

LADAM Newsletter

May 2023



Congratulations to ...

Mike Hampton with Observer Mike Antony
Michael Porter With Observers Bill Morris and
Stuart McFarlane

For passing the Advanced test since the last newsletter

In this Newsletter

Welcome to the May Newsletter. Finally, it's warming up and the first Chip Shop ride of the year was in glorious sunshine. Unfortunately, the trip to the Cotswolds scheduled for 30th April had to be cancelled as the ride leader had no bike, down to bad timing, and a puncture. It has been rescheduled for early June.



This newsletter we have an article on a charity called Mental Health Motorbike and their Mental Health First Aid qualification from Stan, the Inspired Rider, Steve Rowthorne, our Chief Observer gives some hints and tips on emergency braking and we have another LADAM journey, this time from Dafydd Prichard.

Advance notice that we will be relaunching our website in the next few months and will be establishing a blog, which will supplement this newsletter, for those who like their articles in bite sized chunks. Anyone who would like to contribute, please contact Zoe on chair@ladam.org.uk, as content is always a challenge.

Many thanks as always to all the contributors this month. Feedback and stories always welcome, contact chair@ladam.org.uk.



Winter Events

In *March*, for the last of the Winter Evening events, Kieran Sangha from Sangha Race & Restoration joined us again, for a talk on all things maintenance.

This was another great evening, with Kieran showing his extensive knowledge and enthusiasm. A show of hands in the audience revealed that a significant number of LADAM members have had their bikes serviced and fixed by Kieran over the last year, myself included, and there were a number of stories about his dedication and exceptional service.



Unfortunately, I didn't take notes nor take any photos so if you have any questions, contact Kieran direct! There is very little he doesn't know about motorbikes, so I'm sure he will be able to help.

Our Winter events will start again in October, so look out for further details.



Return of the Spring/Summer Rideouts

Below is the schedule for the Spring/Summer Rideouts. You can book now for the first two rides by clicking on the destination to open the form.

Date	Destination	Leader	No of Places
15 th May	Lincoln Loop	Dafydd Prichard	12
4 th June	Ride to the Cotswolds	Zoe Eastwell	12
25 th June	Craven Motorcycle Museum York	Richard Withers	12
9 th July	Baston Car & Bike Show	Richard Withers	12
5 th August	Derwent Water & Snake Pass	Mike Anthony	12
September	Mystery Tour	Steve Tamsett & Bill Morris	12

As places on all these rides will be limited, **you will need to complete the relevant form to register your place.** Full details of the ride, including the starting point and timing is given on the form. If you have already applied for the Ride to the Cotswolds which was due to take place in April, you will need to apply again, although you will have priority. Apologies for this.

To access the form for the first two rides, simply click on the destination in the table above. Please note that these are Google forms and you may not be able to access them on a work computer. Forms will be available in due course for the remaining rides. Associates are welcome, but please speak to your Observer first.

If you have any questions, please contact Mike Anthony or Zoe.



Return of the Chip Shop Rideouts

Tuesday 18th April saw the first of the Chip Shop rideouts. Mike Anthony led a cracking ride up to Ashbourne to the Market Place Fish & Chips. It was a glorious spring evening, which meant that for some of the time we were heading directly into the sun, which was a good test of advanced riding skills. It was a great turnout with around fourteen bikes leaving Birstall,

The second man drop off system worked extremely well on the way there, with everyone making it to the Market Place in Ashbourne. There are some improvements to be made to the system when people are leaving the ride, as it didn't work quite so well on the way back, and only half the riders made it to Donington Park Services. Although as everyone made it home, perhaps it did work!



Thanks Mike for leading. Next ride will be on *Tuesday 9th May* and will be led by Richard Withers. You don't need to book to join the ride, just turn up at 6:15pm for the briefing and be ready to leave at 6:30pm sharp. The Chip Shop rides are open to full Members. If you are an Associate and would like to join, speak to your Observer first.

Bill was due to lead the ride but unfortunately an accident has left him with a broken clavicle and unable to ride. I'm sure you'll all join me in wishing Bill a speedy recovery.



Club Saturday Rideouts

The Saturday ride out is growing as more members are joining and we have more leaders, which is all great news. Come along and try for yourself this weekend, *6th May*. You need to attend the briefing and be ready to leave by 9:30ish. You should have passed your test, but all Associates should get the chance to join a ride as part of the training.





Mental Health Motorbike First Aid

Stan Hulme talks about the Charity and becoming Mental Health First Aider

While out and about last year promoting my fundraising solo ride to Nordkapp, I seemed to keep bumping into people connected with a small but dedicated charity called Mental Health Motorbike (MHM). This led to some great conversations where they shared their vision of building a free, dedicated national network of trained 'Mental Health First Aiders' who aim support bikers and their families across the UK.

This includes an accredited qualification with Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) England, which is already heavily supported by race marshal organisations and partnered with IAM.

More than ever during these challenging times, people can find themselves suffering from poor mental health, due to many factors; like financial / work stress or life events such as bereavement. It's never been more important to not only focus on our own well-being, but that of those around us too.

So, back in March I decided to take their First Aider training course for myself, which over the course of four half day sessions online. I found to be an incredibly valuable and thought-provoking experience.

So, what does Mental Health First Aid training cover?

- Encourages people to challenge the language we use around mental health;
- Explores different frames of reference and the stigma attached to mental health;
- Helps people to understand what good mental health looks like;
- Explores the factors that can have an impact on our mental health;
- Looks at how to support yourself and others with self-care, giving the skills to influence your own mental health;
- Teaches you about diagnosable mental health conditions, what unwell looks like and how to spot these signs in yourself and others;
- Talks about what to do if you think someone is unwell and the steps to take for early intervention;
- Teaches how to intervene (including in a crisis), reassure and signpost people to further support.

Ultimately the course encourages you to become someone who's open to listening and provide support in a non-judgmental and confidential way.

To learn more visit mhmotorbike.com

Thanks Stan. If anyone wants to learn more, Stan would be happy to talk about the Charity and becoming a Mental Health First Aider.





Tips from the Chief Observer

In this newsletter, our Chief Observer, Steve, talks about Emergency Stops

One of the techniques we rarely practise, if ever, is the Emergency Stop. All the training we do is to prevent us being in a situation where the emergency stop is necessary, it's not even a part of the Advanced test. Yet one of the rules we should always abide by is to "always only go at a speed you can safely stop in for the information that's available". This begs the question: "how do you know what distance you need to be able safely stop in at any given speed if you have never tried, let alone perfected the technique."



Modern bikes have very powerful brakes and potentially, if applied too aggressively can even throw you over the handlebars. These powerful brakes and very grippy modern tyres on a perfectly dry road surface make this a real possibility.

The Technique:

Is in two-stages.

Stage 1, Apply the front brake firmly so the front forks compress completely and the front tyre flattens onto the tarmac. This means the suspension is not going to dive down suddenly and put a sudden quick thrust into a tyre that's already under maximum load. The contact patch of the tyre is greatly increased, thus giving you greater grip on the road.

Stage 2, Apply the front brake even harder using all your fingers on the lever until you have stopped. With most modern bikes having ABS there is the possibility this will kick in, which if you have never felt it, can be a strange sensation at first. The rear wheel may even come off the floor - expect it.



You can pull the clutch in at the last moment if you have chance, but remember this is an emergency stop procedure where the only goal is to stop as quickly and safely as possible, if the engine stalls it doesn't matter.

Don't:

Don't try and apply the rear brake as all the weight is on the front suspension so there is a good chance the back wheel will lock up and destabilize the bike. Likewise, don't try to change down a gear.

How to practise:

Find somewhere very quiet, such as an industrial estate on an evening or a Sunday to practise. Start off at slow speeds and perfect the technique before trying higher speeds. I should stress that this technique is strictly for braking in a straight line and upright, there is a lot more to it if you're mid-corner and leant over.

Find a lamppost or other obvious street furniture to act as a trigger point to apply the brake. Once you have stopped, mark where you have stopped on the curb and try again and again and again etc.... etc..... until you are fully comfortable with how the bike feels under heavy braking. You will be amazed at how quickly your bike can stop.

As always please don't hesitate to get in touch to ask questions. steve_r@ladam.org.uk.

Note: braking technique was part of the i2i course that a group from LADAM did last year and which is highly recommended.

My LADAM Journey

This month, Dafydd Prichard who passed his test at the end of last year, talks through his biking and LADAM journey

I grew up on the Isle of Anglesey, in a remote, rural community. As soon as we could balance on two wheels, my friends and I turned to pedal power to stock up on Black Jacks and Curly Wurlies from the local garage, five hilly miles away. At sixteen, my collection of Raleigh Grifters, Choppers and racers were cast aside in favour of a temperamental, and rather asthmatic, 50cc Puch Maxi moped. At seventeen, my allegiances were switched yet again, and the Puch was parked up next to the Raleighs as I stepped behind the wheel of my parents' Morris Allegro (let's be clear here, we were the uncoolest household on the island)!



Fast forward twenty years, and my big passion once again was cycling, and for the next couple of decades, I cycled obsessively, covering longer and longer distances. In 2018, I took a month off work to cycle from Calais to Bucharest, following the Danube for much of the way. Unfortunately, although my stamina levels were pretty robust, my neck wasn't, and the chronic pain I was experiencing caused me to abort the adventure somewhere near the German border.

Undeterred, I decided that 'Mission Bucharest' would be postponed rather than cancelled. I figured that if I couldn't manage the distance fuelled on gallons of strong coffee, I should switch to unleaded instead. A taster bike session with Shires Motorcycling re-ignited the excitement of flying around Anglesey on my Puch, and so within a couple of months I completed my DAS and bought a Kawasaki ER5. Soon after, I switched to a Royal Enfield Bullet, and a year or so later, sold the Bullet and bought a Kawasaki Versys 650 - a proper 'big' bike.



As I came to biking slightly later in life than most people, I was probably a bit more aware of how vulnerable I would be without further training. I felt that being the best rider I could was the least I owed my wife and kids. So over the next couple of years, I first did the BikeSafe training offered by Leicestershire Police, and then, in between lockdowns, did my Enhanced Rider training with Phoenix in Market Harborough.

The next logical step would be to take some 'proper' advanced training, so I started looking at the IAM and RoSPA options. One of the challenges for bikers in a similar situation is choosing between the two organisations. Both are based on the principles of Roadcraft, and share a common goal of equipping bikers with the skills needed to be safer, more controlled riders. Given that LADAM was Leicestershire-based (clue in the name), it seemed the logical choice.



And that's how I found myself meeting up with Steve Rowthorne in May 2021 for my initial taster session. Steve's enthusiasm and encouragement was infectious, and within hours of completing that initial ride, I had signed up for the whole IAM shebang.

A month or so later I was assigned my Observer, Ian Payne. I was Ian's first Associate, so in many ways, we were both on a learning journey together. Whether by accident or design, Ian's been an excellent match - our general personalities are quite similar. Getting that chemistry right, between Observer and Associate must be quite difficult, but as in so many other areas of life, it's essential to forging a successful partnership.

Gradually, with each fortnightly ride, my riding improved, as did my cognitive reasoning (the importance of developing an advanced-rider mindset cannot be understated). This is an important point that Steve R has impressed upon me on several occasions. Just like learning to play a musical instrument or to speak a foreign language, the 'craft' of Roadcraft, requires endless practice, time to reflect, and a deeply-rooted determination.

It's fair to say I haven't been the quickest Associate to progress through the IAM training programme. In fact, it took me an awfully long time to get test-ready (almost 18 months). And it's not only Ian that I have to thank for getting me there. At some point or other, I think I've been helped by most of the club's senior observers, including the two Steves, Zoë and Les. I'll always be grateful for the patience, generosity and commitment shown by the whole LADAM team.

And so it was in November 2022, that I met up with my examiner, Alex Hathaway at Market Harborough's McDonalds. The glorious Indian Summer that had extended well into October was a distant memory. In its place we had November dreich - a miserable cold broth of mist, drizzle, road mulch and poor light.

Obviously, I rode brilliantly. Watching me glide around bends, progress gracefully from A-road to motorway and traverse roundabouts effortlessly must have been comparable to Anna Pavlova's Dying Swan. Sorry. That's a complete lie. I really rode quite poorly and an hour and a half later, as I sat waiting for Alex to tell me the result, fully prepared to walk away disappointed. Thankfully, Alex must have been in an extraordinarily gracious frame of mind and gave me a pass (but with plenty of improvements to consider).

So. What next? Well, there's still some unfinished business in Bucharest. And at least now I have a fighting chance of getting there in one piece...



And in other news...

Rider Awareness Course

A reminder about this course, which was in the last newsletter.

The Advanced Rider Awareness courses are delivered on excellent roads in Wales over 3 days, including two nights in a good quality hotel. All of the trainers for the courses are either IAM Examiners, Masters Mentors or National Observers providing a very high standard of coaching. LADAM are being offered a heavily discounted price of £599, of which £300 is for the hotel accommodation on a B&B basis.

If you have any questions or are interested, please speak to Steve Tamsett.

Ride Leaders

To continue to offer events and to promote safe riding, we are heavily reliant on volunteers. If you can help with leading anything from a Group Ride on a Saturday, a trip to an amazing chip shop, or a full day's tour, please let us know. You don't need to be an Observer although you do need to have passed your Advanced Test. An Observer is required for every official ride, so you will always have support.

If you're interested contact any of the committee. Details at the end of the newsletter.

IAM RoadSmart

The latest IAM RoadSmart News is [here](#), their tips and blogs are [here](#).



Contact Details

Website: <https://www.ladam.org.uk/home>

Facebook Private Group: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/LADAM>

For future events check out the [Calendar Page](#)

Chair & Newsletter Editor: Zoë Eastwell – chair@ladam.org.uk

Group Secretary: Bill Morris – secretary@ladam.org.uk

Treasurer: Steve Tamsett – treasurer.ladam@gmail.com

Chief Observer: Steve Rowthorne – steve_r@ladam.org.uk

If you would like to provide a story, maybe about your journey with LADAM or an event coming up, please contact Zoë. If we don't get any volunteers, be wary, you may be volunteered! The same applies to ride leaders. You have been warned!

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