

Newsletter

March 2023



Dear People,

The NEFOM recently had a personal consultation with Minister Harbers of Infrastructure and Water Management. It has become clear that Minister Harbers will not take any action to tackle the noise nuisance caused by motorcycles. As far as he is concerned, the ball is in the municipality's court. The minister is also of the opinion that the municipalities have sufficient resources to tackle the nuisance, namely through "Entry bans". (see below)

At the moment, there are already entry bans for motorcycles in the following places:

- Lopik (dike road)
- The Mije (road along river)
- Zuiderdijk, Venhuizen (dike road)
- Epenerbaan, Vaals (Drielandenpunt)

Discussions arise with neighboring municipalities, who are not happy that the nuisance is now coming to them.

The NEFOM advises its resident groups to carry out Pilots together with the municipality. This concerns a temporary ban on the entry of motorbicycles, accompanied by research into the consequences of this measure.

The aim is to investigate the consequences of the entry ban. This can be thought of

- Does it give the desired peace and improvement of the environment for the residents?
- What is the effect on the hospitality industry, is there a loss of business?
- Will the nuisance be moved? Will there be additional complaints? Is there a "waterbed effect"?

Furthermore, the aim is to send a clear signal, both to the nuisance offenders "The measure is full", and also to the residents, namely that their complaints are taken seriously.

We emphasise once again that after reviewing all possible alternatives – at least in the short term – we no longer see any other options to reduce the nuisance.

The NEFOM emphasizes that its members do not hate motorcycles or motorcyclists, but rather the enormous noise pollution of these road users.

Best regards

Tony Hardenberg,
Chairman NEFOM

On behalf of the NEFOM board

NEFOM in consultation with Minister Harbers

On 26 January 2023, the NEFOM board spoke with Minister Harbers (Infrastructure and Water Management) about the noise pollution of motor vehicles and what can be done about it .

The noise pollution is caused by more than 50% of motorcycles (because that's what we focus on now). We recognize the following groups:

1. Wheel turners, a small group who knowingly buy illegal exhausts to make noise. This is illegal, sale and use of these substances must be addressed by police. So maintain,
2. Behavior, a large group of drivers abuse the gas trade while stationary or while driving. Influencing behaviour
3. Unconsciously, a large group consists of riders who do not consciously want to make noise, but have a motorcycle that is too loud, which fully meets the inspection requirements. In fact, they cause the greatest inconvenience, because they often drive in large groups / large quantities. So shut down



Minister Harbers with the NEFOM board: fltr. Marcel Wendrich, Tony Hardenberg and Kees van Hooft

NEFOM Conclusion

1. The Minister is paying attention to the problem, but needs time to realize it. He has undertaken to pay attention to:
 - a. Introduction of MOT for motorcycles in the Netherlands
 - b. Extension of MOT with "noise emission standards"
 - c. European focus on lowering noise emission standards for motor vehicles
 - d. Put noise pollution on the agenda of the Association of Dutch Municipalities (VNG) and the Inter Provincial Consultation (IPO)
 - e. Consultation with Minister of Justice to simplify enforcement.
2. In the short term, there will therefore be no solution.
3. Enforcement will only provide relief if the use of ANPR cameras linked to the vehicle registration register is possible on municipal and provincial roads and violation of the entry ban via the vehicle registration register leads to a fine, because the rules are too limited and there is no enforcement capacity available.
4. Entry bans are the only solution for now.

What to do?

The NEFOM advises the residents' groups to continue discussions with their municipality, with the request to impose entry bans for a certain period of time for the areas where nuisance takes place. As a result, they meet their legal obligation to protect their citizens against sickening noise nuisance and they give a signal to the noisemakers that they are no longer welcome and have to adapt their vehicles. Municipalities have the legal option to close areas to certain categories of traffic. This can be prepared by persuading the municipality to start a pilot and thus measure the effects of a closure. Such a pilot is quick, easy and cheap to organize and provides clarity where else the discussion would be conducted on the basis of assumptions. Furthermore, such a pilot is necessary in a legal sense, because if an appeal is lodged against a final decision to conclude (motorcycle clubs), a judge will ask for such a substantiation. If there isn't, you run the risk of a judge reversing the decision (or words to the same effect).

This means that we would probably do better to focus on Dutch regulations: advocating more entry bans for motorcycles and putting pressure on the possibilities through enforcement (preferably via ANPR cameras). Nevertheless, each residents' group will then have to take a number of steps in its municipality, namely:

- a. pressure on the municipality by the residents' group in the municipality in question to declare a driving ban for a certain road (in line with the Lopik case) (for example for a year).
Benefits could be
 1. Lower threshold for municipality
 2. Gemeentes can see what it means for: (pilot)
 - a. hospitality industry, losing business
 - b. Moving the nuisance
 - c. the peace and health of the residents
 3. Het gives a clear signal to the nuisance offenders, "The measure is full"
 4. The municipality meets the residents (it's about time)
- b. in the absence of a decision by the municipality: action through demonstrations on certain weekends (see annex "Right to demonstrate")
- c. The last resort is to litigate against the municipality, we are in consultation with experts on how best to tackle this, but hope that it will not be necessary.

The NEFOM helps resident groups with advice and "best practices" in approaching the municipalities, and motivating them to take measures.

For clarification, the NEFOM shows some film fragments, in which it becomes clear what the noise pollution of motorcycles consists of. It is a selection from the many videos that have been sent to the NEFOM by residents:

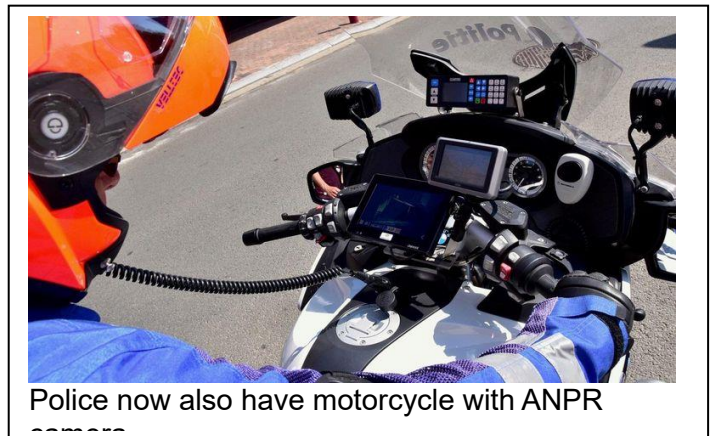
1. Engine nuisance in [the coastal](#)
2. Noise pollution [along a dike](#)
3. Noise pollution [on the countryside](#)
4. Noise pollution [in a village](#)
5. Engine nuisance [Bloemendaal](#)

Enforce motorcycle entry bans with ANPR cameras

ANPR (Automatic Number Plate Recognition)

How does ANPR actually work?

The cameras take pictures of license plates. These are read by special software and compared with license plates in the police database. It has lists of license plates of vehicles that are wanted by the police for one reason or another. This concerns, for example, car owners who still have a prison sentence open or still have to pay a large fine. Stolen cars are also in the database.



Police now also have motorcycle with ANPR



The moment a vehicle is recognized by an ANPR camera, the police receive a notification. This happens about 3000 times a day. At the control room where the alerts come in, it is determined whether it is necessary to immediately send someone there. If the car of someone who is missing drives by, action is taken immediately. If it concerns someone who still has to pay a fine, that can still wait.

(Drievic) complaint at College of Human Rights

In recent years, NEFOM has approached the central government several times with the request to take measures against greenhouse gas emissions and (noise) nuisance from motorcycles in the context of the living environment and the environment.

**COLLEGE VOOR
DE RECHTEN
VAN DE MENS**

To date, the central government has not complied with our requests, although the central government has taken certain measures, but pursues a discriminatory policy, in violation of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR).

In this connection, we have submitted three complaints of discrimination for assessment. We act as an advocate for more than 100 resident groups. These resident groups are spread throughout the Netherlands and are all listed on our site (www.nefom.nl).

See our letter to the College [here](#)

Without measures, the innocent suffer

Some say noise pollution is a personal thing, it's subjective. That is also true, some suffer more than others. But we're talking about what people experience; That it's personal doesn't matter, that doesn't make the problem any less.

Some say personal freedom is at stake. We believe that freedom is never unlimited, the limit of your freedom lies where you touch the freedom and vulnerability of others.

Some say that the solution to noise pollution lies in better legislation, in stricter decibel standards. That will undoubtedly help, but it will be a long road. Good for future generations, we live now.

Some say lawbreakers should be dealt with and fined. That is the way it is, but enforcement is not a simple matter and may even be impossible.

Some say that when roads are closed, the good will suffer from the bad. That is true, but without measures the innocent suffer.

Some say that other road users also cause nuisance. Unfortunately, they are right, but if you remove nuisance from touring motorcyclists, it makes a huge difference.

Some say that the Lekdijk is a magnet for motorcyclists; That's where you have to intervene. Unfortunately, that kite does not go up due to lack of cooperation; even an experiment for research goes too far for our neighbors of Wijk bij Duurstede.

Some say that most motorcyclists are of good will; You have to provide information, work on awareness. Our problem is not because of the individual motorcyclist. We can't repeat it enough- our problem is caused by the number of motorcyclists, it's the large numbers that do it 'em !

Ladies and gentlemen of the City Council,

Soon the motorcycle season will start again. This means that again more and more motorcycles will drive through our village with a lot of noise. And to be clear; really not only in good weather.

We get a lot of reports about the nuisance. We are shocked by the reactions, they bear witness to a lot of human suffering. It is a bitter observation that so many are affected in their privacy by the purges of passers-by.

Fortunately, it's now up to you, you can make a difference. Then do it.



Milestone in the fight against engine nuisance in Amerongen

On 9 February, six of the eight parties of the Utrechtse Heuvelrug city council voted in favour of closing the old village of Amerongen for motorbikes on weekends and public holidays. A motion by D66, Open, BVH Lokaal, CU and PvdD called on the college to take measures to this end, also received support from the CDA. The SGP had also wanted to vote in favour, but wanted to see a trial period before the closure in the motion. Only the VVD was 'mordicus' opposed. This means that 18 of the 29 members voted in favour, including the absent councillors even 22 out of 29 (75 percent). The college will now draw up a traffic decision and submit it to the council in the second quarter. Alderman Haaxma says he wants to do this carefully in view of possible legal objections from the motorcycle world. It may come up with a proposal with different variants.

The Amerongen Motor Nuisance Working Group is pleased that the vast majority of the council has taken the complaints from Amerongen seriously. In recent years, we have made efforts with the [support of hundreds of Amerongers](#) who responded to the flyer that we distributed two years ago in the village and the [Lekdijk](#). Dozens of volunteers helped count motorcycles and distribute earplugs and flyers.

For a long time we hoped that the municipalities of Wijk bij Duurstede and Utrechtse Heuvelrug (UH) would come together to a weekend closure of the Lekdijk for motorcycles. The College of Wijk took a year to create clarity. A motion in the District Council on January 31st. who called on the college to talk to Utrechtse Heuvelrug was rejected by a small majority. When it was established that cooperation with Wijk was not possible, it became clear that our municipality had to take measures independently, which led to UH's council decision this week.

This means that motorcyclists can continue to ride on the Lekdijk for the time being, but Amerongen cannot enter at the weekend. This is a setback for the residents on the Lekdijk, as well as for the many cyclists and other recreationists who want to enjoy the river landscape and nature reserves without a wall of engine noise. Perhaps a future district parliament will pay more attention to the neighbors and quiet recreationists than the turnover of its own catering industry. The Natura2000 sites along the dike would benefit.

In a [letter to the college](#) dated 4 February, we asked that when drawing up a traffic decision, we also look at the Koenestraat/Bergweg and surrounding streets, where there is considerable nuisance from motorcycles and other sources. We will also advocate a flexible approach to the weekend closure. If it turns out that the engine would move to other days, a longer closure is required. It goes without saying that Amerong motorcyclists should be granted an exemption.

Now that the new motorcycle season is approaching, it is important to continue to file complaints in case of nuisance with the municipality. These will help the municipality to substantiate a traffic decision that stands up to a judge. The jurisprudence of government measures against engine nuisance has increased considerably in recent years. In 2019, the municipality of Lopik was successively ruled in favour by the Central Netherlands District Court and the Council of State for the legality of the closure of a piece of Lekdijk after many complaints from residents. In November last. the [court in Alkmaar rejected](#) an appeal by a motorcycle club against the closure of the Zuiderdijk between Hoorn and Enkhuizen. In the municipality of Bodegraven, where the rural area [De Meije has been closed to motorcycles](#) since 2020, another case is at play. The lesson from this is that complaints from residents help to substantiate traffic decisions of road authorities. This week an important step has been taken to make Amerongen quieter on weekends and holidays. Now it is a question of realising the intentions.

HEUVELRUG: VEILIGE EN STILLE LEKDIJK

AMERONGEN • Vier raadsfracties in de gemeente Utrechtse Heuvelrug dragen het college van b en w op met een plan te komen waarin opties staan hoe de Lekdijk zowel verkeersveiliger kan worden gemaakt als ook de motoroverlast een halt toe wordt geroepen.

Daarnaast willen de partijen BHV Lokaal, Open, D66 en Christen-Unie, samen goed voor 16 van de 29 zetels in de raad, dat de gemeente in overleg gaat met de gemeente Wijk bij Duurstede om nog voor de zomer 2023 een pilot te starten voor de tijdelijk afsluiting voor motoren. Indien blijkt dat dit overleg met deze buur-



De Lekdijk bij Amerongen.
FOTO MENNO BAUSCH

gemeente niet haalbaar is, moet Utrechtse Heuvelrug zelf maatregelen nemen om de motoroverlast in Amerongen tegen te gaan door voorbereidingen te treffen voor een verkeersbesluit om het oude dorp van af te sluiten voor doorgaand motorverkeer.

COUNTERPROPOSAL CLOSURE LEKDIJK AMERONGEN FOR MOTORCYCLISTS

14 Feb 2023 Press releases Amerongen will be closed to motorcyclists, various media reported last week. However, that news is too premature, the MAG hopes.

However, according to the Motorcyclists Action G call, it is so "that the large number of motorcyclists in the old village of Amerongen apparently requires measures". After a motion adopted by 24 of the 29 city council members of Utrechtse Heuvelrug to investigate - among other things - the possibilities of a closure, MAG and KNMV entered into discussions with alderman Haaxma and traffic advisor Van der Vegt of the municipality, with the message below as a result. Press release MAG: Amerongen not locked: motorcyclists make counteroffer

The old village of Amerongen is located at the eastern end of the popular Lekdijk. Motorcyclists who include that part of the dike in their route and want to stay above the river will all get through it. In the narrow streets, this quantity can cause nuisance, mag and KNMV also agree. However, a total closure of the old village, in which all motorcyclists are forced to approach or leave this part of the Lekdijk via the ferry south of Amerongen, is unacceptable. Motorcyclists now use three roads through the village. MAG and KNMV have proposed to keep the Kersweg, the shortest of those three roads, open to motorcyclists. The Kersweg, which runs on the west side under the old village, is now a bicycle street where cars with partly one-way traffic are guests. This road should become a two-way street for motorcyclists and cyclists. To compensate, there will be a driving ban for cars, of course with an exception for residents. Motorcyclists from or in an eastern and southern direction can choose to take the ferry in this situation. The number of motorcyclists driving through the village is thus reduced. The alderman submits the proposal of MAG and KNMV to the city council. MAG policy officer Vera de Bruijn: "If the city council does not accept our proposal and wants to permanently lock Amerongen for motorcyclists in the weekends, we will of course not leave it at that. The route via the ferry may be an option for some motorcyclists, but for at least as large a part it is absolutely not."

[More motorcyclists on Betuwse dikes when Amerongen goes into lockdown: 'Problems they transfer to us'](#)

More motorcyclists on the Betuwse dikes? It threatens to happen if the noisy vehicles are no longer allowed to drive through Amerongen. Buren politicians certainly do not like it.

Alderman Pieter Neven is also not happy with the votes that are being held in the city council of Utrechtse Heuvelrug to ban the large numbers of motorcyclists from Amerongen. They would be made aware of the possibility of taking the ferry to Eck en Wiel, and then touring further over the Betuwse dikes. Many inhabitants of Betuwen are not waiting for (even) more motorcyclists on the dikes.

Lolletje for motorcyclists

Traffic alderman Anouk Haaxma of Utrechtse Heuvelrug wants to seriously investigate the option of sending motorcyclists coming from Wijk bij Duurstede via the ferry. They would then no longer be allowed to drive into Amerongen. "Motorcyclists can still ride over the Lekdijk. Then they still have fun and residents of Amerongen are not a nuisance," says Haaxma.



Sales of motorcycles at the highest level in 15 years: 'New hobby during corona'

Since the corona pandemic, the number of motorcyclists in our country has grown considerably. Last year, more than 15,000 motorcycles were sold, which is the highest number since 2008, according to trade association Bovag. At the end of January, there were almost 795,000 motorcycles in the Netherlands and for the first time there are more than 1.5 million motorcycle licenses.

Nuisance

Not everyone is happy with the growing number of motorcyclists. In South Limburg and in the central Netherlands, many residents denounce the large number of motorcycles during sunny weekends. "Then hundreds of motorcycles drive through our village of Amerongen, with a lot of noise and stench," says Joris Versteeg of the Amerongen Motor Nuisance Working Group.

"They come here from two sides: from the Lekdijk with its many bends and the road over the Amerongse Berg. We are right in between. After years of protests, the city council recently asked b&w to do something about this. That's what they're working on now." The working group hopes that the old village will be closed to motorcycles.

"Look, we're not against motorcyclists. It's about the large numbers. Every year it gets busier. It's not just here. Motorcycle clubs fear a snowball effect. Lopik was the first municipality with a ban, Amerongen may become the second. And that process will continue until the motorcycle world realizes that they are throwing in their own glasses," says Versteeg.



The noisenuisance caused by traffic can only be solved regionally.

But what if even two neighboring municipalities don't agree? —

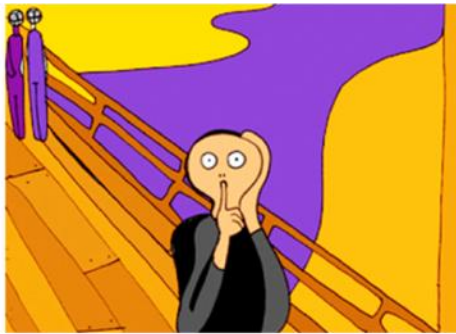
Diana Scriechen

7 February 2023 Limburgs Dagblad

Gulpen/Margraten - The touristtraffic nuisance in South Limburg can only be solved on a regional scale. But how do you do that if even two neighboring municipalities can't agree?

Eijsden-Margraten marches at a brisk marching pace. "We have to get to work," emphasizes Mayor Sjraar Cox, "otherwise nothing will ever happen." But the neighbouring municipality of Gulpen-Wittem hesitates. There they are engaged in a kind of procession of Echternach: two steps forward, one back. No reason for Cox to take his foot off the accelerator: "We can't keep waiting for them to be thought out in Gulpen-Wittem."

Division Division trumps, then. Again. While it is precisely this complicated traffic problem that cries out for a common vision. After all, closing a road here has irrevocable consequences for a village or hamlet elsewhere. Even the two of them, Eijsden-Margraten and Gulpen-Wittem will not be able to find a solution, Cox fears: he only sees salvation in a collaboration with Vaals, Valkenburg, Voerendaal, Simpelveld and perhaps even Maastricht.



Noise pollution in Europe

Residents' groups from Germany, France, Belgium, Luxembourg and the Netherlands have united to form SOS Europe. SOS in this case stands for **Save Our Silence**.

WAS HILFT GEGEN LÄRMEN UND RASEN?

German website against noise pollution by motorcycles

Bundesverband gegen Motorrad Lärm
In Kooperation mit Deutsche Umwelthilfe

BUNDESVERBAND GEGEN MOTORRADLÄRM RECHTLICHES AKTUELLES KONTAKT

WAS HILFT GEGEN LÄRMEN UND RASEN?

Exzessiver Auspuff-„Sound“ von Motorrädern raubt Anwohner*innen die Lebensqualität.
Was alle Seiten dagegen tun können.

WAS KÖNNEN BIKER*INNEN TUN? WAS KÖNNEN ANWOHNER*INNEN TUN? WAS KÖNNEN BEHÖRDEN TUN? HOTSPOT MELDEN

Excessive exhaust noise from motorcycles robs residents of their quality of life.

- What all parties can do about it.
- What can motorcyclists do?
- What can residents do?
- What can authorities do?

Report hotspot

For some it is "sound", for others a constant ordeal.

It has been proven that noise is dangerous to health. The legislature has acknowledged this. According to § 49 StVZO, "motor vehicles [...] such that the noise level does not exceed the level that is unavoidable according to the current state of the art."

There are also relatively quiet and acoustically inconspicuous motorcycles (= state of the art). So why are other motorcycles still so unspeakably loud?

There are three typical ways motorcycles are made louder "beyond the inevitable level":

1. Factory sound
2. Sound as an accessory
3. Noise due to manipulation

Allowed too loud – ex works

The industry develops and sells motorbikes that are louder than necessary ex works. Because industry dominates the UNECE standardization bodies as an interested party, it determines how these standards are written. At the same time, the loopholes are built into this sound cartel. At the end, a new standard and (on paper) quieter vehicles are presented. Technical tricks such as exhaust valves then ensure that the vehicles are quiet at the measuring point according to the standards. Away from the measuring point, a motorcycle manipulated in this way is factory fast as loud as 100 normal copies.

Studies by the Baden-Württemberg state government in 2012 showed that noise levels on paper and in real business do not have much to do with each other.

