



NATIONAL MOTORCYCLE DEALERS ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER MARCH 2020

## COVID-19 - a state of emergency for Customers & Bike Dealers

*This is a personal letter from Philip Youles, NMDA Vice Chair*

**Dear NMDA member,**

I am writing as the COVID-19 virus wreaks havoc through the UK economy, not to mention the lives that will undoubtedly be lost.

However, there is no point in us putting our heads in our hands and doing nothing. As deputy chair of the NMDA, I am writing to give you support and hope. There are a few things we should do and sooner rather than later.

Most of the major manufacturers are talking about re-ageing stock and let's hope they can do so. But we must be responsible for our own business and as sure as I am that everyone is trying, don't bank on it happening.

That brings me to banks. Speak to them and speak to them now. Many banks have a shadow limit on your account, so ask them if there is one on your account as you should know. Will they extend your overdraft limit? If you have a mortgage will they give you a capital repayment holiday? The same question needs to be asked about any loans you have.

Hold VAT, national insurance, corporation tax payments, and talk to them - they all have schemes for helping people pay even in the good times.

If you are in rented property, talk to your landlord as they might just settle for a reduced payment.

Stop your direct debit for your rates and negotiate with them afterwards – you are not going to get evicted today. Yes, you might be entitled to rates relief under the Chancellor's scheme but why wait for them to sort that out.

Look at every cost and where possible cut it. Even simple things like doing your own cleaning can save a few bob.

Above all, talk to your staff - you will have to consult over redundancy and reduced working hours, but these are exceptional times so take any necessary action quickly and above all with consideration, care and fairly. Don't forget your staff are possibly your biggest asset and when things pick up you will need them.

Look at your business and offer contactless purchases, and things like offering to push a bike outside for a customer to view. Contactless service drop-off and collection are also good options.

Now is a good time to review your online presence and business.

Above all, trade will return, so use the time wisely to prepare for when it does. Think of all that money customers have saved by not going on holiday or out to restaurants - this will inevitably be spent somewhere.

***Philip Youles, NMDA Vice Chair***

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### *Honda clinches top two best sellers – PCX 125 and Z 125 MA*

#### **ENCOURAGING 3% GROWTH IN MOTORCYCLE REGISTRATIONS FOR FEBRUARY**

February 2020 has delivered a strong 3% increase in motorcycle sales compared to last year, improving a typically quiet month. In total, 4,607 new motorcycles were registered in February, up from 4,473 in February 2019. In terms of year-to-date, the market has grown 2.9%, from 10,449 in 2019 to 10,753 in 2020 so far.

#### **NEW NMDA CHAIRMAN FROM 24 MARCH**

We are delighted to announce that Phillip Youles, Managing Director of Youles Motorcycles, will be taking over as the NMDA chairman, effective from 24 March. He will be taking over from Paul Barkshire, who has been chairman since September 2018, and we thank Paul for all his hard work promoting the industry.

#### **NMDA MEMBER MEETING ON TUESDAY 24 MARCH 2020 – CONFERENCE CALL**

Due to the ongoing coronavirus outbreak, the first member meeting of 2020 on Tuesday 24 March has been moved to a conference call. If you require more information, or would like to join in the call, please contact Rohima Alam ([rohima.alam@rmif.co.uk](mailto:rohima.alam@rmif.co.uk))

A reminder that the NMDA is your trade body and here to help and advise you on regulatory and operational issues that affect your business. However, if there are issues that we have not covered, or you have concerns about, please do contact us on the NMDA helpline 01788 538303.

Stephen Latham  
Head of NMDA

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## ENCOURAGING 3% GROWTH IN MOTORCYCLE REGISTRATIONS FOR FEBRUARY

Growth in terms of engine bands was seen across the board, with the biggest coming from 651-1000cc at 27.7%, and over 1000cc at 7.3%. Only the 126-650cc band saw a decline, from 1,078 in February 2019 to 955 in February 2020.

Naked motorcycles again showed encouraging growth with an increase of 14.4% to 1,389 units. Sport/tour bikes saw a big 88.2% change from 51 last year to 96 this year, with adventure sport and customs also growing. Drops were seen in the motorcycle scooter category, falling by -6.3%, alongside touring and trail/enduro.

The Honda PCX 125 was again the most registered model with 190 units, followed by the Honda Z 125 MA with 85, and the Lexmoto LXR 125 SY 125-10 in third with 51 sales.

Lexmoto retained its position as the third best-selling brand of February 2020, with Honda remaining at the top with 1,124 registrations, and Yamaha a distant second with 591. After a strong January, Royal Enfield dropped out of the top 10, with SYM entering at number 10 for the first time in many months. February is a month that often distorts the normal market trends and so it was with brands like Suzuki and Ducati were not amongst the top-ten brands in registration volumes.

Although motorcycle dealers have felt optimistic about market demand for this year, the recent negative effects of the coronavirus pandemic are bound to suppress market confidence for March.

We hope that the March plate change and orders in January and February being registered in March will be able to combat the potential impact of coronavirus on the market.

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## ELECTRIC SCOOTERS TO GET GREEN LIGHT TO GO ON BRITAIN'S PUBLIC ROADS



Electric scooters will be allowed on public roads for the first time under a Department for Transport proposal which will consult on the rules required to allow the new technology to operate safely, the government has announced.

The legalisation of e-scooters is just one proposal in a wider plan to enable a “transport revolution”, which also involves projects to trial medical deliveries to the Isle of Wight using autonomous drones, and a test of self-driving cars between Bristol and Bath.

But the scooters, which are already in widespread, if unlawful, use across the UK, will initially only be allowed in four “future transport zones”: Portsmouth and Southampton; the West of England Combined Authority (WECA); Derby and Nottingham; and the West Midlands.

The transport secretary, Grant Shapps, said the emerging technologies were “ripping up the rule book”.

He continued: “Our groundbreaking future of transport programme marks the biggest review of transport laws in a generation and will pave the way for exciting new transport technology to be tested, cementing the UK’s position as a world-leading innovator.

“This review will ensure we understand the potential impacts of a wide range of new transport types such as e-scooters, helping to properly inform any decisions on legalisation.”

In other countries, electronic scooters have become strongly associated with rental apps, such as Lime, Bird, and the Uber subsidiary Jump. However, the legal situation has prevented them from operating e-scooters in the UK, except for Bird, which found a loophole that allowed the company to trial a service that remained exclusively on private land in London’s Olympic Park.

Lime, which runs an electric bike rental scheme in the UK, welcomed the news. The company’s director of UK policy and government affairs, Alan Clarke, said: “We’re delighted that the government is exploring offering greener ways to travel.

“Shared electric scooters are a safe, emission-free, affordable and convenient way of getting around. They help take cars off the road, with around a quarter of e-scooter trips replacing a car journey, cutting congestion and reducing air pollution.”

The government needs to amend legislation before the pilot schemes can begin, however, meaning it will be several months until e-scooters are allowed on UK roads. Under current laws, powered transport must fall into one of three broad categories: cars and motorcycles, which require licences, MOT checks and registration; electric bikes, which are effectively treated as normal bicycles provided they are pedal-assist; and electric wheelchairs and mobility scooters, which have a special allowance to be used on pavements.

The trial will assess what new restrictions should be put in place, such as a minimum age for riders, speed limits, licensing, insurance and helmets.

Other topics include minimum design standards, whether they should be allowed in cycle lanes, and what powers local authorities should have to manage e-scooter hire firms.

The absence of legislation enabling legal use of e-scooters on public roads has not prevented them being sold in Britain, however. The YouTube star and TV presenter Emily Hartridge became the first person in the UK to be killed while riding an e-scooter when she was struck by a lorry in Battersea,

south London, in July last year, and the Metropolitan police stopped nearly 100 riders in London in a single week last summer.

Source: [The Guardian](#)

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### **NMDA MEMBER MEETING ON TUESDAY 24 MARCH 2020 – CONFERENCE CALL**

The NMDA meets every quarter to update and discuss the future direction of policy, plus review issues affecting dealers.

Due to the ongoing coronavirus outbreak, the first member meeting of 2020 on Tuesday 24 March has been moved to a conference call at 10:30am. If you require more information, or would like to join in the call, please contact Rohima Alam ([rohima.alam@rmif.co.uk](mailto:rohima.alam@rmif.co.uk))

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Philip has spent his entire professional life in the motorcycle industry, creating Youles Motorcycles after leaving school. He has grown the business into a thriving, two site operation in Blackburn and Manchester, and will be a strong and valuable voice for the NMDA to continue representing the motorcycle industry.

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### **NMDA DEALER ATTITUDE SURVEY SPRING 2020 – QUESTIONNAIRES HAVE BEEN SENT**

A reminder that the NMDA Dealer Attitude Survey for Spring 2020 should have landed through your letterbox or in your inbox. This is your chance to pass comment on the industry and current issues that affects you. All entries are handled confidentially to ensure the sentiment is averaged across the country to get a balanced picture of what really is affecting your business. If you haven't received your questionnaire, or for more information please contact Jordi Skilbeck – [jordi.skilbeck@rmif.co.uk](mailto:jordi.skilbeck@rmif.co.uk)

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### **WHAT YOU GET FOR YOUR MEMBERSHIP FEE**

- **Legal services** – Free legal advice from in-house lawyers
- **HR & Employment advise** – Resources for providing HR documentation
- **Trading Standards** – Guidance advice handling legislation
- **MOT Training** – Training centres to update and instruct MOT testers
- **Conciliation & Arbitration** – Resolving trade and consumer disputes
- **Government Lobbying** – Ensuring we are in consultation over law changes
- **FCA Advise** – Keeping up to date with F&I knowledge
- **DVLA Partner** – Working with DVLA to assist future projects
- **DVSA Advisor** – Advising on MOT test requirements
- **Utility packages** – Reviewing potential on saving energy costs
- **Banking & Credit Cards** – Possible savings on banking charges
- **Business advice** – On call to assist dealers with day-to-day issues
- **BDN EXPO Trade Show** – Attend the annual motorcycle trade show
- **Monthly Sales Report** – Review of monthly motorcycle registrations

- **Monthly Newsletter** – Updating on issues, trends & results affecting your business
- **Quarterly member meeting** – Reviewing issues affecting the industry
- **Bi-annual Attitude Survey** – Monitoring dealer/manufacture relationship
- **NMDA Website** – Easy way to check on updates

For more information, please contact Ed Buckley (Membership Manager) on 07919576306 mobile or email [ed.buckley@rmif.co.uk](mailto:ed.buckley@rmif.co.uk).