



**DEVON
ADVANCED
MOTORCYCLISTS**



NEWSLETTER 87 Oct - Dec 2026







Chairman's Chatter - October 2026

Les Mosco

I write this the day after our September Committee meeting. It was a pleasure to welcome Chris Uzzell as our new Secretary after he offered to fill the role and was formally co-opted by the Trustees. My - and I'm sure all of DAM members' - thanks to him for stepping up and especially to Catherine McKinley for her years of excellent service as Secretary, she remains on the Committee and active as Magazine Editor so hasn't fully escaped! We also welcomed Richard Watson whose day-to-day IT job makes him well suited to becoming our overall IT manager. Over time he will simplify our somewhat confusing IT systems, overlaps, duplications etc. There's a lot to do there so please be patient but hopefully you don't notice the paddling beneath the surface that's currently needed to keep it working reasonably well.

The Committee heard that we continue with strong finances and steady membership. Sadly, only very slow growth despite the 80-100 we typically train each year to Advanced level, many drop out of DAM soon after, but we've done our job in making them better and safer riders.

I also write this as I start to get my bike ready for the 18th -20th September Wales trip, one of my highlights in DAM's calendar of events. Just like you (of course!) I've been doing POWDDERSS regularly, so I know all those fluids, tyre pressures and the rest are fine. But after the hot dry summer of riding, it's time to clean away the dead insects and maybe add a bit of polish. By the time you read this Wales will have come and gone and my bike has probably been dirtied by Welsh rain. But it and I will have bonded yet a bit more as well as increasing friendships with fellow DAM members. And that's what DAM's all about; developing better safer riders and having fun and camaraderie through Group activities and rides. If you don't already, come and join us at more events, Group Rides or whatever. There's plenty to choose from, we try to be friendly and approachable so come share our joint passion for motorbiking or let us know what new and different things we should be doing to interest you.

Regards, Les Mosco

Chair



EDITORIAL

Catherine McKinley

Hello to all of you who are choosing to read this edition of the DAM magazine. No doubt we are all saying the same thing, and maybe our chairman has mentioned it, too – boy! have we had fine biking weather this summer. Plenty of opportunity to get out on the superb roads of Devon (and further afield) to practice our rider skills and our bike's or bikes' (for those of you who own more than one machine and appreciate grammar) capabilities. If you haven't yet sent me motorcycle-related stories of where you have been and what you have done, please do so because we always need articles for the colder months – magazine@devonadvanced.com. Remember,

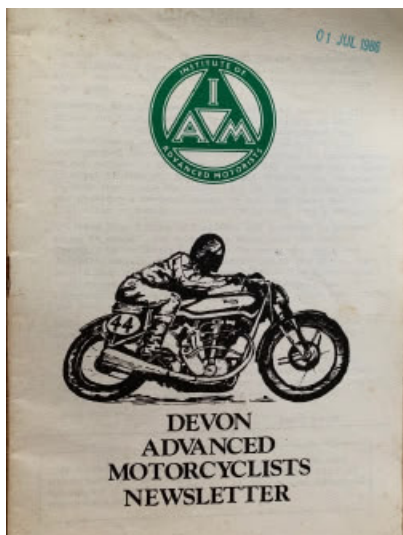
if sending photos, they need to be high resolution and written articles in font Calibri 12. I'm happy to spell check.

Talking of the colder weather returning, very probably along with some rain, after such a long time of dry weather, let's all be aware of the impact this change will make to the roads we ride on.

I hope I'm not teaching my grandmother to suck eggs, but for those of you new to motorcycling here's a bit of science. Roads become very slippery when it rains after a long, dry spell because water mixes with the accumulated surface grime and softens the road's tar binder. Vehicles drop engine oil, fuel, brake dust and rubber onto the tarmac every day. During prolonged periods of hot weather, the bitumen in asphalt roads becomes more mobile and can sometimes 'bleed' through to the surface (credit for the wording goes to the Road Surface Treatments Association). Light rain does not wash this debris away, right away. Instead, it mixes with the dry residue to form a slick, slippery layer. So just be aware of these facts and take care to ensure your machine and tyres are well maintained and continue to ride and think as an advanced motorcyclist. Remember - IPSGA and OAP – it's amazing how useful those pesky acronyms can be! Anyone who is not aware of their meaning please sign yourself up for some refresher, advanced rider training with one of our friendly Observers.

Thanks to Rodney Raynor for the front cover picture taken during his whistle stop tour to the Swiss Alps earlier this year – his article is included in this magazine and shows what can be achieved if you are prepared to put in the time and miles.





Delving into the DAM magazine archives

For those of you who have read about DAM's history, you will know the group's first inaugural meeting was on 16 April 1982. DAM started to produce a magazine early on. This article comes from a magazine dated 1 July 1986 – 40 years old, and it makes for an interesting read.

The early magazines show what went on all those years ago still go on today – I suppose if it's working, don't break it? There were details about a recent First Aid- focussed rider development evening; up-coming events, which

included bi-monthly ride outs to such far flung places as Newquay and the Sammy Miller Museum; pictures of members' motorcycles; opportunities to purchase DAM branded merchandise; and the list of committee members.

One article, called 'Fact File', made particularly fascinating reading and shows that some things have changed. It was a list of members' personal details including their name, address and occupation, but also their date of birth, height (?), weight (??) and place of birth! I suppose the need to adhere to GDPR back then wasn't an issue. Members' favourite motorcycles included were the Suzuki's 1000cc Katana and Yamaha's FZ600.

Below, is a transcript of an article titled 'Roadcraft', which outlines the writer's thoughts on 'making progress' and what it looked like to him. Remember, this was written 40 years ago and whether you agree or disagree with their perspective, it is a subject which is still discussed at length today, between members. It includes reference to John Truelove, one of the founding members of DAM.

Satisfactory Progress but could do better?

On the trip I made to Birmingham with John Truelove.....I chose to follow his lead for two reasons: firstly, because with the Group Examiner following me, I would not be able to avoid the sense of being judged (and why not of course?) which would not allow me to relax into the ride and: secondly, to observe the technique of a Police Class 1 Certificate holder for my own education. The most striking point that I observed was John's superior judgement of overtaking opportunities on the A roads through Evesham and Stratford-upon-Avon to Birmingham. I had to resist any urge to overtake vehicles against my better judgement in order to keep pace with John and, so as not to impede his progress too greatly, I was forced to call upon my Suzuki's performance to haul back the deficit. This set me thinking whether I was failing to 'maintain good progress' as is required of the Advanced Rider. I regard myself

as a cautious rider and when sizing up a passing opportunity prefer to take a (relatively) long look at it rather than make an instant decision so as to weigh up the closing speed of oncoming traffic, what the vehicle in front may do, and any potential hazards such as caning road surfaces, side roads ahead etc. As I form an opinion of the situation the distance available to me is, of course, reducing all the while so I cannot afford to consider for too long before the chance is lost. I regularly curse myself for missing what I eventually decided was a safe bet!

The question I ask is whether this sensible caution.....could be viewed as indecisiveness not expected of the Advanced Rider? Just what qualifies as making 'good' progress? It seems to me the height of foolishness ever to overtake at a point just because an undoubtedly competent rider ahead did so since traffic conditions cannot be identical and your machine's responsiveness may well differ.....I figure 'good progress' can be defined as keeping pace with the flow of traffic in which you find yourself. If you're holding traffic up, forcing a number of vehicles to overtake you, then the chances are you're not maintaining good progress. Whereas, if you're passing most, then the reverse is likely to be true. Another aspect of maintaining good progress is assessing your relative speed on slip roads or the approach to roundabouts or other junctions in order to proceed without having to come to a halt before so doing, where this is possible.

And 40 years later, here is a response from our Chief Observer.

The books say...

1. Understand that advanced riding isn't about making maximum progress. It's about making the level of progress required for a particular journey safely in the given conditions
2. Recognise that the speed phase of IPSGA is not about making progress but adjusting to a safe entry speed for the hazard.
3. Your progress will be steady and unobtrusive- the sign of a safe and competent rider.
4. The system of motorcycle control is a way of approaching and negotiating hazards that is methodical, safe and leaves nothing to chance. It involves careful observation, early anticipation and planning, and a systematic use of the controls to maintain your machine's stability in all situations.
5. Planning through a series of hazards- sometimes effectively treating them as one complex hazard- can help you make progress.

Progress is NOT about throttle, it is about early observation, early planning, accurate use of the system.

Regards Richie

Watch this space for further, historic articles next from the early 1990's.

Editor

DAM Taster Ride review Guy – Rider from Devon

“As a new rider in my late 40s with three years of riding experience (gained from local commuting and a few European trips, totalling about 15,000 miles), I thought getting independent feedback on my riding would be beneficial.

Before the session, I was unsure what to expect. I imagined it might be stiff, uptight, and feel like a high-viz road safety lecture. I was completely wrong!

The session was very enjoyable and offered honest, direct feedback that made me evaluate my riding in a new way. Having someone constructively critique my road positioning, cornering speed, and filtering techniques was brilliant.

Beforehand, I primarily rode in position 3 off-centre and was not using the full road to my advantage. Additionally, my filtering technique was risky because I was not leaving enough of a safety margin.

My observer, Richard, was fantastic! Engaging, open and constructive. Watching him position his own bike to set up optimal entries and exits while maintaining the safest view of the road was a real lightbulb moment. By the end of the session, I was using more of the road, looking further ahead, and riding at a smoother, safer, and faster pace.

I enjoyed the session so much that I signed up for the full course within hours. I am looking forward to becoming a better rider, and I think everyone with a bike license should do it!”

LEGACY funding feedback John Kerry

I passed my IAM Advanced Rider test in 2025 and recently took advantage of the Legacy training offered by DAM. The aim was to build on what I’d already learned and prepare for a reassessment, with the hope of achieving a First, which I’m pleased to say I did.

Brian Lee was my observer and was excellent throughout. One of the biggest benefits of the Legacy training was being able to concentrate on the areas of my riding that weren’t considered First standard. The coffee stop and debrief were just as valuable as the ride itself, giving us time to talk through the ride in detail and discuss practical ways to improve.

Having recently moved onto a much larger bike, the session also helped me become more comfortable and confident with its size and handling.

Without Brian’s observations, I’d never have realised that my usual way of thanking courteous drivers by raising four fingers on my throttle hand, as I’d always done on my Bonneville, was almost completely hidden by the screen and mirrors on my new bike. I’d simply assumed other road users had become a bit miserable and had stopped acknowledging the gesture.

I’d thoroughly recommend the Legacy training to anyone who’s passed their IAM test. It’s a great opportunity to continue developing your riding.

Note from Legacy fund sub committee Chair, Philip Pike - John applied for legacy funding and achieved a First at his IAM Skills Renew assessment. IAM Examiner was Adrian Veale.



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Scotland May 2026 – Helen Beer

Early May sees the annual BMW Club's Aberfoyle Weekend - a good reason to head north and support this event before enjoying the Highlands. I linked up with Sue, Martin and Andrew at Aust Services for our first night at The Briery Wood Country House Hotel in Ambleside. Jill, Nick and Colin met us there. We covered 330 miles mainly on the A49 with lunch at Ludlow.

Friday and all off to Moffat for coffee before the group split as Martin needed his first service (well the bike not him) which was booked at Douglas Park Motorrad in Glasgow. We enjoyed admiring the new bikes whilst drinking their coffee but not for long as they were friendly and efficient and we were soon on our way to the Rob Roy Hotel for a lovely warm welcome. About 140 attendees were booked in and enjoying sunshine and catching up. 184 miles.

Saturday and the club had an organised run to Oban but 4 of us headed to the Dukes Pass, Callander, Killin and the minor mountain road to the Bridge of Balgie and the Glenlyon Tea Room, an excellent cyclists' cafe with lots of homemade goodies. We enjoyed another mountain road before riding the southern side of Loch Rannoch to the Rannoch Station Tea Room – it's amazing how much fuel you can pack away - but it was needed for central heating as it's cold up north. Back via the northern side of Loch Rannoch, Tummel Bridge, Aberfeldy, Crieff, Lockearnhead and Callander. 195 miles, mega grins and just in time for dinner.

Sunday brought another bright and sunny day so 6 of us visited Alexandria beside Loch Lomond to enjoy the views of snow-capped Ben Lomond. Onward via the A82 north to Tarbet, Arrochar, down the south side of Loch Fyne to Otter Ferry and then a stunning mountain pass to Crachan of Glendaruel and Sandra's Cafe at Tighnabruaich for a break. We managed to catch the 1430 ferry from Portavadie to Tarbet - just - v comical watching each other try and book tickets online.... Time pressures, wrong specs, technophobes all played a part. Back via Lochgilphead, Inverary and the Rest and Be Thankful pass. The scenery was beautiful - azaleas, primroses, rhododendrons, daffodils, bright yellow gorse smelling of coconut, wild garlic and of course the mountains and lochs. A very enjoyable 193 miles.

Monday was pack-up and fond farewells - it had been a brilliant club weekend and 6 of us were heading north via Callander, Lochearnhead, around Loch Earn, Crieff, Dunkeld, Blairgowrie, Bridge of Cally and to the Glenshee Cafe and Gift Shop where they were baking scones in the Aga and we huddled round it to warm up. On to the Spittle of Glenshee, Braemar, Balmoral, Ballater and a bit of a detour due to a road closure. A97 and A944 to Cock Bridge, Goodbrand and Ross Cafe, past Corgarff Castle, Lecht Ski Centre, Tomintoul, Grantown-on-Spey, A930, B9090 past Cawdor Castle and Culloden to Inverness and the Conon Hotel near Dingwall which was our stop for 3 nights. 230 miles.



Tuesday was going to be more relaxed but we failed on that - 245 miles. Firstly, a visit to the new Cocoa Mountain Cafe at Dornoch, then on to Lairg and Tongue for a lunch break at a campsite on the coast before the NC500 to Durness (home of the original Cocoa Mountain). Plenty of passing places and drivers were courteous. Laxford Bridge then the A838 - 37 miles of narrow mountain valley road - just stunning. There was no fuel at Lairg so a detour to Rogart and back on the A9.... Again a v quick turnaround for dinner.

Wednesday and north on the A9 diversion along Cromarty Firth to Invergordon and Saltburn. Back on the A9 and A836 to Bonar Bridge and coffee at The Pier in Lairg - this is a well known cafe, advertised in several bike mags, and it well deserves the praise it receives. On to Ledmore and the NC500 north to Kylesku. Around the Drumbeg peninsula and a break at the Secret Garden Cafe. On to Lochinver and the coastal road towards Achiltibuie, past Stac Pollaidh, rejoining the NC500 to Ullapool and Conon Bridge. 192 miles of sunshine and showers but a tad chilly....well we were up north. 192 miles.

Thursday we started to head homeward - it was cold, blustery and wet but a good ride south along the Muir of Ord, Beaully and alongside Beaully Firth and Cawdor for coffee at the village store - a warm welcome despite dripping everywhere. B9007 across the Cairngorms to Aviemore, the old road south to Dalwhinnie, A9 to Blair Athol (memories of my first ever BMW Camping Event a few years ago) . Through the pass of Killiecrankie rejoining the A9 at Pitlochry to Dunkeld. On to Crieff enjoying some dry weather, Gleneagles, Yetts O Muckhart, Powmill and the M90 across Queensferry Bridge and around the Edinburgh bypass to the Park Hotel in Peebles. 230 miles.

Friday started with an early walk along the river at Peebles - a pretty and interesting town and good to have a chance to look. Innerleithen, Selkirk, Hawick, Carter Bar for the compulsory photos, Kielder Forest, Bellingham Station Heritage Centre Tea Room for coffee on the train - it really was a good set up and you felt the train would leave the platform at any moment. On to Allenheads, Middleton in Teesdale, Barnard Castle (no eye tests required), cuppa at Reeth, Leyburn, Buckden, Starbottom, Kettlewell, Skipton and then the M65 and to the Strawberry Duck at Entwistle. The moors and dales made for 223 fun miles and the weather was kind.

Saturday was an early walk before the 271 miles ride home home - mainly motorways and A49. Coffee at Tillys in Bunbury and lunch at Pengethley Garden Centre. After nearly 2300 miles I'm heading towards another service, tyres and chain - must make a hot date with my mechanic. It was a great trip - many thanx to the Scottish Section of the BMW Club for Aberfoyle and to Andrew for leading us, Martin for sorting all our other accommodation and to everyone for your fun company.



Rider Development Evening: JCF Tyres

Diana Percy

Wed 15th July RDE was with Brian and Pete from JCF Tyres. We have invited them a few times over the years but DAM people and tyre technology change so it was nice to welcome them back.

First, we were introduced to the LS2 range of helmets and clothing that they are now selling from their new workshop. Brian described it as 'mid-range' and 'we have had no complaints'. Personally, I thought the designs were really cool and LS2 are definitely worth a look before shelling out 2 months' salary on bike gear! A winter jacket is level 2 armour and AAA abrasion rating. JCF will price match for DAM members. Check out the LS2 website for more info. <https://ls2helmets.com/about-us>

Next Pete and Brian answered some of our questions. 'What is the best tyre for me?' is clearly an impossible question to answer without a bit more info, and this is where going to JCF can really pay dividends. They will ask you about what type of riding you do, if you need a tyre to work early morning in the cold so need something that will warm more quickly, track days, off-road, off-road on a supposedly road ride (what can she mean?) and more. Then they can suggest a range of tyres that might suit your needs. Years ago, tyres were much more use specific but now there is a range of all round tyres.

Another 'as long as a piece of string' answer was to the question 'How long will my tyres last?'. This, we were told, will depend on use, road surface, tyre pressures (lower pressure = larger contact patch = more wear.) I learned here that the contact patch is only 1 ½-2"! OMG!!

The next important information was about how to fix a puncture roadside. Even if you call roadside assistance have a go at mending your puncture while you wait as you have nothing to lose. However, the hard shoulder is a dangerous place and you



want to spend as little time as possible there so be very careful. Don't try to mend a puncture in lane 3....

This is a 'get you home' solution, not a permanent fix. If you do fix a puncture yourself in an emergency, please take your bike to JCF (other tyre repairers are available) asap. Anyway, P and B recommend the rubber string stuff. You can use the 'mushrooms' to mend a straight in puncture but 'silly string' is much more adaptable to angles. So...

1. Find the puncture.
2. Leave foreign object in until you have everything prepared to avoid losing more air.
3. Get string threaded through the needle ready to use- possibly with a few more ready to use if needed, (Pete recorded putting 7 strings in one DAM member's tyre to get him home).
4. Have the glue ready as it works as a lube and makes things easier.
5. Remove foreign object. You might need a screwdriver and pliers.
6. Now, ream out the hole 2 or 3 times so that the string will go in. It can be quite tough so be prepared.
7. Push the needle and string into the hole.
8. Twist (v important) the needle a few times so the string binds, spreads and fills the gap on the inside of tyre.
9. Pull out needle (it is open at one end).
10. Cut the string off but leave a bit proud as this will flatten over and seal hole even more as you roll along the road.
11. Have a cup of tea then ride on carefully.

The new rechargeable pumps are very good but buy the best one you can as the cheaper ones are weak and only have tiny internal pumps. A foot pump is unlikely to fail.

JCF have a range of puncture repair kits. They are inexpensive and really useful (I mended my wellies- lasted for 2 years).

I learned a few more things:

- front tyres' tread goes in a different direction from the rear.
- front tread fans water out and the rear tread makes the water go straight up- the 'rooster tail' (hence the need for rear mudguards).
- all tyres apart from Michelin have metal in them which makes them a bit harder to ream out if you have a puncture.
- Tyre fitters hate sealant.





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Dear Denzil

Wildlife On Our Roads

Cher M. Denzil, je suis récemment arrivé au Royaume-Uni en provenance de France. J'ai peur d'emprunter la route à cause de toutes les rumeurs concernant des tigres et des dragons. Bien à vous, Pierre.

Dear Pierre, You are very wise to check. None of us want to be eaten. I am pleased to report that these dangerous animals are (generally) not at large on the streets of Britain.



'Dragon's teeth' is the colloquial name given to the 'triangular road markings perpendicular to the edge of the carriageway often used at gateways to give the effect of road narrowing. The teeth are laid in pairs either side of the carriageway or a lane. (Credit: sabre-roads.org.uk)

A tiger crossing (officially parallel crossing) is a type of pedestrian & cycle crossing which works in a similar way to a Zebra Crossing, in that traffic should give way to users crossing. Early experimental versions used distinct yellow-and-black stripes (resembling a tiger), though modern variants often use standard zebra black-and-white road markings alongside green or clear cycle path indicators.

Unlike the tiger crossings found in Asia:



I hope this sets your mind at rest. Yours, Denzil.

Metres and Seconds

Dear Denzil, Including reaction time and stopping time, how many metres does it take to stop from 40mph? Yours, Roger Uminator.

Dear Roger, If I was in a less than buoyant mood, I'd simply refer you to my favourite reference website: LetMeGoogleThatForYou.com. As I am feeling more helpful, I'd suggest the following simple procedure:

-Purchase a 100-metre measuring tape. (Available now in good hardware stores).

- Lay the tape out along your favourite stretch of road. The busier the road the better.
- Ride from one end to the other, maintaining constant speed of 64.37376 kilometres per hour.
- Ask a friend to make a phone call to your Bluetooth connected headset at the precise time your front wheel passes the 23.64 metre mark. This is YOUR moment!
- Trigger a stopwatch using a suitable app on your mobile phone. (You may need to temporarily doff and don your gloves to ease the removal of the phone from the back pocket of your riding jeans – but this will be worthwhile to ensure you get the timing exactly right).
- Once settled, jam on your back brake. As hard as you can. The aim is to stall the engine and execute a prolonged skid. For additional affect, I'd recommend trying to steer harshly to avoid any gravel. (If you wish you could also press the horn button – thus fully emulating the scenario of someone pulling out in front of you from a side junction).
- If you have executed the previous step correctly, you should find yourself in a ditch, lying sideways, under a quarter of a ton of iron and, most importantly, with measuring tape within easy view. This is part of the plan.
- Stop the stopwatch immediately. Miraculously, the reading shown on the stopwatch is the amount of time it takes to stop from 40mph.
- Now, make a note the distance marker on tape measure you had previously placed along the side of the road. (If the tape inadvertently moved because of your braking manoeuvre, you will have to start the whole procedure again). Otherwise, subtract 23.64 from the reading, and bingo: you know the overall stopping distance in metres as well.
- Consider dialling 999.

Note: if you want a bigger result, I suggest you choose a cold, wet, winter day.

Yours, Denzil

It's Not Fair

Dear Denzil, I get so irritated that motorcyclists think they own the road in heavy traffic, always weaving in and out of queues of traffic, desperate to get in front and with no regard to other 4-wheeled vehicles. When I see them approaching in my wing mirrors, I am often tempted to open my door to block their path. Yours, Maureen Touriste.

Dear Mo, presumably you are an Audi driver? I can understand your sense of frustration, but I'm not sure "I'll open my door and turn a fellow road user into a human speed bump" is quite the pinnacle of road etiquette.

There are certainly motorcyclists who weave about impatiently and take unnecessary risks—but there are equally motorists who seem to regard indicating as an optional extra and lane discipline as an interesting theory. Filtering through slow-moving or stationary traffic is perfectly legal when done safely, so perhaps the issue is less about whether motorcyclists should be there and more about how considerate EVERYONE (hint) is while sharing the road.

Neither group is a homogeneous tribe of road-going villains (except the Audi drivers). Most motorists and motorcyclists are simply ordinary people going about their day-day business and who are perfectly capable of behaving sensibly and courteously.

Deliberately opening a door to block a motorcycle, however tempting it might feel in the moment, crosses a rather more serious line: it could cause a crash, injure someone, and result in you spending a few years at his majesty's pleasure. A little patience and consideration on all sides seems preferable.

Yours, Denzil.

Lightening

Dear Denzil, What would happen if I rode my motorcycle at the speed of light? Yours, Bud.



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DAM has 7 x Cardo Freecom 4 units, these are Bluetooth not DMC models. We need to release these from stock. We are asking for a token donation towards their purchase. If anyone is interested, please contact chiefobserver@devonadvanced.com

So....is it worthwhile to ride to the Swiss Alps and back in a week?.....one way to find out

TUESDAY July 7th:

Left home yesterday mid-day to ride to Folkestone....34C heavy traffic, thinking "what am I doing" .

Had originally booked Eurotunnel for 09:15 today with std ticket, but woke up at 5am and thought "let's get going and try to avoid the heat". Std ticket allows 1 hour discretion if space, but was offered train at 07:15, perfect . Arrived Calais 9am and a lovely 23C.

Today's route was Autoroute to Nancy, 300 miles. By midday the temp had risen to 34C but somehow didn't seem as bad as riding to Folkestone. However, I was thankful for the early start.

Now in Nancy and enjoying a cold .

Tomorrow I'll leave early again. After 50 mins I'll be riding the route du Cretes, then down to Basel, past Lucerne and arriving at the foot of the Susten and Grimsel passes....I'm staying in a hotel I've used before in Ullrichen at the foot of the Furka & Grimsel passes...can't wait

WEDNESDAY July 8th:

After a quick breakfast, I was on the road by 07:30. Lovely and cool at just 17C.

After an hour I was in the beautiful Vosges, riding down the Route de Cretes in perfect weather. I've ridden this several times before, but usually in the rain. Today was fabulous, blue skies and 24C. An absolutely brilliant ride After the Route de Cretes I headed for Basel, crossing the mighty Rhine, which you catch glimpses of through the tunnel. Very heavy traffic due to roadworks, and getting hot at 33C. Once through Basel I stopped at my favourite Auto Grill for lunch. This is a motorway service place, but more like a high-end food court with freshly cooked food if you want it.

Soon after lunch I'm heading for Lucerne, past Swiss lakes and the mighty snow-capped Alps towering in view ahead. By 13:30 I arrive in Innertkirchen at the junction of the Susten & Grimsel passes. Just bear in mind, I left Devon just 48 hours before....

As it's so early I decide to take the long way to my hotel and ride over the Susten pass, through Andermatt (lots of memories from past trips) and continue over the Furka Pass to my hotel in Ullrichen. Mileage today 305.

THURSDAY July 9th:

Another fantastic day's riding. Nufenen pass in both directions, San Gottard, Tremola (cobblestones), San Bernadino, Oberalp, and others I can't remember, and some fantastic gorge roads as well....one so good, I rode it twice. Mileage today 235.

FRIDAY July 10th:

My last full day in the Alps, I start heading home tomorrow



Today's passes: Susten, Furka, Grimsel, Nufenen, all clockwise and anti-clockwise

An incredible day's riding in perfect weather.

I've been here many times before, but just for a day, passing through, and normally in bad weather.

It's been great to spend time here at my leisure/pleasure. Spending some time in Andermatt village, which is booming with construction of high-end apartments and hotels.

SATURDAY July 11th:

A long ride today, starting in 18C and finishing in 38C in Chalons en Champagne, total 375 miles.

Started off over the Grimsel Pass, sad to be leaving this incredible area. Re tracing my outward route, past Basel, still terrible traffic! and onto the Route de Cretes. I've always avoided the Vosges at the weekend, it was crazy busy with motorbikes, cyclists, and a huge cross country hiking event. Also saw four Police motorcyclists patrolling the area and chasing bikes! Shortly after leaving the Vosges my Garmin had heat stroke and went blank! I resorted to my phone running MRA. All was great until I was running low on fuel...no problem, hit the fuel icon and it places a new via point at the fuel stop 14 miles ahead....petrol gauge is saying I've got 30 miles left, perfect....until I arrive at the fuel stop which is some kind of special gas and no petrol ! Now resort to Google maps and it takes me further on arriving at a petrol station with 8 miles left.....At least time to re-hydrate, one iced tea for me and one bottle of water poured down my jacket. It's time to call it a day and I find an Ibis on Booking.com in Chalons en Champagne an hour up the road.

Arrive, check in and confirm the room has air con as advertised....Oui Monsieur....three rooms later and finally one with working aircon!

I check the restaurant is open, Oui Monsieur but only pizza....six varieties of oven ready pizzas but two are not available Avoid this Ibis hotel !!!

Managed to change my train for tomorrow to an earlier one, so should be back home tomorrow afternoon. Not looking forward to the Folkestone to Devon ride

SUNDAY July 12th:

Woke up at 4am after a great 7 hours sleep, in my air conditioned room so decided to

get up and go before the inevitable heat.....had a lovely ride watching the sun come up. Arrived at Eurotunnel and got the 10:36 train. I wasn't looking forward to the ride home, but after practicing my slow riding & filtering on the M25, it wasn't too bad.

So, to answer my original question " is it worthwhile to ride to the Swiss Alps and back in a week?" ABSOLUTELY I had a fantastic time, riding some incredible mountain roads. Will I do it again, YES

A big shout out to my GS1250, which ate up the miles and was fun when I got there.

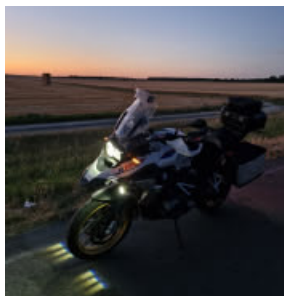
As BMW say " Make Life a Ride" I'd add "make life a ride to remember" and to quote Nike "Just Do It".

Total mileage circa 2,175.

Rodney Rayner

(aka Rod Moto)

Group Rides Coordinator



WESTPOINT ENHANCED SKILLS DAY JULY 19th 2026

Sponsored by the Michael Whitfield Legacy

Now in its third year, and on a lovely sunny day, 24 riders turned up bright and early for a full day practicing their riding skills.

For the first session the large Westpoint tarmac is divided into four sections, with four different courses laid out by the Observers.

The 24 DAM members divided themselves into four groups of 6, and chose which exercise to do first.

The choice:

U turn

The infamous Snowman (3 reducing radius interlocking circles)

Walking Pace Decreasing Slalom

Offset Cone Weave

Each course lasts 25 minutes, with briefing & guidance given by the Observers, then rotating to the next challenge.

After many cones were knocked over, crushed and destroyed, everyone's confidence started to grow. It was great to see riders who started off with lots of foot down moments progress to completing the courses with relative ease.

When all groups had completed the four courses, it was time for a refreshment break, while the hard-working Observers collected all the cones, and re-laid two courses for the next session.

With confidence building it was time to pick up the pace with:

Positive Steering Slalom

Boot Lace Slalom

Both these courses help improve confidence and actively practice "vision" and moving the bike underneath them.

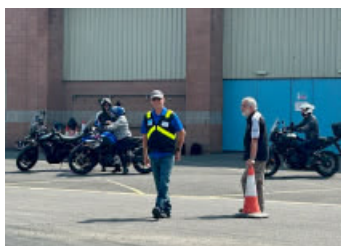
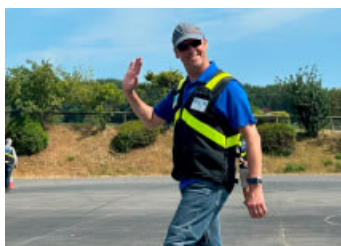
Another refreshment break and onto:

Hazard Avoidance

Emergency Braking.

Both invaluable skills that are difficult to practice outside a large safe environment.

The emergency braking practice really highlights how quickly a modern motorcycle can



stop.

We start off at 30mph and rear brake only, marking the stopping point, and progressing to 40mph plus, with both brakes, and demonstrating the phenomenally short stopping distance that can be achieved.

The day finishes with a Slow Riding Race, two heats of 10 riders, with the slowest three of each heat going into the final.....The last person across the finish line is the winner.

Congratulations to the winner for displaying great slow speed control.

The second Westpoint Skills Day took place on Sept 27th. Hopefully, the plan is to continue the offer of this superb opportunity in 2027. Look out for the adverts on the DAM website, Facebook and email and please contact Rodney at grouprides@devonadvanced.com to reserve your place. These days are especially beneficial to ASSOCIATES (but open to full members too).






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Dave Thorpe Honda Somerset – Enduro Trail Day

I thought I would share a snippet about my day out in July 26, enduro trail riding, with Dave Thorpe Honda in Somerset.

Friends of mine green lane and ride off road a lot; I on the other hand have only ridden a mountain bike off road. Having thoroughly enjoyed my road riding with DAM I wished to give off road a go.

Booking was very easy and Dave Thorpe are good on their communications in the lead up to the day. All kit is provided. I turned up with some sports base layers and didn't feel I needed anything extra with the kit provided.

The bikes on the day were: Honda CRF250RX competition enduro bike, Honda CRF300L trail bike and Honda CRF125F fun off-road bike (for beginner riders).

Riders were split into 3 levels: Beginner, Intermediate or Advanced. I went in the beginner's group but as I had ridden on the road, I was advised to take out a CRF300L. The main difference between the 250 and 300 are the piston size and stroke length. The 250 has a big piston and short stroke, giving punchy power, whereas the 300 has a smaller piston and longer stroke which gives a more balanced power. My friends went in the advanced group with the 250's. They said the 250s were a handful for power, wanting to go as soon as you turn the throttle but good to ride.

The day was spread over 4 sessions with refreshments available throughout the day. The sessions were tailored to our beginner's group. The first three sessions involved riding to an area in the forest with our coach. Our group was then guided round the circuit by our coach Dave. Once we had completed a circuit, we were then allowed to ride around for a while and gain confidence, even overtake if we wished. The last session involved a big group ride where you could ride with your friends whilst following the coaches.

First session – The trails were wide forest tracks, big enough for vehicles although rutted in places. The ground conditions were very dry on the day and I gather it would be even more fun in the wet!

Second session – More technical tracks, some narrow. Part way round was a 2 foot drop off. I was amazed how agile the bike was and trusted the coaches' advice to leave the brakes, drop off and ride the slope. Very similar to riding it on a mountain bike.

Third session – This session involved a big hill climb and more technical tracks, including a stream.

Fourth session – Riding most of the previous trails in one big group.

Cornering – I did find the cornering different to being on a road bike. We were told to sit forward to make sure we had 50:50 weight distribution. It also made sure the front did not go light during the turn and wash out. When taking the corner, you had to put your leg out as part of taking the turn (left turn, left leg). This helped with balance and occasional slides whilst powering out of the corner.

Standing up – This was another thing familiar to me from mountain biking but not something I had really done on a motorbike. Standing gave you better stability and made riding ruts easier.

Overall, the day was brilliant. Photos were provided free of charge. It was a great introduction to off road riding. I also feel it's the best way to evaluate if an off-road bike would be a good addition to the garage!!

Aidan Hall

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FOR 2027 DATES

THIRD THURSDAY RIDE REPORT

28TH JUNE 2026 **Andy Pidsley**

This was my first group ride as a full member having passed my advanced test some two weeks ago. Having previously taken part in a few Rookie rides I was not sure what to expect from the full fat version (not a reference to rider girth here). I received a very warm welcome from my fellow riders, which I feel is a great characteristic for a riding group to have, some of whom have obviously known each other for a long time.

The customary briefing took place in the car park of Hog and Hedge near Okehampton, during which I volunteered myself for this report writing task after a pregnant pause when everyone tried not to look at each other - I broke first.

We set off in the welcome coolness post heatwave, towards our first objective - Westward Ho! Via Torrington and Bideford. However, after around an hour riding a splinter group somehow formed with the majority of riders becoming separated from Les our pilot. One rider had turned down a familiar road but where there was no marker, the immediate group followed, and it took a few phone calls to sort out and regroup and early coffee at Great Torrington. Guilt was confessed for the error; I can't say exactly by whom due to my being a new member and not remembering names (fortunately). I was left wondering if this is what is meant by 'Ride your own ride'?

Les and others arrived back at our unofficial stop after about 20 minutes and we were able to resume our journey, having decided to drop the Westward Ho! stop and head straight for Hartland Quay. There we had photos and admired the rock formations and view of Lundy Island in the distance.

We then departed for Sandymouth Bay, our lunch stop, which lay across the border into Cornwall after Les's mandatory car park detour into Hartland village itself, passing the impressive Bude GCHQ listening complex. We somehow missed the Biometric border check booths probably due to our use of small country lanes.

Sandymouth offered a very nice cafe and an opportunity for those with adventure bikes and semi off-road tyres to look a bit smug as we scaled the gravel car park. After our refreshments we returned via Holsworthy to the Okehampton Granite Waycafe and dispersed.

It was a very enjoyable time and a reminder that North Devon does offer some fine A and B roads for biking and much less traffic than down south.



THURSDAY RIDE: 20TH AUGUST 2026

Tim Archer

Summary: really good riding, countryside, food and company. Also, how not to pick the right kit to wear!

Eleven riders set out from Exeter services for the August Third Thursday ride, very ably piloted by Paul Haines, with Dave Edmunds acting as sweeper.

Some slow going initially, due to roadworks and congestion, as we headed east on the A3052. With these soon behind us we enjoyed some good riding and views along the East Devon Heritage Coast taking in Sidmouth, Seaton and Lyme Regis. The weather was fine, and getting really hot, and I wished I'd worn the mesh jacket after all.

Lyme Regis was crammed full of holiday makers. Many didn't seem to know what pavements were for as they eagerly headed for the beach carrying their towels, picnics and sun tan lotion.

Very shortly after, heading north on the B3165, the sky quickly darkened, and the heavens opened with a massive deluge of rain and sleet, and the road was awash! So, I'd worn the right waterproof kit after all! Unfortunately, Paul hadn't, so he pulled the whole ride over alongside a wood, and here we took shelter while watching in wonder as Paul changed into his waterproofs. Our sympathy also turned, but only very briefly, to the no doubt very soggy holiday makers shivering and dismayed on the beach back at Lyme!

Heading on, we enjoyed more lovely countryside, and rural villages with mellow yellow stone cottages, and arrived at Broadwindsor for a break at the Stableyard Café. Here we found good coffee and cakes, and yes, there were actually two horses in the stable yard. It also became fairly clear that Andrew Robertson had probably been wearing his mesh jacket!

Improved weather, good views, and sweeping turns were enjoyed as we headed promptly down the A356 towards Dorchester. Cutting across from Winterbourne Abbas we arrived on the coast at Abbotsbury for lunch. Ducks Farm Shop was very welcoming, had a super range of good food (mega sausage rolls!), and they looked after us very well. Parking was slightly challenging though, especially so for the somewhat confused and agitated elderly lady who didn't seem capable of reversing, and thought all these bikers should be banned from such a lovely cafe. So we ate well and had free entertainment too!

Heading west on the B3157 we stopped to enjoy some amazing views over Chesil Beach. You can see for miles from here up and down the coast. Les Mosco seemed especially impressed.

From Bridport we rode to Axminster on the A35, then dropped down to Axmouth, headed east, and then up to Honiton. Some super East Devon countryside here, but concerning to see it all looking so brown and burnt out. The ride ended at Max's cabin at Honiton, and it was really hot again – wish I'd worn the mesh jacket after all?!



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WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS

Martin Lynch, Paul Clark, Tim Werry, Adam Wigley, Grant Langer, Charlie Moore, Tim Whitehouse, Eddie Simmins, Allister Parr, Andy Brown, Geoff Dove, Darius Khadjenouri, Ian Ridley, Mike Davis, Conor Bohan, Andrew Newcombe, Chris Portues, Rob Dennett, David Prosser, Eleanor O'Callaghan, Roger Sugden, Mark Human, Lewis Fowler, Chris Davies-Barnard, Guy Looker, Jane Sampson, James Scott

Test Passes

Associate	Observer
Nigel Porter	Nick Marks
Tim Capps	Les Mosco
John Kerry (F1rst)	Brian Lee
Javier Baleato	Barrie Dennett
Paul Watson (F1rst)	Richard Wiseman
Duncan Haddrell (F1rst)	Brian Lee
Andy Wright (F1rst)	Barrie Dennett
Steve Cooke (F1rst)	Graham Hirst
Onur Egitim	Les Mosco
Stan Aitken	Simon Jeffery
John Halling	Graham Hirst
Adam Wigley (F1rst)	Alex Thomas
Caroline Penwill (skills renewal)	Robin Watts
Phil Keeling	Brian Strong
Liam Tanser (F1rst)	Gareth Taylor
Stephen Ashton	Jon Evans
Brett Barber	Andrew Robertson
Member	Observer
Alastair Green – masters	Trevor Olding - Mentor

The Observer Team

October 2026

NO = National Observer

COTT = Chief Observer Training team

TO = Trainee Observer

CO – Chief Observer

TL – Team Leader

NORTH AREA (9)

NO: Robin Watts
NO: Nigel Bond
NO: Simon Kidner
NO: Andy Pratt
NO: Hector Vass TL/COTT
NO: Stuart Taylor
NO: David Strickland
NO: Jonathan Evans
TO: Sandie Puttick

EAST AREA (6)

NO: Gareth Taylor
NO: Ian Holten TL/COTT
NO: Richard Blyth COTT/CO
NO: Leanne Wilkinson
NO: Paul Haines
TO Andy Yarwood

SOUTH AREA (11)

NO: Dave Page TL/COTT
NO: Phil Pike
NO: Steve Westlake
NO: Tony Curley
NO: Graham Hirst
NO: Barrie Dennett COTT
NO: Nick Marks
NO: Andrew Robertson
NO: Richard Thorns
NO: Brian Lee COTT
NO: Sam Iskander

WEST AREA (8)

NO: John Millgate TL/COTT
NO: Simon Jeffery
NO: Mark Fouache COTT
NO: Alex Thomas
NO: Richard Wiseman
NO: Tim O'Callaghan
NO: Darren Evans
NO: Andy Burden

CENTRAL AREA (10)

NO: Ian Pruce TL/COTT
NO: Dave Mudge
NO: Rodney Rayner
NO: Brian Strong
NO: Dave Grant
NO: Simon Padley
NO: Chris Palmer
NO: Les Mosco
NO Dave Sutherland
NO: Chris Kingsley

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WHAT'S ON REGULARLY ARRANGED BY DAM?

PLEASE ALWAYS check the [website](#) or event co-ordinators for up-to-date information.

Also please double-check times after clock change. www.devonadvanced.com

Date	What	Where
OCTOBER		
Sat 3	Rookie Ride (south-ish starts) (open to all members)	See website for details 9am for 9:30am start
Sun 11	Group Ride (full members or associate with Observer)	See website for details 9am for 9:30am start
Tues 13	DAM Committee meeting	The Twisted Oak, Exeter - 7pm
Thurs 15	Third Thursday Group Ride (full members or associate with observer)	See Website for details. Contact Les Mosco thursdayrides@devonadvanced.com
Sat 17	Post Test Training Ride (open to all members)	Contact John Millgate Triumphjohn955@gmail.com
Wed 21	Rider Development Evening	Motorcycle Law – what happens when things go wrong The Twisted Oak, Exeter – 7pm
Sun 25	Group Ride (full members or associate with Observer)	See website for details 9:30 am for 10.00am start
Sun 26	N'ookie Ride (north-ish starts) (open to all members)	See website for details (A Rookie Ride in the north-ish) 9.30 am for 10am start.
NOVEMBER		
Sat 7	Rookie Ride (south-ish starts) (open to all members)	See website for details 9.30am for 10am start.
Sun 8	Memorial Group Ride	See website for details 9.30am for 10am start.
Tues 10	DAM Committee meeting	Cromwell Arms, Bovey Tracey – 7pm
Weds 18	Rider Development Evening	Kevin Williams – Survival Skills The Twisted Oak, Exeter – 7pm
Thurs 19	Third Thursday Group Ride (full members or associate with observer)	See Website for details. Contact Les Mosco thursdayrides@devonadvanced.com
Sat 21	Post Test Training Ride (open to all members)	Contact John Millgate Triumphjohn955@gmail.com
Sun 22	Group Ride (full members or associate with Observer)	See website for details 9.30am for 10am start.
Sat 29	N'ookie Ride (north-ish starts) (open to all members)	See website for details 9.30am for 10am start.

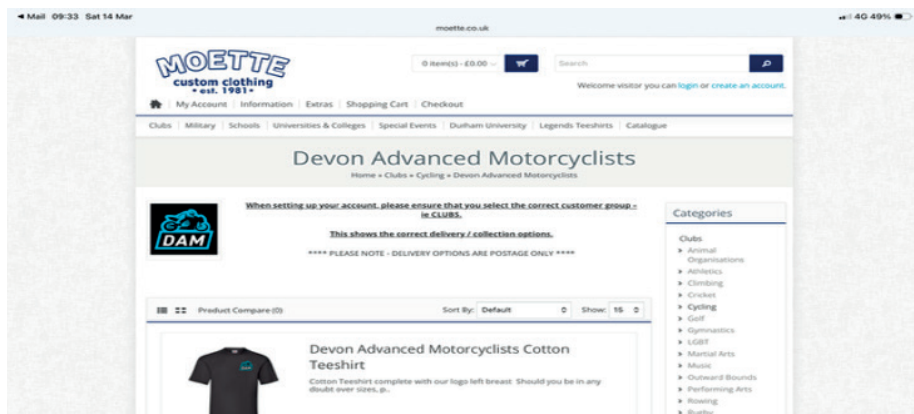
DECEMBER		
Sat 5	Rookie Ride (south-ish starts)	See website for details 9.30am for 10am start
Tues 8	DAM Committee meeting	The Twisted Oak, Exeter - 7pm
Sun 13	Group Ride (full members or associate with Observer)	See website for details 9.30am for 10am start.
Thurs 17	Third Thursday Group Ride (full members or associate with observer)	See Website for details. Contact Les Mosco thursdayrides@devonadvanced.com
Sat 19	Post Test Training Ride (open to all members)	Contact John Millgate Triumphjohn955@gmail.com
Sat 26	N'ookie Ride (north-ish starts) (open to all members)	See website for details 9.30am for 10am start
Sun 27	Group Ride (full members or associate with Observer)	See website for details 9.30am for 10am start

DAM Merchandise

The DAM Marketing have been working hard to set up a simple way you can order DAM kit. Please follow the link below to see the DAM merchandise you can purchase.

<https://www.moette.co.uk/Clubs/Cycling/Devon-Advanced-Motorcyclists>

Please be aware you have to pay for P&P. You may want to combine your orders with a few friends to reduce the overall cost of postage.



KEEPING UP WITH YOUR RIDING AMBITIONS

What can Devon Advanced Motorcyclists do for you?

In three minutes time, you'll know exactly that.

Devon Advanced Motorcyclists is THE leading provider of IAM Roadsmart's Advanced Rider Course in the whole of Devon!

We are here to make competent and confident motorcyclists.

We have a team of nationally qualified Observers who can help you become the best motorcycle rider you can be. And help you stay that way.

If you have no ambition for this, stop reading here.

The Advanced Rider Course

We are affiliated with the national road safety charity IAM RoadSmart. Our role is to provide on-road coaching to enable IAM RoadSmart members achieve a nationally recognised advanced riding standard.

Advanced riding is the ability to maintain focus on the road and traffic environment and to take timely action to deal with it safely, smoothly, and systematically. It's a frame of mind.

Our members come from all walks of life and all ages. Our common goal to be the best riders we can be. The only prerequisite is that you should

have a full (A or A2) motorcycle licence.

To apply for the **Advanced Rider Course** visit
<https://www.iamroadsmart.com/courses/advanced-rider>.



£219
PLUS
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The course includes the Advanced Rider Course manual, one-one on-road riding sessions with your allocated Observer, the price of the advanced riding test, and one year membership of both IAM RoadSmart and Devon Advanced Motorcyclists.

Not sure? We offer a free, no-obligation, **Taster Ride where** so we can answer all your questions. To apply for one of these free Taster Rides visit www.advancedmotorcyclists.com or contact Mark Fouache on tasterrides@devonadvanced.com



FREE

Social Rides

At any one time, we have up to a hundred people like you preparing for their advanced riding test.

We encourage new members to attend our regular social rides aimed at those new to advanced riding. We call these Rookie Rides (based south of the County) or N'Ookie Rides (based north of the County), and they take place on the first and last Saturday of each month, respectively. You can use the opportunity to compare your advanced riding experiences with other new members.

Once you have passed your advanced riding test, you will be eligible to join our other Group Rides. These tend to be longer, all-day rides, and normally on more challenging roads than the Rookie Rides. You'll be riding in the company of experienced advanced riders and come to enjoy the best riding roads and destinations the county has to offer. Put these regular dates for Group Rides in your diary now: the second Sunday of every month, the fourth Sunday of every month, and the third Thursday of every month.

Devon Advanced Motorcyclists also organise a number weekend or longer trips throughout the year to UK and European destinations.

Detailed arrangements about forthcoming Rookie Rides and Group Rides are emailed to members on a regular basis. Contact our Rookie Ridesco-ordinator rookierides@devonadvanced.com or our Group Rides at grouprides@devonadvanced.com for more information.

**FREE
FOR
MEMBERS**

The End of the Beginning

For some new members, passing their advanced riding test and joining in with the regular social rides is sufficient for them to keep their advanced riding skills honed. For many more that is just the beginning.

We continually encourage all our members to take opportunities to keep their advanced riding skills up to scratch. Newly acquired skills can (and do) fade remarkably quickly.

IAM Roadsmart offer a Fellowship membership status: in return for an additional annual subscription, Fellow members are automatically offered a re-test of their advanced riding skills every three years. What better way to keep you on your toes?

Information about Fellowship membership can be found at www.iamroadsmart.com/membership.

**£18
PER
YEAR**

Alternatively, to take your riding skills up another level, you might consider the Masters programme. This provides mentoring support and guidance that will help you attain the highest standard of civilian riding in the country. The coaching encourages the use of professional riding techniques used by police and other emergency services riders.

Information about the Masters qualification can be found at www.iamroadsmart.com/masters.

£345

If something less formal is your thing, we run a variety of events offering ongoing encouragement of advanced riding.

On the third Saturday of each month, we run Post-Test Training Rides. These offer you the opportunity to ride with experienced observers who will offer suggestions for improving and refining your ride. No fee. No obligation! No reason not to!

Contact triumphjohn955@gmail.com to book your place on a Post-Test Training Ride.

FREE
FOR
MEMBERS

Personal Training Ride: Your DAM membership means you are eligible for bespoke one-one coaching from one of our Observers. Just fill up your Observer's tank and away you go. Any time, any place, anywhere.

To arrange your Personal Training ride, contact chiefobserver@devonadvanced.com.

Be a Giver

The ultimate way you can hone your advanced riding skills is by passing your knowledge along by joining the club's team of Observers. Observers are not only excellent advanced riders, but also possess the personal qualities to coach and encourage others to ride to the best of their ability. You will receive training to a nationally recognised standard overseen by the Institute for the Motor Industry.

If you think you have what it takes to become an Observer, get in touch with Richie Blyth, your chiefobserver@devonadvanced.com.

New member to DAM?

If you are a new associate member, please contact our Observed Rides Co-ordinator (see Committee members page in this magazine for details) as early as possible, preferably by email, even if you don't intend to start your Advanced Rider Course immediately.

Committee & Club Officers

Chairman: Les Mosco E: chairman@devonadvanced.com		Group Secretary: Chris Uzzell E: secretary@devonadvanced.com	
Chief Observer: Richie Blyth E: chiefobserver@devonadvanced.com		Treasurer: Aidan Hall E: treasurer@devonadvanced.com	
Marketing Officer/Events Coordinator: Tony Curley E: marketing@devonadvanced.com		Group Rides Co-ordinator: Rodney Rayner E: grouprides@devonadvanced.com	
Newsletter Editor: Catherine McKinley E: magazine@devonadvanced.com		Webmaster: Nick Tucker E: webmaster@devonadvanced.com	
Rookie Rides Co-ordinator: Simon Jeffery E: rookierides@devonadvanced.com		Membership: Barrie Dennett E: membership@devonadvanced.com	
Observed Rides Co-ordinator: Ian Pruce E: observedrides@outlook.com		Rider Development Evening Co-ordinator: E: riderdevelopment@devonadvanced.com	
Legacy Chair Philip Pike legacy@devonadvanced.com			
Other Committee Members: Peter Adams Paul Rogers		DAM Trustees Les Mosco (Chair) Chris Uzzell (Secretary) Aidan Hall (Treasurer) Richard Whybra Philip Pike, David Mudge & Hamish Forward	



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