

LADAM Newsletter

July 2023



Congratulations to ...

All of the Local Observers who have now passed their National Observer Test!

Stuart
Ian Jordan
Richard
Mike

Aimee
Wayne
Clare
Peter

Ian Payne
Rob
Greg

In this Newsletter

Welcome to the September Newsletter. First of all, congratulations to all our Observers who have now passed their National Observer Assessments. There are still a couple more to go, but so far, we have a 100% pass rate. This is a great testament to their hard work and commitment and to the work of the Observer mentors and trainers.



The weather has definitely been against us this summer, but we've still managed to get in some great group rides, which are reported here. Also in the newsletter find Hints and Tips on Practicing from our Chief Observer, together with an article on the Science of Being Seen from Greg. Thanks to Steve Gorman for sharing a traumatic and thought provoking experience, which I very much encourage you to read.

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



What happens if...

This month, Steve Gorman poses a serious question, following a traumatic incident.

Who's going to look after me if I have a serious off????

The first motorbike RTA I helped out with was whilst on a BloodBiker drop off to the Leicester Air Ambulance. A bike had been hit by a van but the biker seemed ok and was being looked after by some passing motorists who seemed to know what they were doing. Once I knew all was ok, I just sorted out the traffic which was easy enough. So dealing with a smash and administering first aid was a new experience.

This article/thought came about after a very recent RTA I helped with. I was riding with a good friend, Laurence Howell, around the Crieff Cloverleaf, Western route through Glencoe and had just passed the Buachaille, which is like the gateway to the Highlands and a brilliant winter and summer climbing area. We had been making progress, passing cars, campers etc and pulling into safe spaces as we went, but weren't in any particular hurry.

At this point we were passed by a group of around thirteen bikes. The group (and I'm not for one minute suggesting that they were reckless or unsafe), passed several cars at a go before making a quick pull in, and then they were gone. A few minutes later we filtered past some stationary traffic with no incident then continued on, meeting another traffic jam and passing that as well.

As we passed the last car, we saw a Mazda CX5 with a redesigned right hand wing but thought nothing of it. Then there was a motorbike parked, again no problem, but then lying in a ditch was a BMW which looked like it had been bent in half as the front and rear wheels seemed to be on top of each other. Then we saw every biker's worst nightmare, a figure lying face down in the bog surrounded by four or five people just looking at him!

I stopped and asked if anyone was medically trained to be told by an American sounding lady that she was a nurse. I couldn't believe that nobody was doing anything, so told Laurence I couldn't continue as I thought we should help. Without an airway you die, it's as simple as that, so I asked Laurence to hold the man's head to try and protect the spine as I rolled him over onto his back. The nurse wasn't happy as she thought we should have left him!!!

Once turned over, we removed his helmet so we could make sure he had a good airway. Some people still worry about removing the helmet in case of damaging the spine, however if the casualty doesn't have a clear airway they will die anyway. CPR was started and the casualty seemed to have reasonable colour so all seemed ok. Luckily a paramedic from Birmingham who was on holiday turned up followed shortly afterwards by a consultant Anaesthetist, who was brilliant. Not too long after, the local paramedic arrived with all the equipment that the other two professionals needed.

Unfortunately, however, the biker didn't make it and after 45 minutes of CPR and several infusions of adrenaline, our efforts were unsuccessful and he was pronounced dead at the scene. It was quite a strange feeling having been so involved, especially as a lay person.

What is this all leading to, I can hear you say. Well, I have done numerous first aid courses, far from help, advanced medical and high altitude medical courses going back to the 1980s and although I have used some of the training in the past on various expeditions, I have never had to put the CPR or incident control into practice. When we stopped, none of the biker's friends or on lookers seemed to have any idea what to do and worse still, just stood looking, hoping it would sort itself. It didn't.

I was left thinking firstly how vulnerable we are as riders and how easy it is to be taken out by a car, or having an off because of debris on the road or simple misjudgement. But the biggest thing I was left worrying about was whether any of my riding buddies know what to do if I'm unfortunate enough to be the one to have a serious off. I am fortunate to be able to go on lots of adventures but this was a wake up call to me.

PLEASE, as a motorcyclist, at the very least complete a 'Biker Down' course or go a bit deeper and do a course that focuses on trauma. The Biker Down course covers all the basics and dispels the myth about helmet removal and are run by bikers for bikers for free. You might even get a free first aid kit. An open and clear airway is key. It only takes a few hours to complete the course and you never know could save your riding buddies life!

Safe riding all :)



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Birstall, Leicestershire LE4 3BU
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Thanks to Steve for his story. For more information on BikerDown scan the QR code above or visit the website. Or speak to Greg Garner.



Summer and Autumn Rideouts

There are only a couple of spaces left for our September rideout, so book quickly to avoid disappointment. As these days out have been so successful throughout the summer, we are considering how much longer we can continue them through into the Autumn and Winter. We've added another ride in October, so watch out for more details on other rides later in the year. You can book now for any of the rides below by clicking on the destination to open the form, which will give you full details of the ride (where confirmed), including the starting point.

Date	Destination	Leader	No of Bikes
Saturday 16th September	Krazy Horse and Lavenham	Steve Tamsett & Bill Morris	12
Sunday 22 nd October	The Hotspur Café, Shobden Airfield, Leominster	Zoe Haywood	12

As places on all these rides will be limited, **you will need to complete the relevant form to register your place** and provide contact details. An email will also be sent for each ride with further details, but book now to make sure of your place. Please note that if you are not booked on the ride in advance, you will not be able to join

To access the relevant form, 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 some computers. Associates are welcome, but please speak to your Observer first.

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



Leicestershire & Rutland Tour

Richard Withers led a great ride through Leicestershire and Rutland way back in July. The ride started at Jennos Coffee House near Fosse Park and headed south first towards Sharnford before hitting the smaller roads across towards Bruntingthorpe and then further east towards Uppingham, around Rutland Water. Skirting Stamford, the ride then headed north towards Grimsthorpe and up onto Corby Glen and the Woodhouse Arms for lunch, where the bikes took over most over the car park!



After a very good lunch, it was back south where due to a series of unfortunate events, the group was split. All was well eventually and everyone arrived home safely!



Bangers & Cash Ride in August

Thanks to Nigel Vernon for the montage and for the write up below.



Myself, Richard Withers and four fellow riders enjoyed a day out at the first Bangers and Cash Live event since the 2020 pandemic. For those not familiar with the Yesterday TV Channel, Bangers and Cash is an observational documentary series going behind the scenes of Mathewson's, a North Yorkshire-based, family-run historic car auction business based in the picturesque village of Thornton-le-Dale.

We set off from Birstall services following our usual LADAM pre-ride briefing and headed north on the A46 towards Newark. We took the A616 towards Mansfield, then onto B roads, to avoid the long stretch of the A614, littered with average-speed cameras. We were going north on the A614 through the Clumber Park National Forest, with a brief spell on the A1 to make progress.

Our first and only stop was at the obligatory McDonalds at Shiptonthorpe for drinks and a bite to eat, then on to the M62, crossing the river Ouse at Howdens Dyke. Now time to head northeast on the A614 towards Bridlington. Another change of direction in the picture village of Sledmere, heading north to our destination Scampton Park arriving at 13:00hrs.

I was lucky to acquire my ticket from our chair, Zoe, who unfortunately couldn't make the ride. However, another two of our group didn't have tickets. so Mark Smith decided to explore the local villages while Richard Harper travelled on into Scarborough.

Derek Matherson and his two sons, Dave and Paul, who feature in the TV series, took part in a Q&A session hosted by the voice of Bangers and Cash, Toby Forster. Toby also interviewed guests from the classic car world, the editor of Classic Car Weekly and My Dad's Car, a company based in Derbyshire, where you can hire a classic for the day like a Morris Minor, Hillman Avenger or an original Mini Copper.

The interviews were broken up with music from the all-female vocal trio, the Knighingales, taking to the main Bangers and Cash stage, with a set of primarily Rock'n' Roll tunes, followed by the local DJ legend Gary Oldis.

The large audience was full of motoring enthusiasts waiting for the main event, the Mathersons auction. With over 60 lots of cars, motorcycles and general auto memorabilia, Derek Mathewson got the show on the road with a gavel at the ready with the first lot. At this point, Wayne and I resisted the temptation to scratch a nose, avoiding the embarrassment of becoming part of the bidding war for a pre-war BP enamel sign or, even worse... a classic car.

We were fortunate with the weather, only having a light shower midway through the auction. I was lucky enough to avoid getting wet, as I had struck up a conversation with a guy from the North Yorkshire TRF (Trail Riders Fellowship) and took refuge under his stand.

We decided to take a more scenic route back and headed straight for the Humber bridge, well, I say straight, but taking in as many twisties as ride leader Rob could find. After a few hours riding and needing a break, we stumbled on a beer festival in the village of Hemingby north of Horncastle, Lincolnshire. It was like an old-style village fete with music supplied by the star attraction, the female duo from ABBA... they looked and sounded like them.

After an enjoyable coffee, tea and pizza, listening to Agnetha and Frid look-a-likes, we headed home. Travelling south of Lincoln to Grantham, then on to Melton Mowbray. At Melton, I parted company with the trio of Kawasaki riders, Richard, Wayne and Rob and made my way home after a great day out.

A big shoutout to Richard Withers for bringing the event to LADAM's attention through a business contact at Mathewsons. With limited ticket availability, Mike Anthony was able to add it to the Ladam events calendar early to avoid disappointment.

... More about the Bangers and Cash TV series for petrol heads.

Bangers and Cash is a British documentary television series that follows the day-to-day operations of Mathewson's, a family-run classic car auction business based in Thornton-le-Dale, North Yorkshire. The series has been running since 2019 and has been broadcast on the Yesterday channel.

The name "Bangers and Cash" is a reference to the types of cars that are often sold at Mathewson's auctions. These cars are typically old, rusty, and in need of some TLC. However, they can also be valuable, and some of the cars that have been sold at Mathewson's auctions have fetched six-figure sums.

In addition to the auctioneering, Bangers and Cash also features interviews with the people who work at Mathewson's, as well as with the buyers and sellers of the cars. The series gives viewers a behind-the-scenes look at the classic car auction world, and it is a must-watch for any car enthusiast.

Here are some additional facts about Bangers and Cash:

- The series is narrated by Toby Forster, who is also the voice of the Bangers and Cash TV commercials.
- The series has featured a number of celebrity guests, including Jay Kay from Jamiroquai, Guy Martin, and Jodie Kidd.
- The series has been nominated for a number of awards, including the Royal Television Society Award for Best Factual Series.

If you're a fan of classic cars, then you should definitely check out Bangers and Cash. It's a great series that gives you a behind-the-scenes look at the world of classic car auctions and car and bike restorations.



August Chip Shop Rideout

There was a great turnout for the August Chip Shop run, which Wayne Lord volunteered to lead. Wayne led from Birstall, heading east across to Oakham and then around Rutland Water via some lovely twisty roads to the Riverside Fish Bar restaurant in Stamford. The roads in Rutland really are a lot of fun and Wayne set a great pace from the off. The second man drop off was put to good effect throughout and we all arrived at around the same time in Stamford!

It was as well that it was still relatively early, as the restaurant had turned off its fryers just before we arrived. Those at the front of the queue managed to order their first choice from the menu, but those towards the end were a bit short of options! Regardless, the food was excellent and the run back gave us a view of more of the lovely Rutland roads.

The last Chip Shop ride this year will be on *Tuesday 12th September*.



Winter Events Programme

We start our Winter Events programme on *Tuesday 10th October*. Once again this year, these will mostly take place at Fosse Riders Club House, on the second Tuesday of every month through until March. We are still to confirm a couple of the guest speakers, but here is a sneak peak:

Date	Guest Speaker	Subject	Location
October	Kieran Sangha	Prepping your Bike for Winter	Fosse Riders
November	AGM + Alex	Adventure Ride Planning	Fosse Riders
December	Jim Sampson	Motorways	Fosse Riders
January	Steve Rowthorne	Group Riding	Fosse Riders
February	John Tyrer	The Helmet Company	Fosse Riders
March	Steve Price	National Highways	Fosse Riders

Please note that these may change as we firm up the arrangements, but we hope it's a strong enough programme to entice you out on a dark Tuesday evening. We are also trying to squeeze in a trip to Corsa Stradale in Melton Mowbray and a possible evening with Northamptonshire Police. Watch out for more details.

If you have any questions, or would like to recommend a speaker, please contact Bill or Zoë.



Tips from the Chief Observer

More tips from our Chief Observer, Steve Rowthorne.

As Advanced riders we should always be looking to improve our skills, so I'm going to talk about the benefits of practice. There really is no substitute for mileage in the saddle, but not just riding along with your mind elsewhere but really thinking about absolutely everything you are doing. I'm sure many of you have heard me use the analogy of learning to play the Guitar - if you want to get better you put the hours of playing in. There really is no difference to riding your bike. So ,what to practice?

Slow Riding

Being good at slow riding has a massive benefit to overall bike control and confidence on the bike. Unfortunately, many riders don't practice this nearly enough if at all. Find a suitable area, an unused car park for instance and practice riding as slow as you can in a straight line at first, (on my Tiger 800 I got it down to 0-1 mph but on my Tiger 1200 3-4 mph was the lowest I could go) and then as you improve, go round in circles. The more you practice the better you will get, pretty quickly as well and you'll be amazed at the difference confidence you will gain in manoeuvring in car parks, petrol stations and filtering situations, to name but a few.



Single Track Roads

Many riders really don't like single track roads, they genuinely are scared by them. This is understandable to some degree, vision is often limited, the road surface is very uneven and in many places gravel/ mud can be a big factor. However, by practicing these sorts of roads, you're forced to consider every aspect of IPSGA. They really make you look for every nugget of information available along with where to position the bike to maximise safety as well as vision. You naturally look over the hedgerows and search for the limit point everywhere. Your level of concentration is heightened and your decision-making process becomes a lot sharper. Perfecting these sorts of roads again has huge benefits on all roads. You will find when you're on main A roads you have more time to make decisions because you naturally take in information quicker, you look further ahead and are more precise with your positioning. The benefits are endless.



Riding in the Rain - Winter

Many riders will only take their bike out if they really have to, but riding in the rain/winter can be great fun and increase your understanding of what the bike feels like in slippery conditions. You will be amazed at how much grip you have.

It really starts with the kit you wear; if you are warm, dry and can see through your visor your level of concentration/ fun is heightened. If you're cold, wet and struggling to see through a steamed up visor, your concentration is reduced greatly, even to dangerous levels and you certainly don't enjoy the ride. Constantly riding in wet slippery conditions - to be clear I don't mean snow and ice, that's a different ball game entirely - your understanding of what the bike feels like increases, your ability to read the road conditions improves, as well as your ability to read what other road users are doing. Unfortunately, I have found that the standard of other road users deteriorates with the weather!



Riding at Night

Riding at night is pretty alien to many riders, vision is greatly reduced even on fully lit roads. Headlights and street lights bouncing off surfaces, as well as your visor, can really make your brain go into overload as it tries to work out what's going on. You know what I'm going to say here though, the more you do it the more your brain will get used to it and the easier it becomes.



Riding on unlit single track roads certainly sharpens your focus, especially when cars coming are towards you with their main beam on - you learn very quickly to not look at the light. Again, your skills get sharper, and you quickly naturally develop a quicker thinking decision making process which transfers into every aspect of your riding.

Motorways

Many bikers don't enjoy riding on the Motorway because they find it boring and those that do just use them to get from A - B as quickly as possible (which is what they're there for). But so much fun can be had from Motorways if you "think". Constantly think about what all the traffic is doing and work out what it's going to do, not just the traffic in your immediate vicinity, but also up ahead and the traffic catching you in your mirrors - how will they impact your lane selection?



Working out where best to position your bike in the lane is a key skill to maximise your safety and progress. Giving everyone the best chance to see you either out of their windows or their mirrors is a constant decision making process. Use cruise control as much as possible - perfect the art of ride planning so you don't have to come off cruise control. All this thinking and planning sharpens your level of concentration which will mean your enjoyment increases and your concentration will last longer.

What do I do?

I'm lucky, I live in Ratby and work in Coventry. I also work shifts (earlies – Lates), which means I get the opportunity to practice all the above every working day of the week. I ride between 12000 – 18000 miles a year depending on what tours I go on. I ride all year round but tend to stay off the ungritted roads when it's below 2 degrees. The lowest temperature I've ridden in was -2 degrees. I have heated grips on the bike, I have heated gloves and heated insoles in my boots, I also have a pinlock on my visor. I have a top box and a waterproof bag permanently attached to my back seat to carry all the stuff I need for work.

Why am I telling you this? I guess to demonstrate I practice what I preach, but also to demonstrate that with a little change in routine many of you can get to enjoy your bike more than ever.

I also talk to and listen to other members of the club. I don't have all the answers by a long way, but within the club we are lucky to have a vast amount of experience and knowledge and I am always willing to learn more.



The Science of Being Seen

As the nights draw in, this article by Greg Garner focuses on how to make yourself visible to other road users.

Following reports conducted both in the UK (Booth Report 1989) and America (Hurt Report 1981 California), safety messages to Bikers have often featured the need for Bikers to wear Hi-Viz and use their lights during the day, but this isn't as straightforward an answer as it may seem.

Motorcycle Accidents in Depth Study 2000 (MAiDS)
(Conducted over 3 years, 921 accidents from 5 countries)

- 54% accidents at a junction
- Cars most frequent collision partner (60%)
- 72% accidents in urban areas
- In 50% Car driver was to blame
- Over 70% of errors involved driver's failure to SEE the Biker!

There are 2 main reasons for this;

1. Ineffective conspicuity strategies by us!

We (the Bikers) are not always careful or aware of how we are presenting ourselves to others, we are not 'helping' drivers to see us despite our hi-viz efforts on occasion!



2. Faulty search strategies by them!

Drivers often don't see us due to human failings associated with recognition of moving objects and sometimes due to lack of caution at junctions.



Ineffective conspicuity strategies

Choice of colours.

Often those who mean well but are less informed assume bright colours are good and will always get you seen. Similarly they assume that dark colours are bad, but it is often the contrast between the moving object and its background that has the effect of making the object seen or not!



It is important that what is seen is easily and quickly

recognisable.



A casual observer may feel that the Biker in the picture on the right is easily identified due to the bright contrasting colours, but in the same way that the one on the left

merges into the background, so does this one.



Use of headlights

Daytime headlights/dipped beam are designed to not dazzle and point downwards so the effect is limited. This can lead to invisibility issues dependant on bright backgrounds or refracted light conditions. They MAY work but the message is simple do not ASSUME they will work!



Similarly lights at night can also cause the bike and rider to be lost in the clutter of background light.

Faulty search strategies

"The conspicuity problem appears to be partly associated with car drivers learning visual strategies that are not very effective at detecting motorcycles." Ref: 'Motorcycle Safety – A Scoping Study, Transport Research Laboratory 2003.



Drivers are affected by the following 3 factors;

1. Motion Camouflage
2. Looming
3. Search Patterns

Motion Camouflage

Tigers approach a target, whilst appearing to remain stationary from the perspective of the target, by remaining on a fixed line with a landmark in their background. i.e. the tiger is not moving ACROSS the background but coming STRAIGHT out of the back ground, the lack of lateral movement making it so much harder to detect until the last moment!



The same effect occurs when a Biker is approaching a car waiting to pull out of a side road. The Motion Camouflage phenomenon leads to this last second appearance of movement which is known as LOOMING.

Looming

Other than sideways movement, the only other way the eye spots a moving object is when it 'LOOMS' into view, the problem is that the Looming only occurs when the object is very close, i.e it suddenly gets bigger when it is often too late to change your mind about pulling out and the driver's fight, flight or freeze response is activated. This makes the reaction of the driver unpredictable.



Search patterns

From quite early on in their lessons, drivers are taught to 'look for the gap' in most situations, not what may be in the gap. If the Biker is not obviously present, then they will often be missed in the 0.5 seconds that the average driver looks in their direction! A study carried out by Chris Burgess at Exeter University found that when driving, the actual driving was found to be the 4th or 5th thing on the driver's mind!

This also links to SACCADIC masking. This is the phenomenon in visual perception where the brain selectively blocks visual processing during eye movements in such a way that neither the motion of the eye nor the gap in visual perception is visible to the viewer."

To put this in a more relatable way, the human brain does not have the added technology of adjustable 'frames per second' shutter speed of a video camera.

If we move our head and/or eyes quickly side to side, our vision would be blurred, therefore what the brain does is take a series of stills, then uses past experiences to fill in the gaps. Unfortunately for motorcyclists, we can easily fit within one of those gaps in vision.



So, what can we do to be seen to be safe?

Think about the environment you will be riding in and what conspicuity strategy YOU will need to be seen:

- Solid blocks of colour – these will offer a recognisable silhouette, avoid wearing tabards, as unlike a full jacket, they are not visible from the side. *Pink is a colour that stands out against most backgrounds!*
- Your Line – introduce some gentle lateral movement into your line as you approach a junction, easing out to the left or right of your lane (as appropriate) may be enough sideways movement to overcome the ‘tiger’ type approach that causes us real problems regards motion camouflage and looming.
- Your horn – the correct use of the horn if you are in doubt that you have been seen, consider covering the horn early on the approach to danger and don’t be shy in using it.

Advanced Riders

As a ‘Thinking Rider’ consider the tools you have available;

- Information –
 - See the potential danger of the situation early, through extended observations and scanning.
 - Note the driver’s body language and where they are looking.
 - Note the body language of the vehicle, does it begin to move. or even fail to stop?
 - Know what else is in the surrounding area.
 - Do you have alternative options should they pull out?
 - Is it safer to let them pull out?
 - Sound your horn to draw attention to your presence.
- Position –
 - Can you adopt an early position to aid your vision.
 - Can you position away from the danger.
 - Move your road position to make yourself seen.
- Speed –
 - Are you at a speed where you can stop safely on your own side of the road in the distance you can see to be clear? (i.e. where they may pull out from).
 - Or ease back and allow them to pull out.
- Gear –
 - Be in a responsive gear.
- Acceleration –
 - Use of the throttle to assist in either stopping through engine braking or accelerating to get out of trouble if the option exists.



Created in conjunction with Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service.



And in other news...

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 Moore – treasurer@ladam.org.uk

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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