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October 2019



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# FROM THE LAPTOP

Loving the Picos Mountains

Certainly a change of weather since last month when we basked in warm sunshine. Fortunately my September trip to France and Spain was blessed with sunshine the whole way, perhaps not as hot as in past years but pleasant riding weather without having a meltdown.

I envisaged the recent 7Ws trip to have found themselves submerged in Wales but I believe they escaped lightly with wet roads and only a little rain - more of that trip next month. Well done to Ness and Andy on running their first weekend in Llandrindod Wells.

We hope you are are now enjoying using groups.io which is our main communication tool and that the handy hints and tips each month in Slipstream enable you to utilise it better. We have a break this month and talk about account settings in November. These articles can also be referenced on the groups.io site. If you have any particular issues or queries, get in touch with [groups.io@tvam.org](mailto:groups.io@tvam.org)

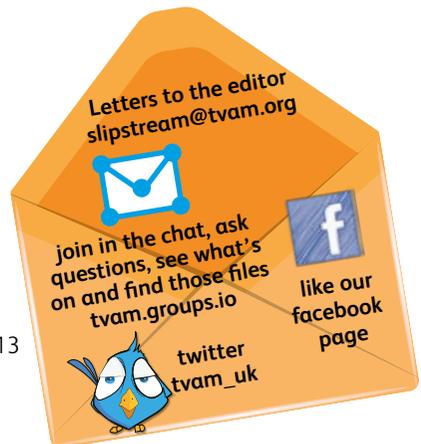
The nights are certainly drawing in earlier, with evening runs having curtailed, but there are still social and training runs going on through the rest of the year. The calendar is a bit lighter, so there is plenty of room for you to add a run if you feel inclined, maybe a morning run, a lunchtime one or just a blast out for coffee and cake? Get in touch with any details and we can add them to the groups.io and Slipstream calendars - [socialruns@tvam.org](mailto:socialruns@tvam.org)

Finally, this month, a reminder that next month's November issue is the last of the year. This gives the team a well-earned rest and time to assess where we are, sort out advertisers for 2020 and start arranging next year's calendar. So, if you have anything to contribute in the next issue, please let us know - [slipstream@tvam.org](mailto:slipstream@tvam.org)

**Slipstream Editor**

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## New Members in October

Carlos Gonzalez  
Andrew Holden  
Brian Holland  
Stephen Holliday  
Sarah Jackson

Toby Jones  
Cain Lee  
Phil Little  
Neeraj Pandey  
Jose Varela



## Test Passes

**Associate**  
Mark Hibbins  
Richard Payne

**Observer**  
Nick Caiger-Smith  
Stephen Wilson

## Observer Validations

Neil Disbrey

## Run Leaders

Ross Fitheridge



*A new Observer, Test passes and new Run Leaders awarded at the September St Crispin's meet*

TVAM Roll of Honour

# FROM THE CHAIR



I've just got back from the last IAM Track Skills Day of the year which was held at Thruxton. It was a great day with most of the riders present being TVAM members taking the opportunity to brush-up their cornering skills on the lovely flowing, grippy track and to explore parts of their tyres not normally in contact with tarmac.

This was the first year I've instructed for these events throughout the season, meaning I saw around 450 riders go through the process from track familiarisation to independent riding under supervision over the 6 sessions on track. With a focus on accuracy and smoothness the progression of exercises encourages riders to experiment with braking harder than you would on the road, just to see how quickly our bikes can slow, to maintaining positive throttle through corners and accelerating away. The day isn't about speed but smiles - and there was lots of those around yesterday despite rain in the afternoon sessions.

Demand for these special skills days has been growing over the past few years as the IAM recognises there is a demand for events using the safe environment of a race track but which aren't out-and-out track days with screaming 600's and 1 litre bikes ridden by power-ranger clad racers going for a lap time. Dates are already being negotiated with circuits for 2020 and these will go on sale from the first day of Motorcycle Live 2019 in Birmingham on 16th November. Whilst we will continue to organise our own TVAM days at Castle Combe if you want to ride Thruxton you will need to book these early through IAM RoadSmart as the track's owners will only deal with them. As more details become available we'll push a note out on the 'all-members' Club groups.io forum.

Just occasionally one of our number distinguishes themselves through quiet perseverance and by 'just getting on with the job' of training riders to be safer on our busy roads. Every month we recognise our Observers who have successfully guided another Associate through their Advanced Test. One of our Observers though has now decided it's time to hang up his gold badge having moved to Poole and bought a boat. With 48 test passes and having been an active club member for many years (decades) quite a few know Colin Wheeler for his sense of humour, fun, and healthy scepticism for bureaucracy. I understand Colin will be at St Crispin's this Sunday and I'm sure we will all want to wish him well for the future.

**Andy Slater**  
Chairman

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# WHY DO THEY DO IT?



## Changing the framework of your mind!

Elspeth Beard, you may have come to see her at the TVAM Seminar on 19th June - nearly 100 members did. Describing her as a remarkable lady is never going to do her justice! If you missed it, you missed a great opportunity.

In 1982, at just 23 years of age and training as an architect, Elspeth decided to go around the world solo on her motorcycle! At this time there were no credit cards, mobile phones, no Sat Navs, no internet and little in the way of global communication – do you remember the telex machine? She was the first woman to embark on such a journey and when she left she had little idea of what lay ahead.

She spoke with great humility about her travels having survived some horrendous accidents, travelled through some very unsavoury countries, fended off sexual advances and fallen in love twice. She worked at various places and saved money to enable the next part of her journey. Camping for much of the journey Elspeth rode across the United States to Los Angeles, crossing to New Zealand, stopping in Australia, then on to Malaysia, Singapore, Nepal, India, Iran, Turkey and back home. En route, she looked after her own BMW R60/6 with the help of a Haynes manual and religiously carried out the maintenance.

Her story was told with honesty and wit and is an inspiration for all motorcyclists. In all, Elspeth covered 35,000 miles over two and a half years but when she returned her story went unheard. It wasn't until 2008 that a freelance journalist heard about her adventure and wrote about it.

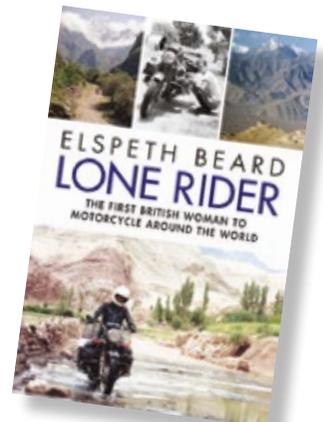
Slowly her story emerged and in 2014 Elspeth finally decided to write her book 'Lone Rider'. Fast forward 5 years and there is now talk about wanting to make a film about her. What a fantastic end to a story that continues to inspire so many – what an amazing lady!

In Elspeth's words, 'There are always excuses not to do something and never the right time to make a start, so just do it!'

**David Naylor**

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*Roger, a regular at 7Ws*



*40 winks in the bar at the Commodore*

## **ROGER HATCH - 1945-2019**

We recently saw the loss of one of our long standing members, Roger Hatch. Roger passed away on 6 August 2019 at the age of 74. He had been a member of TVAM for 14 years and had passed his advanced test in 2007. I met Roger back in 1977 when I worked with him at Slough College Management Faculty for a year or so, where he maintained all the audio visual equipment whilst I covered all the graphics requirements. He was always quite a character. He will be missed.

**Editor**

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The advertisement features a row of six earplugs in various colors: red, blue, clear, white, black, and dark grey. Each earplug is shown with a splash of water around it, suggesting they are waterproof. The background is white with a black border.

Advanced note for your Diary

## An Evening with Neil Hodgson and Niall Mackenzie

Neil Hodgson, British Superbike, World Superbike champion and now commentator on MotorGP for BT Sport, and Niall Mackenzie, British Superbike Champion, Grand Prix racer and now working for EuroSport commentating on World Superbike coverage are coming to visit TVAM in November. These two racers and expert commentators will be sharing tales of the professional racing circuit and the back-stories behind the current championships in an evening of chat and questions. Just what is Lorenzo up to? Will he be at Honda next year? Will Rossi really retire?

Date: Wednesday 13th November 2019

Location: Hilton St Anne's Manor, London Road, Wokingham.

Time: 7.30pm - 10pm

Tickets in Advance: £5.00 to cover venue costs.

Available in the TVAM Webshop

Neil and Niall have also recently established a new company offering bike insurance to IAM members and Observers.

A competitor to Surety? That would be interesting.....





# ONE BIKE TO RULE THEM ALL?

Motorcyclists, on average, own more than one motorcycle. Only truly hardcore automotive enthusiasts own more than one car, the financial and logistical constraints of the format conspiring to ensure that even most performance-oriented cars need to be able to function as someone's only mode of practical transport. Motorcycles don't have that problem.

Today, it's possible to have a garage full of bikes that have dramatically different operational envelopes. But what came first, the chicken or the egg? Do we need multiple motorcycles because each one is only good at one thing? Or is it the other way around, and brands are only able to thrive while selling specialised hardware precisely because they know you have other bikes for other purposes?

There are dirt bikes for exploring byways; sportsbikes for clipping apexes at trackdays; naked roadsters for B-road blasts; big tourers for nipping to the Black Forest for a long weekend in comfort; and even long, low cruisers for rolling up at your favourite biker cafe in style. In truth, I could spend the rest of this article just listing the many genres and applications of motorcycles, and still have someone email me a list of those I'd missed.

And yet, even if you have the means to stock your garage with diverse choices, there's a purity to doing it all on just one bike. There have been several times in my riding career when the question of which bike to ride was moot, and it's always liberating. No worries about whether I've brought the wrong bike for a particular ride or trip, no nagging concern that I might've had more fun on one of my other motorcycles. It was a bike ride, I rode my bike. Simple.

Insurance, tax and MOTs all need paying for regardless of how the mileage is divided up, and the reality is that you can only sit in one saddle at a time. Sure, there are practical benefits to sharing the load - if one bike is off the road for repairs or maintenance it's handy to have a backup. Although it must be said that this argument breaks down if, like me, you aim for your fleet to have as little overlap as possible. If your sporty bike gets a puncture the day before a trackday you can't exactly shrug and take your cruiser instead.

And yet, I'm increasingly convinced that one bike can do it all. Twenty years ago the only way to get good brakes, suspension and decent power was to grit your teeth and clamber aboard a dedicated

sportsbike - comfort and practicality be damned. They were the flagships, and everything else was compromised in some way - and so people compromised on luggage and comfort instead. But these days the most expensive bikes in the showroom stand tall on their dirt-styled tyres, glowering down at lesser bikes with their array of LED spotlights. Adventure Bikes can do now everything as well, or better, than everything else in the showroom.

Comfort? Check - Adventure Bikes, or Adventure Tourers as some variants are labelled, are designed to soak up big miles with ease. Performance? Check - the top-flight models from the European manufacturers use big engines to put out more torque and power than can be usefully employed anywhere outside a racetrack. Brakes and suspension are not only better quality than race bikes from just a few years ago, they manage the trick of enabling these big beasts to out-handle dedicated performance machines on the bumpiest of neglected British roads.

Want tech? Sportsbikes are the ones playing catch-up these days, with the slickest TFT screens, automated electronic suspension and riding aids going to the Adventure Bikes first. And finally, luggage; beefy subframes and fashionable yet functional top-loading panniers mean that the dedicated touring motorcycle has all but died out, with only BMW and Honda offering a grand total of three models between them in the UK. I know that there's a little more choice in North American markets, but in Europe, the Adventure Bike has completely taken over.

And honestly, I'm just as guilty of contributing to this state of affairs. I bought a V-Strom 650, modified it to suit and then spent 75,000 miles riding it in all conditions, on all surfaces, in every type of terrain and weather, across borders, on road, track and beyond, with and without luggage and passenger. And during my adventures, did I ever think that another bike might have been better at performing the task at hand, might have made a trip, ride or other biking experience that much more enjoyable? Sure - but only for one small part of the journey. You see, unless you do all your riding within a few miles of your house, you're going to put down some miles travelling to the good roads, or the racetrack, or the trailhead. And while a sportsbike will be slightly more fun when you're actually knee-down at Mallory Park, there's a reason why hardcore track-rats cart their



*20 years ago, top-flight sportsbikes were the only way to get good performance.*



*Touring, trackdays & commuting – there's a certain simplicity to doing it all on one bike.*



*Upside-down cartridge forks and radial brakes, but also two-up comfort and luggage?*



*Dedicated touring bikes still exist, but adventure bikes have largely made them redundant.*



*With bumpy roads, variable weather and lots to carry, would he have been better off on ADVs?*



*After several days of re-packing and re-strapping my tailpack I really started to miss my top box.*

bikes around in vans. Carving up mountain passes is indeed more rewarding on my Street Triple than it is on my V-Strom, but only just. And the V-Strom will make the journey there far easier and more enjoyable, with better wind protection, as well as easier-to-use, more spacious and more secure luggage.

This point was driven home by me earlier this year across two separate trips - one 7-day blast across the Swiss Alps, and another shorter loop around the Scottish North Coast 500 - both undertaken by myself and a friend on our trusty Street Triples. We both had an absolute blast, but after long days in the saddles we realised that we would've given up very little in terms of cornering enjoyment if we'd been riding middleweight Adventure Bikes instead.

500 miles along French motorways was a trial to be overcome. Squeezing clothes and toiletries into tiny tailpacks was a daily frustration. The bumpy roads of the highlands knackered our wrists and short fuel ranges were a constant gnawing concern. Sure, you may want to stop every 100 miles, but you can't always find an open petrol station in many of the most interesting parts of Europe, never mind beyond! When the rain arrived, I missed my V-Strom's windshield, fairing and handguards. And while oiling my chain would've been easier with the V-Strom's centrestand. Many adventure bikes solve the problem entirely with shaft-driven rear wheels.

A BMW R1250GS is lighter and more nimble than it's fully-faired RT cousin, has better wind protection than the naked R and will be far more comfortable during the long motorway stretches than the RS. An S1000RR has more power and weighs less than an S1000XR, but which one would you rather take for a long ride through the Pyrenees? Which one would your pillion prefer? Naked bikes, sportsbikes, retro roadsters - they all look great and perform brilliantly when the conditions are magazine-photo-perfect, but at any other part of the trip you'll want something a little less single-minded.

Twenty years ago the compromises would have been huge. I would have had to sacrifice a massive amount of engine, handling and braking performance to get my desired level of comfort and practicality. Not any more. And there will certainly be those of you who see the pain and discomfort



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*"Call that an adventure bike? This is an adventure bike!"*

I'm fortunate enough to be able to afford to keep multiple motorcycles, even if the annual mileages on my more focused vehicles is dwarfed by that of my Adventure Bike. And if you only have the resources or the space to keep a single motorcycle in your garage, then why not pick one that is a jack of all trades, while also managing the impressive trick of damn near mastering them all?

## Nick Tasker

of using a more focused device as a badge of honour and pride, and I certainly understand that. There are those amongst you for whom any compromise will be one too many. My brother maintains that he'll never give up the front-end feel he enjoys from his sportsbike, and his wife seems perfectly happy to tour from that tiny back seat. That said, it's funny how he's putting far more miles on his CCM GP450 these days...

And so, as always, it comes down to personal preference. I'm not going to be thinning my personal fleet just yet, nor stop adding more specialised bikes to the garage to fill ever-smaller niches.

# Nick Robinson

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## MYROUTE-APP & SATNAV PRESENTATION

A TVAM presentation on the use of MyRoute-app and SatNavs will be given on  
**Thursday 14th November**  
 at the Binfield Social Club, RG42 5HS.  
 Please arrive at 7.45pm for an 8pm start.

The talk will be given by Keith Yallop and Stef Bellon and will take about 2 hours, with a drinks break half way through and is for beginners through to members already using the app and will cover;

- MyRouteApp history
- why it is becoming the club's preferred mapping software
- how it enhances the use of SatNav devices
- introducing the new MyRoute-app TVAM group and how to sign up to it
- where to download the app and get the club discount
- demonstration on how it works using slides
- how to use the support videos to train yourself to operate it
- the use of SatNavs and dealing with operator errors
- finally we will have a question and answer session

There will be a back up service once you have signed up to the app and have taught yourself how to build a basic route, we will then offer further one-to-one training if required.

If you would like to attend one of these presentations please book by emailing us at [myrouteapp@tvam.org](mailto:myrouteapp@tvam.org)  
**The evening will be limited to 25 members** - so first come, first served.

**Keith Yallop and Stef Bellon**  
[myrouteapp@tvam.org](mailto:myrouteapp@tvam.org)



# TVAM TEAM CHALLENGE



Team Name		Team Members	Points
1	3 Horse Power	Charon Willis Duncan Willis Robin Crane	573
2	Wobmob	Andrew McWalter Bill Barnes	506
3	The Johnsons	Jo Johnson John Johnson	490
4	Lads and a Lady	Carole Hooper Andy Collins Simon Mack David Mack	485
5	Lost Amigos	Ally McCulloch Catherine Russell Tim Dadd Kelly Cogollo	462
6	Know Eye Deer	Gary Venning Neil Rigby Adrian Grey Steve Dobson Mike Bedwell	426
7	Girl Power	Julie Colville Laurie Provost Jules Reed David Jennings	365
8	The Misfits	Phil Donovan Samantha Calvert Dana Gottschalk Merrick Cox	357



With thanks to all those that took part in this year's TVAM Team Challenge. Eight teams ventured out on a warm and sunny day to seek out the 8 White Horses of Wiltshire and one in Oxfordshire, though as you can see, some found a few more! With varying levels of success, we hope all had a great day out. Congratulations to the Willis team and Robin who came back after a year's break to reclaim the title and the trophy!

### Robina & Salli





Many of us have spent time in the Picos Mountains in northern Spain this summer - and you can see why! If you haven't, it may be time to consider them, 24hr ferry to Spain, stunning scenery and fantastic roads.



# Picos de Europa

Photos: Andy Sellers, Jane and Alan Bradford, Kathy Drogemuller, Simon Daniels, Salli G





# EVENTS DIARY

## SOCIAL RIDES, T-RUNS, TRACK DAYS AND OTHER EVENTS IN 2019

### St Crispin's Sunday - Monthly Meet - Observed Ride

Every 3rd Sunday of the month. Meet 9am at St Crispin's School, Wokingham (see p32 of *Slipstream* for map). All those currently involved in observed runs will be allocated an Observer. Slow riding skills practice is available. Social runs available for full members start at 10am if run leaders are available on the day.

If you are willing to lead a run please email [greenteam@tvam.org](mailto:greenteam@tvam.org) or contact Alan Hudson at

[alantvam@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:alantvam@yahoo.co.uk)

## OCTOBER 2019

SUNDAY

20

### ST CRISPIN'S SUNDAY - OBSERVED RIDE

See top of page for meeting details.

### CHRIS ARNOLD MEMORIAL RIDE (B)

100 miles to finish at Loomies on some of Chris' favourite roads. Briefing 10am with departure at 10.30am from St Crispin's. **Run Leader Mark Spittles 07753 931570.**

SATURDAY

26

### CLAMS 4TH SATURDAY RUN (B)

Meet at Sainsbury's, Cobham, KT11 1HW at 9am for a 9.30am start in the store carpark behind the filling station. Destination Roedean Café near Brighton. Approx 120 miles, back mid-afternoon. **Run leaders Graham and Lesley Bugby.**

SATURDAY

26

### GOODBYE BST (British Summer Time) RUN (C)

Meet at Peartree Services, north Oxford, OX2 8JZ, where fuel and refreshments are available, at 09.30am for a briefing and 10am departure. Approximately 140 miles heading north into (mostly) Northants on (mostly) quiet roads. Fuel/coffee stop in the morning, lunch near Market Harborough, and a further break on the return leg if requested. Return to Peartree by 4.30pm, but anyone wishing to leave the run early is welcome to do so. All Full Members, Associates and guests welcome - suitable for first-timers. **Run leader Bob Harrison.**

SUNDAY

27

### GREEN TEAM MONTHLY RUN (B)

Meet at 9am for a 9.30am start at the former Little Nellie's Diner, Kingsclere, RG20 4TA. Riding to Felpham, Bognor Regis and ending at Loomies, Alton Road, West Meon, GU32 1JX. **Run leader Alan Hudson.**

## NOVEMBER 2019

SATURDAY

2

### BREAKFAST RIDE TO LEPE PARK (B)

A morning ride of 120 miles round trip with a breakfast stop at Lepe Country Park return to Basingstoke for early afternoon. Meet at the former Little Nellie's Diner, Newbury Rd, Kingsclere, RG20 4TA at 8am for an 8.15am departure. **Run Leader Mark Spittles - 07753 931570.**

SUNDAY

3

### WAGs FIRST SUNDAY RUN (B)

Come along and meet the members of the WAGS team and join us on a social ride which we hold first Sunday of each month. The location and time changes from month to month and these details will be published 2 weeks before the event via [allmembers@tvam.groups.io](mailto:allmembers@tvam.groups.io) and on the TVAM Facebook page. For further information please contact the organiser on [wantage.social@tvam.org](mailto:wantage.social@tvam.org)

Social Runs

St Crispin's

Track Day/Training Run

Events

Green Team

SUNDAY 10	<b>WAGs GREEN BADGE RUN (B)</b> Starting from Costa Drive through just off the A420 at Park Road, Faringdon, SN7 7GQ. Meet at 10am for departure at 10.30am. All Green Badge holders and above welcome. <a href="mailto:wantage.social@tvam.org">wantage.social@tvam.org</a>
WEDNESDAY 13	<b>AN EVENING WITH NEIL HODGSON AND NIALL MACKENZIE</b> See page 9 for full details of this evening with the two legends at Hilton St Anne's Manor, London Road, Wokingham for TVAM members and friends. These two racers and expert commentators will be sharing tales of the professional racing circuit and the back-stories behind the current championships in an evening of chat and questions. <b>Tickets in Webshop £5</b>
THURSDAY 14	<b>MYROUTE-APP AND SATNAV PRESENTATION</b> Want to learn how to use MyRoute-App to create routes for your SatNav? Evening presentation at Binfield Social Club - see page 15 for details. Book Now!
SATURDAY 16	<b>RIDE TO CHOPPERS (B)</b> A morning ride to Choppers with a return to Basingstoke by lunchtime. Meet at the former Little Nellie's Diner, Newbury Rd, Kingsclere, RG20 4TA at 8am for an 8.30am departure. <b>Run Leader Mark Spittles - 07753 931570.</b>
SUNDAY 17	<b>ST CRISPIN'S SUNDAY - OBSERVED RIDE</b> See top of p20 for meeting details.
SUNDAY 17	<b>ST CRISPIN'S PUB LUNCH RIDE (B)</b> Open to Associates, Full Members and Observers. Meet at 1pm in side car park. Ride to nearby pub or café for quick lunch followed by an afternoon ride of 1.5hrs to a well-known café for further refreshment before heading home. <b>Contact Phil Donovan – phildon3@gmail.com or call 07788 586586.</b>
SATURDAY 23	<b>CLAMS 4TH SATURDAY RUN (B)</b> Meet at the Bushe Café, Blackbushe Airport on the A30, Camberley, GU17 9LQ at 9am for a briefing to leave at 9.30am. All day with stops. <b>Run leader Jim Bates.</b>

## DECEMBER 2019

SUNDAY 1	<b>WAGs FIRST SUNDAY RUN (B)</b> Come along and meet the members of the WAGS team and join us on a social ride which we hold first Sunday of each month. The location and time changes from month to month and these details will be published 2 weeks before the event via <a href="mailto:allmembers@tvam.groups.io">allmembers@tvam.groups.io</a> and on the TVAM Facebook page. For further information please contact the organiser on <a href="mailto:wantage.social@tvam.org">wantage.social@tvam.org</a>
SUNDAY 15	<b>ST CRISPIN'S SUNDAY - OBSERVED RIDE</b> See top of p20 for meeting details.
SUNDAY 29	<b>LAST BREAKFAST RIDE OF THE YEAR TO THE SEASIDE (B)</b> A morning ride of 120 miles round trip with a breakfast stop at Lepe Country Park return to Basingstoke for 2pm latest. Meet at the former Little Nellie's Diner, Newbury Rd, Kingsclere, RG20 4TA at 8am for an 8.30am departure. <b>Run Leader Mark Spittles - 07753 931570.</b>

Send details of any runs or events to [eventsdiary@tvam.org](mailto:eventsdiary@tvam.org) or [socialruns@tvam.org](mailto:socialruns@tvam.org)

**DO YOU HAVE A CLUB RUN TO ADD TO THESE PAGES FOR 2019?**  
T-RUNS, BREAKFAST RUNS, HALF-DAY RUNS, FULL-DAY RUNS, WEEKEND TRIPS,  
TRIPS ABROAD, TRAINING RUNS, TRACK DAYS - email the details to [socialruns@tvam.org](mailto:socialruns@tvam.org)

**By supplying your details for entry on these pages you are agreeing to them being publicly available.**

**TVAM Run Ratings**

- A: Skilled/progressive for confident riders on all types of road. Aimed at smaller groups.
- B+: More progressive pace for the confident, focused rider. Overtaking permitted.
- B: Medium paced, relaxed ride. Overtaking permitted.
- C: Leisurely pace - NO overtaking within the group. Suitable for first timers or those looking for a slower pace.
- T: Team Training Run - observed/social ride with an element of coaching run by each of the local teams
- O: Off-road



Social Runs



St Crispin's



Track Day/Training Run



Events



Green Team

## COURSES FOR TVAM MEMBERS 2020

### ABC - Advanced Bike Control - Look out for future courses in 2020

Experience some advanced machine control on the runway at RAF Odiham, taking home enhanced riding skills, and the biggest grin you can squeeze into a helmet. Cost £25. You will need to ensure that your bike is in good condition - particularly tyres, suspension and brakes. If you have any questions email Chris Caswell on [advancedbikecontrol@tvam.org](mailto:advancedbikecontrol@tvam.org)

### BC - BikeCraft - Sunday 9th February, Saturday 21st March, 2020

The great thing about TVAM is we get out and ride our bikes. Now you can add to that great practical experience by joining us for a participative theory day. BikeCraft can add to your information to help make you a better biker. Have you ever wondered: What's the best way of overtaking? What does the system really mean and how do I get the best out of it? Get answers to these questions and many others. Cost £15 includes the course CD and workbook. For course details and questions email Di Woodcock at [bikecraft@tvam.org](mailto:bikecraft@tvam.org)

### CBB - Class of Better Biking - Look out for future courses in 2020

If you are an Associate in your first half-a-dozen rides and you still don't feel completely fluent in the language of TVAM, this theory and discussion hour is for you. Learn about the subtleties of the system of motorcycle control, how to make a workable riding plan and what the run report form is really telling you. Email [bikecraft@tvam.org](mailto:bikecraft@tvam.org) with 'Class of Better Biking' in the subject line to book a place ... and, yes, you will be able to get out for an observed ride afterwards.

### RLBM - Run Leader and Back Marker Course - Look out for future courses in 2020

For full members – this tailor-made course, consists of theory and practical sessions, giving you the skill, knowledge and training necessary to run lead or back mark a TVAM social run. A mentor will also be allocated to you. For further information please email [runleaderbackmarker@tvam.org](mailto:runleaderbackmarker@tvam.org)

### LLR - Look, Lean, Roll - Look out for future courses in 2020

Run by a renowned team of TVAM members and Observers, the aim of this half-day event is to enhance cornering and bike-handling skills, within a controlled, off-road environment. Cost £30. Just do it! To book for this course please email Jackie Reeve at [llr@tvam.org](mailto:llr@tvam.org)

### PRC - Pillion Riding Course - Look out for future courses in 2020

TVAM's course to help both riders and their pillion passengers achieve safer and more enjoyable riding together. It is aimed at full TVAM members and their partners, especially those with little or no experience of riding with, or as, a passenger. The course includes both theory and practical sessions.

# From Rookie to Advanced Rider

Until a few years ago, I had absolutely no interest in bikes. My only experience was riding my Dad's old Puch Maxi 50cc moped just to get me to and from college for a year. Once I'd passed my driving test, I never gave bikes a second thought. I preferred riding horses!

Fast forward to 2012, my husband Ian announced, out of the blue, that he wanted a bike and would take his test again. Mid-life crisis I called it. He had ridden bikes as a teenager, a 125, then an RD250 at 17 but once he'd got a car, he sold it and never got another one. In March 2012 he booked himself on a 1-week DAS course. The day after he passed, he went over to Aylesbury to pick up his Honda CBF600 SA. I was persuaded to jump on the back one Summer's evening and reluctantly agreed. I absolutely hated it, way too fast and I felt vulnerable and not in control – never again! Until a year later when he changed to a Triumph Sprint, this time it was more comfortable, but I still wasn't convinced.



As a keen cyclist, Ian was interested in marshalling at cycling events and one of his friends from Reading Cycling Club said he would need to do the advanced test so suggested joining TVAM. By Spring 2014, after chopping in the Triumph Sprint for a Triumph Explorer 1200, he joined TVAM. I rode pillion a couple of times on the Explorer and found it pretty comfy. That summer for my 50<sup>th</sup> birthday, I agreed to a weekend away on the bike to Hay-on-Wye. I was nervous but we had a great time. Later that year, Ian passed his advanced test.

In early 2015 we found out about a trip to France for 1 day, a 'French Taster'. It was one night in Calais and a day's riding on some French roads. Good for those who had never biked abroad. We had a great time despite the appalling weather. Strangely, it didn't put me off and a couple of months later we went on another french trip to Normandy with some more TVAM members. I'd always wanted to see the beaches and the WW2 sites. I was actually beginning to enjoy this biking lark! We did the pillion riding course which was really useful and informative. Looking back, I think the people we'd met helped make these trips so enjoyable as well as some lovely roads.

We began to visit Wales a couple of times a year where the roads are just fantastic! Ian had been on his first 7Ws so we rode some of those amazing roads in mid Wales. I started to tag along to some of the Green team runs and some of the other group runs. I had got used to the marker system and buddy system after a few rides, but at this point, whilst I had become accustomed to riding pillion, I still had no desire to ride myself.



In September 2016, we went to the Picos de Europa national park in Spain with some other TVAM members. I absolutely loved it! The roads and scenery were fabulous, we were with a great bunch of people and we all got along well and had some laughs (and a few gins!) along the way. On my return, I decided to bite the bullet and get some bike lessons. So, in October 2016, I booked a taster session with Lightning Training in Caversham. I got on one of their CB125s and rode it around the car park for a bit getting used to the gears and brakes. Despite driving for over 30 years, riding a geared bike didn't feel natural at all, however, I enjoyed it, so I did



my CBT training the following week. I spent the first half of the day around the car park getting up into 2<sup>nd</sup> gear and practising emergency brakes and U-turns. I got my certificate at the end of the day, really pleased with myself - not bad for a 52 year old!

I was keen to do my Direct Access quite quickly - I wanted to get it done and dusted in a week, like Ian had before - so, I booked a 'Roadrider' day for the following week to get some more road experience. I had to go to the Lightning's Oxford centre as Reading was fully booked. I rode the CB125 again around Oxford City centre, which was very challenging - bicycles and buses everywhere. We rode a couple of times between their Oxford and Reading centres to pickup

and drop off the bikes, and as we did I was becoming more used to the bike's controls.

I booked my MOD 1 training for the following week with Lightning, again. I spent all day in their training pad on a knackered old Suzuki Gladius. I was a bit peeved as they had some newish CB650s but they thought they were a bit tall for me. I had a fairly good first half of the day, then I dropped the bike on a U turn ending up with a massive bruise on my leg. It knocked my confidence and they decided not to let me out on the road that day so I was a bit deflated and decided I wasn't ready for the test. I had bought myself a CB125 but found it a bit small so I got myself a 2007 Honda Varadero 125, which was perfect for me. It was a bit taller and didn't feel like a 125 in size. It was a great practice bike and I went out a few times on it just getting used to gears, brakes and turning. I kept it for a year, until I got bored of trying to keep up with Ian on his Triumph Explorer.



In 2017, going pillion again, we went on our own to France for a ten-day tour, then again to the Picos in the September. When I got back from Spain, I decided I was ready for my big bike test. I had heard about BMW's Rookie to Rider training through another TVAM member, so I made some enquiries and in October 2017, almost a year to the day of passing my CBT, I booked myself on a 5-day training course up at their centre in Royston, Hertfordshire. The process was pretty easy and they even recommended a local B&B. It turned out that the lady owner had recently passed her DAS with them the summer before and couldn't recommend them enough. The best thing of all was I got to learn on a new F700 GS!

On the Sunday morning, I arrived at the training centre in Royston around 9am having travelled up the day before. Over a couple of cups of tea, I filled in all the paperwork and then we had a briefing in the classroom with the other students. I immediately opted to start on the 700 rather than the 125. We did a couple of hours or so around their training pad just so they could see our level of riding, then we went out into the countryside, stopping in the popular biking village of Finchingfield. As I reverse parked, my foot slipped on loose gravel and the bike went over - couldn't have happened in a worse place in front of all those Sunday bikers! Anyhow, I brushed myself down and carried on after a quick cuppa. Apart from that slight hiccup, we had a cracking day's riding, even getting in some twisties. I couldn't wait for day two.



Day two was MOD1 training day. Lots more in the training pad, mastering the slaloms, figures of 8 and lots of U-turns. I managed



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to drop the bike a couple of times doing U-turns but carried on, determined to master this manoeuvre. We did lots of road riding in the afternoon.

Day 3 was more MOD1 and MOD2 training and we got to practise in the actual DAS test enclosure before the test. I dropped the bike AGAIN on the U-turn. At least it was a practice and not the real thing. I was beginning to doubt my U-turn abilities. Everything else was spot on. .

Day 4 was the MOD1 test. I was nervous and didn't sleep much the night before. After some more practice in the training pad we headed off over to the test centre just outside Cambridge. There were 2 of us and I went first. I failed! I was gutted and so was Julie, my trainer. I'd done a near perfect test with just that one fault. I'd wobbled over the white line on the U-turn. I did the actual U-turn OK but going over that line was a fail! How frustrating, the other chap passed.

I decided to save day 5 for another time and upon my return home, I spent days on my 125 practising. I had to wait 3 weeks for a re-test, thankfully passing MOD1 the second time and immediately booked my MOD2 test for the following week. I passed with just 3 minors. I was over the moon!

While I was away, Ian had sent me a picture of a 2013 BMW F700GS, the same as I'd been training on at Royston which was for sale in Christchurch. So, the day after I passed, I removed my L plates from my 125 and rode it down to Christchurch on a rainy November day to view the BMW. I picked my new bike the following week, riding home on my own BMW700GS. Happy days! Stopping in Lyndhurst for lunch on the way home, I stalled and dropped my new bike in the car park. I'd only had it five minutes! The throttle was sticking a bit, but I had to ride it home like that in the rain and it was getting dark! I rode quite a bit during the winter months and decided to wait until the Spring before joining TVAM and eventually joined as an Associate in April 2018. Since then, I've had over 30 observed rides some good and some not so good but my scores were coming down and my riding improving. I was struggling with cornering, particularly right-hand bends not looking round enough and keeping to the left. I practised these a lot and went on the 7Ws last October plus the Look, Lean and Roll course this year which both helped my riding, cornering and overall confidence immensely. It all started to fall into place.

Finally, on August 1<sup>st</sup> 2019, I took my Advanced Test and got a F1RST! I am absolutely chuffed to bits. Looking back, it took longer than I would have liked, but I've learnt so much in that time, especially as I've only been riding a bike just under 3 years. Of course, there's always room for improvement and I see this as a continuing learning curve with each ride. I cannot thank Observers enough for their

support. Steve, my Observer, for encouraging me and getting me through this process. I'm not the easiest of students. Plus, of course Ian, for putting up with me along the way. It's been quite a journey.

Riding a bike has opened up a whole new world. I've been on roads I never knew existed in this country, seen stunning scenery and ridden amazing roads in the UK and through France, Belgium, Luxembourg, Germany and Spain. I've met some fabulous people along the way in TVAM, all of whom have been so friendly and encouraging throughout my journey. Too many names to mention, but you know who you are.

Looking forward to new adventures and hopefully a new bike in the near future.

**Julie Colville**



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# ADVANCED RIDING 14 - NOW FOR THE FUN

In the last of these articles on Advanced Riding we get to the fun part - acceleration. The hazard is behind us and we can start to wind the speed on again. **The final stage in the 'System' is acceleration (A).** After all the Information, Position, Speed, and Gear selection stages we can begin to crack on again. All of us like the freedom and the agility a motorbike gives us, and most riders can do the straight parts of roads well. After all, a motorcycle is most stable when upright and accelerating smoothly - or as my other half prefers, upright on the centre stand in the garage.

## How quickly should I accelerate?

This clearly depends on the situation. In the Speed Limits chapter of Insights Part 1, accelerating out of lower speed limits is discussed. 'Acceleration should be brisk rather than fast but be smooth, progressive, and controlled according to conditions.' You should take into account your speed exiting the hazard, the road and traffic conditions ahead and choose a point to accelerate safely and smoothly away, ensuring your speed does not cause you to have to brake sharply for the next hazard you may see ahead.

Acceleration changes the balance of the bike, moving the centre of gravity rearwards, so increasing grip available to the rear tyre, whilst reducing that on the front. Excessive or sharp acceleration could cause the front wheel to lift, meaning you have little steering control at this point, or the rear wheel could spin. Bikes are very responsive, so sudden changes of throttle input will put unnecessary strain on the gearbox, transmission and tyres as well as being uncomfortable. It will also increase your fuel consumption.



*Excessive acceleration will lift the front wheel*

## What is Acceleration Sense?

Acceleration sense is the ability to control the speed of the bike in response to changing road and traffic conditions by use of the throttle, so you make less use of the brakes and the ride is smoother. It requires you to be in a responsive gear, to have perfected your observation and planning skills so that, using your bike's characteristics, you can anticipate speed and distance to manage hazards smoothly. As your skills improve, your acceleration sense will enable you to ride smoother and longer as the strain of riding also reduces. Remember though that acceleration sense still means you can use the brakes. The

manufacturer put them there to be used, but in combination with good acceleration sense the overall ride becomes much calmer, which will be especially appreciated if you have a pillion.

### **What governs how quickly I can accelerate?**

A number of factors may come into play when accelerating. If you're starting to increase speed during the final stages of a bend, having applied positive throttle through to the apex, a balance comes into play between the tyres ability to maintain the stability control you require and also the grip required to provide the acceleration you're now calling for.

If one imagines a tyre's available grip as being 100 this can be divided between the various functions we ask of it at any one time. When upright and accelerating in a straight line all 100 points of grip on the rear tyre are available for that function. The geometry of the bike designed by the manufacturer means it will go in a straight line unless you apply a steering input, so it should all be just fun at this stage. However, if you're still banked-over exiting a corner some of that grip is still required for stability, maybe 80 points of it at the apex, so only 20 points are available for acceleration. This balance changes as the bike become more upright towards the exit of the bend, allowing you to use more points of grip to accelerate as less are being used to maintain steering and stability - until all 100 are available to push you forward.

Exceeding the grip of the rear tyre exiting a corner by accelerating too hard can have one of two effects. The tyre will spin-up as it loses traction, which can cause the rear of the bike to skid outwards causing the rider to experience what's known as a Low Side accident as you slide gracefully into the ditch, hedge, or gravel trap if on a track day.

The alternative is the rear tyre loses traction for a split-second, making the rear of the bike slide outwards, then suddenly grips again causing the bike to pitch upright, throwing the rider off upwards, usually over the handlebars. This is known as a High Side, and usually results in more damage to the rider, as re-entry onto the tarmac from 2m high at speed is not a gentle affair. There are many YouTube videos available of MotoGP riders demonstrating both techniques.

Modern bike electronics can help control the level of spin, or rear tyre over-speed, allowing the expert rider to retain control and exit the corner still in the saddle despite exceeding the grip of the rear tyre, leaving impressive black lines behind them, but these are extreme tactics normally reserved for the track where the consequences of getting it wrong are possibly much lower than on the public road. Certainly displaying these tactics on test would mean guaranteed failure and, if spotted by enforcement agencies, could result in points on your licence, or worse.

For the front tyre the same balance of grip vs demands still plays out. As you brake for a corner or other hazard, the grip is shared between the steering input you're asking for and grip required for the braking you're applying. If the bike is upright the 100 points of grip are available for braking. As soon as the bike banks over into the corner, the tyre has to start using some of that grip for steering and stability, so you can no longer brake as hard. Hence the 'System' has the speed reduction phase (braking) before gear selection and finally steering around the hazard or bend. This forces you to get the braking over whilst still upright and before you apply any steering input for a change of direction.

Trail Braking, where the front brake is feathered but still applied during the early stages of a corner, means the rider has to be confident in balancing the grip demands of the front tyre. Get it wrong and a visit to the scenery as the front of the bike collapses is your reward. Again, many MotoGP riders can be seen on YouTube demonstrating this effect, which is much cheaper than going out and trying it for yourself.

### **Is that all there is to IPSGA?**

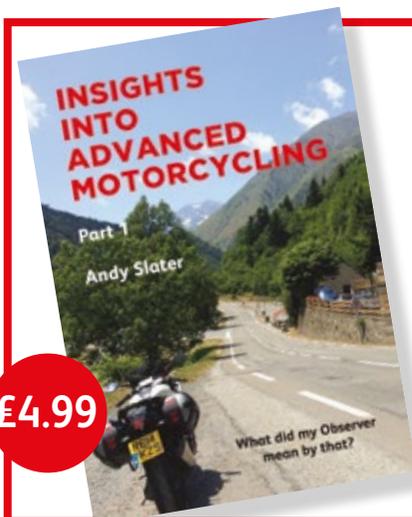
The System of Motorcycle Control (IPSGA) does have some logic to it. As we've seen in these articles over the summer:

- Information is all about looking up and actually seeing what you're looking at and using it to minimise surprises.
- Position is the art of balancing hazards, maintaining your safety bubble, and preparing for the manoeuvre you're about to perform.
- Speed is not necessarily about going faster but getting it right so you are smoother and applying less inputs to the bike to keep it stable.
- Gear means being in the right one that makes the bike flexible so it will respond as you call upon it to track around a corner or as you move into the final stage:
- Acceleration - or getting on with the fun.



*Well, maybe there's a little more to being a successful biker than just IPSGA.....*

*Extract from Insights into Advanced Motorcycling Part 2, due out at the end of 2019*



## **Insights Into Advanced Motorcycling**

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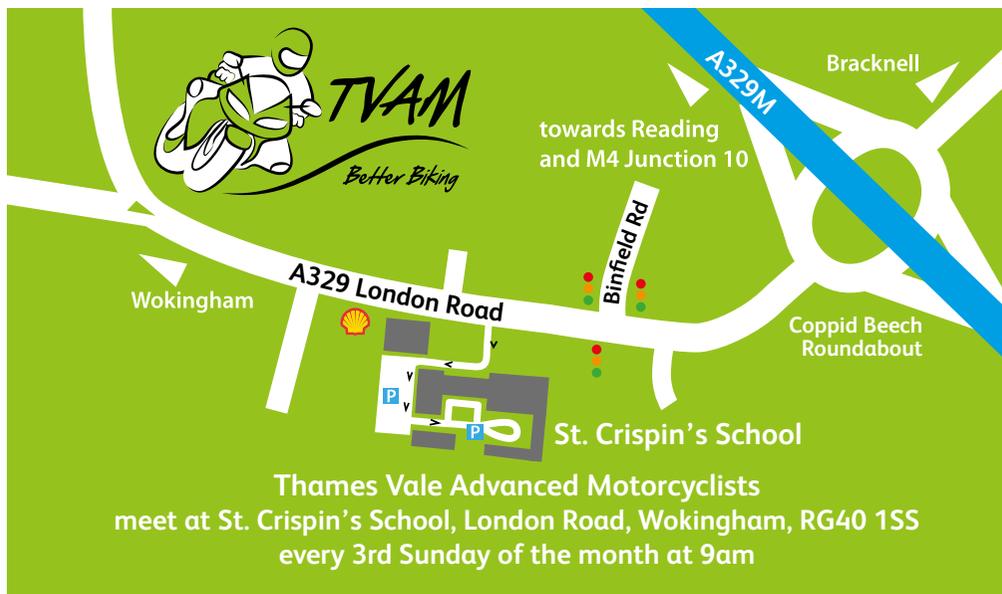
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## CLUB MEET

Monthly meetings are held at 9am on the 3rd Sunday of each month at St. Crispin's School, London Road, Wokingham, RG40 1SS. Observed rides for Associates and first time attendees, social runs for Full Members.



## LOCAL TEAM MEETS

### Basingstoke (BAR)

When: First Monday of the month  
Where: Jekyll & Hyde, Hartley Wespall, Turgis Green, RG27 OAX  
Time: 7.30pm

### Camberley (CLAMs)

When: 1st Tuesday of the month, every other month  
Where: The Bee, School Road, Bagshot, Windlesham, GU20 6PD  
Time: 8pm (Feb, Apr, Jun, Aug, Oct, Dec)

### Great Northern (GNATs)

Meet 1: Saturday before St. Crispin's - check with [wycombe@tvam.org](mailto:wycombe@tvam.org) for location  
Meet 2: After each St. Crispin's for coffee at The Farm Café, Ashridge Manor Garden Centre, Forest Road, Wokingham, RG40 5QY.  
Meet 3: Rideout first Sunday of the month.

### Reading (RAMs)

When: First Tuesday (Nov) and first Monday (Dec) of the month  
Where: Fox and Hounds, Theale, RG7 4BE  
Time: 8pm

### Slough (SAM)

When: First Saturday of the month  
Where: Jenners Riverside Café, Ray Mead Road, Maidenhead, SL6 8NP  
Time: 9am - Contact [slough@tvam.org](mailto:slough@tvam.org)

### Wantage & Newbury (WAGs)

When: Second Wednesday of the month  
Where: Ye Olde Red Lion, Green Lane, Chieveley, Berkshire, RG20 8XB  
Time: 7.30pm

### Wokingham & Bracknell (WOBMOB)

When: 3rd Tuesday of the month  
Where: Binfield Social Club, Binfield, West Berkshire, RG42 4HP  
Time: 8pm

### Green Team (Full Members)

Meet 1: Last weekend of the month - see *Slipstream* or web calendar for social run information.  
Meet 2: Wednesday following St Crispin's at The Crown, The Street, Swallowfield, RG7 1QY at 7.30pm - Contact [greenteam@tvam.org](mailto:greenteam@tvam.org)

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 Quarterly meetings - 26th November 2019 in Binfield

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Wokingham & Bracknell (WOBMOB)	Andy MacWalter, Ian Gaitley	wokingham@tvam.org

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# TVAM CLUB CONTACTS

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Sir Stirling Moss OBE FIE

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Nigel Fowler 1996, Richard Tickner 2005, Nigel Taylor 2010, Charon Willis 2016

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Green Team Leader	Alan Hudson	events@tvam.org
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**Committee Meetings:** These are held at James House, Mere Park, Dedmere Road, Marlow, SL7 1FJ

Next Meetings: (M - Marlow / S - via Skype), 12th November (S), 10th December (M) - all meetings on Tuesdays at 7.30pm and alternate monthly between Marlow and Skype meetings.

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Merchandise	(to order items away from St Crispin's)	merchandise@tvam.org
Midweek Runs	Ken Jeddere-Fisher	midweekruns@tvam.org
Offroad Riding	Clive Marsden	offroad@tvam.org
Pillion Rider Course	Alan Hudson	prc@tvam.org
Red Zone	Mel Hakhnazarian	redzone@tvam.org
RideOn	Training Team	trainingteam@tvam.org
Run Leader & Back Marker Course	Issy Griffiths	runleaderbackmarker@tvam.org
Social Run Co-ordinators	Salli Griffith /Phil Donovan	socialruns@tvam.org
St Crispin's Sunday Runs	Alan Mossman	sundaysocialruns@tvam.org
Tea & Coffee Bar at St Crispin's	Louise Simmons	coffeebar@tvam.org
Thrupton Skills Days	Pat Coneley	skillsdays@tvam.org
Toy Run	Steve Harris	(volunteers for Dec Toy Run) toyrun@tvam.org
Track Skills Days (Training)	Dave Hepworth	circuitsskills@tvam.org
Webmaster	Steve Dennis	webmaster@tvam.org

## Website:

TVAM Website [www.tvam.org](http://www.tvam.org)

The website gives you access to the web shop for booking courses, trips, training and track days.

## TVAM Groups.io

Groups.io is the system used by TVAM to share details of news, events and much more. You will automatically be added to the system when you join TVAM so you can get involved in the conversations with other members. There are local team and special interest groups available for you to join also. Get involved and find out what's happening.

**Correspondence Address & Telephone:** 23 Comet Way, Woodley, Reading RG5 4NZ

0118 402 4800

## Registered Office:

Thames Vale Advanced Motorcyclists is a charitable company limited by guarantee, and is a group within the IAM. c/o Durrants Accountants, 24 Wellington Business Park, Dukes Ride, Crowthorne, Berkshire, RG45 6LS. Registration Number: 03556042. Charity Number 1069767.

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