

I have been asked on several occasions and the question has been repeated through the recent survey we have commissioned. “Why do we not have organised ride-outs for members not otherwise engaged with guidance or observing, on Saturdays and on weekends and Bank Holidays?”

Well, the answer is largely to do with insurance arrangements and conditions. The Group Rules Handbook on the subject covers the detail that Groups are affiliate members of IAM and responsible for their own affairs. The IAM P.L. insurance only covers Observers and any incidents occurring on Guidance runs involving third parties and the public. “Group Organised Rides” must comply with the affiliation Rules and must be formally organised and advertised. Such a ride must be considered to be promoting the aims of the Group, i.e., to further the skill of safe and competent riding and should the ‘convoy’ include Associate members, then it must include Group Observers. Strictly speaking, the governance of such formality should fall under the responsibility of the Group Senior Observer. The Group insurance does not provide cover for informal group(s) of members and/or associates, deciding to get together for ‘a run to the Coast’ for instance.

It seems therefore, that the answer to the question posed at the beginning is that should members wish to encourage such formal ride-outs, then someone must take charge and offer regular events which should appear in the program and be advertised on the website and in Wheel to Wheel. Start times and venue should be set and the group must include one or more Observers.

The Committee is aware of the need to offer additional facilities to Members who do not hold observing duties so that they may continue honing their skills following the Green Badge but in order to achieve this need, we seek qualified members who would agree to take on the project.

Currently there are two members who “if asked nicely” usually agree to lead an informal ride on Saturdays and of course there are the ‘SaGa rides on Thursdays for members. Such runs usually include analysis and comment on riding standards and are therefore most helpful in continuing the honing of skills. There is also the freedom for Associates to join the SaGa’s as the day includes several Observers but the Associates must be near to Test Pass standard.

In earlier times when H&S and liability was not the ogre it is now, we ran such events with volunteers and indeed members can still privately arrange such runs between themselves for which their own insurance arrangements are sufficient but to run such under the SAM headline, then the conditions described above, must be fulfilled.

Rob G. Hon Sec.