

Police urge motor cyclists to ride safely



Police

Police are urging motorcyclists to ride safely as bikers prepare to get back on the road for the summer season.

As the nights are getting longer, many recreational bikers will be taking their machines out of storage and getting back on the road, possibly for the first time in several months.

The Police Scotland Motorcycle Safety Campaign will promote safe and responsible motorcycling with a view to reducing the number of road traffic casualties and improving rider behaviour.

The campaign, which will run until the end of September, was launched today at the Grampian Transport Museum in Alford, Aberdeenshire by Police Scotland.

Superintendent Louise Blakelock, deputy head of road policing at Police Scotland, said, "Although motorcyclists make up only one per cent of the motoring public they account for around 20 per cent of the people killed in road crashes, often during cornering or overtaking manoeuvres. Motorcyclists are more vulnerable than other motorists – the smallest of errors, by rider or driver, can lead to very serious consequences, particularly when higher speeds are involved.

"Road safety is everyone's responsibility. I urge motorcyclists to follow our safety advice; by doing so they will avoid collisions. Other roads users must keep a careful look out for motorcyclists, particularly when turning into or out of junctions where many collisions occur. Drivers who actively apply the road safety message, 'Think Bike, Think Biker' will help keep our roads safer and save lives."

Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Infrastructure and Connectivity Michael Matheson said, "We have been successful in reducing accidents and casualties and Scotland now ranks amongst the safest countries in the world for road safety. In spite of this progress, more remains to be done and particularly for motorcyclists.

"Currently, motorcyclists represent around one per cent of traffic but account for around 20 per cent of fatalities, so

it is imperative we continue to work with partners and the motorcycle community itself to drive casualty figures down. While the longer evenings and better weather will be tempting many bikers to head out to enjoy Scotland's roads in the days and weeks ahead, it's very important they do so in a safe manner and ride to the conditions.

"I would strongly urge all motorcyclists – regardless of their experience levels – to visit the Road Safety Scotland 'Live Fast Die Old' Facebook page and also view the Breathtaking Roads campaign. It's easy to think you know it all, but these resources will provide helpful hints and tips to make sure everyone enjoys their day and gets home safely."

The campaign will be supported by the Area Safety Camera Units and will include deploying a specially equipped motorcycle which has all the functionality of a Safety Camera van, but with technology, including forward-facing speed cameras, packed into a highly-maneuvrable motorcycle.

The initiative links in with the Breathtaking Roads campaign, a series of short films showcasing Scotland's breathtaking motorcycle routes, encouraging bikers to share best practice riding tips, in a bid to help reduce fatalities by encouraging bikers to follow best practice when enjoying Scotland's roads.

The films capture the thrill of riding in Scotland and showcase breathtaking coastal rides, scenic forest roads and epic mountain journeys and carry the poignant message – "Be aware on breathtaking roads. Don't let them take your breath away for good". A dedicated website (livefastdieold.scot) and Facebook page (Live Fast, Die Old) highlight the greatest biking experiences, along with hints and tips from carefully selected local biking experts who have first-hand experience of Scotland's roads.

Breathtaking Roads ambassador Jayne Tollan, from Evolution Women's MCC, said, "Safety and best practice are at the heart

of our riding philosophy and our members are always looking for fresh guidance and advice for getting the most out of Scotland's roads. We're delighted to back the Breathtaking Roads campaign and we're looking forward to offering some top tips and advice from our community."

As part of the Motorcycle Safety campaign, Police Scotland will run a number of special 'Weekends of Action', with the first beginning this weekend when road policing officers will be out on the roads, engaging with bikers to ensure their machines have been properly maintained over the winter and are fit for use.

This will also include checks to ensure both MoT certificates are current and insurance cover remains valid. Where offences are committed, officers will enforce the law and will not hesitate to pull over anyone who is driving in an irresponsible, anti-social, erratic or illegal manner to keep road users as safe as possible.