



June 2026

Helmet & Goggles

The Newsletter of the Highland Classic Motorcycle Club

Find us on Facebook.

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Bert McKay's latest, this lovely Suzuki Hustler 250 was much admired at the recent Inverness Classic Vehicle Show and also drew favourable comments at the June club meeting.

Send your news and views to the Editor at: msdavidson50@gmail.com. The Editor reserves the right to edit the articles included. The views expressed herein are not necessarily those of the HCMC.

May was another busy motorcycling month with the club tiddlers run, Inverness BID, DGR and weekend away in addition to the normal end of month club run.

Much of these events has already been covered extensively in Facebook and in WhatsApp but there's a few pics here for the sake of completeness. The season has really got going now and June promises to be just as busy with the LNR on 14th and some members away on various tours around Europe.



At the Inverness Classic Vehicle Show.



There were some unusual classic cars at Inverness as well. Like this Hillman Minx Californian (above), Vauxhall Velox (above right) and Hillman Superminx (right).





The Tiddlers run at the top of Strathconon by Loch Beannacharain – also known locally as Scardroy with Scardroy House nearby to distinguish it from Loch Beannacharan in Glen Strathfarrar.



Some unusual machines were photographed and a new watering-hole discovered at Matilda's Garden Restaurant at Estate of Ord near Muir of Ord.

(Photos by Paul Marrs)



The Distinguished Gentleman's Ride took place again this year at Inverness on 17th May starting from Inverness Biker Gear. 39 bikes took part of which around 12 were club members. Some stylish characters turned out for the event.

The HCMC Team raised £5771 the highest in Scotland says Dode, the captain of the HCMC team.

One of the team, Andy Howe was in York and took part there. He has given the newsletter a few words and pictures of his experience



After 2 days of heavy showers, Sunday 17th May was dry and sunny, but I soon learnt riding the 9 miles from Pocklington to A1 Moto Services Ltd (who are the York Triumph dealer), in my tweeds that the Highland cold air had followed me down.

Arriving at A1 before 10am there was already around 50 bikes all lined up and by the time the ride briefing took place it had swelled to around 200 machines ridden by Gentlefolk.

Due to the amount of machines involved, North Yorkshire Police escorted the ride, closing junctions to other traffic allowing the ride to snake around the ancient City of York, as one seamless stream of Gentlefolk. Unlike Inverness, the streets were lined with spectators with children waving at every rider that passed.

The halfway stop was at the Clifton Tower which is the largest surviving remnant of York Castle for coffee and socialising.

At the end of the stop is where my day sadly ended. First press of the starter button resulted in the starter motor spinning but not engaging and gradually reducing to just a click and even with the help of some spectators and a hill my Speed Triple wouldn't bump into life.

Like a sad damsel in distress I was rescued by the AA with a jump start from a booster pack and escorted to Halfords to have a new battery fitted for my ride back to Pocklington.

Next year I'll need to return to York and actually complete the DGR ride



A lot of bikes in York for the DGR in a lovely setting. And a sad end to Andy's day.

The entertainment at the May club meeting was a talk on certain aspects of road safety design by Ross Bartlett, Road Safety Officer in the Highland Council area. This was an interesting talk with a lot of information presented. Included here are a number of what I hope are the main points of the presentation.

Road Safety Teams Role

- Collision statistics analysis
- Traffic Regulation Orders
- Active travel and safer routes to school schemes
- Road safety education
- Road safety advice to our area roads and transport planning teams

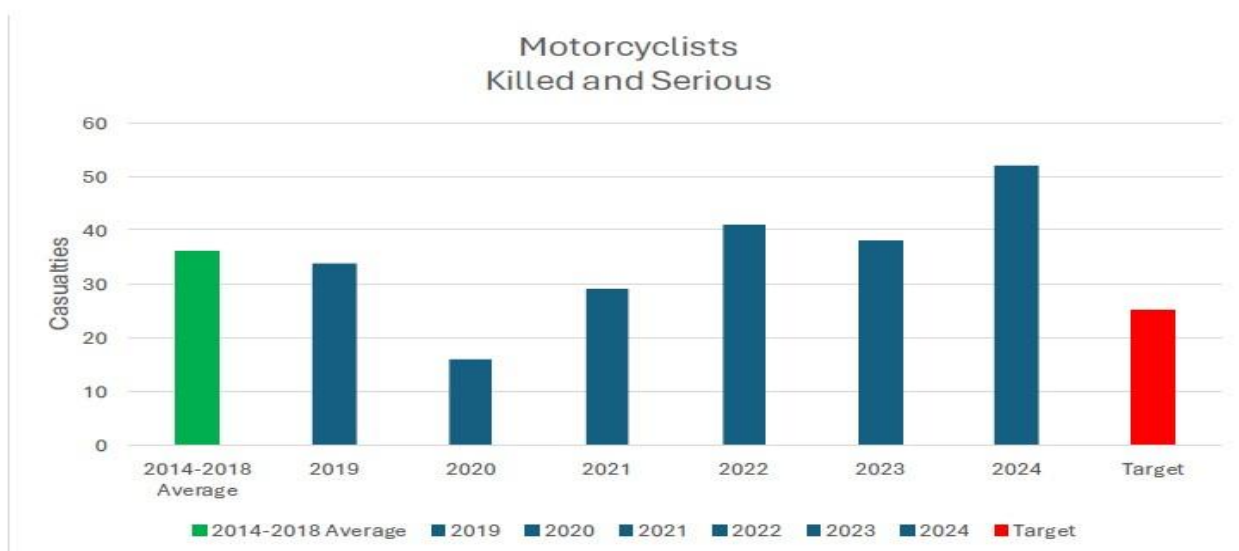
Highland Council Area



Highland Council is Scotland largest local authority by area

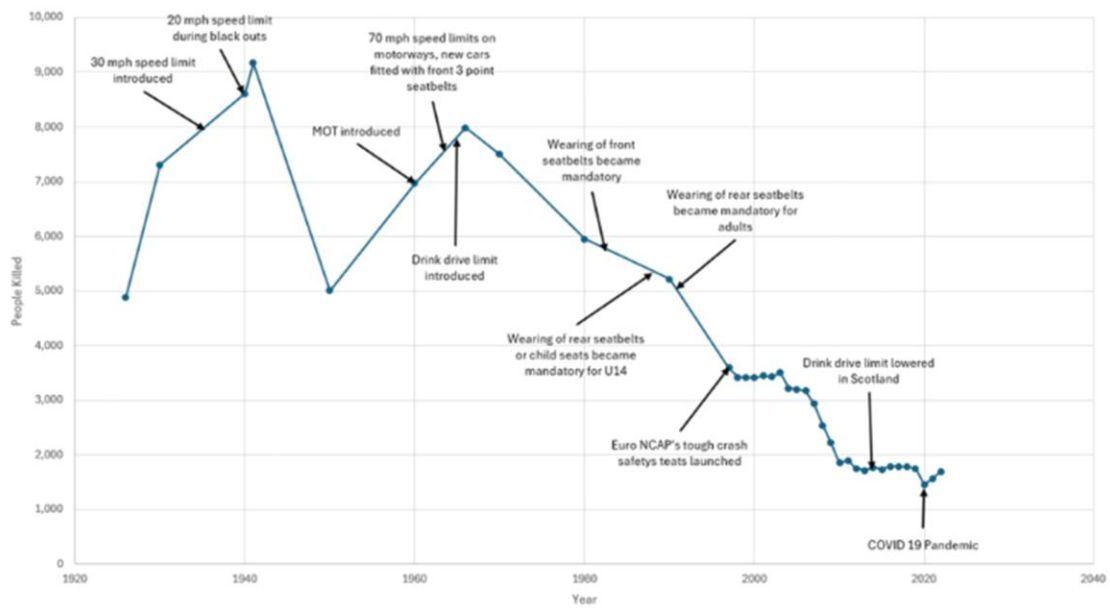
- 1.5 times the size of Wales
- The same size a Belgium
- 7680 km of adopted road

Key Targets



There were several Key Targets presented for road accident casualties relating to all road users. The diagram above shows the target for motorcyclists

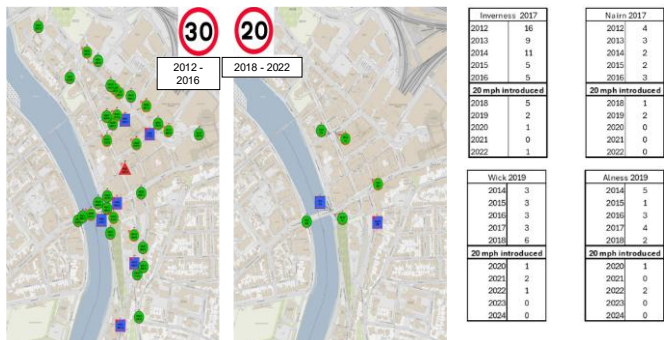
Trend in People Killed



What are we doing?

The Road Safety Improvement Fund is there to support local authorities to reduce casualties and risk on the road network. Eg Struie (pictured right).

20 mph Collision Reduction



December 2016, pre the introduction of the 20 mph is shown above left. There were 19 collisions in total, consisting of 1 fatal, 2 serious and 16 slight - within these 17 collisions there were 8 pedestrians and 3 cyclists.

The collision data for the 4 year period post implementation, ending Dec 2021 is shown on the right. This consists of 4 slight collisions, 2 of whom were pedestrians. This is a 79% reduction in the number of injury collisions in the City Centre. Taking into account that 2 years of the post data were in the pandemic, we have compared this to the Highland wide reduction in collisions over the same 4 year period which for the Council area was 32% so the Inverness scheme is showing a 50% reduction over and above this average.

Safer Roads



Looking at this at a local level using Inverness City Centre as an example.

The permanent 20 mph speed limit went live in Inverness City Centre on 14th July 2017.

The collision data for the 4 year period, ending

Right

Collisions are car drivers' fault? - 42% don't have cars involved

Roads are terrible. – 3: this doesn't include debris on the road or oil diesel

Nature of collisions

42% are single vehicle motorcycle collisions with speed limit greater than 50 mph

Only 3 collisions with poor/defective road surface as a factor

46% Left hand bends

25% Right hand bends

Motorcyclists

	Motorcycle							All traffic				
	Fatal		Serious		Slight		Total	Fatal	Serious	Slight	Total	
Total	10	12%	78	15%	33	6%	121	10%	86	517	553	1,156
U	0	0%	14	18%	10	11%	24	14%	7	77	89	173
A832	0	0%	13	45%	0	0%	13	26%	2	29	19	50
A836	8	80%	2	18%	1	8%	11	33%	10	11	12	33
A894	0	0%	5	100%	4	87%	9	82%	0	5	6	11
A939	0	0%	7	58%	2	29%	9	45%	1	12	7	20
A838	0	0%	5	100%	2	87%	7	78%	1	5	3	9

Left - Due to the number of motor cyclist collisions some analysis was carried out and highlighted some of our routes with a large over representation.
(The figures highlighted in red are percentages of the Total Traffic columns on the right of the diagram).

Connected Vehicle Data



Right – this diagram may not be very clear but it attempts to illustrate the sources of information on traffic behaviour that is used in road safety analyses. The map shows the bridge over the river Findhorn at Logie on the A939 below Ferness. Various symbols relate to traffic behaviour, eg braking in this case. Data is purchased from agencies such as Google and systems embedded in modern cars.



Ross was at pains to emphasise that his department is not responsible for road maintenance but he did offer the following information.

- Road defects can be reported on the council's website highland.gov.uk/report
- For claims for damage to vehicles the phone number is 01349 886601.

Surface dressing cost effectively adds 5 – 10 years of life to the road surface. It fills microcracks. Loose chippings are deliberately left for a short period for bedding in before the remainder are swept off.

Surface Dressing



Also in May was the weekend away and 20 bikes, some with passengers, went to Oban. Pictured below are some of those who arrived safely. Hopefully in the near future there might be a story for the newsletter from one of those who was there!



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