

West Sussex Advanced Motorcyclists Newsletter - August 2019



Toolboxes... how big is yours?

When we start motorcycling, we all have a toolbox. To begin with it's quite small, with very few tools in it, and for some people, right up until their last motorcycling day, it never gets any bigger. However, for others, it's a magic toolbox; the more tools you find and put in your toolbox, the bigger it gets. If you're the type of person who loves new tools, this toolbox will just keep on getting bigger to accommodate them. However, the toolbox does have two downsides.... it only holds steel tools and it leaks. Hmm! This means that if a tool is at the bottom and never gets used, within a few months it will become rusty, and maybe after a year or so, it won't work and will need updating.

Some of you (mostly old associates of mine) will realise that I'm not talking about a mechanics toolbox, but instead a toolbox situated deep in our sub-conscious with a collection of tools and techniques for dealing with all known hazards on the road.

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Diary for August 2019

Sunday 11th Aug 2019 10.00am WSAM Monthly Meeting

Today is our monthly gathering at Dial Post Village Hall, RH13 8NJ. The committee meet at 9.00am for an hour, and then after 10.00am everyone is welcome for tea, coffee, biscuits and a natter.

Following today's meeting, there will be an official ride out (see page 3)

Thursday 15th Aug 2019 7.00pm WSAM Nosh Nite

Another Nosh Nite has been booked for tonight at the Bolney Stage which is a Pub/Restaurant. See website [here](#). All are very welcome with or without partners for a natter and if you wish you can order food on the night. (PS It's Helen's birthday on this evening, but don't tell anyone...sshhh!)

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Toolboxes, continued.....

Let's say we need to loosen a large nut. Do we use pliers, spanner, an adjustable wrench, or maybe a socket with a big long ratchet? If you've had to loosen a nut like this before, you'll immediately know to reach for your socket and ratchet, but if you've never come across this size of nut before, there might not even be the right socket in your toolbox.



There may be a ratchet and you remember someone once talking about a large socket, but if you've never had to loosen this nut before, you may never have used this combination of tools before. If you come across large nuts like this every week, you'll be an expert at using the tools and they will remain shiny. But if it's 6 months before you have to loosen another, those tools will soon become very rusty.

The same with our riding. If we regularly go out and ride, we will frequently come across hazards, recognise them earlier and know how best to deal with them, armed with shiny tools in our toolbox. You also come

across new tools even when you're not riding on the road. A Skills Day will give you quite a few more, and off-road day even more. Even being aware when driving a car, you might pick up one or two more.

The key here is to learn a skill and then use it. If you fail to do either, or both, one day you will come across a hazard, and without the correct tools, it could all get very messy!

Welcome to WSAM

A warm welcome to the following new members this month.

Philip Mendes da Costa - Goring
Roger Bonnici - Arundel
Jonathan Pickett - Bognor Regis
Yvonne Sharp - Crawley
Steve Brewer - Partridge Green

Test Passes at WSAM

Congratulations to the following people for passing their test.

Simon Gledhill (F1RST) - Obs Tim Lamb
Ian Nuttall (Pass) - Obs Yeshwant Patel
Stephen Foster (F1RST) - Obs Peter Oakley

Rideout 11th August

The July rideout on Sunday 14th July will leave Dial Post Village hall at 10.30am, and head out to the Butchers Hook Café near Heathfield. If you want to see where they are on the map click [here](#).



Sunglasses or not?

I recently saw this article and out of interest thought I would share it.

The sun is out at long last, so it's time to don the shades as soon as you get behind the wheel. Or is it?

If you're not in-line with the law, then you could find yourself facing a fine... Surely wearing sunglasses when driving is a good idea?

It is – not least because the Highway Code itself states (Rule 237) that 'drivers must slow down or, if necessary, pull over if they get dazzled by bright sunlight'.

If you don't heed this advice, then you could be charged with careless driving, and if a collision occurs due to you driving directly into bright sunlight you could be fined up to £2,500, or at least a fixed penalty fine of £100 if you're blinded by the light and commit a driving offence.

So yes, keep a pair of shades handy in your car for when you need them.

So why could I be breaking the law? Put simply, not all sunglasses are safe for driving in.



They are split into four types of light and UV penetration, and the darkest Category 4 lenses allow less than eight per cent of light to pass through – great if you're lying on your back on a sunlounger soaking up the rays, but not so when you're driving up the motorway.

According to the AA: "Filter Category 4 lenses only transmit between 3 per cent and 8 per cent of light and are not suitable for driving at any time."



These types of glasses are illegal for driving, in much the same way that you can be fined for having a similar level of tint on your windows.

In a press statement to the Metro newspaper, a spokeswoman for the Department for Transport said: "We have some of the safest roads in Europe and our campaigns, especially those focusing on road safety, play a key role in ensuring the public stays safe on the roads.

"We are not aware of any particular sunglasses that are illegal to wear while driving. But drivers must clearly be able to see the road ahead of them, and their sunglasses should not prevent them from doing so."

How do I check? The law states that every pair of sunglasses sold in the UK comes with a removeable label or sticker advising of their filter category. Filter Categories 1-3 are legal for driving, though Filter category 3 could impact your vision in lower light situations, meaning Category 1 or Category 2 are the safest choices for drivers.

Interestingly MCN have just done a similar article, but on tinted visors. See it [here](#).

Have you asked Alexa

So, now, according to this article from GOV.UK we don't even need to get off our butts to check if our bike is taxed.... All you need to do is ask Alexa. But as you will see from the article, people weren't content with just asking that. See the article [here](#).

Gadget of the month

Anyone who knows me, knows I like a gadget or two. So when I saw these online and then a day later saw them in a bike shop, I was both intrigued and impressed.



The valve caps are not at all heavy and the display is cordless and apparently only needs charging every 3 months or so. If anyone has bought these and fitted them to their bike, I'm sure like myself, the other WSAM members would like to hear how you got on. See the video [here](#).

Highways England

Highways England seem to be taking the subject of motorcycle safety a bit more seriously and have set up a dedicated website <https://highwaysengland.co.uk/biker/> and also Highways Scotland have released a video entitled Devils Beertub to make bikers aware of the dangers faced when riding around Scotland. See it [here](#).

And Finally.....

Remember Erik Buell, from Harley Davidson fame, well meet his new bike, the Fuell. See it [here](#), and if you fancy getting one click [here](#).

I've never really wanted to own a Ducati Panagale, but after seeing [this](#) video, that has all changed. If you would like to pre-order one, I've even found them for you [here](#).

And I know it's not real, but find these things really fun. See the video [here](#)

That's all folks.

Max