

Campaign Toolkit



NFCC
National Fire
Chiefs Council



#MotorcycleSafety #BikerDown

Motorcycle Safety Week

3rd – 9th April 2023

The Campaign

Motorcycles make up around 1% of road traffic but in 2021 accounted for 20% of road fatalities and 12% of road casualties in Great Britain.

The National Fire Chiefs Council and Biker Down have come together so fire and rescue services and their partners can share advice and information to raise public awareness and support the reduction of motorcycle rider injuries and fatalities in the UK. Through increased awareness we aim to encourage people to improve their riding skills, adopt safer habits and provide education to respond in the event of an incident. The focused week of action is scheduled to coincide with motorcycle activity as weather improves and we generally start to see an increase in motorcycle casualties.

Objectives

- To raise awareness of risks and behaviours which can lead to motorcycle related fatal and serious injury collisions, particularly poor maintenance, and substandard PPE.
- Educate and provide advice to influence positive motorcycle user behaviour and encourage all forms of enhanced rider training.
- To increase delivery and attendance at Biker Down and all other motorcycle safety courses currently delivered by FRS's and their partners.
- To continue to establish Biker Down as a national brand for FRSs supported by NFCC and expand that brand to incorporate all public awareness messaging for motorcycle safety.

Fire Bike Teams

Fire Bike Teams across the country vary in size and make-up dependent on local resourcing. Team members can be paid or volunteer and are drawn from within the Fire and Rescue Service and from other organisations such as the local Police service.

Teams do not tend to follow any rank structure although there is usually a team leader in place. Roles within the team are defined as riders and admin staff with delivery of initiatives undertaken by all members on an equal footing. Teams across the UK are following the same format for initiatives notwithstanding some are using different titles or formats to deliver the same message. Generally, activities are as follows:

- Biker Down
- Promotion of advanced riding
- Slow Riding
- Ride Skills/Riding Schools – cornering, braking etc.
- Theory Sessions
- Female only sessions
- Vulnerable rider courses
- Taster/promotional events or 'Pit Stop' days
- Bike security events

FRS support for the campaign should tie in closely with the work for your own Fire Bike Team to support national messaging and local engagement. **Let your communities know about their work in your region as part of the week**

Biker Down is a product which FRSs deliver but you can also help promote other motorcycle training courses or work undertaken by Fire Bike teams in your local area as part of the campaign.

The course is delivered in one day and consists of 3 modules:

Module One – Incident Scene Management **Module Two** – Casualty Care **Module Three** – The Thinking Biker

The Biker Down session is well established and now delivered by more than 45 teams across the UK – primarily FRS (32) but in some cases road safety practitioners and police forces. The course must be delivered as advised and there is scope for additional or localised information to be added, no elements should be removed. This ensures the course is delivered consistently across the UK.

For those FRS who currently do not deliver the Biker Down course but are interested in finding out more the Biker Down team can advise and help you look into this. Contact james.sanderson@kent.fire-uk.org

You can also help promote other motorcycle training courses in your area as part of the campaign – some suggested links for specific audiences are included throughout the toolkit.

NFCC Road Safety Position Statement

Look out for NFCC's new road safety lead Dan Quin and NFCC's tactical advisor for motorcycle safety Tony Smith, as they join colleagues from Road Safety GB for a podcast as part of the week. Follow Road safety GB on Twitter @Road_Safety_GB and of course NFCC will tweet too! <https://roadsafetygb.org.uk/rsqb-talk-archive/>

During the campaign week NFCC are supporting the launch of the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) new Novice Riders Hub. The website will go live and will be found here www.rosipa.com/road-safety/Novice-Riders-Hub

It will have information and advice for riders from information about the learning to ride process, preparation for the road and biking skills. It will have resources and information that fire service can use to promote riding skills throughout the year. Look out for NFCC and RoSPA joint communications to support the launch.




Statistics


GB* Statistics 2021 ([link to Reported road casualties in Great Britain: motorcyclist factsheet 2021](#))


 Between 2020-2021 motorcyclist traffic has grown by 17%

Fatalities

 310 fatalities in 2021 - an increase from 2020 of 9% (285)
63% were males aged between 25 - 59 years old
19% were males aged between 16 - 24 years old

Injuries

 5,264 people were seriously injured
10,264 people were slightly injured

 In 2021 56% of serious injuries were on urban roads and 43% on rural roads
In 2021 80% of slight injuries were on urban roads and 19% on rural roads

[Interactive Dashboard](#)

[An interactive dashboard is available to allow you to drill down all road statistics including motorcycles by police and LHA areas](#)

[The dashboard includes data on increases or decreases on fatalities and injuries by areas on pages 4 and 5](#)

[The data can help inform message targeting and community engagement in your FRS area](#)

Northern Ireland

Northern Ireland statistics are recorded and published by the [Police Service of Northern Ireland](#)

There are more up to date statistics available for Northern Ireland so locally NIFRS may wish to use the latest available

14 fatalities in 2021 - an increase from 2020 of 75% (8)

92 people were seriously injured (increase 9.5%)

185 people were slighted injured (increase 57%)

Template Press Release

Sign up for Biker Down!

The National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) and @name of FRS is encouraging motorcyclists to prepare themselves and their bikes, to help stay safe ahead of the Biker Down national safety campaign which will run from the 3rd - 9th April.

The use of motorcycles increased in 2020 - 2021 by 17 per cent. Despite motorcycles making up around one per cent of vehicle traffic, in 2021 they accounted for 20 per cent of road fatalities and 12 per cent of road injuries in Great Britain.

Fire and rescue services aim to reduce the number of riders injured and killed on the roads by delivering safety advice and Biker Down sessions.

The three-hour session provides practical and potentially lifesaving advice. It includes advice for riders on reducing their risk of being involved in a collision, what to do if they are involved in one or if they see an injured motorcyclist.

Biker Down sessions are suitable for riders of all experience levels, whether riding for work, pleasure, or both.

Key messages will be highlighted during the campaign, including the importance of motorcycle maintenance and the wearing of legal and protective riding gear.

@nameofFRS be working with motorcycle dealers, accessory retailers and meeting places to reach riders as the weather improves and more people take to the roads on motorcycles. (You can insert details of any engagement events planned - NFCC has contacted Biker Down and Fire Bike teams with suggested activities)

Dan Quin, NFCC lead for road safety, said: "Motorcyclists are over-represented in collision and casualty statistics nationally. With an increase in the number of people using motorbikes for both commuting and enjoyment, our aim is to encourage riders to do all they can to ride safe and ensure they do all they can to be visible on the road. This campaign at the beginning of the motorcycling season is a great opportunity for all partners to deliver a range of safety messages across the UK."

Include a quote from FRS Road Safety Lead and feel free to mention any regional support you have secured.

Other partner organisations supporting the campaign include The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA), Road Safety GB, National Highways and TyreSafe.

Information and advice for websites and tailored for social media messaging (#MotorcycleSafety #BikerDown)

The right gear

A motorcycle helmet is the most important part of your kit – getting it right can save your life. To travel safely and legally you **must** wear a safety helmet that meets British safety standards when riding on a motorcycle or moped on the road. A brain injury is permanent – a genuine helmet is designed and tested to minimise the risk of head injury.

Beware of counterfeit and fake motorcycle helmets

Counterfeiters are getting very sophisticated in the way they make, package, and label products to look like those from reputable manufacturers or in the case of fakes produce substandard helmets with fake safety standard markings.

- Ensure you buy from reputable retailers including online retailers and avoid buying from social media or second hand.
- Where is the seller based and what chance have you got of getting money back if the goods turn out to be unsatisfactory?
- How do they want payment and does the deal look too good to be true?

Choosing the right helmet for your needs and budget is important. There are many reputable retailers that have good advice on their websites and can also advise in store including measuring you for your helmet.

Don't buy second hand

If a helmet has had an impact either from a collision or by being dropped it may no longer offer you the protection. You may not be able to see this damage. Motorcycle helmets have a limited life span. Manufacturers generally recommend a properly maintained, regularly used helmet should be replaced about every 3-5 years. Internal linings will have shaped to the first owner's head, it will therefore not fit or reshape to your head properly, reducing level of protection.

[The Department for Transport has a useful website to help motorcyclists choose the right helmet for them, it includes good advice and comparison tests.](#)

[There is also a leaflet which can be ordered free of charge and is a useful resource for FRSs](#)



You can pay a big price if you buy counterfeit or fake motorcycle helmets. You're being ripped off. You're not riding legally. You're not properly protected in a collision or fall. Make sure your helmet is safe and legal by buying from reputable retailers #MotorcycleSafety

Second hand motorcycle helmets might look ok, but helmets have a limited lifespan. The materials may not provide full impact protection. Helmets must be replaced after an impact – including being dropped. Fit is important and second hand is rarely the best fit #MotorcycleSafety

Choose the right helmet for your needs, budget and safety. Buy new, from a reputable retailer, and take a look @transportgovuk SHARP helmet safety scheme website for help and advice <https://sharp.dft.gov.uk/> #MotorcycleSafety

PPE

Apart from helmets there is no law that requires a rider to wear protective clothing whilst riding a motorcycle. But wearing the right protective gear can protect riders from serious injury so should be strongly recommended. Like helmets there is a trade in fake, substandard or counterfeit goods.

Motorcycle clothing that is designed to protect you in an impact or slide is classed as PPE and must comply with safety regulations and carry a safety mark (CE, UKCA or UKNI), ratings for the level of protection and user information and warnings.

It will also have a rating from AAA (highest level of protection) to B (urban riding without impact protection)

The right riding gear isn't jeans and trainers! The right protective clothing can reduce the risk of injury if you're in a collision. Buy clothing that suits your ride. You might need protection for your elbows, knees back, chest and shoulders. Riders should wear boots to protect their ankles and gloves to protect hands #MotorcycleSafety

Always buy your protective gear from reputable retailers. They can offer you the right advice on the right kit for your ride. Buyer beware the market for counterfeit and fake gear is big. Don't get scammed, don't ride unprotected #MotorcycleSafety #BikerDown

The National Young Rider Forum is launching their 'Spring has Sprung' campaign which NFCC is supporting, to coincide with National Motorcycle Safety Week. The New Rider Hub is full of resources aimed at 16–24-year-olds and a great place to direct young audiences to advice and training including Biker Down. [Take a look at the New Rider Hub for information and resources for younger riders](#)

Do you ride for a living? Check out the advice on @NewRidersHub for gig economy riders and what the minimum requirements are for you to ride for a living <https://newriderhub.net/riders/gig-economy/> #MotorcycleSafety

If you're a new rider take a look at the New Rider Hub – for advice on anything you need to know to help you start out safely on the road <https://newriderhub.net/> #MotorcycleSafety

Bike Maintenance: Whether you ride your motorcycle every day or you're getting ready to take to the road as the weather improves, maintenance of your bike is important to help you ride safely and legally.

P.O.W.D.E.R.S check can help keep you safe

Petrol – Check you have enough fuel for your journey to prevent breakdowns and putting yourself or others at risk.

Oil - Reservoirs have upper and lower marks, and the oil level is usually checkable via a window in the engine casing if not use a dipstick to check. Ensure your motorcycle parked upright on level ground. The correct oil level will prevent your engine seizing up.

Water – Check coolant levels keep them topped up, running out of coolant can cause your engine to overheat which will damage your motorcycle.

Damage/Drive chain – Check the motorcycle over for any signs of damage this includes checking for chain tension and lubrication and damage to sprocket teeth. If your bike has a belt rather than chain, you should check for signs of damage such as cracking and drying.

Electrics – Check all lights including brakes and indicators are all working. Check cables are secure, and they or termination points are not worn as this can lead to failure of systems such as clutch, brakes or lighting.

Rubber - Check your tyres once a week. Check tyre pressure when your tyres are cold and ensure they are set at the correct pressure as recommended by the manufacturer. Over inflated motorcycle tyres can affect road grip and under inflated can cause problems with braking and handling. Look for cracks, bulges or objects embedded in the tread. Make sure your tyres are wearing evenly, if they're not your tyre pressures may be incorrect, or wheel assembly may be incorrectly balanced. Ensure tyres are clean and free of oil and grease, wash them with the detergent if necessary. Check your tyre tread depth. It must be no less than 1mm around the circumference of the middle three quarters of the tyre. More information for motorcycle tyres can be found on the [tyresafe website](#) but if you have any concerns, you should get advice from a qualified professional or an approved fitting centre.

Self – Make sure you are fit to drive, not tired or under the influence of alcohol, drugs or any medicines which may affect your riding. Plan your route especially if you are taking your motorcycle out on a longer ride and make sure you take frequent breaks.

Whether you ride your motorcycle every day or you're getting ready to ride as the weather improves, maintaining your motorcycle is crucial to keeping you safe. The P.O.W.D.E.R.S check can help keep you safe #MotorcycleSafety

Motorcycles need legal, correctly inflated and maintained tyres to ride safely, braking and handling on motorcycles. Check your tyres for uneven wear, embedded objects, cracks, or bulging as part of your regular maintenance. For great advice take a look at <https://www.tyresafe.org/motorbike-tyre-safety/> #MotorcycleSafety

The Thinking Biker

The average driver spends less than a second looking each way at junctions, we really need them to recognise you and your bike clearly! What's seen needs to be recognised.

Being seen isn't just about dressing from head to foot in Day-Glo yellow or fitting more lights to your bike than a Mod's scooter has mirrors!

It's about considering, before the start of the journey, the environments you will be riding in. What may get you noticed in a busy city street may not have the same visibility enhancing qualities as the gear you may wear on late summers evening when scratching around on those idyllic country lanes.

Standing out has never been about merging in with the crowd, dress to be different to the background but also try to present solid blocks of colour so your silhouette is easily recognisable at a glance. Consider the environment, background, light conditions, and colour clash to background potential.

The thinking biker also considers positioning - consider the areas of the road that would be the best place so you can be seen. This is especially important on the approach to junctions. As new bikers we're constantly told to 'stay dominant!' As experienced bikers we must make full use of the available road space to give drivers the best possible chance of seeing us sooner. We need to be aware that size DOES matter and a motorcycles lack of it means we're easily obscured.

The Biker Down session covers how to can increase your visibility as a biker and how other vehicle drivers may struggle to see a motorbike due to dazzle camouflage, motion camouflage and looming. Tried and tested rider tactics covering road positioning for visibility are covered to help make riding safer for both bikes and other vehicles.

The first person at the scene of a motorbike collision is often another biker. Would you know what to do? Sign up to a free 3 hour #BikerDown session - it might just save a life #MotorcycleSafety

Many collisions happen when drivers don't see the motorcyclist. It's not always because they didn't look properly. It can be the optical illusions that can make it hard to see you on the road! A free #BikerDown session can give advice and riding techniques to help avoid a collision. #MotorcycleSafety

Biker Down is a safety session, designed by bikers to help bikers. Delivered by Fire and Rescue Services the 3 hour session is free. Sign up for advice, skills and techniques to help keep riders safe #BikerDown #MotorcycleSafety

Engagement Suggestions

A communication from Dan Quin has been sent to all Biker Down and Fire Bike teams with suggested approach for engagement.

Please use any motorcycle safety messaging developed locally and through RSGs to supplement information.

You do not have to run the Biker Down sessions during the campaign week – they can and should run throughout the year. But it's an opportunity to refresh and publicise the initiative.

Engage with groups in your area and retailers to spread messages and help publicise Biker Down. Could retailers display and hand out flyers for Biker Down?

If there are other suitable courses which would benefit bikers being delivered in your area, please feel free to publicise those too.

If you can use your Biker Down teams (and their bikes!) to create short videos using the messaging in the toolkit and from the Biker Down sessions to create content for social media.

Many people riding motorcycles may not think of themselves as bikers. Could you approach workplaces that use riders to share information about Biker Down?