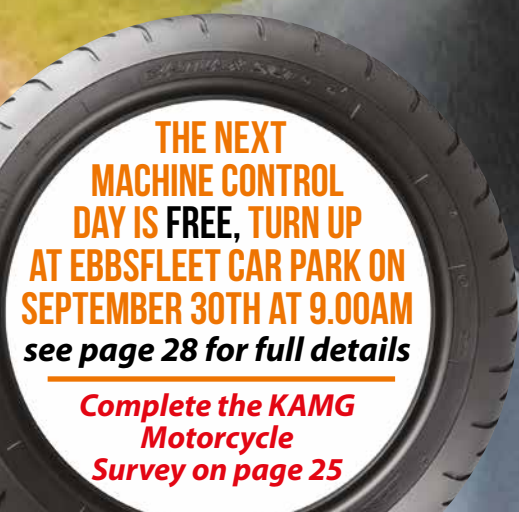


RIDERS

... magazine of the KAMG



ISSUE 207 August 2017 • Registered Charity No. 1060837



KENT ADVANCED MOTORCYCLISTS GROUP



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Front cover: Les Smith reflects on the Taffy Dakar., see Page 8.

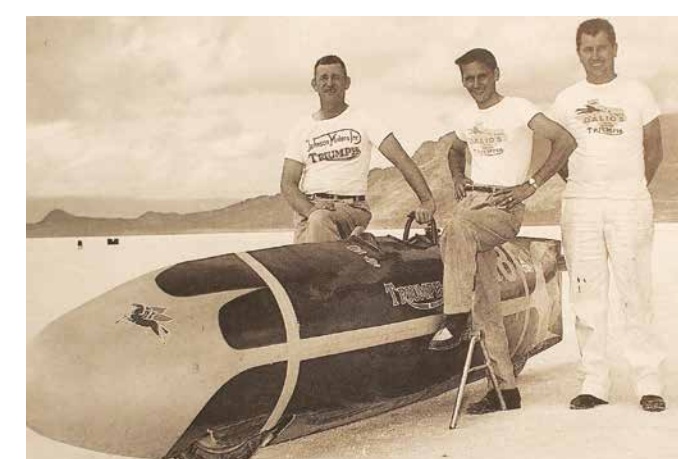
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Above: Why the Bonneville is called the Bonneville., see page 12.

Left: Eat at Rye Harbour, see page 22.

Magazine design and layout by John Gardiner.



Nick Farley, Editor

When sending articles for publishing in this magazine, please send images (with captions) as separate JPEG files.

Images should be in colour in as high a resolution as possible, preferably the original size in which they were captured. Please do not place images inside Word documents as this will significantly reduce the quality of the images.

Views contained within this publication are not necessarily views of the Editor, the KAMG or the IAM.

The Editor claims no liability for correctness of information, printing or typesetting errors.

The Editor cannot guarantee sunshine on club runs.

PS. Don't forget to drop me a line about your adventures. You just might inspire others to follow in your tyre tracks.

EDITORIAL

Time to React? Perhaps not.

Do you know what your reaction time is? I bet you don't. Do you even care what your reaction time is? No, of course you don't, and that being the case you won't be losing any sleep over the headline news that the Highway Code has, for decades apparently, been building the wrong reaction times into its braking distance figures. However, unlike sensible, calm, cool-headed us, some people in the media have been getting in a bit of a fizz about this: the Highway Code is wrong! How can this be? Shock! Horror! We have been misled. What can save us from certain crashes now? It is the end of the world.....and so on.

Apparently the Transport Research Laboratory has decided that it takes us 1.5 seconds to see a hazard and react to it, whereas the Highway Code's braking figures are based on a reaction time of only 0.67 seconds. (Stop yawning at the back there, and pay attention.) Look, if the Highway Code's notion of braking distance was the only thing that had prevented us from slamming into the back of every car in front of us every time they braked, we'd all have been dead years ago.

The fact that the Highway Code has for years been bleating about stopping distances based on the 'wrong' data, shows what a load of cobblers it all is. And who is to say that this new 1.5 seconds reaction time is 'right'? How do we know that some other smartarse won't come along next week and double it or halve it? The fact is that we ride using our judgement about what is a 'safe' distance to leave between us and the car/ lorry/bus/horse in front, and we know what that distance looks like and what it 'feels' like even if we can't say exactly how many metres it is. In any case it is an enormously variable distance which you can't learn by rote. It is necessarily born of experience, and I know that's a problem for learners, but it is, nonetheless, a fact. The 'braking distance' we allow ourselves is based on our assessment of the road condition, the vehicle we are following, the vehicle that we are in or on and the traffic density and all the other zillion bits of qualitative information which we continuously process as we ride or drive along. Moreover, that distance, like it or not, is a huge compromise between what is completely 'safe' - which, let's say, is infinity - and what's practicable given that there are a few million other people on the roads too.

IAM RoadSmarm

The IAM, I'm very sorry to tell you, is not after all going to be Smart and is not going to get involved in any campaign to try to improve the state of our potholed and dangerous roads. As reported in the last issue, I was at first hopeful that they would, but then I received the following email from Neil Greig, IAM's Policy and Research Director:

Hi Nick

We have the big charity giveaway and our new modules on the go right now Nick so new campaigns are on hold. Our instagram launch has also generated lots of photos which we are currently working through.

Neil

Well, I'm sure we all agree that it's obviously more important to sort out the Instagram pictures rather than the roads, don't we? The IAM has also, they tell me, joined the Sussex Safer Roads Partnership, which is just another way of spending our money on a facile PR stunt rather than actually doing anything. East and West Sussex Councils are both involved in this little "Look what we are doing" charade too, and Sussex roads are worse than Kent's, if that's possible. The SSRP has a website (of course) and a dinky little tent thing and some pretty flags which it erects at various shows, just to demonstrate what a lot it's doing to make the roads safer. I can tell you what they are actually doing - sweet Philip Archer. We, the riders and drivers, and the vehicle manufacturers are making the roads safer, not fatuous PR stunts like SSRP with its help from the IAM using our money.

KAMG Survey

On page 25 you will find details about a new survey which we are conducting in order to try to find out more about the membership of KAMG so that we can do our best to ensure that the club is meeting the needs and matching the expectations of its members. Please find the ten minutes necessary to complete this anonymous survey. It would be very helpful.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

SEPTEMBER

- Sat 2nd Trainee observers on-road workshop
Sun 3rd Social/Training ride to Wingham nr Canterbury. This is a new ride. Satnav details on KAMG website. Group leaders needed.
Sat/Sun 9th & 10th Peterborough training weekend. Contact Colin Underwood or Steve Riches chiefobserver@kamg.org.uk steveriches12@gmail.com
Mon 11th Committee meeting
Fri 15th KFRS Riders Skills day. Contact Tina Underwood vicechairman@kamg.org.uk
Sat 16th IDCAM. Contact Tony Young dco@kamg.org.net
Sun 17th Observer-only ride.
Sun 24th Demelza House Open Day ride. Contact Ian Burchell chairman@kamg.org.uk
Thurs 28th Club night. BMW demo.
Sat 30th FREE Machine Control Day, see page 28 for details. Contact Mick West at MCD@kamg.org.uk

OCTOBER

- Sun 1st Training/Social ride. 9am Oakdene layby
Sun 8th IDCAM. Contact Tony Young dco@kamg.org.net
Mon 9th Committee meeting
Thurs 19th Observer meeting
Sat/Sun/Mon 21st-23rd Pork Pie run to Rutland and Rutland TT (?) contact steveriches12@gmail.com
Thurs 26th Club night. Quiz.
Sat 28th IDCAM. Contact Tony Young dco@kamg.org.net
Sun 29th Training/Social ride. 9am Oakdene layby

NOVEMBER

- Mon 13th Committee meeting
Thurs 30th Club night. IAM

DECEMBER

- Sun 3rd Training/Social ride. Oakdene layby 10am.

All dates are subject to change at short notice so before attending any activity please check dates, times and location on Tracker for up to date information.

When going on a Club Run, Fish and Chip run or any club jaunt come to that, please take a camera with you and share some of your pictures with us. You can easily email them to editor@kamg.org.uk including some captions or perhaps a few words to share your experiences with other members of the club. Supporting the magazine is always greatly appreciated.



DON'T FORGET YOUR CAMERA



WE MEET AT 8PM ON THE LAST THURSDAY OF EACH MONTH AT THE KENTAGON, BRANDS HATCH, DA3 8NG



WORDS FROM THE CHAIR

Well done us!

I am writing this the day after the July club night BBQ. As usual the Kentagon staff put on a really good spread – so good, in fact, that I only bought one meal ticket and still had more than enough to share with my wife. The evening seemed to go well with plenty of social interaction. So much so, that I received the email below from a new member who had been visiting us at Brands for the first time,

and he complimented KAMG on its sociable, warm and welcoming atmosphere. Apart from getting a complimentary message, which is always nice, if relatively rare, it is a tribute to you, the KAMG membership (and family and friends last night). I thought “Brilliant”, that’s what we should be known for as well as being a provider of high quality advanced motorcycle training.

Colin Underwood

Yesterday at 18:36

To: KAMG Committee

Reply-To: Entire Group

[KAMG Committee] Colin Underwood started a conversation

Hi All

Ian received this email and asked Tina to put on wiggio

Hi Ian,

Just a quick note to thank you for your generous welcome tonight at the BBQ. This was my first night, and it was a pleasure to meet you and you fellow members.

The energy in the room was electric, and I was pleasantly surprised to find so many people genuinely interested in safe riding. The healthy enthusiasm amongst members is no doubt due to the efforts of you and your committee, and you are to be congratulated.

I look forward to my taster ride in a couple of weeks, and to beginning the IAM course. In time, I will also be joining in with your other activities, but I will wait until I have had a few runs out with an observer first. Thanks again for the warm welcome.

R B Whelan.

2040 - will it be the end of motorcycles?

Having seen the news recently regarding the ban on the sale of petrol and diesel engined vehicles by 2040, I was left wondering where this leaves the motorcycles of today? If you consider too the advance of the computer controlled vehicles that many large companies are throwing money at, where will motorcycling be in 2040? Will there be any such things as powered two wheelers? Will we be riding all-electric two wheelers? Will the riding of a motorcycle by a human being fit in with this new world? Enjoy it while you can is what I say. Get out there and enjoy yourselves.

Taster rides

Since the beginning of the year the IAM has been offering and advertising free one hour observed rides to non- members. KAMG has been participating in this scheme and to date we, at KAMG, have conducted over 30 rides, and some of those have resulted in the riders continuing on to join the club. If you have a motorcycling friend or family member who would be interested in a taster ride please ask them to email me chairman@kamg.org.uk. I am organising further sessions on various dates throughout the year.

TEST PASSES

Since the last edition

A warm welcome to the Group's new members and existing ones



Mark Peacock receiving Advanced Rider qualification from Martin Platt



Adriano Serrecchia receiving Advanced Rider qualification from Ian Walker



Jack Hanlon receiving Advanced Rider Qualification 1st from Ian Walker



Stuart Malcomson receiving Advanced Rider qualification from Mike Stapley



John Rasch receiving Advanced Rider qualification from Christine Botley

TAFFY DAKAR

LES SMITH FINDS DAKAR IN WALES, LOOK YOU!



After years of dreaming about taking part in the Dakar Rally I finally made it to the start line – albeit the start line of the slightly lesser known “Taffy Dakar.” Not quite so extreme, nor as far to go, to be fair, but substantially cheaper and great fun all the same. The Taffy Dakar is for anyone with an adventure bike or trail bike wanting a fun, off-road event that won’t kill your bike or your bank balance. If this is you then you should take a look at this adventure/trail bike event which will suit everyone. www.taffydakar.org.uk. It takes place in and around Ystradgynlais in Wales. Nestled between the Black Mountains and the Brecon Beacons it is the perfect location for a couple of good day’s riding, and it’s a great social event too. The event is a couple of years old now and combines trail riding and map reading skills; the official description is orienteering by bike, but it’s far more than that in reality. It takes place over a weekend and the base is a campsite with a pub and a beer tent, a marquee with decent food, plus live bands. All of which helps to make the weekend a real treat. It’s an event that raises valuable money for charity, but it also brings together a spread of bikers the like of which I’ve not

seen gathered in one place in a long time. Riders from all corners of the globe populated the campsite and I pitched next to a bunch of South Africans... well, they are currently living in Suffolk, but they were real South Africans.

The Taffy Dakar has a simple and efficient format: using map reading and off-road navigation skills riders have to find the answers to a set of questions by riding around a series of given grid references. Most of the locations can only be reached by negotiating off-road trails in the hills and forests, but I must stress that it is not an enduro competition and race bikes are not allowed. It is a trail bike event, which means that all bikes have to be fully road legal and designated as “trail bikes” by the manufacturers. All manner of motorcycles, from the mighty BMW GSA 1200s and KTM 1290s to Honda C90s are acceptable, and this year there were even a couple of URAL sidecar outfits. Depending on your sense of adventure



4.187	9 T	What numbers / letters are on the number plate (on tree)?	31
566 340	10 T	What does the hazard triangle sign warn you of?	23
567 350	11 T	What number plate letters are here?	22
578 344	12 T	What number plate letters are here?	21
586 336	13 R	Which year's did they win best kept village in Carmarthen?	20 196
602 320	14 T	What numbers / letters are on the number plate (on tree)?	19
633 166	15 T	What does the white sign say?	32
652 102	16 R	Who designed the sign overlooking Bettws?	33
675 088	17 R	What colour were the river guard rails painted originally?	34
702 383	18 T	What is the colour of the two Carmarthenshire CC signs?	38

or determination there is some serious riding to be done, and proper planning followed up by a hard day’s ride will see riders reach all the grid references and answer all the questions. However, such is the laid back ethos of the event that riders can instead opt for a gentle bumble around some of the locations (via a few cafés and a pub lunch) to get just a few of the answers. The winner of the trophy is decided by the number of questions answered correctly, and by the discretion of the committee. Simple.



While some riders on smaller bikes make the trip to Wales by van (the DRZ Suzuki and KTM 690 types), I chose to ride the 260 or so miles from my home in Kent to Taffy Dakar HQ on Helga, my BMW 1150 GS Adventure. For the ride down to Wales and then the two days trail riding she was a pretty good companion (almost) she was treated to new tyres at the last minute, which made the off road sections much more navigable and fun, but more about the tyres in the next issue. Preparation is always key and so in true ad hoc style the prep was all done the day before; like I said, it’s key, so no rush then. Helga was treated to a wash, tyres were fitted, other bits were oiled and fettled, the tent was packed and a few bits of clothing were chucked in a bag together with some easy cook “jetboil” grub, and I was all set.

I planned to arrive about mid-afternoon on the Friday and as the traffic on the M25 and M4 was OK for a change I made good time, and once I was booked in and the tent was pitched, I had the obligatory brew while I waited for the other guys to arrive. The campsite was packed with bikes and tents and all manner of motorhomes. It looked like it was a good turnout. Booking a place for the event is a frantic affair as there are only limited slots and there were a lot of people who seemed to be regulars which made



for a nice atmosphere, everyone was welcoming and friendly and sort of normal (loose term).

Friday evening was spent route planning over a beer, studying and plotting the grid reference points on the map and working out an order of attack. The route is obviously very important and, as we found out, it was going to be a long ride. Our route worked out to be about 40% off-road and 60% on. Unfortunately, some of the more famous byways such as Sarn Helen* were out of bounds due to over use, which meant we had a few more road miles to fit in to circumnavigate the omissions. For riders of the smaller, knife-edge-seat bikes, like the 690s, the re-routing was a bit of a pain (literally), but that style of bike can go to places that Helga found a little difficult, so it is a compromise.

Saturday was Navigation day. On the whole, the locations and our routes were great, even if some of the grid references which we were given turned out to be a little vague and the clues were hard to spot, but the majority were found quickly making for good progress in the forests and across the moors.

**Sarn Helen is an old road dating back to Roman times. It is 160 miles long and stretches from Carmarthen in the south to Conway in north Wales.*





before. The winning team scored a decent 37. I reckon the planning and execution of the route is where it's at so we have a plan for next year... watch this space. Finishing the day off with live bands, beer and a hog roast was a great end to a good day with everyone cramming into the marquee to eat and drink and swap war stories about bikes and mud and stuff.

Sunday was trail day and saw the remaining "hard core" riders – the ones who didn't go home after day one – treated to guided trail rides on some fantastic routes, all led by the guys from the Welsh Trail Riders Association (most had been event marshals). These people are the 'Go-To' group for this part of the world if you need to know where to go and how to alter the routes to suit bigger bikes... which is invaluable if, like me, you are on a BMW GS. I had a brilliant day, and have to say thank you to the marshal who helped pick the right lines up a "proper" rocky hill for me and Helga, I might still be there had I not had the best advice.

Only once did I get really stuck; it was on a muddy slate covered slope, and was more to do with my faffing about and other bikes blocking the trail rather than Helga's fault. I had just got going again, with the help of some of the marshals (who are a good bunch of people), and was legging it up the track when I was T-boned by a F650 GS cutting across from rut to rut in front of me and, believe it or not, he said "Sorry mate, I didn't see you."... in the middle of a Welsh forest! Oh, and Helga and I did take a soaking as I fluffed up a water filled trail where we both ended up a little wet and muddy. After a bit more mud, a few steep climbs and the odd splash of water, it was a good day's riding. The navigation was a challenge at times but on the whole we rode a pretty good route topped with the beautiful Welsh scenery. We made it to all the grids we had planned and I think we finished with 31 points which put us in about 8th place overall in the standings, which was OK but not as good as the year



To sum up, the Taffy Dakar was a real treat. The whole thing reminded me of the early Cambrian Rally events from the late 1990s which used to be based at the Llandovery rugby club. The Taffy is run by nice people, riding is on decent trails without the pressure of time cards and enduro style time limits and there are tea bars available

in most villages. So, like the Cambrian Rallies of old, the Taffy Dakar was a cracking do and I would thoroughly recommend it. Well done to the Taffy Dakar Crew and all who help to make it as good as it is. It was a brilliant event, and god willing, I'll be back next year... with a plan! Roll on the next episode of Helga's adventures.

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WHEN MOTORCYCLING WAS FUN

AND DAVE WILLSON THINKS IT STILL IS, IF YOU RIDE A THRUXTON BONNEVILLE

Sometimes I have a longing for the good old days when I was 17, hooning around on my Yamaha RD400, changing the jets in the carbs to make it go faster. Blasting down the A2 at 102,103,104mph (no cameras back then) in jeans, Doc Martens and a wax cotton jacket, while my younger brother was wringing the neck of his Fizzy and my elder brother was scaring himself witless every time he got to a bend on his Kawasaki Z1R. Back when the coolest people on telly were Starsky and Hutch, and when we blokes could enjoy watching Ponch and John in CHiPS (California Highway Patrol) because homo erotica hadn't been invented. Back when Pepsi was "Lipsmackin' thirstquenchin' acetastin' motivatin' goodbuzzin' cooltalkin'

highwalkin' fastlivin' evergivin' coolfizzin'", but most of all, back when motorcycling was FUN.

Well, eleven years ago I bought a new Triumph Bonneville Thruxton 900 and as soon as I threw a leg over it my grin returned and I wondered if I'd rediscovered those halcyon days. Let me tell you a bit about the Triumph. (All you GS owners, which I sometimes think is about 80% of the club, can skip this bit because you all know that you've got the ugliest or best bike ever made, and yes we do all know that Charlie Boringman, and Obi-Wan Kenobi rode around the universe on one.) Years ago Triumphs were made in Meriden in the Midlands by men in brown coats and flat caps. And very good

they were too – the bikes I mean, not the men...possibly both. The Bonneville was so named because Triumph broke the motorcycle world land speed record on the Bonneville Salt flats in 1956 and three years later launched the first Bonneville on to the market. But unfortunately just after that those Japanese chaps started making cheaper, better, cleaner, faster bikes and the British bike industry was, in the words of Private Fraser, "Doomed, doomed, I say." You'd think that would be the end of the story but, as you know, in the noughties, Triumph, under different management, opened a new factory at Hinckley and started production of a 799cc Bonneville and on the back of that the Thruxton was reborn.

The writer's (unique?) burgundy Thruxton



An 18 year old Mike Hailwood winning the first Thruxton nine hour race in 1958

The Thruxton had the engine bored out to 865cc; it had bigger, 38mm carbs, a jacked up rear end, rear-sets, clip-ons, a seat hump, and other cosmetic changes, and the bored out engine was so well received that they started fitting it

in the standard Bonnies as well. The "Thruxton" name was to celebrate the fact that Triumph was always very successful in the Thruxton Nine Hour Endurance Race, actually winning the very first one in 1958 with a certain Mike Hailwood as

one of its riders alongside Dan Shorey. The Triumph successes continued when the race became the Thruxton 500 Mile Endurance race and throughout the 1960s and early 1970s they won many more times even coming first second and third in 1969, although by 1974 the Japs had taken over the winning.

Now don't get me wrong, my Triumph Thruxton is about as technically advanced as a candle. If you want ABS, EBS, riding modes, slipper clutch, and suspension with loads of settings so that you can really cock-up the handling, then the Thruxton is not the bike for you. Incidentally, why do manufacturers give the general public (and we all know how stupid they are) the option to play about with suspension settings when you need at least a physics degree to begin to understand it? I had a

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friend who used to race at the TT. I visited his workshop once and in the corner sat a frail, 90 year old gent sipping soup through a straw. When I enquired about him I was told "That's Jim, he's only 25. He's the suspension expert." But I digress. Let's first get the negatives out of the way. There's no fairing on a Bonneville, so you get cold and wet at anything over 90mph and you're going to need arms like a gorilla to hang on. Anything under 20mph and you're also going to need wrists like a gorilla due to the clip-ons. It's air cooled, so in the summer your legs get really hot, and the tank range is only about 120 miles, but believe me, after that distance a petrol station will be a blessed relief because your back and arse will be begging you to stop. I'm not really selling this am I? But if you focus on the negatives, well, you're missing the point of the Thruxton.

One reason to love it is its uniqueness: if you're a GS owner (and I'm not picking on GS owners, they're brilliant bikes), but if you're a GS owner you can come to a club meet, or a ride-out, or go to a race meet, or, if you're a motorcycle cop, you can go to work, and you can park your GS next to all the other identical GSs, but that's not the case with a Thruxton. They made the Thruxton in four colours – burgundy, blue, black, and yellow, and mine's Burgundy, and in 11 years of ownership I can honestly say, hand on heart, that I have never seen another Burgundy one. Not a single one. Not on the road nor in showrooms or anywhere else come to that. In fact, when did you last see any Thruxton? They are as rare as rocking horse s... or hens' teeth. And if perchance I did come across another, I can guarantee it would be different from mine because Thruxton owners love their mods.

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750 cc. CLASS	214.40 mph one mile
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Rider: Johnny Allen	
30-50 CU. IN. CLASS "A"	198.020 mph one mile
40 CU. IN. CLASS "A"	214.40 mph one mile

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No, not those strange people in fishtail parkas, on scooters with lots of mirrors. No, not those mods; I mean modifications. We Bonneville owners love them so much that there are several companies (for example, TEC Bike Parts, and British Customs) that make a living just selling bits to people like me with more money than sense.

So far I have: small indicators, main stand, progressive fork springs, steering damper, gas shocks and

red rocker box cover. It's never ending. It all just depends on what I can sneak past my wife. "Why are you buying shock absorbers? Didn't Triumph supply any with the bike?" I can literally spend hours trawling ebay for parts that I really don't need; just ask my wife. The next reason to love it is its simplicity. It's got single discs front and rear, it bounces a bit at both ends, sometimes too much, sometimes not enough. It's got a steel frame (powder coated), carburettors, and

Thruxton

TRIUMPH

THRUXTON 500 MILE RACE
Outright winner of this arduous International Race for standard production motorcycles was a Triumph "Bonneville" ridden by Tony Godfrey and John Holder. Above is a fine view of Holder at speed on the winning machine. Other "Bonnevilles" filled 2nd, 4th, 5th and 6th places in the multicylinder class.

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did I mention that it's air cooled? Keeps your legs lovely and warm in the winter (and in summer too, see above). And all this means that it's cheap and easy to maintain. When buying tyres, for example, I Google the size and speed rating and buy the cheapest one that pops up. My current rear tyre cost £52. Don't however think that a Bonneville doesn't handle, I regularly grind the toe of my boot on the ground and occasionally get my knee down too...although once, I must admit,

this was followed by getting my elbow down and then my arse, but that's another story.

If you're still in any doubt about how well they handle have a look at the "Thruxton Cup" on YouTube.

The point is that you need to ride it well to get the best out of it. Get that limit point wrong and there's no electronic gadget to save you. Fail to apply the correct degree of acceleration to leave the hazard

safely, and you're on your own. It takes a bit of work and it's all the better for it. But if you ever feel the need to ride a bike instead of steering a two wheeled motor car then give the Thruxton a look. And who knows you may even recapture the joyous, youthful days when the only thing that mattered was beating your mates in a burn up from the lights.

KAMG AND KENT FIREBIKE WORKING TOGETHER

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KENT & MEDWAY

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Tina gets shook up by Shakey



.... some people get their knees and elbows down at Brands



REACHING 80 ON A SCOOTER

GEOFF WALDMEYER GIVES IT GO

The Honda Forza 300 will reach 80 after a while, and with the grace of God, and after a couple of tyre changes, so shall I.

The question is: do I want to preserve the “Peacock Factor” and struggle to manoeuvre 300 kilogram bikes and ride with white knuckles on loose gravel or should I bite the bullet and downsize? I’ve been involved in motorcycling all my life, starting by sharing my bedroom, as a young boy during the war, with my dad’s Francis Barnett Cruiser because he couldn’t get the petrol to ride it, so I don’t want to stop biking now. Some of you may have heard me going on about trying three wheels, and that certainly was or is an option. I was torn between putting two rear wheels on my Honda DN01 or perhaps putting a sidecar on my Harley or on my old BMW, and I still don’t rule out those possibilities for the future, but I hope it is realistic to try to get a few more years on two wheels by switching to lighter bikes.



After having a knee and hip replaced I can now ride sports bikes OK, but before the operations I was very uncomfortable and was squirming about after only 20 minutes riding. It was then that I discovered ‘feet-forward’ and found I could ride my Honda DN01 and my Harley custom, which are both feet-forward bikes, for the duration of a full tank with no trouble. However, having made the decision that really it was uncomfortable to ride conventional bikes, it was a case of choosing the right lightweight.

Geoff and his Honda Forza 300



Sadly there is little choice in lightweight ‘feet-forward’ motorbikes, so I started to look at SCOOTERS! A far from a natural choice for me. I last rode a scooter on my honeymoon in 1960, but I expected things to have moved on since then, and indeed they have. I agonised about the super scooters, and then reminded myself that I needed something lighter, something that I could push around and manoeuvre in tight places, and that’s why I’ve ended up with a Honda Forza 300. This is of reasonable size, it can be ridden feet-forward and has a similar riding position to my Harley and my Honda DN01, BUT it weighs in at only 192kgs, which is some 100kgs less than my other bikes. That makes a big difference and I can wheel it about and get it on the centre stand without thinking about the weight. Of course there are some other advantages which can’t be ignored either, like getting 80 to 90 mpg and being able to stuff a lot of gear under the seat. Added to which being semi-step-through makes getting on and off (or should I say in and out) easy as well.

But how does it GO? Well, apart from not having a tank between your knees it’s quite like a bike. It’s got a 14 inch front wheel and a 13 inch rear. The continuously variable automatic gearbox is superb and is always in EXACTLY the right gear. I have a similar gearbox on my DN01 and I found that on coming out

of a roundabout or tight corner I could whack open the throttle with no fear of it spinning up or lifting the front wheel and I was back up to the legal speed limit often before chums on sportier bikes had overcome worries about their back wheels stepping out if they applied too much right hand. The Forza does not have the six speed tiptronic gears like the DN01, which can be selected by a button, or a “sports” mode, but I don’t miss either. Braking is the usual Honda ABS combined arrangement whereby the back brake also activates one piston of the front caliper. I find this faultless. The back brake is operated by a left hand lever on the bars so there is nothing to do with your feet. I don’t seem to get mixed up with these different braking arrangements when riding my other bikes although it has always irritated me that turn indicator arrangements cannot be standardised. I specified the taller screen which allows visor-up riding at any speed, and for short distances in light rain I don’t really get wet either. It’s just so easy to use and I’m increasingly neglecting my Harley and BMW, except when going on Harley Owners Group or VMCC runs.

Thinking objectively about what I want a bike for, and appreciating that I’m rarely on full throttle for more than a few seconds on any run, and finding that the “Peacock Factor” is a bit less important at my age, I think have I done the right thing.



FOR THE RIDE

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Christine Botley

Profile of an extraordinary KAMG rider on two wheels or four legs

God it's been a hell of a day. I had breakfast, unloaded and reloaded the dishwasher and then I had to settle down for an hour to think seriously about cutting the grass, after that I thought almost as seriously about cleaning the bike, then I had to read the paper before posting a letter, and now, blow me, it's lunchtime. Time flies.

Of course there are people I've known who actually *do* mow the grass, *do* clean the bike and could post a thousand letters before breakfast... every day. Christine Botley is one of those. She looks after her horse and sometimes someone else's horse too; she looks after her grandsons, her bike and her two 'rescue' dogs; she judges at horse shows all over the place, and she is a KAMG observer, plus she has to do all the other routine stuff which you have to do in the normal course of living, stuff like mowing the lawn, for example. And if I tell you that she passed her motorcycle test way back in 1960/61 you can... well, you work it out.

Christine lived in south London as a child and from about the age four she very badly wanted a pony. The post war south London bomb sites were unlikely pony country and so she didn't actually have a pony, she just wanted one quite a lot. By the time she was 14 she also wanted a motorbike quite a lot too. Not, you'll notice, instead of a pony, but as well as. She doesn't know why she wanted either because no one she knew had a horse or a motorbike. In fact, the nearest she got to any animals was when she and the other local kids queued up to take the dogs from the nearby dogs' home out for walks at the weekend. Eventually, however, at the legal riding age of 16, she did get a two-wheeler - a rather ratty, down-at-heel Vespa. This gave way to an Ariel Leader, not because she wanted the heavy old thing, all tarted up in its fairings and 'streamlining', because she didn't. What she wanted was the highly desirable, naked version of the Leader, the Ariel Arrow, and this was impossible to find. However, the Leader, as befitted its name, did lead her to her first motorbike love, a Triumph Sports Cub. The overdressed Leader's part in this matchmaking simply involved breaking its chain leaving her stranded, and one of the two bikers who rescued her had a Sports Cub. She fell for the bike and had to have one too. In fact you can actually see a young Christine and her Sports Cub on You Tube in one of The *Look*

at Life films made by the Rank Organisation and which used to be shown after the newsreels at the cinema. (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CyVJvYXNZKc>) This particular 1964 film was called "*Behind the Ton Up Boys*" and about two and half minutes in Christine is seen standing extreme left, in a green sweater, looking interested as something is being explained at an RAC/ACU training session.

After the Cub came a much loved 350cc Triumph Tiger 90. Her boyfriend at that time also had a Triumph, a T110. This, however, was sold to make way for a Triumph Bonneville - a Bonneville Thruxton, no less, and with all this Triumph activity she and her boyfriend were, not surprisingly, members of the Triumph Owners' Club. The Thruxton was the bike on which she first "did the ton", on the Swanley bypass, and with a pillion! She hastily points out that in those blissful traffic-free days the national speed limit was whatever you wanted it to be, there was no upper limit. She is still riding just as fast, faster actually, but not (we hope) on the Swanley bypass, but who knows? Those were the days too when she would hurtle down the A20 to that biking Mecca, Johnson's Café, near Brands Hatch. This famous café was the starting point for those mythical rides down Death Hill round the roundabout at the bottom and back to Johnson's all ridden in the time that it took for one record to play on the juke box. Hmmm.

While all this two wheeling was going on horses had not been forgotten. She was also riding horses and becoming pretty good at it, but by then Mr Thruxton had disappeared and oddly she managed to marry a chap who wasn't interested either in horses or in motorbikes! How could this be? She can't explain. During this marital period there were no obvious motorbikes in the Botley garage, although she did frequently sneak off to ride her brother's bike(s) and so she never quite lost touch with bikes and never lost her love for them either. Her speed lust was, in part, satisfied in the absence of two wheels by a proper Mini Cooper which, of course, was painted in British racing green.

Eventually it was her son who, indirectly, led her to KAMG. When he was old enough to ride a motorbike she insisted that he should be properly trained for it and so they both joined KAMG and had a competition to see which of them could get the Green Badge first. Christine won by a short head. That



was twenty years ago. Since then she has been increasingly involved with the club and been a very important and very active part of it. After her Green Badge she went on to qualify as a local observer, then as a national observer, a local observer assessor, and up until two years ago she was KAMG's Chief Observer. She also has a RoSPA Gold and is, in short, pretty useful on a motorbike and rides high, fast mileages, all year round. She is a big fan of the National Rally and has taken part in it and the Welsh and Scottish counterparts many times, and she has won a lot of awards at them too. When I asked how many track days she had done she shook her head, "Too many to count," she said.

Despite being an active horsewoman, however, she didn't actually own her first horse until the late 1970s when, for just £60 including tack, she bought a rather neglected horse who in her care gradually recovered from his pretty run-down state and flourished. As a horsewoman she is just as skilled as she is on a bike and is much in demand as a judge at horse shows all over the UK and Europe. She judges at shows in France, Germany, Holland, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland and, of course, England, and often rides her bike to the event. I wonder what it's like to be, say, a German horse show organiser who, having booked what he supposes is a genteel

lady judge from England, finds this rather unlikely female turning up on a motorbike, and a very fast motorbike, at that. She rides a Yamaha R1.

As if her life was not full enough with her own family, grandsons, horses, dogs and bikes, Christine was also for some time a foster parent for Barnardo's children. And this seems part of a recurring theme in her life - helping people and animals in need. Her first horse was one that no one else wanted; her present two dogs are rescue dogs; her present horse is very old and she just walks him for his exercise, he's rarely if ever ridden these days.

So, next time you are at a club night and a slight and gentle lady asks you to buy a raffle ticket it will probably be Christine, just remember that beneath that seemingly frail and polite exterior there hides a tough, very fast, highly qualified, high mileage rider, an international equestrian judge, a Barnardo's foster mother and a Rank Starlet from the sixties...well almost. NF

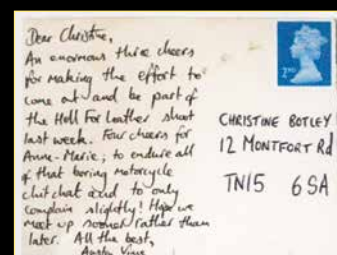
Apologies for the poor quality of some of the pictures in this feature. They are second generation photographs of old photographs or enlargements from very small originals. Ed.



Darley Moor track day



The 'ton' Bonneville



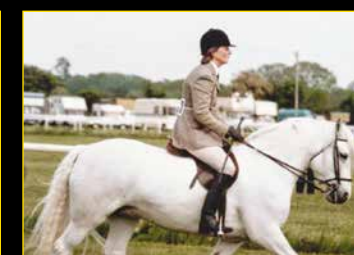
Anne-Marie was one of her foster children



Brands hatch



1964 Rank starlet?



BIKING BITES

EAT AT THE REAL RYE HARBOUR

I know that you know Rye. Rye is one of the best known biking destinations and indeed it's one of the places we ride to as one of the club's Sunday social and training rides. I also know that you think that the run goes to Rye Harbour because when you get there you find yourself beside a stretch of water on which several boats are moored, and you assume, therefore, that you are at, in or beside Rye Harbour; but you're not. No, you simply happen to be beside some boats which happen to be on some water which happens to be in Rye. Rye Harbour is a completely different and separate place. It is a place in its own right, and it is actually two full



miles away from the town of Rye. In fact, Rye Harbour is so far removed from Rye that if Rye was flattened by an earthquake tomorrow, Rye Harbour wouldn't bat an eyelid....well, it might, but you get my point.

Why do I labour this pedantic geographic point? Because if you want the best café in this corner of East Sussex you need to be at the separate, smaller and distinct village outpost of Rye Harbour where there is an excellent café right beside the lifeboat station. It is called The Bosun's Bite and it is a café long known to the discerning biker who seeks a good 'Full English' breakfast, a proper lunch or just a mid-morning coffee and it is the perfect destination for a ride. The food is really good and the service is smiley, but also efficient; smiley on its own doesn't cut it. There's

always piles of stuff to read if you have ridden there solo and there's a sort of shabby comfort about the place which encourages the lingerer in you, well it always does in me. They do all the usual caff stuff and they do it well and generously as you can see from the picture of the ham sandwich which was my lunch yesterday. It was a sandwich of stature, it was a sandwich for men, and I realise that in these times such a flagrantly sexist remark will excite a shrill shriek from the feminist lobby, but I don't really care – calling it a 'sandwich for persons' sounds daft and doesn't make my point, and my point is that this was a substantial sandwich, it was the sort of sandwich that you can lean on in times of need and it was supported by copious amounts of crisps – I like a crisp – and a mountain of girly salad too. So, there I sat reading a two day old newspaper eating a big glorious, manly ham sandwich which, including a large coffee, came to five quid. Rye Harbour? This was Rye Heaven. Go there with all speed.

There's also some very good roads near Rye too: for example, ride eastwards on the A259 as it snakes across the marshes from the main town of Rye to Brenzett. Then, at Brenzett roundabout, take the first exit and go to



Appledore where, immediately after crossing the bridge, you turn left and pick up that glorious five and half mile blast with open S bends that runs alongside the Military Canal and takes you back into Rye. In the other direction, if you need a bit of hairpin practice, go west from Rye on the A259 and you will come to the only alpine-esque hairpin in the south east, at Winchelsea. But before or after any Rye ride go to the Bosun's Bite at the real Rye Harbour.

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PLEASE COMPLETE THE



KAMG MEMBERSHIP SURVEY

The primary reason, we assume, that people join KAMG is because they want to improve their riding skills and to qualify as IAM RoadSmart Advanced Riders, but KAMG is much more than a training outfit, it is an all-singing all-dancing motorcycle club with a full programme of social, touring and other activities, and in order to make sure that it is meeting the needs and aspirations of the members we need to try and find out a bit more about those members. Virtually all we know at the moment is that a member rides, or used to ride, a motorbike. It would help enormously if we knew a bit more about him or her, hence this survey.

Completing the survey will take you less than ten minutes and it is totally anonymous. There is no way of knowing who has made what comments or how any one person has answered any particular question. In any case, knowing the individual source of answers is irrelevant and meaningless. We are trying to find out about the membership as a whole; about its views, its likes and dislikes and about its motorcycle experience, all with the aim of making the club better for everyone.

We, the members of KAMG, are a pretty significant group of people: think about it – we are 350 or so people who have voluntarily decided to improve our riding skills and many – about 1 in 7, in fact – have gone on to gain Observer qualifications too, so that they can pass on their knowledge to others. The more we know about the members of KAMG the better we shall be able to harness that knowledge and experience to influence what happens in the places where important decisions are being made which are affecting us today and will affect us in the future.

Please, therefore, take a few minutes to complete the survey, and be as candid as you like.

GO TO www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/kamg



LONDON BOROUGH MARKET

How to lay a wreath, chat up coppers and annoy a motorist at McDonald's

George Georgiades manages all three . . .

Last month, a small group from our custom cruiser club decided to ride to London Borough Market to lay a wreath to commemorate the eight killed in the recent terror attack there. We met at the Harley Davidson showroom in Mottingham for a coffee first because one of our number wanted to buy some expensive Harley Davidson braces, which apparently don't break.



It was decided that I should lead the group because I said that, long ago, I used to take a pleasant route through Greenwich Park. However, I had forgotten about the Blackheath festivities on the day in question and did not know that Greenwich Park had been closed to motor traffic. But it was too late to turn back so we just rode through anyway to cheers from sunbathers lining the road. The route from Greenwich through Deptford and Bermondsey isn't very motorcycle friendly either: not all of the bus lanes allow motorcycles, and while some do, the times vary, so you need to keep your wits about you. We have not received any traffic offence summonses through the post at the time of writing, so I guess we got away with it.

On arriving at Borough Market we spoke to a policeman in a police van who proved to be very helpful and gave us a long chat about where we could park our bikes..... which, in summary, was that we couldn't. He also told us that the

wreaths had been moved to London Bridge by the steps. So we drove into London Bridge Station and parked in the layby by the Shard while I trotted off to ask another van full of policemen about parking for ten minutes whilst we laid the wreath. They were really very helpful too and suggested that we parked outside the wine bar so that they could watch out for us and we wouldn't get a ticket. And that's what we did. One of the police officers recognised an army badge on the jacket of one of our group as he had been in the same regiment – this might have helped.

The day was rounded off with refreshment at McDonald's on the way home where an unhappy gent began ranting about our bikes occupying two parking bays where he wanted to park his car. Big Tim said "I say old chap, we have eight bikes parked here and you are alone in your car, there are six parking bays in front of you and you have already passed another ten empty bays, so why don't you run along like a good fellow," or words to that effect.



OBSERVER ASSOCIATE CHARTER

What is expected of the Observer / Associate partnership

THE OBSERVERS

➤ Have made the effort to train, not only for the test, but have also taken part in Observer Training courses. They are a valuable asset to the group and give of their time freely, except for a contribution from the Associate towards their expenses, as determined by the Committee and the IAM.

THE ASSOCIATES

➤ Are expected to have equal commitment, with the goal being the Test.

➤ Are to be available for observed runs once every two weeks (ideally), as continuity cannot be maintained with regular gaps of three weeks or more.

➤ Should make their monetary contribution before setting-off.

➤ Must establish the date(s) of the next run(s) at the debriefing, and they must PRACTISE between these dates.

➤ Must make an effort to STUDY the THEORY by reading the relevant literature; for example 'How to be a Better Rider', 'Highway Code', 'Roadcraft' etc.

➤ Cancellation of a run due to the weather will be at the discretion of the Observer. If, after a period of one month, an Observer has not heard from the Associate it will be assumed that interest has been lost and the Associate's name will be placed back at the bottom of the waiting list.

➤ A review of the Associate's progress is mandatory, requiring a Check Run with a Senior Observer after six runs or six months. When the Observer feels that the Associate is riding consistently to the required standard a Pre-Test Assessment will be arranged with a Senior Observer. The Observer will give as much help and encouragement as possible but the onus is on the Associate to endeavour.

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- All of us need to keep our skill levels high and this takes practice. Much of this practice is not possible on the road. A session at an MCD will show you just how good you are or, perhaps, how much you need the practice, and because we want as many people as possible to attend the next MCD, it's **FREE**. Turn up at Ebbsfleet car park on September 30th. Major prize for winner of the 'Slow Bike Race'.

YOU'RE NEVER TOO GOOD TO PRACTICE AND IMPROVE

Machine Control Day, Saturday, September 30th. Details of contacts and location on the facing page.

IDCAM

INTRODUCTORY DAY COURSE IN ADVANCED MOTORCYCLING



The revised style IDCAM has been running for some months now. Attendees book in at 8.45am and have their documents and bikes checked over. A short classroom presentation about KAMG and Advanced Motorcycling commences at about 9.00am. An assessed ride follows with a short debrief before a coffee break. A classroom session about the System of Motorcycle Control takes us to lunch time. We also fit in a Highway Code quiz and the POWDDERSS check of a motorcycle, so it's quite a busy morning. After lunch, attendees go out for a second assessed ride with an Observer, finishing at a mutually agreed location.

If you would like to attend as an Associate contact Tim Johansen associates@kamg.org.uk Observers should confirm their willingness to help on Tracker and Tim will keep them informed as to our needs for the session.



KAMG REGALIA

For reflective bibs both Observer and Green Badge holders, please see Regalia Manager at one of our club nights

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Large range of KAMG branded clothing to order only, any colour and size.

Crew Neck T-shirts **£17**

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How to be a better rider **£10**

Highway Code **£2.50**

Know Your Traffic Signs **£4.99**

Road craft **£12**

IAM Sticker **£1**



MACHINE CONTROL DAY

Our machine control days are organised by Mick West. If you have not yet signed up then do it now. A MCD is the best value for money you can buy at **£10.00** (paid on the day).

0844 585 7783

mcd@kamg.org.uk

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

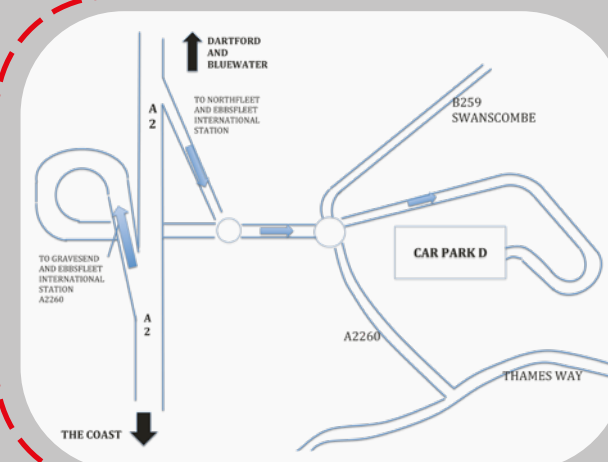
Arrival time: 08:45 for 09:00 start

Finish Time: approx 13:00 Hrs

Saturday, 24th June 2017

Saturday, 29th July 2017

Saturday, 30th September 2017



SOCIAL AND TRAINING RIDES - GUIDELINES

START from the OAKDENE Café layby with a FULL petrol tank and an EMPTY bladder!

There will be a green badge holder at the front and back of each group of 4 riders, who will depart at 2 minute intervals.

It is an opportunity to ride with others who have passed their IAM test and then socialise with club members at the finish point over a cup of tea or coffee and breakfast.

Rides start at 10.00am in December, January and February and at 09.00am for all other months

For the safety of participants, if the temperature at the start point drops below **3°C**, the ride will be cancelled.

PLEASE CHECK THE KAMG WEBSITE OR TRACKER SYSTEM FOR THE ROUTES OF ALL FUTURE RIDES.

The up-to-date routes can be downloaded to your Sat Nav or printed out if you prefer. They will also be advertised in the RIDERS Extra E News published and sent out to all members monthly via Tracker.

ASSOCIATES NON GREEN BADGE HOLDERS

- Maintain highest riding standards at all times
- Read the road ahead, NOT the vehicle in front
- Always keep the rider behind in your mirrors
- Maintain your allocated position unless otherwise directed
- Ride to YOUR capabilities not the rider in front
- **YOU are responsible for your ride at all times**
- **Carry your KAMG membership and ICE cards**

GROUP LEADERS GREEN BADGE HOLDERS

- Make sure all in your group are logged with the run organiser (for insurance purposes)
- Please follow the prescribed route not your own
- Confirm destination and route to group
- Explain run guidelines
- Explain stopping procedures
- Allow a quicker group to pass if necessary
- Select a 'Tail-End Charlie'
- Consider change of associate order at a midway point
- **Adjust speed as appropriate for the group and ride to the SLOWEST rider**



Carry your ICE (In Case of Emergency) card with you, as you may be asked to produce it. When going on a group ride, the ride will terminate at the destination. If this will leave you in unfamiliar territory and you would like an accompanied ride back to the start,

please make this known to the run leader or your group leader before the ride starts. **It is a condition for all club runs that you MUST be a member of the IAM for Insurance purposes. Not a member, then you are not insured.**

CONTACT PAGE

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Vice President: **Dave Murphy**
Honorary Life Members: **Rod Collins • Kevin Chapman • Terry Friday
John Leigh • John Lemon • Mike Knowles
Brenda Vickery • Ian Burchell • Sue Mills**



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BMW Motorrad



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The rugged and supremely agile R 1200 GS Adventure is the perfect choice for those who like to push boundaries. With optimised engine efficiency and a 30-litre fuel tank, it will take you further than ever before.

The R 1200 GS Adventure is now available with Representative 5.9% APR. With competitive finance from BMW, start your journey today and make life a ride.

To find out more or book a test ride†, please contact Vines Guildford Motorrad on 01483 207000 or visit www.vinesguildfordmotorrad.co.uk

REPRESENTATIVE 5.9% APR.

Vines Guildford Motorrad

Slyfield Green, Woking Road, Guildford, Surrey GU1 1RD

Vines Guildford Motorrad is a credit broker and not a lender.

**MAKE LIFE
A RIDE.**

Representative 5.9% APR available on a BMW Select agreement for new BMW R 1200 GS Adventure models ordered between 1 January and 31 March 2017 and registered by 30 June 2017 (subject to availability). Retail customers only. Finance available subject to credit acceptance to UK residents aged 18 or over. Guarantees and indemnities may be required. Terms and conditions apply. Optional final payment and option to purchase fee not payable if you opt to return the motorcycle at the end of the agreement (motorcycle condition, excess mileage and other charges may be payable). Offer may be varied, withdrawn or extended at any time. 'BMW Select' is a form of hire-purchase agreement provided by BMW Motorrad Financial Services, Summit ONE, Summit Avenue, Farnborough, Hampshire GU14 0FB. Vines Limited, trading as Vines Guildford Motorrad, commonly introduce customers to a selected panel of lenders including BMW Motorrad Financial Services. We may receive commission or other benefits for introducing you to such lenders. This introduction does not amount to independent financial advice. Test ride subject to applicant status and availability.