, 'fatal' casualties represent an increasing proportion in motorcycle accidents.
- 3.4 It is important to stress that increased use of motorcycling does not necessarily lead to an increase in casualties. An example of this is in Greater London over the last decade where motorcycling has increased without a corresponding increase in accidents.
- 3.5 The Government's road safety strategy *Tomorrow's roads – safer for everyone* published in 2000, acknowledged the safety issues surrounding motorcyclists and devoted a whole chapter to this problem. The strategy in respect to motorcycling was as followed:
  - To improve training and testing for all learner riders;
  - To publish advice for people returning to motorcycling after a break, and people riding as part of their work;
  - To ensure the quality of instruction;
  - Through training and testing, to help drivers become more aware of how vulnerable motorcyclists are;
  - To promote improvements in engineering and technical standards which could further protect motorcyclists; and
  - To work with representatives of interested organisations, in an advisory group, to look at issues of concern.
- 3.6 In the first three year review published in April 2004, the progress towards a *National Motorcycling Strategy* and IHIE guidelines were noted together with progress on improving training and testing for all learner riders and the publishing of advice and increasing awareness of the vulnerability of motorcyclists. The review acknowledged further progress was still required particularly in respect to road safety.

## The Local Picture - Usage

- 3.7 Motorcycle use in Luton has been assessed using the classified traffic surveys from the outer (both directions), inner (inbound only) and shadow (inbound) cordon surveys which are carried out between 0700 hours and 1200 hours (weekdays only) as part of the traffic monitoring carried out by the Council. The following table summarises the level of motorcycling in Luton over the last five years from these surveys:

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Total motor vehicles	157670	148368	154398	130740	143377
Total motorcycles	1195	1076	1059	911	834
% motorcycles	0.76%	0.73%	0.69%	0.70%	0.58%

Contrary to the national trend, the traffic monitoring in Luton suggests a decline in motorcycle use over the last five years.

- 3.8 Motorcycle use in Bedfordshire has been assessed using the Bedford Inner Cordon survey data. This is a town centre study that is undertaken annually, every autumn. Unlike the national trend, the trend in Bedford from 1997-2005 shows little change in the total numbers of motorcyclists entering Bedford (notwithstanding a few ups and downs over the intervening years). The proportion of traffic, in terms of modal split, has also remained constant. The following table summarises the level of motorcycling in Bedford over the last nine years from these surveys:

	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Total motor vehicles	39735	37706	40144	38692	39339	41744	38225	39523	39841
Total motor cycles	287	223	239	288	287	303	321	291	249
% motorcycles	0.72%	0.59%	0.60%	0.74%	0.73%	0.73%	0.84%	0.74%	0.62%

## The Local Picture – Road Safety

- 3.9 The casualty record for Luton for the last 6 years shows that on average there are over 44 motorcyclist casualties per year. 26% of these casualties were 'killed or seriously injured' (KSI); this is a much higher percentage than for all accidents. Six motorcyclists have been killed in Luton over the last 6 years. To put this into context, a total of 31 people have been killed in all traffic crashes in Luton in the same period i.e. around 20% or 1 in 5 fatalities on Luton's roads are motorcyclists. A more detailed assessment of these accidents showed that they were fairly evenly spread through the days of the week except for Sunday that had a lower number of accidents. The vast majority of accidents occurred on

roads with a 30 mph speed limit; this is not surprising for Luton where most roads are subject to this limit.

Year	Fatal Casualties	Serious Casualties	Slight Casualties	Total
2000	1	12	25	38
2001	1	14	46	61
2002	3	5	27	35
2003	1	9	35	45
2004	0	11	29	40
2005	0	11	32	43
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>194</b>	<b>262</b>

3.10 A similar analysis has been carried for the casualty record in Bedfordshire County Council area (excluding Luton) for the last 6 years and this shows that on average there are around 175 casualties per year involving motorcyclists. 30% of these casualties were 'killed or seriously injured' (KSI); this is a much higher percentage than for all accidents. 32 motorcyclists have been killed in Bedfordshire over the last 6 years. To put this into context, a total of 182 people have been killed in all traffic crashes in Bedfordshire in the same period i.e. around 17% or 1 in 6 fatalities on Bedfordshire's roads are motorcyclists. A more detailed assessment of these accidents showed that they were fairly evenly spread through the days of the week. Just over half of the accidents occurred on roads with a 30 mph speed limit with most other accidents on derestricted roads.

Year	Fatal Accidents	Serious Accidents	Slight Accidents	Total
2000	6	51	120	177
2001	9	56	154	219
2002	4	45	125	174
2003	3	48	117	168
2004	5	41	95	141
2005	5	49	122	176
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>290</b>	<b>733</b>	<b>1055</b>

3.11 The above data only deals with accidents that involve personal injury and that are reported to the Police. Whilst this data gives us a good indication of road safety problems and trends in road safety, it is important to note that this does not tell the whole story. There are many more damage only accidents or injury accidents that go unreported that will not be covered in the above statistics.

3.12 An Equalities Impact Assessment was carried out on a draft of the Motorcycle Strategy. As a result of the Assessment the following tables

showing the accident record between motorcyclists and pedestrians were included. From the tables below it can be seen that in Luton around 6.5% of accidents involving motorcyclists involved an injury to pedestrians and that the corresponding figure for Bedfordshire was 3%

Accidents involving motorcyclists with injury to Pedestrians – Luton			
Year	No of accidents involving pedestrians and motorcycles	Number of pedestrians injured in accidents with motorcycles	Total number of accidents involving motorcycles
2000	3	3 (2 children)	42
2001	2	2	60
2002	4	6 (5 children)	39
2003	1	1	46
2004	3	3 (1 child)	45
2005	5	5 (1 child)	49
Average	3	3.33 (1.5 children)	46.8

Note: Total number of accidents in the above table differ from the total number of motorcyclist casualties in table in paragraph 3.9

Accidents involving motorcyclists with injury to Pedestrians – Bedfordshire		
Year	Number of pedestrians injured in accidents with motorcycles	Total number of casualties involving motorcycles
2000	7 (1 child)	213
2001	4	250
2002	6	192
2003	6 (1 child)	188
2004	3 (2 children)	158
2005	6 (1 child)	188
Average	5.5 (0.8 children)	198

### Problems and Opportunities

3.13 The Motorcycle Strategy comprises of a number of different policies and related actions that need to work together to improve infrastructure and other facilities for motorcycles, improve safety and generally promote and encourage greater use of motorcycling. In order for the Strategy to be successful, it needs to address real and perceived problems and grasp the

many opportunities that motorcycling offers. The main problems and opportunities associated with motorcycling have been outlined below.

### **Problems**

- Very poor road safety record
- Risk of theft
- Limited scope for luggage or large loads
- Less attractive in poor weather
- Requires special protective clothing
- Lack of awareness from other road users
- More affected by hazards on the highway than other road users
- Motorcyclists often have a poor public image
- Can cause a noise nuisance when fitted with illegal exhaust systems
- Storage facilities for clothing.

### **Opportunities**

- Relatively cheap mode of transport
- Can often reduce journey times in congested conditions
- Improve the image of motorcycling among general road users.
- Reduced congestion
- Reduced on-street space and parking requirements
- Improve accessibility to training, education, employment, leisure and other destinations particularly in rural areas.
- A relatively 'green' mode of transport with low emissions and fuel consumption
- Motorcycles cause less damage to the highway network
- Motorcycles can be relatively quiet if fitted with appropriate exhausts
- Potential for good integration with other modes of transport such as rail.
- Providing for motorcyclists within highway design and maintenance regimes can improve conditions for other roads users.

## **4.0 DELIVERING THE STRATEGY**

### **Road Safety**

- 4.1 As previously mentioned, the road safety record of motorcycling needs improving. This will include road safety education, training and raising awareness of motorcyclists for all road users. The strategy to improve road safety for motorcyclists will also include an investigation of any motorcycle safety 'hotspots' and the implementation of measures to

address any identified problems.

***ACTION: In partnership with key stakeholders the Councils will seek to introduce a motorcycle casualty reduction plan consisting of engineering, maintenance, education, enforcement, publicity and promotion measures.***

## **Training**

- 4.2 There are rigorous training and testing requirements for those wishing to ride motorcycles. Learners must pass a Compulsory Basic Training course (valid for two years) before taking their vehicles onto the road and there are restrictions on the power of the motorcycles at various stages. Unlike for cars, training for riding a motorcycle must be carried out by a qualified instructor. A motorcycle theory test then needs to be completed before applying for a *Full A1 Light Motorcycle Licence* or *Full Standard A Motorcycle Licence* (this depends on the age of the rider and the size of the bike). Within Bedfordshire and Luton, motorcycle training is generally met by commercial organisations. There are also refresher and advanced training courses available from most motorcycle training organisations and from organisations such as the *RoSPA Advanced Drivers Association* and the *Institute of Advanced Motorists*. Some manufacturers offer courses to customers purchasing more powerful motorcycles. *Motorcycling Matters* also help run 'rusty rider' and local events skills days to assist in training provision.
- 4.3 *BikeSafe* is an initiative run by Police Forces around the United Kingdom who work with the whole of the biking world to help to lower the number of motorcycle rider casualties. By passing on their knowledge, skills and experience, police motorcyclists can help others become safer, more competent riders. This scheme should help riders to improve their ability and confidence, so that they can get even more enjoyment from riding their motorcycle. As part of *BikeSafe*, dealers are encouraged to display information on locally based rider training schemes. A full list of participating dealers and training groups is also posted at [www.motorcycle-uk.com](http://www.motorcycle-uk.com).

***ACTION: To publicise and promote motorcycle training schemes and continue to support the BikeSafe concept.***

## **Use of Bus Lanes by Motorcycles**

- 4.4 This issue was the first one raised by the *Bedfordshire and Luton Motorcycle Forum* when the Motorcycle Strategy was first discussed. It was raised and therefore high on their agenda and has been a key discussion point at a National level. The current DfT advice on bus lanes,

*Local Transport Note 1/97: Keeping Buses Moving* recommends against allowing motorcycles to use bus lanes. However, several authorities have decided to allow motorcycles to use bus lanes and experience so far suggests that there are no apparent safety disbenefits. One of the actions set out in the Government's Motorcycle Strategy is

*'We plan to review the Department's Local Transport Note 1/97, Keep Buses Moving, during 2005 and will include consideration of the position on motorcycles as part of that review in light of the results of research.'*

**Action:** *To formally consider the use of bus lanes by motorcycles in light of the Government's review of Local Transport Note 1/97.*

### **Use of Advanced Stop Lines by Motorcycles**

- 4.5 There are currently no plans to allow motorcycles to use advanced stop lines designed for pedal cyclists but a watching brief will be maintained on this issue

### **Motorcycle Parking**

- 4.6 There is a need to provide convenient on and off-street parking for motorcyclists in town centre locations and at other key destinations such as train stations, offices and leisure centres. Demand for good quality secure parking certainly exists. For example at Luton Station, a second covered parking area for cyclists was recently installed. This shelter was jointly funded by the Council and the train operator and is covered by CCTV. This facility is mainly used for motorcycles and, as there is still sufficient space for cycles, no measures to stop this practice has been taken. A major concern for many motorcyclists is theft and therefore secure parking is a serious issue. Ideally, motorcycle parking provision should allow for the machines to be chained to a secured feature, in a well lit, public area. *Traffic Advisory Leaflet 2/02* provides useful information on the powers of local authorities to provide such parking devices and encourages local authorities to consider using them.

**ACTION:** *The Councils will seek to provide and encourage sufficient, secure and convenient parking for motorcycles at key destinations*

- 4.7 There can be problems in charging motorcyclists to pay in Pay and Display car parks and on-street parking bays as there is nowhere secure to place the ticket. Motorcycles also take up less space than cars and can often be located in places where cars would not fit.

- 4.8 In Luton, a motorcycle can park in an allocated solo motorcycle bay on or off street free of charge and without time limit. However if a motorcycle parks in a normal P&D or car parking space then payment is required and restricted to time limit of the bay. Currently, what generally happens is that the motorcyclist purchases a P&D and keeps it on their person rather than attached to the bike. If a PCN is issued the person then forwards the P&D ticket to the Council and if valid the PCN would generally be cancelled. Resident permits for motorcyclists in Luton are presently issued free of charge for residents within existing CPZs with resident parking bays.
- 4.9 In South Bedfordshire designated motorcycle parking in the public car parks is provided in each of the market town (Dunstable and Leighton Buzzard). These are free of charge and have a solid rail to which bikes can be chained. South Bedfordshire have a rolling programme of lighting improvement and CCTV installation in the car parks but only one site is covered by the latter at present.
- 4.10 Bedford Borough Council allows motorcycles to park free of charge in any of its on street pay-and-display parking bays providing they park perpendicular to the kerb, ensuring the motorcycle takes up part of a parking place not occupying the entire space themselves, allowing other vehicles to utilise the remaining part of the bay. Motorcycles can also use any of the Council's car parks free of charge. Three of the multi storey car parks have "park mark" secure parking accreditation. There are also dedicated motorcycle parking bays in Hasset Street, Harpur Street and Harpur Square.
- 4.11 Storage facilities for helmets and protective clothing can also be extremely useful at public transport interchanges to encourage greater public transport use and at work places as part of staff travel plans.

### **Motorcycle Theft**

- 4.12 The Home Office 'Findings' report 269 on *The extent of motorcycle theft* (December 2005) provides some interesting and useful information. Some key findings of the report are listed below:
- The rate of theft of motorcycles has fallen by 5% between 2001 and 2003 (compared to a reduction of 23% for cars)
  - The number of motorcycles stolen has increased from 48,412 in 2001 to 50,591 in 2003 (the number of registered motorcycles has increased from 1,247,688 to 1,360,874)
  - The theft rate of motorcycles (37 per 1,000 registered) is much higher than those for cars (10 per 1,000 registered)
  - Lower powered and sports motorcycles are more likely to be stolen
  - Only 40% of stolen motorcycles are recovered compared with a

recovery rate of 79% for cars.

The Home Office provides general advice through leaflets and on their website on vehicle security at [www.secureyourmotor.gov.uk](http://www.secureyourmotor.gov.uk) and information on motorcycles at most risk of being stolen can be obtained from [www.crimereduction.gov.uk](http://www.crimereduction.gov.uk).

- 4.13 Bedfordshire Police only have recent data for the breakdown of vehicle thefts by vehicle type and therefore trends of motorcycle thefts are not available for the Bedfordshire and Luton area. The data provided from the Police show that there were 288 thefts in about 9 months - roughly one a day. About half the thefts were mopeds/scooters and half were motorcycles. In terms of makes, Hondas, Suzukis, Piaggios and Yamahas had the highest number stolen but this may be due to higher levels of ownership of these makes. No information on the location of these thefts was provided by the Police.
- 4.14 It is clear that more needs to be done to reduce the level of motorcycle thefts. Much of this will be down to the manufacturers and the Police but local authorities including Bedfordshire and Luton will also need to play their part. The Findings report states that ground anchors are important because anecdotal reports suggest that many motorcycles are stolen by lifting them onto the back of a truck and that fixing such an anchor may help prevent this form of theft. The report also noted that it is now possible to identify the registered keepers of motorcycles shown to be most at risk of theft, local *Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships* could use targeted publicity campaigns.

***ACTION: In partnership with key stakeholders, the Councils will seek to reduce the theft of motorcycles.***

### **Highway Design and Maintenance**

- 4.15 Motorcyclists are affected in different ways by highway design and maintenance issues compared to other road user groups. This is most notable when compared with the requirements of vehicles like cars, buses etc. Sometimes this results in inconvenience for motorcyclists but often these can result in road safety problems. The type of issues that can cause problems for motorcyclists include the following:

- Pot holes
- Inspection chambers and other covers
- Overbanding (sealant for trench reinstatements or road surfacing joints)
- Mud and debris on the road
- Standing water

- Fuel spillage
- Temporary surfacing, including raised ironwork
- Steel plating over excavations
- Poor temporary signing and coning
- White lining/road studs
- Lane widths
- Road furniture, including signs and safety fencing
- Traffic calming

4.16 Surveys by Bedfordshire and Luton Councils continually demonstrate that repairing existing roads and footways is at or close to the top of local peoples priorities. Help line numbers, web and defect cards are used to assist the public in reporting faults and are supported by initiatives such as the BMF Report-a-Road where motorcyclists can report defects at any location in the country. The maintenance of the nearside third of the carriageway is particularly important for motorcyclists, as this is the normal path that motorcyclists take. It is noted that everyone benefits from better quality roads not just motorcyclists. One of the biggest concerns of motorcyclists is the dangers from diesel spills. The Councils will take this seriously and will support campaigns to educate drivers not to overfill their diesel tanks.

***ACTION: Using all current best practice documentation, the needs of motorcyclists will be considered as part of the Councils' highway design and maintenance work.***

***ACTION: Continue to improve the response rate for reported damage to roads and to encourage motorcyclists to report defects.***

### **Enforcement**

4.17 It is an offence to deposit mud and debris or to spill fuel on the road. Enforcement can be carried out by the Police and by Council officers (highway inspectors and planning enforcement). Enforcement will be carried out by both the Police and the Councils in the worst cases but there is a need to be pragmatic, particularly in rural areas where the use of warning boards may be the most appropriate solution.

### **Development Control and Travel Plans**

4.18 As part of the planning process, the Planning Authorities will seek to ensure the needs and requirements of motorcyclists are fully incorporated into new developments. This will include issues such as secure parking and other facilities. Consideration of motorcycling will be expected in all staff travel plans required as a condition of planning permission for new developments and will also be considered in staff travel plans for both

Councils. As part of the DfT's *Transport Energy Best Practice Programme*, a *Travel Plan Resource Pack* for employers was published that included details of ways that employers might assist motorcyclists such as drying facilities and showers.

***ACTION: The Councils will promote and encourage safe and sustainable motorcycle use including encouraging developers and employers to provide secure parking and facilities for users.***

### **Wheels to Work**

- 4.19 'Wheels to Work' schemes provide an innovative way of tackling transport barriers to allow people to access training, education and employment opportunities particularly in rural areas. The Countryside Agency published *Two Wheels to Work* in 2002 that is a guide to developing and implementing wheels to work schemes. While many people consider owning a car or motorcycle a necessity, others (particularly younger people) often cannot afford a vehicle. This can result in people not being able to travel to work or for training/education. Wheels to Work schemes are an innovative way of overcoming these types of problems by offering people their own transport solutions such as a loan for a moped.

### **Publicity and Promotion**

- 4.20 Publicity and promotion are important in order to maximise the benefits of this Strategy and its proposed actions. The benefits and facilities associated with motorcycling need to be more widely recognised and also some of the concerns and myths of motorcycling allayed. Road safety education and publicity will need to be carried out as an integral tool in improving the poor road safety record of motorcycling. Consideration will also be given to publishing articles in the Bedfordshire Magazine and in Lutonline that are distributed to all residents in the respective authorities.

***ACTION: The Councils will publicise and promote the benefits of this Motorcycling Strategy, particularly in respect to road safety issues.***

### **Policy and Integration**

- 4.21 In order to maximise the benefits of this Strategy, it needs to act as a catalyst to raising the awareness of motorcycling. This heightened awareness should then result in better integration of motorcycling with other modes of transport and with other strategies, particularly with the Local Transport Plans.

***ACTION: The Councils will seek to integrate the use of***

## ***motorcycling with other modes of transport and with other strategies***

### **Trail Riding and Off-Road Riding**

4.22 As mentioned in the introduction, the issue of trail riding and off-road riding is not covered comprehensively in this Strategy. There is an extensive network of footpaths and bridleways in Bedfordshire and Luton on which motorcycling is prohibited. There are also a number of *By-ways Open to All Traffic* (BOAT) where the use of motorcycling is permitted.

Unfortunately, it is sometimes difficult to differentiate where motorcycling is and is not allowed. Whilst trail riding is a popular activity for many people, others consider it a major problem that results in noise, dust, pollution, damage to the ground and safety and intimidation issues. The *Trail Riders Fellowship* ([www.trf.org.uk](http://www.trf.org.uk)) supports and promotes this activity within its own code of conduct. Legal trail riding when carried out within this code and in line with the *Countryside Code* ([www.countrysideaccess.gov.uk](http://www.countrysideaccess.gov.uk)) should not cause undue problems for other users.

4.23 The illegal use of motorcycles and scooters off-road, on pathways and recreational land is becoming a growing problem. As well as being illegal it is dangerous and does not give a good image of law-abiding motorcyclists. The Councils will work with the Police and their other partners on initiatives to combat and reduce the illegal use of motorcycles and will investigate such issues as strengthening defences against two wheeled encroachment on land not designated for vehicular use and using the anti social behaviour legislation against persistent and dangerous offenders. The growing use of mini-moto bikes, which were never manufactured or intended for use on the road, will be included in these initiatives. Some work is already being carried out to tackle these problems including the Polices' 'Operation Dedicate'. The intention of the operation is to reduce the number of nuisance vehicle incidents, especially off road motorcycling on footpaths and parkland. This is achieved by using Section 59 of the Police Reform Act 2002 which gives the Police power to seize vehicles from persons who have been warned for riding/driving them either off road or in a manner which is considered careless or inconsiderate causing harassment or alarm to residents.

***ACTION: The issue of trail riding and off-road riding will be addressed in the Councils' Public Rights of Way Strategies/Improvement Plans that needs to be completed by November 2007.***

## 5.0 CONSULTATION AND PARTNERS

5.1 As previously mentioned this Strategy needs the ownership of all the key stakeholders if the aims and objectives are to be fully met. The Strategy has been developed in consultation and partnership with a wide range of groups and organisations including:

- Bedfordshire and Luton Motorcycle Forum
- Local Motorcycle Action Group (MAG)
- British Motorcyclist Federation (BMF)
- Honda Owners Club
- Institute of Advanced Motorists (IAM)
- Local motorcycle training organisations (including SMART, Trophy, UK Advanced)
- Bedfordshire and Luton Casualty Reduction Partnership
- Bedfordshire Police
- Bedfordshire Road Safety Strategy Forum
- All elected Members of Bedfordshire County Council and Luton Borough Council,
- Luton and the Bedfordshire Cycle Forums
- Bus operators
- Adjacent local authorities (Hertfordshire, Northamptonshire, Cambridgeshire, Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes).
- Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships
- District Councils, particularly in respect to their planning and parking functions
- Utility Companies
- Eastern Region Accident Reduction Working Group
- Eastern Region Local Association of Road Safety Officers
- Town and Parish Council's

***ACTION :*** *The Councils will consult with and work in partnership with the Motorcycle Forum and its constituent groups and on future updates and on the delivery of this Strategy.*

## 6.0 MONITORING AND REVIEW

6.1 There is a need to monitor the effectiveness of the Motorcycle Strategy and other associated strategies. We have sought to ensure that all of our targets are SMART i.e. Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-related. The key Performance Indicators will be reported in our Annual Progress Reports (APRs) as part of the Local Transport Plan process. While no specific key Performance Indicators for Motorcycling are proposed for inclusion in the Councils LTPs, we do intend to monitor

the effectiveness of this strategy with other performance indicators and these have been listed below:

Performance Indicator	Base level	Target
No. of motorcyclists killed or seriously injured (Luton and Bedfordshire)	69 average (2000/1/2)	15% reduction to 58 average (2007/8/9)
No. of motorcyclists with slight injuries (Luton and Bedfordshire)	165 average (2000/1/2)	10% reduction to 149 average (2007/8/9)
No. of publicly available secure motorcycle parking places	Not Known	60 new spaces by 2009
Theft Data	288 in 9 months	Reduction of 10% to 345 per year in 2009
No of Motorcycle trips	934 average for Luton (2003/4/5)  287 average for Bedford (2003/4/5)	Over 1000 average for Luton (2007/8/9)  Over 300 average for Bedford (2007/8/9)

- 6.2 This Motorcycle Strategy will be reviewed on an annual basis and updated where appropriate. This could be in light of new guidance or best practise but could also be due to the performance monitoring. Where targets are not on schedule to be met, remedial action will need to be taken and where targets are met early, stretched targets may be appropriate. A full formal review of this strategy is anticipated at the end of the LTP2 period.

***ACTION: To monitor the performance indicators in order to assess the effectiveness of this Strategy.***

## 7.0 FUNDING

- 7.1 Funding for the implementation of this Strategy will come from a number of sources. The integrated transport elements of the LTP allocations are

likely to be one of the main sources of capital funding. Other potential funding could come from Council revenue and capital, District Councils and developers (S106 funding). While only limited funding is likely to be allocated to specific motorcycle schemes, significant funds will go into generic areas such as road safety that will have elements that will relate to motorcycling.

Action	Timescale	Who	Shared Priority
In partnership with key stakeholders the Councils will seek to introduce a motorcycle casualty reduction plan consisting of engineering, maintenance, education, enforcement, publicity and promotion measures.	On-going with Annual Review	Councils	Safety
To publicise and promote motorcycle training schemes and continue to support the BikeSafe concept.	On-going with Annual Review	Councils	Safety
To formally consider the use of bus lanes by motorcycles in light of the Government's review of Local Transport Note 1/97.	Following review of LTN 1/97	Councils	Integration
The Councils will seek to provide and encourage sufficient, secure and convenient parking for motorcycles at key destinations	Annual Review	Councils	Integration and accessibility
Due to the factors mentioned above, on and off street parking for motorcycles is to be free in designated motorcycle parking places.	Annual Review	Councils	Integration and accessibility
In partnership with key stakeholders, the Councils will seek to reduce the theft of motorcycles.	Annual Review	Councils, Police and Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships	Economy
Using all current best practice documentation the needs of motorcyclists will be considered as part of the Councils' highway design and maintenance work.	Annual Review	Councils	Integration, accessibility and safety
Continue to improve the response rate for reported damage to roads and to	Annual Review	Councils and motorcyclists	Safety

encourage motorcyclists to report defects.			
The Councils will promote safe, sustainable motorcycle use including working with developers and employers to provide secure parking and facilities for users	Annual Review	Councils and Developers	Environment
The Councils will publicise and promote the benefits of this Motorcycling Strategy, particularly in respect to road safety issues	Annual Review	Councils	Safety
The Councils will seek to integrate the use of motorcycling with other modes of transport and with other strategies	Annual Review	Councils	Integration and accessibility
The issue of trail riding and off-road riding will be addressed in the Councils' Public Rights of Way Strategies/Improvement Plans that needs to be completed by November 2007.	November 2007	Councils	Environment
The Councils will consult with and work in partnership with the Motorcycle Forum and its constituent groups and other key stakeholders on future updates and on the delivery of this Strategy.	With LTP3 2011	Councils and key stakeholders	Integration
To monitor the performance indicators in order to assess the effectiveness of this Strategy.	Annual Review	Councils	Integration

## **References**

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The Government's Motorcycling Strategy. Department for Transport. HMSO. February 2005

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Government's White Paper 'The Future of Transport, a network for 2030'. HMSO. July 2004

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Draft Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS14) 'The East of England Plan'. November 2004.

The Bedfordshire Local Transport Plan 2006-2011. March 2006

The Luton, Dunstable and Houghton Regis Local Transport Plan (LTP) 2006-2011. March 2006

Tomorrow's roads: safer for everyone 2000

Tomorrow's roads – safer for everyone: The first three year review. April 2004  
Local Transport Note 1/97: Keeping Buses Moving HMSO

The extent of motorcycle theft. Home Office Findings Report 269. December 2005

Two Wheels Work, a good practice guide for developing and implementing Wheels to Work schemes. The Countryside Agency

## **Further Information and Contacts**

Advisory Group on Motorcycling: Final Report to Government

Use of Mechanically Propelled vehicles on Rights of Way – the Government's Framework for Action

Motorcycle Industry Association's (MCI) policy booklet 'Powered Two Wheelers, The Smart Choice'

Motorcycle Action Group's (MAG) booklet 'Local Transport Plans – The Powered Two Wheel Option'

British Motorcyclist Federation's 'Powered Two wheeler use into the 21st Century. (The Road to Reduced Pollution and Congestion - A Guide for Planners)'

Traffic Advisory Leaflet 2/02, Motorcycle Parking

The Motorcycle Industry Association (MCIA)  
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[www.mag-uk.org](http://www.mag-uk.org)

Institute of Advanced Motorists  
[www.iam.org.uk](http://www.iam.org.uk)

RoSPA Advanced Drivers Association  
[www.roada.org.uk](http://www.roada.org.uk)

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