



## **Being an Associate with Shropshire and Powys Advanced Riders**

The main purpose of becoming an Associate with Shropshire and Powys Advanced Riders (SaPAR) is to improve your riding skills and work towards taking the RoSPA Advanced Motorcycle test. Taking the test is not compulsory but helping Associates to achieve that is one of the aims of SaPAR.

Having joined SaPAR as an Associate you will in most instances be placed on a waiting list, by the Training Officer, for allocation to a tutor. We have a number of tutors who are all trained to a high standard and give their time voluntarily to help others not only improve their standard of riding and therefore their safety, but also gain more enjoyment from their riding. The purpose of the waiting list is to enable fair allocation of Associates to tutors and the way we work it is based on date of joining. We have a finite number of tutors and Associates are only allocated to a tutor when there is a realistic prospect of the tutor being able to give time to the Associate. Some people find this can prove frustrating as they feel they are not progressing in the process, however, it ensures everyone is treated fairly. Other factors that may be taken into consideration are geographic location in relation to tutors and also when both can be available, days of the week or times of day etc.

On joining SaPAR your details are included in the group membership system which can only be accessed by those committee members who need that access. One of these is the Training Officer who allocates Associates to tutors and monitors standards with the assistance of a number of senior tutors. The Training Officer will contact you to let you know you have been placed on the waiting list and how many members are ahead of you in the allocation process. Unfortunately, it is not possible to give an estimate of how long you will have to wait to be allocated a tutor as everyone is different and some people take longer than others.

Once allocated a tutor it is then for the two of you to arrange mutually convenient times, dates and locations to meet for your tutoring sessions. Your tutor will contact you to make arrangements for the first session with the next one usually being agreed at the conclusion of each session. In general Associates take up to ten sessions to get to test standard but as said above this does vary. Some people may progress quicker, or have prior experience, and therefore require less time. Others may reach a plateau where they have improved their riding but have reached the highest standard they are capable of at that time. In either of the above situations an Associate may be referred to a Senior tutor for assessment or advised to apply for their test by their tutor.

Each tutoring session will generally last around two to four hours including the initial discussion and briefing, the on-road section and the de-brief. All our tutors are volunteers and give their time freely, we do however ask that you make a contribution to their costs of £10.00 per tutoring session.

On the first session the tutor will need to see your driving licence to ensure that you are properly licenced for the class of vehicle you are using and also ask you to confirm that it is insured, taxed, if necessary has a current MOT test certificate, and will conduct a simple eyesight check (reading a vehicle number plate from 20 metres). The tutor



will ask you to sign a disclaimer that the above documents are in force for the vehicle and will be maintained so, along with the validity of your driving licence, throughout the period of your tutoring, and that you will ensure your motorcycle is in a legal and roadworthy condition and you are fit to ride, on each occasion that you get together for a tutoring session.

After checking the documentation and getting general information from you regarding your previous riding experience the tutor will go through the 'POWDDERSS' check as explained in Roadcraft. It is a good idea to make sure you know how to conduct this check prior to attending your first session, what should your tyre pressures be and how do you check them for instance. More information on this can be obtained from Motorcycle Roadcraft and your motorcycle handbook.

The tutor will run through a pre-ride chat, this may include among other matters:

- POWDDERSS
- Purpose of the session
- Remind you that it is your responsibility to keep the tutor in view (pointless if the tutor cannot see you)
- Make rear observations obvious (no good if the tutor or examiner cannot see them)
- Ride normally but legally
- How directions will be given and that they will be given in good time
- Follow the road ahead (or the discussed route) unless diversions indicate otherwise
- Keep to the speed limits at all times
- Ignore the tutor's road position, (they will be observing you so may need to take up an unusual position)
- Always sacrifice road position for safety
- Stopping procedure (if the tutor needs to chat with you, he/she will overtake and signal or use some other prearranged method)
- Procedure in the event of being separated

Many tutors bikes are equipped with video cameras, so your riding may be recorded and the footage can be used to help during the debrief after the ride. It is a good idea to purchase and bring with you your own memory card that the video footage can be saved to. This way you will have a permanent record of your rides. N.B. most cameras are HD quality so you need a fairly substantial size to store all of the film. A minimum of around 8Gb will be needed if you want to store all of the files on the same card (32gb is recommended). If you want to have your ride recorded please speak to your tutor before the session so they are aware. They can then let you know if they have the facility and, if they do, what type of memory card you will need.

At the end of the session the tutor will discuss with you the aspects of your riding. Where necessary he/she will suggest areas that you need to concentrate on in readiness for the next session. They may well refer you to a particular section of the Motorcycle Roadcraft book and could well ask questions during the next session. You



can ask questions of the tutor as well. This is not a one-way exercise, the purpose is to improve your riding and help you pass the Advanced Test with a good grade. If you feel that you have a weak area discuss this with the tutor he/she can then look at ways they may be able to assist. Occasionally the tutor will be accompanied by a senior tutor. The purpose of this is twofold, the senior tutors need to know that tutors are correctly assessing the Associate's ability and are offering good, constructive advice. Secondly, they are able to judge how ready the Associate is for taking the test.

It is also a good idea to read the 'Test Guidelines' document which can be found on the SAPAR website 'Tutoring/Test' drop down menu and The Highway Code as questions on this are likely to form part of your test. You can then ask your tutor any questions that you may have. There is also a 'Drivers and Riders Initial Test' form that can be completed on-line. Details of the current RoSPA Advanced test fees can be found on the RoSPA web site at <https://www.roadar.org.uk/riders/the-test.htm>.

Should you have any issues with the tutor or are concerned about the manner in which the tutoring is being carried out the first thing to do is to discuss your concerns with the tutor. If the issues fail to be resolved then contact the training coordinator (training@saparweb.com) and he will help.

**Good luck and safe and happy riding.**