

WORCESTER AND HEREFORD ADVANCED MOTORCYCLISTS



June 2026

EDITORIAL – JIM ROLT



Guess where we've been? Here are 3 proper bikers and some random gay bloke, in Lynmouth. There's plenty of chat about that most excellent Exmoor weekend from our contributors below, so I'll leave it at that for now. Except just to say, that after a discussion on Friday night about the start time on Saturday morning it was confirmed (I thought) that we'd meet at 9 for 9.30 departure. As Sally and I walked up from the campsite at 08.55 we heard lots of motorbike noise and when we got to the car park.. they'd all gone! Do I take that as a hint? At least it meant I got to ride my own ride! (See CO's piece below)

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In this issue you'll find:

[Chairman's thoughts](#)

Richard CO Hewitt on [Group Riding](#)

Ian Fullwood managed to drop his bike during a dead end detour, so he gets to write this month's guest article [all about the WHAM weekend](#)

Here are the [club events for June](#), also available on the [club website](#), a bit special this month as we have a full day out on some of the best roads Wales has to offer, and if that isn't enough, the famous Slow Riding Day, if you haven't been, then go, if you have been, you already know you'll be there. Great fun.

All events and rides can be found on <https://www.wham-motorcycling.org/events/>

Banter and more on the [facebook page](#)

Jim Rolt, Editor whamnewsletter@gmail.com

CHAIRMAN – TONY DAVIS

Hi all.

I am writing this from a hotel room in Montreal having spent the last few days driving up through New England. You don't see many bikes in New England even when the sun shines. In the White Mountain region all you see is the odd Harley, usually with a helmetless pilot. Its a completely different experience to ours, wide roads with few bends and restrictive speed limits somewhat spoil the fun I guess. We got upgraded to a massive Jeep Wagoneer for the week and really enjoyed a leisurely relaxed drive through some fabulous scenery but it cant compare to a road trip on a bike in Europe.



On the subject of road trips, our regular Exmoor weekender was held a couple of weeks ago. We were very fortunate with the weather again and the riding did not disappoint, its a real hidden UK gem down there and Mark Saxton managed to find us a route down on the Friday that was great fun. Saturday also delivered some spectacular riding and scenery, not forgetting the excellent fish & chips in Lynmouth. Thanks to Donna for the usual meticulous organisation.

Our summer events programme continues next weekend with a day long ride to Aberdovey, this one is not to be missed, especially the mountain road between Rhayader and Machynlleth. Its a full day this one but a brilliant one.

Enjoy the newsletter, ride safe and see you on the road!

Tony.

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CHIEF OBSERVER – RICHARD HEWITT

WHAM – CO's piece June 2026

I find myself cramming in the writing of this month's piece between skills days, a Spanish tour, and the WHAM Exmoor weekend which I have extended by another week to explore Exmoor, and thereabouts, roads.

One item being a common constituent part present within all these events, is group riding.

Every Sunday morning a WHAM "staffer" steps forward ahead of the group ride and gives a pre-brief. I think most of the people I know that have had the "pleasure" of giving this brief have on occasion experienced a mixture of feeling that range somewhere on a the scale of repeating oneself, to speaking to people who are just not listening. Maybe harsh on the right-hand side of the range of feelings, but technically correct, I think.

Not only is best practice being served when a pre-ride brief is given. Mentioning and getting agreement to ride to the standards set out within the well-honed WHAM group riding policy means that should the unthinkable happen, an incident on the road, any subsequent investigation will benefit the Group in that the right things have been done pre-ride within the realms of a Group event. Bluntly, we have not just gone off for an unstructured 'race' on our bikes in the sunny countryside.

So please, even you think you may have heard the same things fifty times already, give the poor sap that's stepped forward and attempted to give you a brief, your attention.

The Group riding within the three events I noted above are seemingly quite different: but upon reflection, the very same.

Within a skills day we have a very well structured, choreographed even, whole days riding around a racetrack, combined within classroom sessions and multiple opportunities for feedback, and instruction. The expectation is that riders are there to learn and hone.

Within the tour we have the feeling of 'a holiday' and with evenings to spend together wining and dining we have the challenge of ensuring everything is done in moderation so that we stay safe and legal, and importantly with enough energy in reserve for a fortnight's riding.

The Exmoor weekend, well, that is an extended Group ride who's only challenge is to stop joshing and laughing long enough for some riding to be done! We do have a lovely club, don't we? And it was so nice to see old members there with a good smattering of new folk too.

For all the enjoyment we gleaned from these three events I did see the same common items come



up time and again, in all three environments, that diluted the pleasure experienced within those rides. There has been chapter and verse debated, spoken, and written, about group riding and yet the pointers below help hone minds further:

1. Ride your own ride. You DO NOT have to keep up with, or slow for, anyone. You need to get home safe and happy; and this is best achieved by concerning yourself with your ride. You have no idea what other riders are experiencing and even if you think you do, it does not make your ride any smoother/better/faster/slower to focus on them
2. Pick your own Group – we must continue to socialise ‘off-bike’ as one; but, on the road, pick three other riders that want what you want from the ride. Making progress? focusing only on the tarmac and riding environment? ask your buddies if that is what they want from today’s ride. Or more of a ‘tour’ experience? satisfactory progress yes but also taking in some of the environment you are riding through? that is a different riding group that wants a slower pace. Or mix of both, maybe a stop to take a picture of a particular landmark? discuss it beforehand and stop accordingly. No one has sole agency on what “a good ride” looks like and so do not fall into the trap of thinking an advanced ride always has to be with ‘Progress’ being the defining factor

Two items, yes two items (above), is all I want to say here. I do not want to suffer from regurgitation of the WHAM group riding policy (it can be clearly [found on the club’s website](#)), so why do I only want to say two things?

Well, nearly all the frowns, issues, incidents, unhappiness I have seen in Group riding can be traced to the above two items. Yes, there are many ancillary items like following the leader even if your satnav says differently, and the need to bunch your group up when you enter the urban environment, but the core item, instruction/piece of advice, is ride your own ride, at your own pace.

“Where have you been?” is a great joke amongst friends. If you say it nicely, you get a nice response. If you receive it nicely, you’ve probably either made a new friend, or further cemented an existing relationship. However, no one knows between groups what route has been taken, no one knows what hazards have been dealt with. No one even knows if anyone has stopped for fuel, etc. And so please don’t read anything any more than a joke into “Where have you been?”

Ride your own ride.....

Richard Hewitt

WHAM Chief Observer

WHAM EXMOOR WEEKEND 2026 - IAN FULLWOOD

Day 1 - How not to park a bike - or should I say how to ignore Chapter 6 of Motorcycle Roadcraft (2020 edition)

Most of the group met at Tewkesbury (some would join us later at the hotel) for a three leg journey to the Raleghs Cross Inn on Exmoor. A slight change in route from the previous year to avoid the nightmare traffic conditions usually associated with Bridgwater on a Friday afternoon.

The weather was kind once again but thankfully a little cooler than last year. Mark Cooper and I had ridden to Tewkesbury from Leominster and decided to continue in our own group of two.

And so the adventure begins - all very nice and smooth thank you very much. There was road closure somewhere along the first hour of the route and we ended up at a Ford across the road. I think Adrian tried to go across and got a boot full of water so all riders decided to turn around, I found a dry pull in about 50 yards from the ford, turned the bike with slow riding to face back the way we came and parked the bike.

Now it is time to quote from Roadcraft (p132).

Applying the side stand to get off

Identify a safe location (tick - it was off the highway and not in a hedge, ditch or indeed the ford), ideally on solid level ground (mistake - the ground was loose and on a slope).

It may seem blindingly obvious but the graphic below gives an idea of how unbalanced you and the machine can be. You will be fighting gravity against the combined weights of your body and the machine. Now in my case that's 68kg versus the Honda Crossrunner at 240kg (plus luggage at approx 10-12kg). So my bike + luggage is about 4 times my weight, once you combine it then we are looking at around 300+ kg that wants to take both you and your machine to the ground, and believe me it can. Most riders I have talked to say it has happened to them, and boy do we feel foolish when it happens.

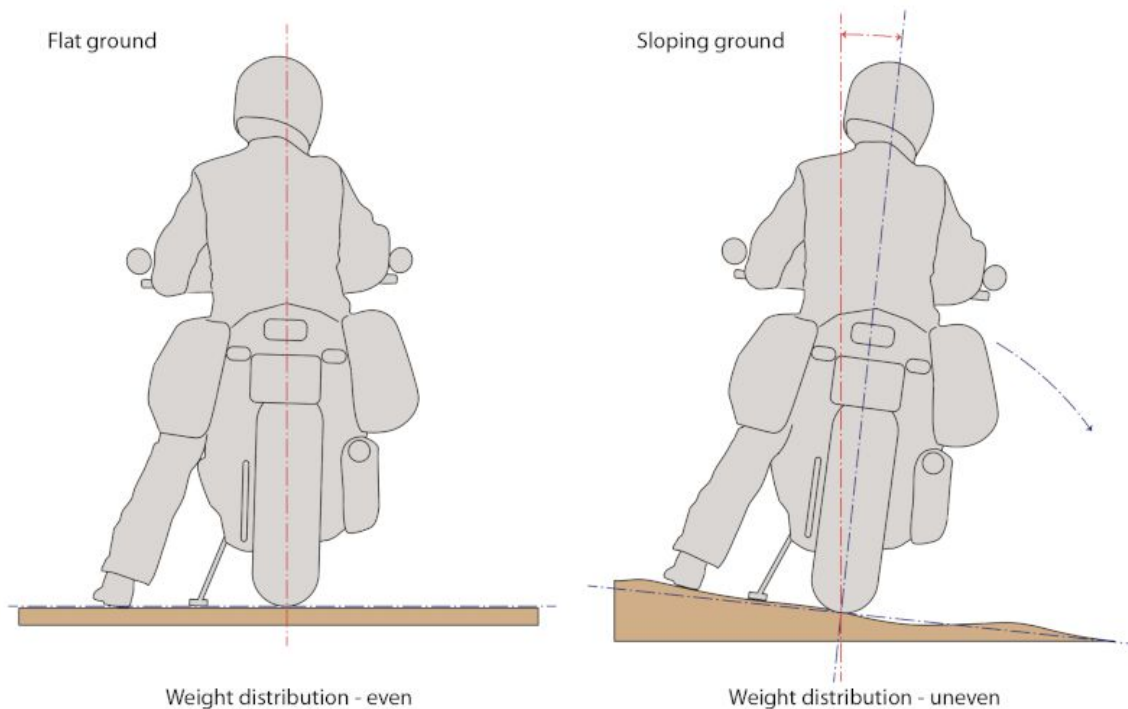
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Time for more Roadcraft advice (p134).

Problems that may need practice

- poor technique or balance (both in this case)
- the rider's physical attributes in relation to the machine - for example, short arms (tick), short legs (tick), low body weight (tick) may make a heavier machine harder to manoeuvre (tick).

So I'm pretty sure you can guess what the next sentence will be. Correct, I fell off. Helite jacket exploded, my anger at feeling so stupid exploded, gloves thrown to the ground amidst expletives not to be printed here. To see a grown (well half grown) individual looking like a bright yellow angry Michelin man must have been some sight. Anyway, I want to say thank you to all those that assisted me back into an upright position and calm me down ready to get riding again. Yes it did shake me up a bit but I knew it was my own fault. Instead of assessing and planning where the best place to park and think about machine and rider positioning I was more worried about blocking other people (it was a bit of a small area with lots of bikes turning round). So it may seem like a stupid thing to do (tick) but the forces of nature are against you if you get it wrong, so treat this article as a reminder that machine control is not just about cornering, positioning or observation whilst on the move; use that observation to position yourself as best possible when parking. We all know this, but it doesn't hurt to revisit the simple things that make your days ride enjoyable so get yourself booked on to the [Slow Riding Day](#) (20/6/2026) - very enjoyable, fun and informative.

So from that point I knew things could only get better. A little shaken I moved off to catch up with

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Mark again who had duly waited for me a few hundred yards ahead. I rode in front but the sat nav at this point was very confused and was trying to get us down to the ford again (not on your nelly was I going anywhere near that again!). Ignoring the sat nav I decided to ride until we came to a decent size road where we could stop in a lay-by and re-plan. In essence this was a good thing and I did find said lay-by, but what we didn't do was both put the new route in our respective sat nav's (my 2nd mistake of the day), I decided I just wanted to follow Mark and let him lead the way, hindsight is such a wonderful thing.

Day 1 - Notes on group riding.

On our new route we made our way to where I believe may have been Cirencester which is where things went a bit pear shaped again. Mark was one car ahead approaching a busy roundabout, he found a gap but the car in front of me was very slow moving off, I couldn't filter as there was just no room. My sat nav said second exit off the roundabout but Mark entered the roundabout in the lane for the 3rd exit. I could not see which turning Mark took and by the time I was leaving the 3rd exit he was not in sight. I continued to the next roundabout but could not see him. At that point it was impossible to keep the group riding policy intact. I had a different sat nav route to Mark and even if I was on his route he would have been unable to stop due to safety issues and traffic restrictions. It was this point I decided to invoke 2 points from item 5 of our Group Riding Framework;

- If busy/traffic avoid pressure to keep up.
- Ride own Ride, Make own decisions.

Although these are from the 'Open Road' section, in this instance I applied these to my ride as I could easily be going down a series of rabbit holes trying to find Mark. We both had each others phone numbers so I decided to now follow my sat nav, find a safe (flat) place to park and contact Mark. Obviously unless the recipient of a call has her or his phone connected to a helmet speaker then one can only leave a voicemail or a text informing of your whereabouts and situation. We both did this and so were able to know that we were safe and trying to get back on track.

What can we learn from this?

In the first instance because there was only two of us it was even more important to have the same route. This is obvious but I failed to make sure that I understood where we were heading, I should have taken more time at our lay-by stop to fully comprehend our next stage. Would more people in the group have made a difference - possibly. Again looking at the Group Riding Policy;

- Form into groups of 3 or 4 riders (which I failed to implement at the start).
- All riders should exchange mobile phone numbers (this we implemented and proved worthwhile)

Eventually both Mark and I made it to our first stop at Malmesbury having read our respective messages to each other but at different times.

I left Malmesbury with a different group but the same thing happened - I got separated and then just relied on my sat nav to get me to Cheddar - which it did. Once again I did not prepare with that group, I just tagged on the end.

And then guess what, the same thing happened. I was beginning to think I had some serious body odour at this point as for each of the 3 stages I ended up with Billy no mates. There are lessons to be learnt - whilst we are all responsible for our own rides we must use our WHAM group riding policy as the basis for our ride. I accept total responsibility for my mistakes and will use this experience to impress on all how important it is to follow said policy.

Having mentioned all these issues I experienced, the riding and the routes were excellent (thank you Tony Davis, Mark & Donna Saxton) - so try and get onto one of these extended weekend rides if you can, there are some fantastic rides plotted out for you to enjoy and indeed despite what I have written about I really did enjoy the day.

Day 2 - Enjoying the scenery

Leg 1. What a day, the favourite ride of the weekend for me was leg 1 to Fremington Quay. Following the River Quarme, then the River Exe to Dulverton and then over the top of Exmoor



where we were treated to some fantastic views across to the sea and Barnstaple. At Fremington Quay there is a fantastic cafe to stretch the legs, take in the sea view and think back to the stunning ride just completed. Barnstaple traffic a bit gnarly but most of the route was very quiet, lots of dappled shade early on to test your observation skills and corners galore to put a smile on your face.



Fremington Quay

Leg 2. This route took us to the north of Devon eventually ending at Lynmouth for those fantastic pasties that are always welcomed after some time in the saddle and, as the weather was good, an obligatory ice cream. Once again the route had been well planned and took us through some stunning countryside. I must say there seemed to be less pot holes than in Herefordshire!



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Lynmouth

Leg 3. Back to the hotel about 3:00pm for drinks and reminisce with the others regarding the days respective rides. A bit of an early start on the alcohol for me so by 7:30pm I'd had enough and finished on lime and lemonades for the rest of the evening. Talk inevitably migrated to the weather for Sunday and it seemed as though most people were inclined to take the route over the Quantock Hills straight from the hotel as we thought the rain was moving in from the west.

Raleghs Cross Inn is the perfect venue for an Exmoor trip, accommodation is clean, comfortable, staff are very friendly and food is great. I would not hesitate to recommend this trip to anyone if we decide to book it again.

Ian Fullwood

EVENTS THIS MONTH

[WHAM Day Ride – Aberdovey via Mountain Roads](#)

June 14 @ 8:00 am - 5:00 pm

Starting at Starbucks Wooferton.

Leg 1 – Some familiar roads to start with then it gets interesting on the Llanbister road, ends up at the Halt Cafe south of Rhayader for coffee.

Leg 2 – Uses some brilliant mountain roads not seen on any of our regular routes. Ends in Aberdovey where we park up in the main carpark. Walker's Fish and Chip shop over the road from the carpark is recommended for lunch.

Leg 3 – Heads down to Aberystwyth then avoids the busy A44 in preference to the excellent A4120 to Devils Bridge then over the Elan Valley to the visitor centre for afternoon tea.

Leg 4 – Back to Wooferton via Builth Wells and Hundred House.

[WHAM 2026 Slow Riding Day](#)

June 20 @ 10:30 am - 3:30 pm

WHAM Slow Riding Day Our most popular training day of the year – held once again at Madley Industrial Estate near Hereford. A must for Associates and recommended for full members, especially those who have recently passed their test. Slow riding is an important skill and our Slow Riding day gives WHAM Members a chance to practice in a safe environment and have fun at the same time.

There will be a slalom course, figure-of-eights and our famous obstacle course. The afternoon session will up the pace with a chance to practice emergency braking and counter steering.

This excellent day culminates in a very competitive slow ride between the start and finish line, and the winner is, (yes you guessed it) the slowest rider of the day. This lucky individual gets to hold the Slow riding trophy for the rest of the year.

Please arrive promptly on the day, it is a great day out in good company and a bit of banter too, what's not to like. See you there!

Open to all WHAM Members and Associates – refreshments in the form of soft drinks, cakes and sandwiches provided for a small charity contribution.

[Sunday Ride – McDonalds Malvern to Baffle Haus Cafe – Route 42](#)

June 21 @ 9:00 am - 1:30 pm

Sunday Ride starting at McDonalds Malvern to the Baffle House Cafe Pontypool. Optional route back to British Camp. 08:30 for 09:00 Start

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[WHAM Evening Ride 2](#)

June 24 @ 7:00 pm - 9:30 pm

Evening ride and Natter Night. Join us for a ride to the Falcon in Bromyard. Leaves the start points (Hereford or Worcester) at 19:00, arrives at the Falcon at around 20:15. Please arrive in time to organise riding groups. All members very welcome.

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