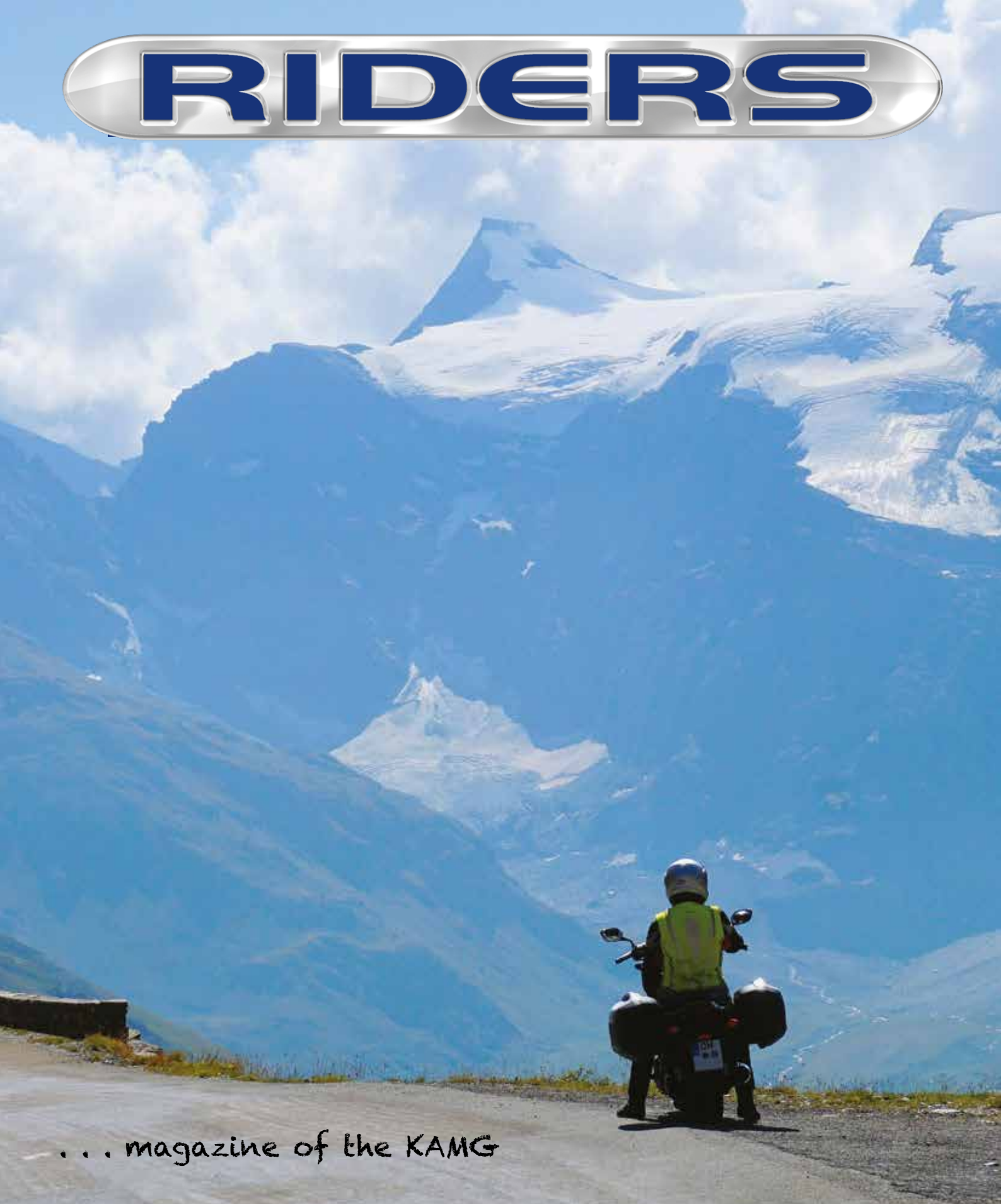


RIDERS



... magazine of the KAMG

ISSUE 241 • February 2026 • Registered Charity No. 1060837



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MOTORCYCLE WEAR

THIS EDITION INCLUDES . . .

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FORTHCOMING EVENTS

March

- | | |
|---------------|---------------------------------|
| Sun 1st | Ride to Spitfire Café, Manston. |
| Sat 7th | Observer Annual Conference |
| Sat 14th | IDCAM |
| Sat/Sun 21/22 | Peterborough Training Weekend |
| Thurs 26th | Group Night |
| Sun 29th | Round trip via Chartham |

April

- | | |
|------------|------------------------------------|
| Sat 4th | Easter run to Scotts Project Trust |
| Sat 11th | Pillion Workshop (page 24) |
| Thurs 16th | Fish and Chip run |
| Sat 18th | IDCAM |
| Thurs 30th | Group Night |

May

- | | |
|---------------|------------------------------|
| Sun 3rd | Ride to Headcorn |
| Sat 9th | Machine Control Day |
| Sat/Sun 16/17 | Basingstoke Training Weekend |
| Sat 23rd | IDCAM |
| Thurs 28th | Group Night |
| Sun 31st | Ride to Roedean |

This list is correct at time of going to press. Check all KAMG dates on Tracker to ensure that there are no changes. Details of contacts for IDCAM, Machine Control Days and Ride-outs are on pages 30 and 31.

EDITORIAL



Nick Farley, Editor

Recruiting Younger Riders

When I was talking to Nic Walker about her new job as Chief Observer, it was clear that she, like me, thinks that we need to do something to attract younger members to KAMG, even if not as long term members, but at least so that they get their Green Badge and learn to ride with a web of notional safety around them. But how do we do that? How do we reach the right target audience? And how do we reach them with the right message? Even if someone youngish finds the IAM's website there doesn't seem to be anything there that would attract them to apply for membership. The website looks like so many websites – it's just very neat and very dull. It's been designed by someone with the imagination of a log. Sure, it ticks all the right people boxes that I know have to be ticked today, but it just looks boring and the words are boring and the 'right' people in it look particularly boring. But what's really wrong with it is that it doesn't in any sense communicate what riding a motorbike is about. And the advanced course costs £219. If you were skint and 25 years old, you'd run a mile. I would.

What the IAM does is up to the IAM, but what can KAMG do on its own behalf to try and reach a younger audience? It is a long-term problem and I don't think it's ever been properly addressed. KAMG is a road safety charity in its own right; yes, it's affiliated to the IAM, but it has considerable funds of its own. How could some of those resources be directed towards actively attracting younger members? Should we even try to do that? And if we should, have you got any ideas on how we might do it? At the moment KAMG's recruitment levels are low and we are training observers without having enough associates to be observed. Attracting some new riders of any age would be good, but attracting younger riders would be especially good.

A New Editor?

Riders needs a new editor. August 2016 was my first issue as editor, ten years ago, and when the next magazine comes out in May it will mean that I will have completed 40 issues. It's a job I have enjoyed doing it and I still enjoy it, but I have run out of ideas and the magazine badly needs some new blood. Could it be yours? Think about it.

The views and opinions expressed in this magazine are solely the views and opinions of the people who write the articles, and those views and opinions should never be taken as, nor be presumed to be, the official view of, nor views supported by, either IAM RoadSmart or the KAMG.

Every article that appears in this magazine has been written expressly for this magazine and has not appeared in any other print or electronic medium before, and none of the material in this magazine may be reprinted elsewhere without the express permission of the KAMG.

Everything is done to ensure the correctness and accuracy of the editorial content of the magazine, but neither the editor nor the KAMG accepts liability for information errors, omissions or typesetting errors.

Riders is the place for every single member, or associate member, of KAMG to say what he/she thinks about anything and everything connected with riding and driving and the KAMG. Every article submitted will be published (provided it is legal) and no opinions or views will be changed or cut out. The magazine is apolitical, but criticism or praise of politicians of any political colour is welcome if the criticism, or praise, is about the politician's actions or views on road safety, roads or some other aspect of transport.

Please submit articles for publication, or letters to the editor, to the email address of the editor (see page 30). Please send pictures for publication as separate file attachments to an email if possible, rather than embedding them in the email content, and ensure that the pictures are of the highest resolution possible. Please do not send information or pictures via Facebook.

MAGAZINE DESIGN AND LAYOUT
BY JOHN GARDINER

VIEW FROM THE CHAIR

February has come around quickly again this year, and as the nights get lighter I hope to get out and about on two wheels. Colin and myself have been keeping Boots' tyre van busy recently as on our last three ride-outs we've both had punctures from the dirty roads.

Behind the scenes, we have all been working hard to get this year's events in hand for the start of biking season. Now we have a new Chief Observer, Nic Walker, and we wish her every success in her new role. Our thanks to outgoing CO, Colin Billings, for all his hard work in fulfilling this challenging role for the last three years. It is very much appreciated by us all.

The CIO (Charitable Incorporated Organisation) arrangements are in full swing and both Nigel Clibbens and Matt Pounds are still liaising with IAM and the charity commission on our behalf. We are nearly there!

I am still in shock at the latest invitation from the IAM for me to attend a Buckingham Palace garden party for

an audience with the Duke of Kent, who is one of the IAM patrons. It's the IAM's 70th birthday this year and I am honoured to be asked, and I keep picturing Terry Friday looking down on us and smiling. He would have been so proud that KAMG, the first ever motorcycle-only IAM group, has been invited to attend. The KAMG is thriving and staying strong thanks to a team of great people behind the scenes who bring it all together, but some members have decided to stand aside and pass the gauntlet on this year, so we are looking to fill some key roles within the group. Please bring your enthusiasm to us and join the team to help us continue to grow and be as successful as we are. With the AGM approaching fast we need your help to fill the following positions: magazine editor, group night organiser, and regalia sales organiser. Please contact myself or any committee member if you think you could give some time, no matter how much or how little, to help the group.

Tina Underwood

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TEST PASSES

Since the last edition



Michael Harper receiving his Advanced Rider F1RST qualification from his observer Thomas Kempster



David Foster receiving his Advanced Rider qualification from his observer Dave Murphy



David Howard receiving his Masters re-qualification from mentor Trevor Shearsmith



Richard Hillier receiving his Advanced Rider F1RST qualification from his observer John Roberts



Stephen Port receiving his National Observer qualification from membership secretary David Howard



Bob Phillips receiving his National Observer qualification from chief observer Colin Billings

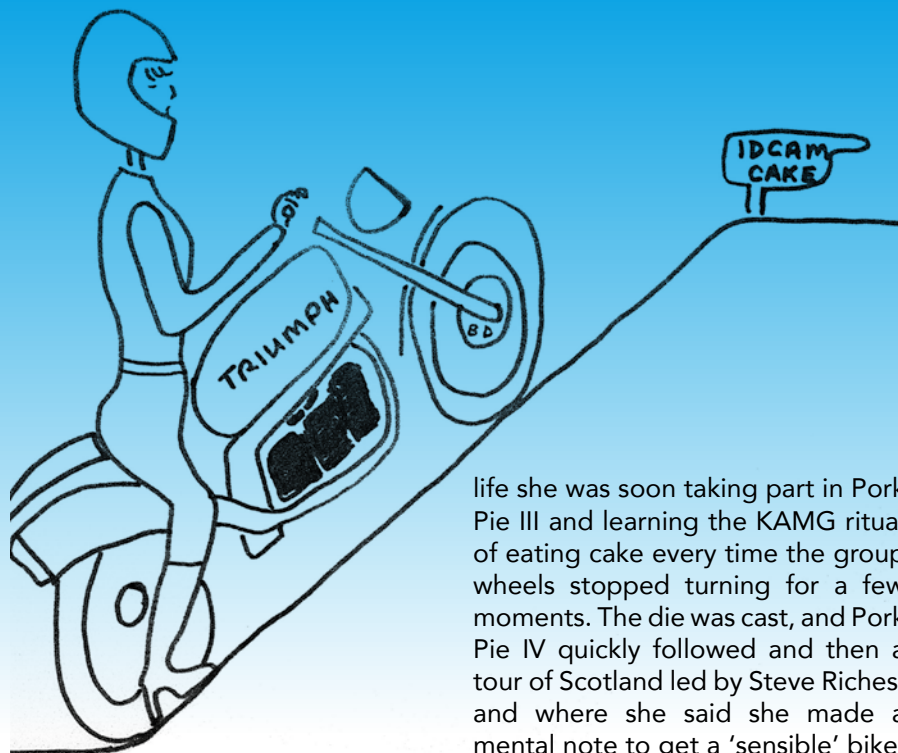
AT LAST!



Ever since I joined KAMG nearly twenty years ago there has been an oft stated hope that the group would attract some younger members and perhaps even some female members. That's not to say that there were no ladies or people under 50 years old back then, but they were thin on the ground. And yet, when you see pictures of the early days of the club, when it was formed 46 years ago, everyone in the pictures seems to be young and many of them are young women. Despite the obvious intention to attract younger riders nothing much happened, and the old greybeards carried on meeting and lamenting the lack of young members but not obviously doing much to change the situation.

Then, fortunately for us, a rider joined a few years ago who was not only young she was a woman too. A win double!

And now that lady, Nicola Walker, is the group's new Chief Observer. Ta Da! That's a win 'treble' or an accumulator or something. Anyway, we win.

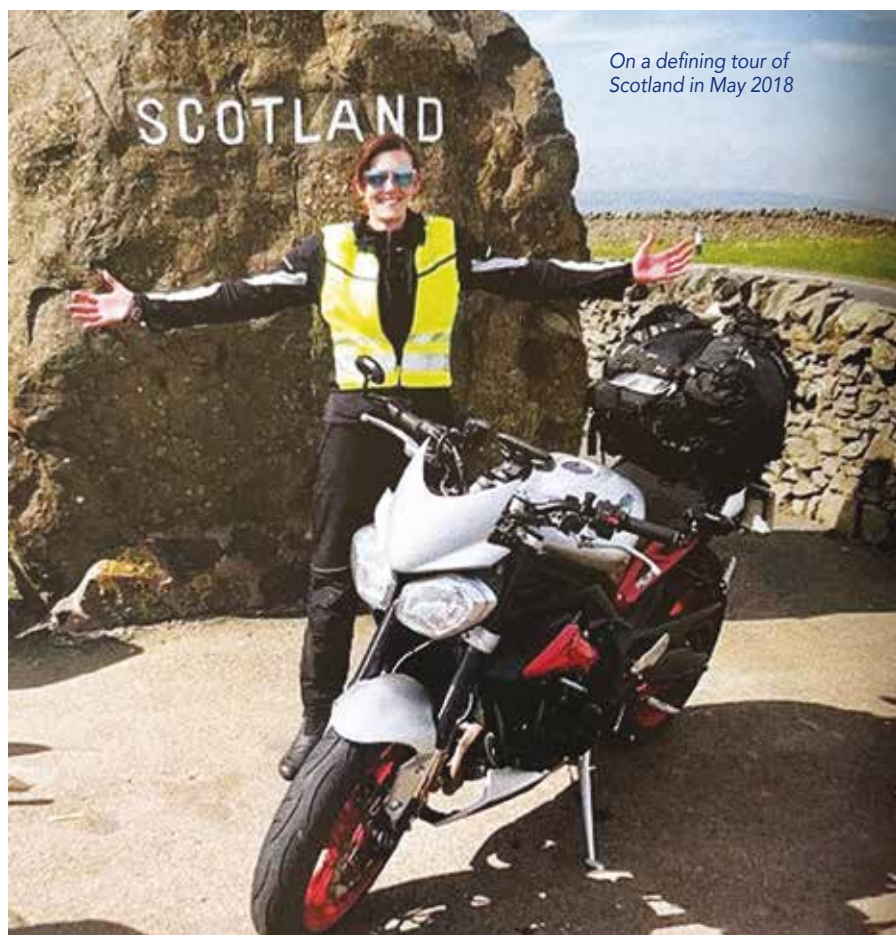


life she was soon taking part in Pork Pie III and learning the KAMG ritual of eating cake every time the group wheels stopped turning for a few moments. The die was cast, and Pork Pie IV quickly followed and then a tour of Scotland led by Steve Riches, and where she said she made a mental note to get a 'sensible' bike. She now rides a Tiger 900.

Nicola Thorpe joined KAMG in August 2017. She was then riding a Triumph Street Triple, which she had owned for about a year and in which time she says she had ridden for "just shy of 2500 miles." Within three months of joining KAMG this had risen to 4500 and it's been going up at an alarming rate ever since then. Her first taste of KAMG was the IDCAM in August 2017, where she was greeted by "a biker dressed predominantly in orange," [?] who told her to "point it uphill." Despite this oblique introduction to KAMG

The motorcycle thing all started in South Africa where she spent her childhood. She was born in England, but her family moved to South Africa when she was very young and they lived near to the famous Grand Prix circuit at Kyalami, and that was where she got her first taste for motorbikes. Her own first 'bike' was only a 125cc scooter, which she rode to school against parental advice, but the seed was sown.

She came back to England as a grown-up and as an investment banker no





Nicola Thorpe receiving her Advanced Rider award from her observer Ian Walker

less, which impressed me enormously when she told me because I don't really know what one of them is, and anyway I thought they were either fat old blokes or drunk young blokes. Well, apparently they're not! While investment banking during the day she managed to pass her Direct Access Test in Vauxhall in her spare time, and that led her to the IAM and the IAM led her and her Street Triple to KAMG together.

Since then, from that novitiate IDCAM day nine years ago, it's



Nicola Walker receiving Masters with Distinction award in March 2024 from husband Ian Walker

been a rapid climb up the KAMG ladder. First there was Advanced Rider status in 2018, then Master Rider status *with Distinction* in 2024, followed by a National Observer qualification, also in 2024, and now two years later she is KAMG's Chief Observer. And while this has all been going on she has changed her name to Walker. How did that happen? When did she have the time?

Exciting times are ahead.

NF



Somewhat distractedly receiving her national observer qualification in 2024



Hannah Perry receives her Advanced award from her observer Nicola last October



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FOG IT! AGAIN!!

*Colin Billings repeats himself**

"Between the greyness of Thurrock and the warmth of a Peterborough hotel there was a lot of water to be crossed, and water to be absorbed too. Truly biblical amounts of water, actually. Water that came down, water that rose up, and deep water that flowed across . . . across everything. Water that found completely new directions from which to assault us, continuously, torrentially and, above all, coldly."

That's how the weather on the morning of March 23rd, the first morning of the Peterborough Training Weekend, was described in the May 2023 issue of *Riders*, and this short article has been put together following that appalling wet weather, when a number of riders were complaining about their lack of vision due to fogged visors.

The following hints and tips are not intended to teach anyone to 'suck eggs', but to help inform everyone of some of the things that some of the more experienced (long in the tooth) riders have learnt over the years to help keep visors fog free during 'inclement' weather conditions. You will be glad to know that rubbing tobacco on the inside of the visor isn't one of them. That was, believe it or not, an age-old remedy.

In the same way that we perform a POWDERS check on our motorcycles, it is well worth checking our helmets on a regular basis too. Keeping the lining clean not only

makes the helmet more pleasant to wear, but a dirty lining will also attract moisture, which is best avoided. Using a proprietary cleaner on the outer shell will give you an opportunity for a close inspection of the surface and also help provide a water repellent surface (I use a silicone-based furniture polish). The less water that sits on the helmet the less chance of the inner lining getting wet. When you buy a new helmet, with most of the better brands you also get a small bottle of silicone (which I'm sure you all use!). It's provided to help maintain the condition of the rubber seal around the front aperture, and this in turn helps to ensure a good seal. Where is your silicone?

Cleaning and maintaining the visor is no different from looking after a pair of spectacles or the windscreen of a car. We need to look after the cleanliness of the visor both inside and out because moisture is attracted to dirt and grime. And while visors are generally manufactured from a fairly durable plastic, the more care we take when cleaning them the longer will be their useful life. Incidentally, how often do you change the visor on your helmet? Using a microfibre cloth and water to clean the visor is ideal; the water helping to loosen and lift the dirt to avoid scratching the surface. Personally, I use a proprietary rain dispersant on the outside of my visor most of the time, I feel that it helps build a protective layer and if there is a light shower it will cause no problem.



Pinlocks provide a double-glazing effect and are a wonderful invention, although I've sometimes heard complaints that they don't work. If yours is not working correctly, it's most likely that it's not fitted correctly. When fitted, the silicone seal on the pinlock should be in full contact with the visor all the way around, if this is not the case the pins need to be adjusted. Something that is frequently misunderstood about the pins is the fact that they are not round – *at the point of contact with the pinlock they are actually cams, and thus rotating them will increase or decrease the pressure on the pinlock in order to provide the best level of seal.* (Google: pinlock.com/support or search YouTube where there are umpteen videos.)



Medieval non-misting helmet

Apart from keeping our kit clean and well maintained, how else can we avoid fogging? First, the dryer we can keep the inside of the helmet the better. The problem is often that we get a bit of fogging at the start of the trip and we then lift the visor to help clear it. Unfortunately, that is a very short-term solution, as then the inside of the helmet becomes wet and causes even more fogging. Therefore, if it's raining when you are about to start the journey, first get fully dressed *inside the house* in the dry, before venturing out into the wet, and this includes putting your helmet on in the house too. And also allow a few extra minutes for the temperature inside your helmet to balance. Likewise, if you are having a long stop while on the journey, avoid removing your helmet unless you are inside, and be sure to dry it off as soon as possible to minimise any wetting of the lining. When stopping for just a few minutes – say for fuel – and if your visor is fog free, keep your helmet on, as this will help to avoid any wetting of the inside. If, like me, you wear spectacles, ensure that these too are clean, avoid exposing them to the wet, and allow a few extra minutes for temperatures to equalise.

Ventilation is key to keeping a visor fog-free, as the fogging is simply condensation formed by the variance

between the inside and outside temperatures. Open the vents so that air flows through your helmet. Most helmets have a visor position that is just an opening of a few millimetres that is ideal for keeping the air flowing without getting the inside wet in light showers; however, it usually breaks the seal at the top of the visor allowing water to enter from above and run down the inside of the visor (a good reason for discouraging water to sit on the outside of the helmet).

Was your helmet supplied with an anti-mist nose cover thingy? It's probably in the same 'safe place' as the bottle of silicone. It's designed to deflect the moisture of your breath away from the visor and up towards the exhaust vents. Pulling a scarf or neck tube up over your nose and mouth also helps achieve the same thing (unless you wear spectacles). Most helmets now have a wind protector under the chin that, in extreme cases, you might try removing. It might not be so warm and cosy if you do, but the increased air flow could make a big difference. Also, if you have an adjustable screen on your motorcycle, fiddle about with its positioning to establish the best position for that much needed air flow.

I'm not suggesting this is the definitive guide to keeping your visor fog free, and I'm sure many will have other tips, but I hope it might help. More important than any of the above, be sure that if your visor does fog, you stop somewhere safe and deal with it. No one will think the worse of you for doing so.

SIDE BAR

It is really useful to carry a small bag containing the following to help your visor to stay fog free:

- Microfibre towel kept in a plastic Ziplock bag so that when it's wet it doesn't contaminate the dry items.
- A small spray bottle with very dilute soapy water.
- A bottle of rain dispersant spray.
- Two soft dry buffing clothes (one is not enough for a holiday trip).
- A bottle of silicone.
- Spare 'Pinlock' pins.

As a spectacle wearer I also carry:

- A spray bottle of lens cleaner.
- Two lens clothes.
- A spare pair of glasses (they don't help with fogging, but they sure help with seeing if you break or lose your main pair).

**This excellent advice by Colin Billings appeared in Riders three years ago. But as we have had – and by the time you read this we may still be having – the wettest winter on record, with an unbroken run of 37 days of continuous rain at the time of writing, we thought it was good advice worth reprinting. Ed.*

2025 JUST ANOTHER YEAR



Chief Observer Colin Billings's report for 2025

As we reach that point in the year when many of us start looking forward to warmer, drier days, it's also a natural moment to reflect on the year behind us. For me, that means reviewing what our Observers, Associates and Full Members have achieved. Inevitably, much of this involves statistics, which are useful, but which never tell the whole story.

KAMG currently has 47 registered National Observers, although not all are actively observing, and for entirely understandable reasons. We are a volunteer organisation, and life's demands shift constantly. Retirement, increased work responsibilities, family commitments, illness and injury all play their part. Taking this into account, 39 of our Observers were active in 2025 and together they supported 154 different riders on 706 observed rides in the last year.

Who We Observed

- Associates 88
- Full Members: 42
- Trainee Observers: 5
- Taster Rides: 19

Total: 154 different riders

How That Translated into Rides

- Associates: 528
- Full Members: 137
- Trainee Observers: 22
- Taster Rides: 19

Total: 706 rides

Across the year, those figures equate to an average of just over 18 rides per observer, with 27 observers completing more than 10 rides. These figures also include newly qualified observers who only contributed towards the end of the year.

Putting the Numbers into Perspective

Each observed ride involves two riders and two motorcycles, so the true level of commitment is doubled. An average ride lasts around 3.5 hours and covers approximately 50 miles door to door. On that basis, our members collectively covered around 70,600 miles and dedicated 4,942 hours to training – that's the equivalent of 618, eight-hour days.

From a motorcycle perspective, that mileage represents almost twelve sets of tyres and likely twelve services. Oh, and somewhere in the region of 6,400 litres of fuel too.

From a rider perspective, assuming just one cup of tea or coffee per ride, which I feel is somewhat conservative, that's 247 litres consumed in total – or roughly ten full fuel tanks. I'll leave the calculations for bacon sandwiches, sausage rolls and cake to your imagination.

When viewed as a whole like this, the scale of our commitment to safer riding becomes clear. More than 70,000 miles were ridden by just under 200 individuals, and that figure reflects only the formal training. Our end-of-month Training and Social Rides – attended by 124 members – add an estimated 25,000 miles more. In total that is almost four times around the world.

On a personal note, I will be ending my term as Chief Observer at the AGM in March. It has been an interesting and rewarding three years, and I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Observer Team for all their efforts and support. I also want to thank the observers, who qualified during my time as CO, for their commitment, and finally I'd like to thank the members of the Training Sub-Committee (TSC) and the Group Committee for all their support, and I hope I leave the Group's training as strong as it was when I began. I am confident that our new Chief Observer, Nicola Walker, will bring fresh ideas and renewed enthusiasm to the role and I wish her and all continuing members of the training team every success and look forward to playing my part.

HEAD FOR THE HILLS

Or better still make for the mountains . . . Now

Brexit caused a bit of stir one way and another ten years ago, and its noise rumbles on still. But wherever you stood or stand on that issue there is one thing that we must all agree on, and it's something Europe has that we don't have, yet it's something we undeniably need in our two-wheeled lives – it is *big, grown-up mountains*. Proper motorbike mountains. Our weedy little home-grown 'mountains' and valleys are really no more than molehills and divots on a golf course when compared to the monster European stuff. European mountains were designed from the outset to be ridden up and down on motorbikes. They have no other practical purpose that I can see. They were put there long, long ago and were told to wait for motorbikes to be invented. And here we are, at last!

It was because of some unseen mountains in Europe that I rediscovered motorbikes twenty years ago. It was while sitting in the warm sun in a café sipping coffee in a town somewhere in the French Alps, on a car touring holiday, that I decided to get a motorbike again. It had been twenty-five years since I had owned a bike before, after the usual family/work induced gap, and I sat there that day and watched a constant stream of bikes coming down into the town from the surrounding high mountains and I so much wanted to be one of those riders. Oddly I cannot remember exactly where that was but I can still picture every detail of the scene perfectly and have never forgotten the feeling. And so it was, a year later, and within two weeks of getting motorbike once again, that The Lady Pillion and I were off to France. Since then we have been many times and we always aim for the high mountains in The Alps, The Pyrenees or The Dolomites.

Riding in the high mountains is always good for all the obvious reasons, like the views and the way in which it tests your ability, but most of all because it is just plain, straightforward exciting. and you can't do it here.



So, where to go? Well, in truth, it doesn't really matter: France, Spain, Italy, Austria Switzerland, they have all got high mountains and good roads and good food and they all expect to entertain lots people on motorbikes in the summer months. You will be welcome wherever you go, and it's virtually certain that the weather will be good too. If you want to ride the famous passes, that wish will dictate your destination, but I wouldn't really recommend that approach. Everyone has heard of the famous passes like the Stelvio on the Italian Swiss border along with all those passes like the Col du Tourmalet, the Col de Iseran and the Col du Galibier made famous by the Tour de France, but there are hundreds of other high passes or cols, and I do mean literally *hundreds* of others, and 321 of them are higher than the highest road in the UK. In fact, the very highest pass is the 9390ft Col La Bonette, which is well over *three times higher* than anything here at home.



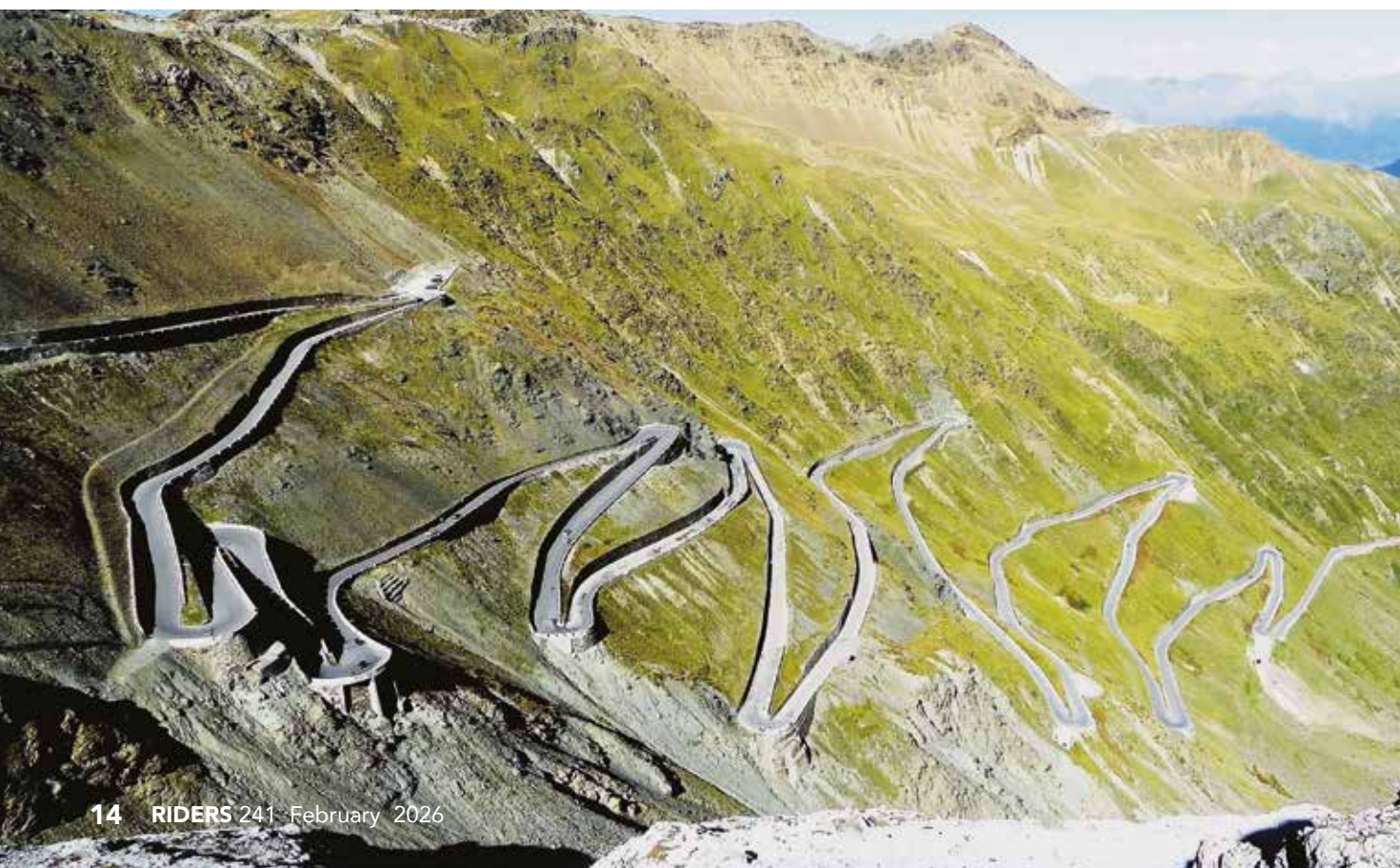


Personally, I wouldn't recommend riding the Stelvio unless you particularly want to tick that tourist box. Its fame can be its downfall as an enjoyable ride. You may be lucky, but it can sometimes be a very crowded pass with heavy traffic of cars, cyclists, motorbikes and buses, all of which can make it dangerous and difficult and often negate the point of riding it.

Over many trips we have found that the best 'tours' are spent in one place rather than actually touring from place to place. Choose a spot that is strategically positioned so that a number of good rides are on the doorstep and you can make a day's riding as long or as short as you like. I have learnt too, that while it's often tempting, when surrounded by big mountains, to plan epic, multi-pass, riding days, but it is also quite important not to bite off more than you can chew. Riding up a high mountain pass with endless hairpins one after another will be great fun (there's 48 on the Stelvio I believe), however, it will also be physically and mentally tiring; much more tiring than you might think.



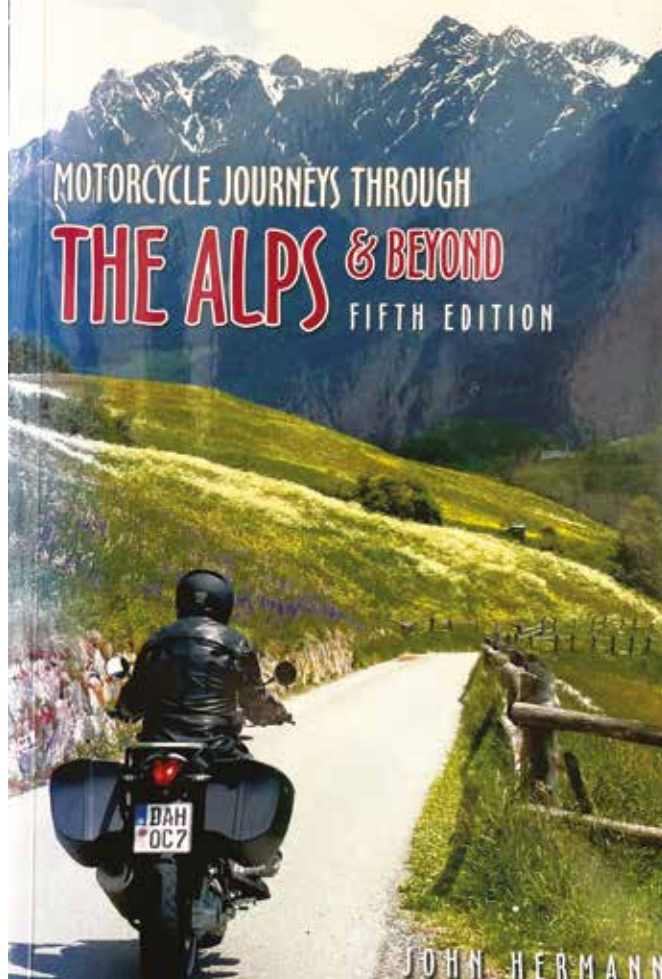
We have stayed several times in the small town of Guillestre in the Hautes Alpes in France fairly close to the Italian border. It is, I think, the perfect spot. There are a number of the well-known high passes within easy reach – the Galibier, the Izoard, the Lauteret and the Col de la Bonette – but more important there are also many deserted anonymous but wonderful wiggly riding roads high in the mountains. After all, you're in The Alps where every road is a great riding road, and one reason for that is that despite being covered in snow for several months of each year the road surfaces are good, so you are unlikely to come swooping round some mountain bend to find a bloody great pothole leering at you in mid corner when you are at maximum lean. It's not Kent.



If staying in The Pyrenees is your bag, we have stayed in small town of Bagnère-de-Bigorre on the French side at the foot of the Col du Tourmalet, which will give you easy access to all of the fantastic roads in the high mountain roads on either side of the border.

It's February now and it's time to get the maps out and plan your trip. And the very first thing you must do is buy a copy of a book called *Motorcycle Journeys Through the Alps & Beyond*. I have mentioned this brilliant book before in *Riders* and I cannot recommend it too highly. It is a truly excellent book that has been reprinted five times, although it is now sadly out of print. However, I have checked and found that there are still plenty of copies available on-line. It would be my *Desert Island Discs* book. It has led me on so many wonderful journeys in the mountains of Europe. It is full of detailed ride plans with maps and recommendations on where to eat and where to stay. It covers The Alps, The Pyrenees, The Dolomites, The Picos and even Corsica. It is a goldmine. It is written by an American called John Hermann who has ridden an estimated million miles on the eighteen different BMWs he has owned. And he says that about a third of those miles have been ridden in Europe. Get a copy now and make for the mountains.

NF



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THE DIRTY TRUTH

Dominic Barham comes clean



'Ride Squeaky Clean' started in 2018, up until then I had been a chef all my life, working at the top of the hospitality industry and doing rather well, due to my passion, determination and love for the job, and perhaps also because of having mild OCD problems [obsessive compulsive disorder]. I've always looked after my own bikes and cars meticulously and I take a lot of pride in their appearance. My reasoning is that if you look after them, they will look after you, and your pocket. This was so important to me that I would go and work with a couple of car detailers for free, as I had done in kitchens previously, just to learn and be trained in the correct way of doing things. This is how I live my life too!

One day, one of my good friends, who is an excellent motorbike mechanic, approached me saying that he'd been asked on

a number of occasions by his customers, if he could recommend a motorbike valeting company, and he asked if I would like to clean a customer's bike for him. I was reluctant to do so as I had previously only ever done my own bikes or the bikes of friends and family. But I did it and the customer was so happy with the result that he assumed that it had been professionally cleaned. From this experience, and from many others of my mechanic friend's customers, I learnt the value of my detailed cleans and protection, and so I decided to open my own business.

As a business we are passionate about our high quality detailing and protection packages, which include corrosion protection and ceramic coatings. These high-grade protection packages give fantastic results and the majority of our customers are

returning customers who want us to maintain their bike's protection for them. The products that we use to detail and finish the bikes are used because they are the best in class and because they do the right job of protecting each specific area of the bike. The ceramic coatings we offer create a strong, durable layer to protect against light scratches, UV rays, salt corrosion, acid rain and harsh chemicals. This protection package is hydrophobic and resistant to contaminants, which makes it a worthwhile investment for riders who want to keep their bikes looking new for longer and which also makes them easier to clean and maintain.

Our services are mobile or studio based, so we can travel to you at your place of work or home or you can come to our studio near Brands Hatch, which is cheaper.

Before



After



This is how we recommend you maintain and quick clean your bike:

1. Ensure bike is cold and degrease oily areas and the chain areas (if applicable).
2. Then spray snow foam
3. Allow it to work and dissipate.
4. Rinse with clean cold water.
5. Using a dedicated bike wash (e.g. Clean My Ride) loaded on a soft brush
6. Agitate over the bike.
7. Rinse with clean cold water.
8. Now clean the bike with a shampoo and agitate with a soft microfibre mitt using the two-bucket method.
9. Rinse with clean cold water thoroughly.
10. Dry with drying towel and blow dryer, if possible.
11. If required, polish all paintwork and apply silicone spray to plastics, ensuring that you keep it well away from tyres, foot pegs, brake discs and calipers.
12. Admire your bike!

See Squeaky Clean advertisement on page 18

Before

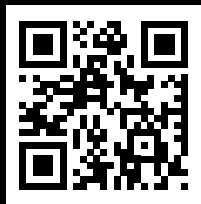


After



Finished and clean . . .





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RIDE ON RIDERS

We need more stuff

The KAMG has had a club magazine since it started 46 years ago. Since then, the ways in which we communicate have changed dramatically. Today it is assumed not only that everyone will have a mobile 'phone', but that that 'phone' will be an all-singing, all-dancing thing with the computing power of NASA. Yet it is very easy to forget that it was only a very few years ago that a state-of-the-art mobile phone was probably made by Nokia and was just that – a phone, albeit one that was not hard-wired to a house. Today the mobile phone enables everyone to tell everyone else, *and to show everyone else*, what he or she is eating for breakfast and to do that while the eating is actually in progress. To my amazement, there are also people who seem interested to know what someone else is eating for breakfast. Often someone they barely know or perhaps don't know at all.

In this blizzard of thin utterly meaningless digital messages zinging back and forth through the ether you may ask why there is any need for an old-fashioned paper magazine like *Riders* to continue. Good question.

You hear it said today that everyone gets news and information on-line and the printed word is dead or dying, yet that is demonstrably untrue. You only have to walk into a branch of WH Smith's to see that is untrue. The enormous number of magazines that are produced daily, weekly and monthly are proof of that. What's more, the number of publications is not shrinking, it's growing; and one of the reasons is that the same advanced technology that enables you to tell the world that your porridge this morning has been made with non-milk milk, has also enabled magazines and newspapers to be formed entirely in a small laptop computer in an office, or on a park bench or indeed anywhere else, and pinged to a printer who will turn it into a proper paper magazine.

Ah, you might say, but why then bother to turn it into a paper magazine at all? Why not leave it as an on-line digital thing? Well, because an on-line digital thing has no lasting worth; it has no presence; it is not seen as a properly constructed entity; it's just a cheap short cut; it doesn't actually exist; it's just a loose collection of bits and pieces

floating about in space. In fact, 'on-line' is a medium entirely suited to communications about the breakfast habits of the sad. If you subscribe on-line to any current newspaper or magazine you will know exactly what I mean. I do subscribe to a daily newspaper on-line and every day I skim through it I feel cheated. What value does it have? None. 'Reading' on-line, you don't move through the 'paper' scanning each page for stories that interest you, instead you flit between a loose assembly of random headlines on the screen. Contrast that with reading a hard copy of that same publication. For example, you may specifically want to read about Arsenal's latest defeat/victory and while doing that, incidentally, on the same spread your eye catches another headline about, say, cricket or rugby, which you may only be marginally interested in and which you wouldn't have seen on-line, but in the hard copy you notice the piece and read it too. The experience of handling a real, tangible magazine or newspaper, as opposed to an on-line one, is so much more involving and satisfying because all of your senses are active as you react with a real three-dimensional thing.

People do undoubtedly develop a relationship with hard copies of publications, which is absolutely crucial. Many years ago, I was conducting some market research for the *Daily Mail* group at a time when newspapers had far fewer pages than they have today and when it was common, therefore, for households to have two or even three different newspapers delivered each day. However, the number of delivered copies was falling and we wanted to know why. It was because as the paging increased there was less need to take more than one newspaper, but we found that it was quite difficult for people to drop even their second or third choice papers, and it was summed up perfectly by a woman in a focus group, who was trying to explain why her newspaper was important to her. She looked forward to connecting with her newspaper each day "A paper's your friend isn't it," she said. In other words, she had a direct relationship with her newspaper; it wasn't like any other product that she bought that was exactly the same each time she bought it. No, every day her newspaper was totally different from the day



before, every single thing about it had changed, yet it was exactly the same. It was like a friend. It had a personality.

I have never forgotten that. And it is why I believe that a hard copy of *Riders* is a very important connection between KAMG members and the group's centre. I think it's too easy for those who are at the group's observing centre to forget that KAMG is much more than a motorcycle training vehicle, it's a 'club' and for we ordinary 'club' members *Riders* is tangible evidence that we belong to something even if we are not always able to attend many or indeed any of its functions or ride-outs.

When *Riders* arrives in the post you can't completely ignore it. It's physically there in front of you, and it says you belong to something; it says *you matter*. You'll flick through it and I hope that something will catch your eye. Whereas, if *Riders* was just another email with an attachment, I suggest you might not even open it. It would be so easy to ignore it amongst all the other dross that is fed into our email 'inboxes' every day.

But!

Yes, now comes the inevitable 'but': but *Riders* needs words. Unlike *The Daily Mail* or *Motorcycle News* that have oodles of professional writers, *Riders* is a club magazine that is not only for its members, it is written entirely by its members about the things that *they* have done or the things that *they* think are important and, unfortunately, members' words have been in short supply lately. *Riders* simply needs more stuff.

We must do all we can to make sure that *Riders* remains a continuing and integral part of KAMG. And for that to happen we need your stories. You'd be surprised how interesting you can make almond milk porridge sound, in a motorcycling kind of way, obviously. So don't put your breakfast on Facebook, put it in *Riders*. Don't worry about whether or not you've got a degree in English, just send words in any old order. Whatever you send and however you send it, it will be decoded. And always send pictures. We can never have too many pictures. Although, please make sure they are copyright free. That's very important.

NF

Rutland Water

May 2 – 4th (Bank Holiday)

Now full. Register your interest by email in case of cancellations, or see further running of this event in Aug

Wales

May 25th to 29th

Mid week 5 Day Tour

A medium level tour around the Brecon Beacons and Snowdonia. 2 nights in each hotel, total of 1000 miles. Leaving from Paddock Wood and returning via the M25 through Essex. The scenery and stops are great.

6 Space available, £640/£660

Lakes, North Pennines and Northumberland.

June 6th to 14th - 9 Day Tour

Now full. Quiet, rugged, beautiful challenging empty roads. This is an outstanding part of the country to ride a motorcycle around. North England is such an underrated part of the world, try it and you

will be back. 200 miles only on motorway (Peterborough) then across country on A and B roads.

Single £1140, Double £1190

Yorkshire Dales and Moors

June 25th to 28th

4 Day Tour

A great ride up to Yorkshire, in the middle of the country. A Day around the Dales and a day around the Moors.

6 Spaces available.
Single occupancy £440/£460

Southern Scotland

August 15th to 22nd

8 Day Tour

A medium level tour around the Southern Scotland and Northern England. If you have never been to Southern Scotland its an absolutely great 1700 mile tour of which only 200 miles on the motorway. There is an option to go into Beamish Living Museum, great sweeping roads, empty most of the time, great cafés, wonderful



MotoRoadTrip

views, what is not to like.
1 space available.

Single £1150, Double £1200

Rutland Water

Aug 29th – 31st (Bank Holiday)

Rutland Water is a gentle 3 day tour staying in the same hotel for both nights. It's an easy but still very enjoyable tour for all levels of riders. It's the last one of the year to Rutland.

It's a great tour, or a relaxed practice.

Cost for rooms £280/£300
13 spaces available.

Day 1-180 miles, Day 2-138 miles, Day 3-180 miles

Scotland Tours to North Coast 500, Fort William (Mull and Applecross) and Oban (Skyefall and Loch Rannock) have been cancelled due to the exceptional cost of accommodation in Scotland.

I will be running other trips during the year, please see the website for further details and availability

www.motoroadtrip.co.uk

07786 592845

steveriches12@gmail.com

INFORMATION, POSITION, SPEED, GEAR, ANXIETY?

"Today, driving involves a level of permanent anxiety, where you must be constantly alert to unwittingly committing some small infraction, then [being] fined with no allowance for context or extenuating circumstances. Challenging or reversing a bad decision is almost impossible."

That quotation came from an article in *The Spectator* a couple of weeks ago, and it's something that I have written about in this magazine before – namely, that we now need to spend far too much time worrying about the irrelevant, when we are on the road, rather than concentrating on what matters.

For nearly thirty years I drove or rode a 100-mile round trip to and from central London every day. Admittedly, I haven't done that for a long time, but I do still occasionally ride and drive there, and although I know London very well and know where I am going, I do find that today I spend too much time worrying about whether I



might inadvertently venture into a cycle lane, a bus lane, a yellow box junction, a low traffic neighbourhood or exceed the ridiculous 20mph speed limit.

When I was driving to work every day, I was able to devote all of my concentration to the things that mattered; well, actually, to the *only* things that mattered – namely, not hitting anything or anybody. And I was able to do that because I didn't have to waste any concentration on the other stuff. I knew every inch of the journey intimately, which meant that I was always, without thinking, automatically in the right position at multi-lane junctions or at big roundabouts like Hyde Park Corner and Marble Arch,

where being in the correct lane early matters. If you get in the wrong lane at some of the big complicated roundabouts it can be very 'difficult' to correct things safely in what are best described as 'competitive' London driving conditions, where changing lanes is frowned upon by the regulars.

When I was a daily London driver or rider, it was interesting to notice the difference between the behaviour of we weekday drive-to-work drivers, who knew where we were going, and the weekend visitor traffic that didn't know. When driving in London at the weekend back then, I was always (well, nearly always) more tolerant of



Pothole damage

the obvious weekend drivers and foreign-plated drivers because I recognised that they would be driving in a complicated area that they didn't know. Now I am in that position myself, but it's worse today because there are so many more ways in which I can infringe some law or rule by crossing a line painted on the road.

And that's my point, and that's the point of *The Spectator* journalist – we shouldn't be spending great chunks of our limited concentration fund worrying about doing 21mph with 2cm of a tyre in a bus lane while being policed and judged by a camera; rather we should be fully concentrating on not ramming a light-jumping cyclist or a meandering FaceBooking pedestrian. And all of that counts double at night in the rain when the ridiculous lines on the road, the light-jumping moron on the bicycle and the stupid pedestrian are in-bloody-visible!

But it's not just in high density traffic where a big chunk of our finite limit of concentration is being wasted as we look for daft and often unnecessary artificial hazards; no, it is happening out in the sticks too. We have long ranted in this magazine about the condition of the roads in Kent; in fact, ten years ago, in the first two issues for which I was editor, I wrote two articles about the roads, including an interview with the bloke at Kent County Council whose job it was then, and still is, to keep them repaired.

Outside of towns it is not the maze of white lines that divert our concentration, it's the holes in the roads. Millions of them. They are deep, dangerous and distracting. The very wet winter we have had this year has made country roads worse than I have ever seen them, which means that driving is like ski slaloming as we swerve round truly

horrific holes. Consequently, this means that too much of our attention is taken up with short range road scanning for holes that can do expensive damage to our vehicles, rather than long range scanning for traffic 'situations'. It's very difficult to IPSPA your way perfectly across the landscape when at any minute you could disappear from view down some pothole that wasn't there yesterday. I know that the self-righteous among you will tell me that I shouldn't be 'swerving' round holes in the road, and of course you are right, I shouldn't be doing it; but I have had my share of expensive motor and motorcycling contact with potholes, and so I try to avoid them, and that involves too much short-range scanning at the expense of 'proper' long-range scanning. It's necessary, yet it is a misuse of our concentration and attention. At least on two wheels pothole avoidance is easier than on four, although the consequences of hitting a hole on a bike are likely to cost more than money.

Whether we are worried about teetering on the brink of illegality if we encroach minimally on to one of those arbitrarily painted white lines in a town or we are swerving round an archaeological dig on a country road, my contention is that we are spending too much of our time and concentration on the wrong things. And there's nothing we can do about it. Sad, isn't it?

NF



KAMG PILLION WORKSHOP

Who is it for, and what does it cover?

Sue Billings explains

The KAMG pillion workshop was introduced in 2024 and it is intended to be for riders *and* for passengers. It is designed to help everyone develop the skills and confidence needed for safe, enjoyable twoup riding by:

- Supporting riders who are new to carrying a pillion and helping them to understand the adjustments they need to make to their motorcycle's setup, and the changes that they themselves may need to make to their riding style.
- Emphasising the importance of clear communication with the person perched behind them.
- Helping pillion passengers better understand their role in making a ride smooth and safe beyond simply following the instruction to "Tuck in behind me and lean the same way I do in corners."
- Providing a relaxed environment for riders and pillions to ask questions, to share experiences, and to exchange practical tips for keeping both parties comfortable, confident and happy on rides.
- Offering hands-on practice in a low-risk, supportive environment, including mounting and dismounting technique, slowspeed manoeuvring with a passenger, and by improving control when pulling away, turning and stopping with additional weight on the bike – even the lightest pillion can affect handling.
- Refreshing and refining the skills of experienced pillion riders

What does the workshop include?

The workshop runs for approximately 2 to 2½ hours and explores such things as how a motorcycle's centre of gravity can shift markedly when carrying a rider and a pillion plus luggage. Also covered is a demonstration of the changes as you load your bike with additional weight, and the way in which that additional weight — particularly over the rear wheel — affects braking distances, acceleration, and also how it affects the turning characteristics of the bike. There is also a discussion about motorcycle manufacturers' stated weight limits when compared with real world of two-up touring.

From there, the course moves on to preparing a motorcycle for pillion riding. This covers potential adjustments to suspension and tyre pressures, mirror alignment, and the value of consulting a qualified technician who can advise on the ideal setup for your specific bike.

Once the technicalities have been covered, the course focuses on the riding style changes that are needed in order to maintain a smooth, safe ride with a pillion. Communication plays a central role here, and this part of the workshop often sparks lively stories about what can happen when communication breaks down — even with rider and passenger using intercoms.

Also discussed are the increased risks associated with poor communication: risks such as a bike being dropped if the rider isn't ready for the pillion to mount or dismount, or a pillion being caught offguard by a sudden stop or



sharp bend – many riders and pillions have experienced the helmet ‘tap’ caused by sudden unexpected braking!

Participants then have the chance to practise riding with their pillion in a safe, open area. Exercises include Uturns, slalom riding, braking, and pulling away at junctions. Then, when everyone feels comfortable, the workshop ends with an optional group road ride using the marker system. This relaxed outing usually ends with lunch or tea, and offers another opportunity to share experiences, ask questions, and to build confidence in riding with, or as, a pillion.



Left: "Tuck in behind me and lean the same way I do in corners."

Right: "... a motorcycle's centre of gravity can shift markedly when carrying a rider and a pillion plus luggage"

The course is on Saturday April 11th at Ebbsfleet.

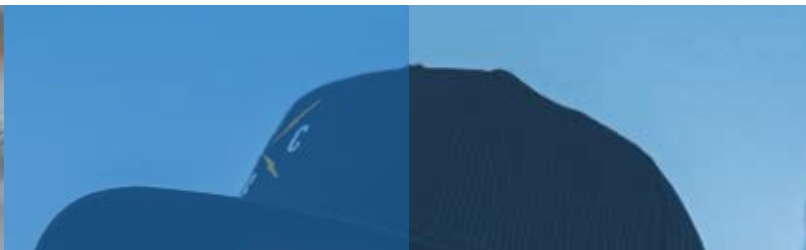
Details are on Tracker. Please sign up if you wish to attend

Meet at 9.45am

Theory and Practical session: 10.00 to 12.30

On road session from 12.30 to 15.30 approx.

If you do not have a pillion, you are very welcome to attend and undertake the practical exercises and road ride solo



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NOTICE OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING



Notice of the Annual General Meeting 2026

By order of the Group Committee notice is hereby given that the Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Kent Advanced Motorcyclists Group (Registered Charity No. 1060837) will be held at 20:00 on Thursday 26th March 2026 at The Kentagon Restaurant, Brands Hatch Circuit, DA3 8PU.

All full group members, associates and friends are invited to attend the AGM, however only full group members are allowed to vote.

Meeting Agenda:

- | | | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Opening and welcome | Tina Underwood | Chairperson |
| 2. Approval of the 2025 AGM Minutes | Joe Mair | Secretary |
| 3. Annual Report | Tina Underwood | Chairperson |
| 4. Update on new KAMG CIO | Nigel Clibbens and Matt Pounds | Treasurer and Auditor |
| 5. Approval of the Financial Report | Nigel Clibbens | Treasurer |
| 6. Chief Observer's Report | Colin Billings | Chief Observer |
| 7. Election of Officers | Joe Mair | Secretary |
| 8. Election of Committee Members | Joe Mair | Secretary |
| 9. Any other Business | Tina Underwood | Chairperson |
| 10. Meeting Close | Tina Underwood | Chairperson |

Whilst it is not required by the Group's constitution, all current Officers and Committee Members will resign their position on 26th March 2026. They will stand for re-election unless otherwise indicated.

Nick Farley is standing down as Magazine Editor after many years of sterling contribution and we need someone to try and fill his shoes, if you, or possibly a family member, are able to take on this role please let us know. We are also actively looking for somebody to take over the management of our regalia and merchandise, we thank Catherine Hills for her contribution to the role.

For the continued success and future of KAMG it is vital that all members consider how they can best help and if they could serve as a Committee Member or volunteer to assist in any other way. KAMG needs members to promote KAMG to attract new associates, members to play active roles at Group Night, to assist in managing our social media communications and to manage our website and related IT. If you have a skill that could assist in the running of KAMG, please contact any of the committee members. Not all roles of support require being an Officer or Committee Member of KAMG.

By Monday 23rd March 2026 at the latest, a complete list of candidates standing for election as either an officer or as a committee member will be sent by email to all members together with a voting form for members unable to attend the AGM. Voting forms must be returned to the Secretary at secretary@kamg.org.uk by close of business on Wednesday 25th March 2026. If you would like to volunteer for one of the roles please complete the form below.

If any member requires any details on a specific Committee position, such as responsibilities, time commitments, experience needed etc, kindly contact the Secretary at secretary@kamg.org.uk who will gladly provide the necessary information.

Submission for election to the Committee of the Kent Advanced Motorcyclists Group (please tick which, or all of the roles listed that apply).

| | |
|--------------------|---|
| Committee Position | I Confirm I wish to seek election to this position. |
|--------------------|---|

| | |
|---------------------------|--|
| Chairperson | |
| Vice-Chairperson | |
| Secretary | |
| Treasurer | |
| Membership Secretary | |
| Group Night Team Leader | |
| Communication Team Leader | |
| Marketing Team Leader | |
| Member without Portfolio | |

Candidate Name _____ Signature _____

Proposer Name _____ Signature _____

Secondee Name _____ Signature _____



YAMAHA

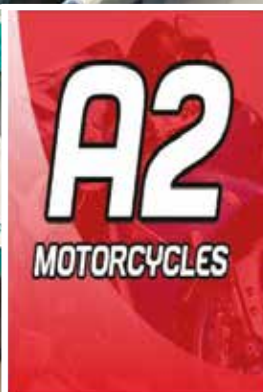
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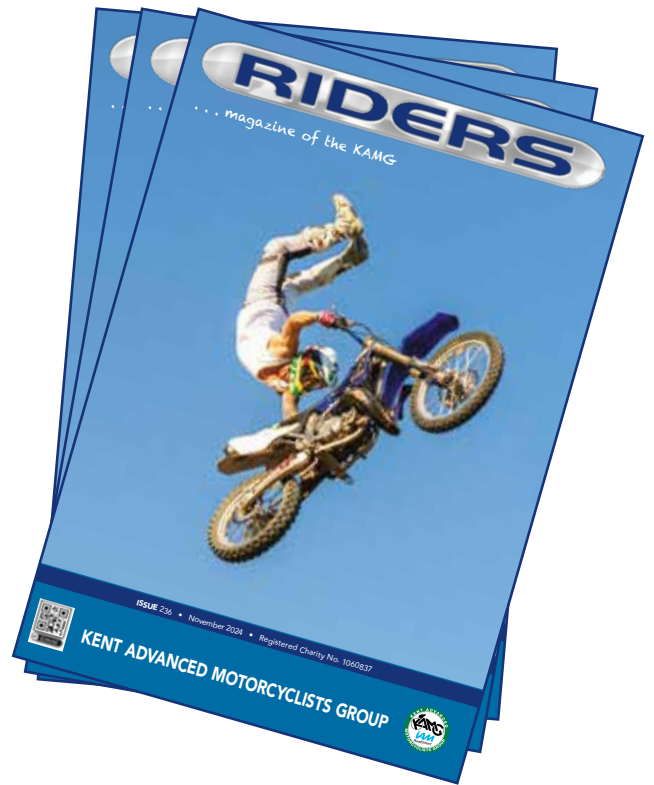
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affluent riders**

Contact Tina Underwood at
chairman@kamg.org.uk



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Benefits include unlimited foreign travel, an index-linked starting salary of £0000, and an unlimited self-financing expense account.

Full training given, plus access to shared dictionary on alternate Fridays.

Full membership of BUPA's five-star 'Sympathy Plan' after successful completion of ten-year probationary period.

Applicants must be able to stand unaided, or with Zimmer frame assistance if needed.

Please note that the successful applicant will be expected to work from home.

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email sales@smarterimpressions.co.uk

POSTAGE : There will be a drop down at the checkout with the tracked Economy 2-4 day service at 4.99 with other shipping options available. For overseas destinations, please email sales@smarterimpressions.co.uk

All products are subject to VAT, which will be calculated checkout.

KAMG & IAM Roadsmart are copyrighted, you must be a paid up member of both or either to order

IDCAM

INTRODUCTORY DAY COURSE IN ADVANCED MOTORCYCLING

- 2026 Dates**
- Feb 21st
 - Mar 14th
 - Apr 18th
 - May 23rd
 - June 20th
 - July 18th
 - Aug 15th
 - Sep 19th
 - Oct 17th
 - Nov 21st



Our IDCAM is held at the Kent Fire and Rescue Road Safety facility in Marconi Way, Rochester, ME1 2XQ. If you wish to attend, please register your interest via the calendar on Tracker. Attendees are asked to arrive at 08.45 for a prompt 09:00 start. The morning session consists of a presentation about IAM RoadSmart, about KAMG and the aims of the course, and how to check that both the rider and motorcycle are fit for the road. This is followed by a coffee break.

The second presentation is all about the system of motorcycle control and, if time permits, a *Highway Code* quiz. The morning session will finish at approximately 12:15.

Please note that lunch is not provided. You may bring along your lunch or, if you wish, your allocated Observer can take you to a local café.



The afternoon session consists of an observed ride with a National Observer, and includes a pre-ride briefing and post ride debrief. The finish point is at a mutually agreed location that is usually closer to home than the start. The afternoon session lasts around two and a half hours.

If you would like to attend as an Associate, please contact associates@kamg.org.uk.

MACHINE CONTROL DAY

Our machine control days are organised by David Austen. If you have not yet signed up then do it now – simply log on to Tracker and register your participation or contact email below:

mcd@kamg.org.uk

Held at: Car Park D, Ebbsfleet Station, International Way, Gravesend, Kent DA10 1EB

2026 Dates

Sat 9th May Sat 13th June Sat 11th July
Sat 22nd August Sat 12th Sept

Non-KAMG members will be asked for a small fee of £10.00 contributing to the running costs.

Arrival time: 08:45 for 09:00 start

Finish Time: approx 13:00 Hrs



CONTACTS

Vice President Dave Murphy

Honorary Life Members Kevin Chapman John Leigh Brenda Vickery Sue Mills Tony Young
Christine Botley John Lemon Ian Burchell Tina Underwood Roger Lancaster



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