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TRAIL



The magazine of the TRF, the National Club for all who wish to ride Legal Motorcycles on Legal Carriageways
 DECEMBER 2011 No. 400 EDITOR: FRED ELLISON

Patron: Lord Fairfax

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Keepers of Stationery:	Debbie Hutchinson	Leaflets & Membership Forms
	Fred Ellison	Letterheads & Compliments Slips
Display Equipment:	Leo Crone	01325 463815 (7a.m. - 5p.m.) Display boards held at Ut 10, Red Barnes Way, McMullen Road, Darlington DL1 2RR

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Display Ads: For Advertising Rates please contact Fred Ellison, 01254 823893 editor@trf.org.uk
Members Classifieds: Bikes, Riding Gear etc **FREE OF CHARGE** Enclose membership number.
ALL Commercial Advertising to be paid for - £1 per line, £5 minimum. Please send all classifieds with payment if applicable to THE EDITOR, Sheepcote Farm, Moor Lane, Wiswell, Clitheroe BB7 9DG. Tel: 01254 823893 Fax: 01254 887999 editor@trf.org.uk

EDITOR

A good year for trail riding? Well we lost some and we won some as well as bloodying the noses of a few authorities who just decided to close lanes without following the correct procedures. So not bad.

We have also successfully defended a number of our members in court (in all cases they should never have been taken to court in the first place). The future? Orange? Make mine a Yamaha! (subtle joke).

Thanks to everyone who has contributed to TRAIL as well as those who intend to contribute in the future.

Best wishes for
Christmas and the
New Year.



2012 CALENDAR COMPETITION

Despite some excellent entries the winner had to be the striking photo of a rainbow on the Weston Hills, near Stevenage, the Kawaskaki in the foreground, submitted by Glenn Vieira. A £25 voucher to be redeemed in the TRF shop is on its way to Glenn. Congratulations!



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WANTED:

RUN REPORTS
RIGHTS OF WAY • NOTICES
BIKE & RIDING GEAR REVIEWS
COVER PHOTOS
YOUR VIEWS ON TRAIL RIDING
RELATED TOPICS
*or anything you feel
would be interesting*

COVER PHOTO:

From Paul Laver.

COPY DEADLINE:
1st Tuesday of the Month

All contributions to THE EDITOR
Fred Ellison, Sheepcote Farm,
Moor Lane, Wiswell, Clitheroe
BB7 9DG editor@trf.org.uk

BMF Discount Code: TRF11C774

IMPORTANT MAGAZINE SUBSCRIPTION INFORMATION

It was advised by the Treasurer at the AGM that we should consider increasing membership fees for 2012, on this note it was proposed and seconded that we should increase a single membership subscription from £40 to £45, the majority of the room were in favour, therefore:

From 1st January 2012 the 12 month membership subscription will increase to:

Single: £45.00

Joint: £67.50

Life: £450.00

This will also apply to renewals from this point on.

If you are considering renewing but not until the New Year do try and do so before 31st December 2011 to get the subscription at the current fee of £40.00.

When you receive your renewal letter (with TRAIL) there will be an opportunity for you to save 10% off the membership subscription, if you decide to renew with an annual direct debit. This will be available both online and via the post.

As always in the event that you have any questions please email memsec@trf.org.uk

Debbie Hutchinson,
National Membership Secretary.

NOTICE BOARD

GROUP RETURN

Please would all groups complete the Group Return form and send it back to me, Polly Cody, at the address given in TRAIL. The form is available on the TRF website for those who didn't receive an email request for the form.

Polly Cody, TRF Secretary

SURREY

Surrey Police will be patrolling byways and, with permission, some Bridleways but at the moment only in the Mole Vale Sector as most of the funding came from Surrey Hills, but will cross into other sectors if asked. They will be using two Husqvarna TE 310's.

Ronald Lumley

TRF EXEC

Following the success of the Executive Meeting hosted by the Devon Group, the Cambridge Group have volunteered to host the next meeting in January 2012

10.30 a.m. Sunday 29th January 2012

**Lakeside Lodge Leisure Centre/Pidley Golf Club
Pidley PE28 3DF**

For those who want to make a weekend of it, the Cambridge Group will be leading a number of runs on Saturday 28th January. There will be a talk given by Sam Manicome at the Leisure Centre on the Saturday night and B&B is available at the Leisure Centre.

Please contact the Cambridge Chairman, Mike Irving, to book yourself on a run and indicate if you will be staying at the Leisure Centre.

Mike Irving, 07860 813578 or mike@mandktrading.co.uk

Details of the Leisure Centre can be found at www.lakeside-lodge.co.uk

Mike also needs to know who is going to buy lunch in the restaurant on the Sunday.

Polly Cody, TRF Secretary

COPY FOR TRAIL

COPY DEADLINE: The first Tuesday of the month.

COPY: Via email, typed or handwritten (please try to make it legible!) to The Editor, Sheepcote Farm, Moor Lane, Wiswell, Clitheroe BB7 9DG, email: editor@trf.org.uk, fax: 01254 887999.

PHOTOS: Digital via email on CD or DVD; scanned originals (high resolution 300dpi jpeg or tiff); or posted originals (please include an s.a.e for return). We prefer you not to include your photos in 'Word' documents, if possible please send images separately.

CAPTIONS: Please caption your photos!

EMAILING: It is best not to place too many images on one email document.

WORRIED ABOUT YOUR SPELLING? DON'T HAVE A COMPUTER?

Don't let this put you off, send it in and we'll sort it out, handwritten or otherwise.

Photographs submitted for publication may also be used for other TRF purposes.

RoW UPDATE

GRAHAM TILL

Uppermost in my mind as I write is the sad loss of yet another of our valiant campaigners for the TRF, our colleague Graham Till who died suddenly on the 28th November.

As most of those who knew him knew he had not been a well man for some time although this rarely affected his enthusiasm for both getting out on his bike, or promoting the TRF to all he came across in relation to his pastime. As someone who had been involved with the TRF for many years his passing and his dry wit will be a loss to us all.

At this time it is usual to remember the past

year and what has been achieved, so can I express my thanks to all of you who have helped us achieve so many successes this year. I was the recipient of a round of applause at the AGM for which I felt a little humble. The greater part of that applause needed to be directed to all of you who have done so much again this year to protect our pastime from those who would have us all on foot.

Thank you and Merry Christmas to you all.

Robin Hickin, National RoW Officer.

TRF ROW TRAINING WORKSHOP 23 OCTOBER 2011

Thanks to all those who attended and a special thanks to our ROW team for presenting what I think was an excellent programme of activities on the day. I sincerely hope that those of you who came along both enjoyed the workshop and went away with some useful information to pass on to your members locally. As a result of interest in the workshop from Devon Group I was invited to provide a workshop for them as they had potentially 20 members who were interested. This was held on the 29th October and as it turned out 34 members from Devon, Cornwall, Somerset and Wilts groups turned up on the day.

We discussed at both workshops many of the issues that you would expect to come up at a workshop - TRO's, what's legal to use what is illegal and the best way to protect members from

prosecution.

One issue that I am particularly interested in is member's views on what direction TRF ROW should be taking in the future? We have successfully challenged TRO's, protected members from prosecution and have as such



consolidated our position in protecting our, and the public's rights, to use routes, but is this our future or do we need to do more, what are your thoughts? Let me know.

If you want me to come to your region to talk to members on ROW issues all you need to do is ask. Email Row@trf.org.uk

SOUTH WALES TRF

I have also been to visit South Wales TRF at their request to discuss the ongoing problem with riding in the South Wales area, and the current problems associated with routes in the Brecon Beacons National Park. It is important to point out that where riders are using legal routes we will continue to protect our members' interest at all levels including in the courts if necessary. It was also incumbent on me to point out that as a responsible and law-abiding organisation I could not condone illegal riding wherever it occurred. Members need to be active in their own locality in ensuring that routes are protected from both misuse and political interference to have them closed, by what ever means. If you spend a few minutes to write to your local councillor, your local MP to air your views it might have a greater affect.

TALES FROM THE NATIONAL PARK

The Peak District

I watched with interest the programme following residents trying to close Chertpit Lane, their sheer persistence in harassing Peak Park employees, police and others shows how they can affect the views of others. We saw reasonable riders being reported for an incident, conveniently not caught on camera, for riding dangerously. It is this kind of persistent harassment and intimidation of those in the park authority that eventually breaks their spirit and they go along with the pressure from outside. As such I would advise you to get involved and communicate, email phone or write, with your views/complaints every time you feel it is necessary to do so and make sure it is logged and you get a reply.

I will not go into the issues of people walking down the middle of a road and trying to physically stop vehicle users, but I wonder how he would have been treated by the police if he had tried it on the nearby A6. What do you think?

Robin Hickin, National ROW Officer.

BEWARE OF THE TRAINS

I found this unusual sign on a byway last week in the Ashford-Charing area of Kent, not one you would expect to find on a track that has not been used for many years but as you can see by the photo the signs and gates are still there unmanned!!! I thought some of our other readers and riders would find this amusing. I know I did but it didn't stop me looking both ways!!!

David Driver



RoW NEWS

WALNA SCAR

Cumbria TRF Group is sorry to announce that it has decided to withdraw its objection to the Lake District National Park Authority Rights of Way Committee decision to make Walna Scar Road a Restricted Byway.

It does this on the basis that, having taken the best advice available, there is now no prospect of winning Byway Open to All Traffic status for the route.

New evidence obtained by the Park since CTRF's previous successful objection resulted in the Planning Inspectorate's short lived decision to award BOAT status in 2010 (that decision was quashed due to procedural errors) means that CTRF can no longer reasonably assert that motorcycle traffic in the early 20th Century was not preceded by quarry related horse and cart use in the 18th and 19th Centuries.

CTRF cannot contest that this horse and cart traffic created a vehicular right of way, and thus, due to the insidious way that the NERC Act is worded, the only decision that can be made is for Restricted Byway.

The bitterest taste is left in our mouths. It is only very slightly alleviated by our knowledge that even the Park feel that we have been dealt an unjust hand. When their Rights of Way Committee met last January they made their Restricted Byway decision reluctantly, and only after they were informed that NERCA gave them no other option if they believed the evidence in front of them. Indeed some Members made a point of coming up to the CTRF Officers who attended to apologise for the decision they considered they had had to make.

Steve Pighills, ROW Officer
Cumbria TRF Group

BREAST HIGH

After last month's report that Breast High had been closed by Emergency Order, and would be Temporarily (up to 18 months) TRO'ed on grounds of safety and being out of repair, Cumbria TRF can now announce that, thanks to our intervention with LARA support, Cumbria Highways have now excluded motorcycles and bicycles from the TRO, which is in place from 8.12.11.

We're very gratified that Highways listened to, and acted upon, our arguments, and that the land owner, who was present at the meeting, was reasonable.

The land owner has a request of us; that we behave responsibly, keep to the track and do not divert onto the environmentally sensitive land alongside. The sign herewith will be erected along the route.

Steve Pighills, ROW Officer
Cumbria TRF Group

Breast High Road Motorcyclists & Cyclists

Please keep to the track. Track edges and surrounding farmland are environmentally sensitive. If you find the route to tough to follow - turn back.

For more information on this matter visit www.laragb.org.uk



www.laragb.org
admin@laragb.org

Saving our motoring heritage.

Over three separate periods in the summer of 2011, LARA sent representatives to the public inquiry into the proposal to impose a prohibition of driving order (TRO) on the byways open to all traffic (BOAT) that pass through the Stonehenge World Heritage Site. This is an area much larger than you might think, and the order would have closed 7km of byways that have been used and enjoyed by drivers and motorcyclists for over 100 years.

LARA argued that it would be unsafe to divert small trail bikes on to the A303 and the A360, and that this had not been considered by Wiltshire Council, the order-making authority. We also argued, amongst many other points, that for as long as the A303 bisects the World Heritage Site, the amount of motor traffic using the byways was insignificant in its impact.

In his recommendations published on the 16th November the Inspector (Mr. Alan Boyland BEng(Hons) DipTP CEng MICE MCIHT MRTPI) recognises that "... The BOATs that are the subject of the proposed TRO are key links in the network.... It seems to be undisputed that the only alternative routes would largely be on roads more dangerous for motorcyclists, particularly those riding the relatively low

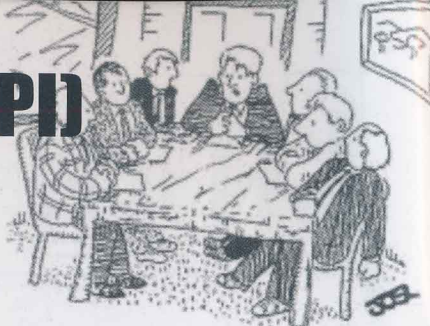
powered and slower bikes habitually used by trail riders. Several objectors have also pointed to the lack of a risk assessment regarding the use of the alternative routes by trail bikes. it seems to me that diverting trail riders from BOATs onto roads would be likely to increase the level of risk to their safety, even if the particular roads involved are not in themselves significantly more dangerous than other similar ones." Mr Boyland added "I accept that Wiltshire has a considerably greater length of BOATs than any other County. This is not however, in itself, a reason for allowing a further loss for recreational motor vehicle users." LARA is particularly pleased with this result because we are opposing Wiltshire Council (represented by counsel) and English Heritage (represented by leading planning QC John Hobson) with their teams of experts and a 'money no object' approach to the issue. We now hope that Wiltshire Council will discuss the situation with us to find a workable and amicable outcome.

For more information please contact admin@laragb.org or visit our web site www.laragb.org

LARA, PO Box 142,
Newcastle upon Tyne, NE3 5YP

We congratulate LARA on winning this crucial decision. It was felt that it was correct to allow LARA oppose the closures as it made the arguments more independent and hence more credible but they were fully supported both financially by the TRF and through the expertise of the TRF's Right of Way Contractors and representatives. Thank you to all of those involved for their excellent work.

PUBLIC INQUIRIES (PI) WHAT ARE THEY?



"If we're going to keep this quiet
"If we're going to keep this quiet,
we'll need a public enquiry"

This article attempts to explain a PI in "laymans' language plus some added humour. Most of us have all read that there will be a PI about a right of way being re-classified/subject to a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) or closure at some time or other.

There is an independent government organisation based in Bristol called the Planning Inspectorate which employs people to collate the facts/evidence from councils, organisations, and individuals at a meeting called a PI. That person is called an Inspector. Public Inquiries are usually held in community halls or village halls as near as possible to the area that is affected by the subject matter and the hall is set out thus:

The Inspector sits at the front, then either side but in front of him, to his left and right, are positioned the order making authority (County Council) on one side, and opposite but facing, are the opponents of the CC who are to give their evidence. Then the audience sits facing the Inspector with two opposing sides to their left and right.

The proceedings are relatively informal with no swearing on oath before giving your version of events or statement. The CC usually have the County solicitor to represent them to go through the proceedings, and they will call various officers of the council to explain their case. After each person has said their bit they can be cross-questioned by the opposition before moving on to the next witness. Increasingly CC's are employing a barrister as well as their own solicitor. I will add that the whole cost of a PI is the responsibility of the order making authority and barristers charge like an enraged bull!! So the cost can be considerable, funded from CC budget before

ultimately filtering down the line to the tax payer.

I have been to about a dozen different inquiries over the years, each one having their own unique quirks and nuances. I have given evidence at a few and have actively cross-questioned at others, too. The most important advice that I was given both by Tim Stevens and Bill Riley was to stick religiously to the facts so that it would make cross-questioning very difficult or impossible thus making your contribution credible for the Inspector. That advice has worked well for me because I have never been cross-questioned.

Landowners often oppose Byway applications and again they will often employ legal representation. One case that springs to mind was the PI (about 10 years ago), for the now Byway at Glympton near Woodstock (on our patch). This claim was put in by Oxford TRF member Cliff Hathaway who also gave his presentation to the PI. The proposed Byway crossed the Glympton Estate which was/is owned by Arabs and the estate budget at the time was £21 million a year!! They employed the best ROW barrister in the land, George Lawrence who was reputedly charging at the time £500/hour. Despite this, Cliff stood his ground and the result was Byway status.

The decision is never given at the PI, but days, weeks or even several months later after the Inspector has read, re-read and examined all the documents, notes etc.

The most entertaining PI was just a few weeks



ago at Salisbury Rugby club about the proposed Traffic Regulation Orders (TRO's) around Stonehenge. Present were Wiltshire Council and English Heritage promoting the order and opposing it were TRF top man Dave Tilbury, legend Bill Riley, (who has done most of the claims in the past in Wilts, which has more byways than any other county), and the Druids. LARA and other TRF people had appeared earlier at the Inquiry.

The Druids were led by King Arthur Pendragon in his full head to toe ceremonial robe (looked like a white sheet with a hood!!). Apparently the previous day he walked into the hall fully attired and the self closing doors shut the cloak in the door abruptly stopping him so suddenly that he nearly fell over backwards.

Chris Blomfield and I got there at 10.20 and about 10.45 some more of his followers arrived, one woman in her mid forties dressed in a floral full length dress came in the hall swigging a can of Carlsberg!. Most of the men had ZZ Top-style beards with an assortment of

rings and piercings. I have to say how passionate they were to oppose the TRO's and all sorts of EU human rights acts were quoted along with the numerous orders of Druids who wanted to worship there. One had come up from Cornwall in his "camper van", a beat up LDV ex Parcel-Force van now faded to pink instead of red. Chris B could not stop chuckling about the crook lock on the steering wheel. Who would want to steal it? It was obvious that this guy had been living in around the car park all week because underneath the van was a pool of oil and likewise all around the car park.

The Druid leader was most entertaining when the cross-questioning came from English Heritage's barrister who spoke with a plum in his mouth and obviously did not like Druids. King Arthur would not let him finish a sentence and had to be warned about his behaviour by the PI Inspector.

To give you all an idea how absurd the English Heritage "facts" were: pollution and noise was cited from vehicles using the Byway until it was pointed out to them about the movement of thousands of vehicles daily on the adjacent A303 and A344 which passes either side of Stonehenge.

When the PI closed for the day it turned out that Mr. Pendragon and his high Priestess rode away on a big Suzuki of dubious vintage and the tank we think was painted with woad. We now have to wait no doubt several months for the outcome.

Finally, it takes many, many months of hard work to prepare a really good presentation for a PI. When you are there and you see in the audience other TRF people supporting you, it gives you a real boost that you are not a lone voice in the wilderness.

So if you have never been, and it is known that the TRF are represented, try to go to support the people fighting for your rights, because without them trail riding would not be what it is today.

Chris Hurworth

The ZERO Electric Motorcycle

I believe I have seen the future of trail riding in the UK and furthermore experienced it in the shape of a ZERO DS.

One of the fundamentals of our hobby is that the bikes we use have a petrol engine. What else is there? The only variation in motive power is whether it is a two stroke or a four stroke. My current mount is a nice alloy framed Yamaha WR450 and it has been preceded over 38 years of motorcycling by NSU's, DRZ's, KDX,s, GPZ, KLX's, IT's etc. The Yam' is well overpowered for trail riding but has lots of easy low-end urge, so can go slowly as well, as of course we do.

I don't like noisy bikes and some of mine have not been quiet enough, in spite of my best efforts with fibre glass wool and modified baffle tubes. Nevertheless the actual noise impact we make is minimal and extremely transient for any given sensitive receptor.

Over the past 5 years I've read about developments in electric motorcycles and also power assisted pedal bikes. In the past year I've managed to try out electric commuter bicycles, electric scooters, an electric mountain bike, a small electric trail bike and now I've just ridden the best of these; the 2011 model ZERO DS.

I made an enquiry with Zero's agents in the UK and was put in touch with their PR consultant. I was told that the Metropolitan Police were just finishing a period of testing the ZERO DS in London. If I could get to Dorking I could have a ride. "How soon could I get there"?

"How about Monday" I said?

And so it was that I arrived at the Azcar Adventure Centre to collect the bike. Still in Police colours with "Police" wording taped out. I met Susan from ZERO and discussed my plans. Now, I've been a member of the Kent group for over 30 years and have often ridden the byways in that area of Surrey. So Susan followed me up in her car (an electric hybrid Toyota Prius) to park at the top of Fetcham Downs. From there is a byway that leads to the National Trust house at Polesden Lacey. We did a short session of videoing and discussed the bike and the general issues around electric vehicles. Susan then departed and left me to do some testing in the dirt.

On the 7 or 8-mile ride up the main A24 the ZERO DS's power felt something like a 125cc petrol bike, albeit a lot less frenzied. I was careful not to pin the throttle open so as to help conserve power. I thus started on the lanes with around 75% power remaining. Perhaps 35 miles? We'd see.

There is something odd about being able to power along and up a green road in almost complete silence. There is a little mechanical noise and general whirring but nothing significant. Coming across several dog walkers it was easy to pass a word or two along the lines of "Hello", "thanks" and "yes, it's an electric motorbike!" I found myself laughing out aloud that I was really, really making progress in relative silence.

The motor was responsive once on the move. There seems to be a bit of a lag on initial acceleration from a standstill and the riding technique is different from a petrol-engined



machine. I kept to our code of conduct speed of 25 mph; doing a hasty kilometre per hour conversion since this example was registered in the Netherlands with a kph speedo.

The chassis on this DS version is set up differently from a pure dirt version. The wheels are smaller than on most petrol bikes which are 18" / 21" front / rear. The DS has a 16" rear and a 17" front. The problem with this configuration in the dirt is that it makes the front end liable to being caught out by potholes and the like. Also the road orientated, but slightly chunkier tyres don't give a lot of grip on turns and let the front wash out occasionally. However the suspension coped well and if I'm honest the handling did not hinder my progress. I believe ZERO does use a 19" front wheel on their off-road only motocross version. I think the DS should have this, at least as an option. In Europe the DS should really be called a Super Moto (SM).

I was enjoying myself so much that I studied my OS map for some more byways. I guessed that I could take in a couple of more lanes and

still have power to get back. What did the fuel indicator say (paradoxically with a petrol pump logo!)? Just over half power. OK then go for it. I was getting the hang of this and starting to really like it. How could I manage to afford one? Would it be a good decision?

I stopped for a couple of horses. Our TRF code of conduct says "... switch off engines when meeting horses". One rider said her horse could be scared of motorbikes; I said, "this is an electric one, look"; and wafted away on a sea of tranquillity.

The grin factor was increasing. The countryside is generally empty on Mondays and I usually avoid Sundays, especially in suburban Surrey. I was finding my full face helmet was detracting from the connection with nature; actually that's exactly what its designed for having had the occasional impact with a tree or terra firma. An open face trials type helmet would be better I was thinking. Could I hear the birds? How about the wind in the trees? Well, just about. I'd not really worried before, even with the muted burble of my well silenced WR450. That had me thinking about noise. I'm fortunate that part of my job involves acoustics and it would be interesting to do some comparisons in pass-by noise.

I passed a Traffic Regulation Order sign. This one is a width limit; 1.5 metres. In the past 4WD and forestry vehicles have trashed this lane. I've always believed that powered two wheelers have minimal adverse impact on the countryside.

Not all countryside users agree with us and "waisters"* like those in GLEAM and the Ramblers Association, have the single purpose of banning all motorised vehicles from any road in the countryside that is not hard surfaced and wide enough for their BMW's Merc's or Jag's. Many are of course retired "duffers"*** with too much time on their hands. It's the strangest way to spend your free time not being actually FOR anything but just AGAINST something. What a sad way to spend you life? It's bizarre that they never

mention fly tipping or destruction of green roads by commercial interests. Did my electric bike ruin the trail's surface? No, I left hardly a mark. Did I injure anyone? No, it's the hapless rider that usually suffers. AND WAS I NOISY? NO!! This is it! The Achilles heel of the motorcycle is solved! Tell me NOW what is the problem?

In fact petrol engines don't have to be excessively noisy; it's the vehicle manufacturers themselves and after-market exhausts who are to blame; and to some extent ourselves. Can I purchase an exhaust that loses me 5 or 10 bhp AND also reduces noise by 10 or 15dB(A)? No, I can't! 5 bhp extra at the top of the rev range and 95dB(A); yes, no problem! Motocross has a lot to answer for.

So lets all go electric? Well, not quite. So much was I enjoying myself that I then noted with increasing concern the little battery power indicator blocks were disappearing? I had about 20% of power left. Time to get back to Dorking. Whilst it was about 5 miles away, I was fairly high up and gravity helped. I made it back still with the two blocks flashing. Total distance was 38 kilometres on the speedo; only 24 miles.

So, that is not bad for an electric vehicle, but ideally it should be 70-80 miles as that is the range of a petrol trail bike. Petrol stations are not common in the countryside and we do plan our rides around fuel stops. A day's ride for us would be 60 to 100 miles. The key to all this would be a fuel (or is that energy) stop where a top up charge could be had in around 30 minutes. A network of rapid battery chargers at strategic petrol stations is what's needed. Just enough time for a coffee and sandwich. It's good practice to stop for a rest anyway when driving, as we all know. A sort of compulsory safety stop built into the vehicle. I hear for 2012 the ZERO road bikes will have a range of over 100 miles. If true then even allowing for a more spirited ride, it makes the whole concept of an electric trail bike a real goer. But I am sceptical that this can be

achieved. Electric vehicle manufacturers always seem to exaggerate the range of their vehicles. It needs to be tried against the same criteria and drive cycles as the fuel consumption tests. Performance on the open road does not compare well with a petrol bike, but that's not the point. As long as it can do 50 mph easily that is usually enough. Keep to the back roads and it's great fun.

The crunch comes down to money, as always. 100 miles riding on my WR450 costs me £12 as of November 2011. Plus oil and other engine related consumables it could be as much as £20 per 100 miles. So that is £2000 for 10,000 miles. Given the harsh terrain we operate in, that's about its lifespan. We might ride 2000 to 3000 miles per year and keep our bikes for maybe 5 years. My WR450 was second-hand and cost £3K but new they are about £7K. The ZERO is about £9K. It's a lot of money for a vehicle with limitations. The federal government in the USA gives at least a 10% tax break. Why are electric motorcycles not given similar tax breaks here in the UK? Electric cars get £5000. How about removing 20% VAT? Then we'd be talking. Perhaps we ought to build them in the UK?

So, for me as someone with trail riding in his blood I can't wait to try 80 miles on the 2012 version of the ZERO DS (and please remember the knobbly 19" front tyre and also one on the rear please). See <http://www.zero-motorcycles.com> for more information.

Steve Neville, Chairman
Kent Trail Riders Fellowship

Definition:

* *Waist"er*, n. (Naut.) A seaman, usually a green hand or a broken-down man, stationed in the waist of a vessel of war.

** *Duffer*: Informal a dull or incompetent person
Slang something worthless (Business / Professions) Dialect a peddler or hawker Australian slang
a. (Mining & Quarrying) a mine that proves unproductive
b. a person who steals cattle

in chains

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FREMINGTON EDGE

Teesside and North Yorks Group carry out a lot of voluntary maintenance work on unsurfaced roads and where appropriate contribute financially towards such work. It is nice that their input is acknowledged.



YORKSHIRE DALES
National Park Authority

Danny Laws
Treasurer
Teesside & North Yorkshire TRF

05 December 2011

Dear Danny

Re: contribution to the lane repair at Fremington Edge

This is to acknowledge receipt of the contribution of £600 from the Teesside and North Yorkshire TRF towards the repair of U429 at Fremington Edge.

Many thanks for your support of this project, and the other works that your group has been involved in this year. These contributions are much appreciated.

As has been made clear, the financial contribution to the repair work does not provide any guarantee of the future management of this route. The National Park Authority will continue to monitor the use and condition of the route, and its management may be re-visited in the future.

Yours sincerely

Mark Allum
Recreation and Tourism Manager

Colvend, Hebden Road, Grassington,
Skipton, North Yorkshire, BD23 5LB
Tel: 0300 456 0030 or 01756 751600
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Website: www.yorkshiredales.org.uk
E-mail: info@yorkshiredales.org.uk

Chief Executive: David Butterworth



British Motorcyclists Federation

BMF in 'Back off EU' Brussels Protest

Despite the unseasonable time of year, Tuesday saw the BMF amongst the hundreds of riders from all over Europe who converged on the European Parliament building in Brussels to protest at the latest raft of motorcycle related Type Approval Regulations emanating from the European Commission.

Organised by Motor Cycle News, about 200 riders, mostly from the UK, assembled at the Parc du Cinquantenaire to take part in the 'Back Off EU' protest ride. Before the start of the ride they were addressed by MCN's Senior Reporter Steve Farrell, Chris Hodder, British MP Mike Weatherly and the Motorcycle Action Group's President, Ian Mutch.

A ride-past the European Commission offices ended at the European Parliament at the Place du Luxembourg where UKIP MEP Marta Andreason also addressed the riders, emphasising that she had been previously campaigning with bikers across the UK and

with MCN to ensure that 'this needless legislation is thrown on the scrap heap.'

Although there are a number of issues of concern say the BMF, the principle one is of the anti-tampering regulations. These have the effect of preventing any changes to a machine from its standard specification which, given the independence and individuality of owners, is an anathema to many motorcyclists say the BMF.

Speaking afterwards MCN's Steve Farrell said: "People can question whether protests like this make a difference, but we can be certain that nothing will be achieved by sitting at home."

Supporting this line, Chris Hodder of the BMF said: "At times it's important to visibly show solidarity and demonstrate the strength of feeling there is when debating items like this with politicians and civil servants."

THE DAWNING OF A NEW AGE!

Is this the Dawning of a New Age. The NYMPA acknowledging vehicular rights do exist.



Stoke to the Welsh Coast

As a bunch of Stoke on Trent mates doing this trip we decided that we should give our group a name for this trip and came up with: "Two Wheeled all Terrain Society" finding amusement in its acronym.

We were meeting for the ride to Wales on 1st October and the weather forecast for this day was good.

The XR was ready with one clean change of clothes stuffed into a black bin bag bungeed to the back (ready for the essential social evening at the pub later on that day!). At 6.30 I kicked the bike into life and went to meet at the petrol station for a 7am start. It was still very dark and cold, so all wrapped up in our warm kit we set off for our 50-mile road ride to Oswestry. Just over an hour later we were filling up our bikes and dropping our tyre pressures in preparation for the start of the trails.

We started lane riding near Racecourse. As we rode the 1st lanes in the Bedwlyn area it only took 40 minutes to get too hot to ride in the kit we had set off in; so a quick stop to change from thick gloves and neck tubes to thin gloves and sunglasses. We all knew this was going to be a really good sunny weekend out on the bikes.

Lane after lane was dispatched without any problems, even when on the steep descent of Hen Graig, which we had nicknamed "certain death" a few years earlier when out

on Africa Twins and GSs - but on trail bikes no problem! Through the stream at the bottom and away to the narrow lanes at Priddbwl.

Everything was going to plan, but when out on one of these "jolly weekends" you have to keep one eye on the clock as you have to cover some miles to get to the digs for the night. We called in at another petrol station at Llansantffraid yn mechain to top up the bikes and pick up some snacks for lunch. An hour later we were sat at the time box thingy at the mid point on the wayfarer trail to eat lunch, where another couple of groups of trail riders had also stopped to take in the views.

Then on we went up to the top of the Tanant Valley where we joined the road. Noticed orange triangles - aah means some sort of off-road event must be on. We continued down into Bala and out past the lake. This section is all on road for about 18-20 miles - but is ok because it's just great to be out!

Just before Rhydymain we turned off the A494 up a small tarmac road, close to a farm where there is an old aeroplane engine mounted as a memorial to the airmen that crashed close to this site. We continued up a trail, which although very nice, is lined with gates, gates and more gates! A quick stop for more fuel at Dolgellau and off to pick up the lane that comes out by the youth hostel

Annual General Meeting of the TRF

Sunday 10 October 2010

The Heritage Motor Centre, Banbury Road, Gaydon, CV35 0BJ

MINUTES

(Please keep these minutes and bring them to the 2011 AGM)

1. Chairman's introduction and report

2010 has been a challenging year for the country and this will continue. What are the issues for Trail riders? As individuals, we have been forced into safe guarding our future, putting off buying service items, fewer members, less volunteer time. As an organisation we have punched above our weight largely due to the contractors.

The pressures show no signs of abatement. The change of government has provided us with an opportunity to work with more receptive MPs. We can go to new incumbents before their minds are turned against us. Local authorities are under increasing pressure to reduce costs and green lanes are an easy target to reduce costs. There is an increase in TROs and questions over other unsurfaced routes. UCRs are on the agenda with the new minister.

We need to convince the authorities that they need to work with us. As an organisation we need resources to do this. We need to attract new members and we need to make better use of their skills and those of our existing members. We need to prioritise and target carefully.

We're a fellowship and as a member of the fellowship you have a responsibility beyond the payment of membership fees. Every member should spend a few minutes promoting the organisation to other riders. The members need to take responsibility for their actions to make sure Trail riding remains. We need to engage the membership into helping us.

2. **Apologies for absence** Harry Nicholson, Alan Kind, Keith Westley, Dave Tilbury.

3. **Notice of any other urgent business (at Chairman's discretion)** None received.

4. **Approval of minutes of AGM on 11th October 2009 - see Trail No. 376 December 2009**

Charlie Morriss asked if the editor could reprint previous minutes with the agenda.

Dave Giles proposes that the minutes be approved minutes and Charlie Morriss seconds the proposal. All are in favour.

Dave Giles pointed out that TRF directors should be elected every 2 years. Andy was reappointed 2 months ago. A third director is required but no one has yet come forward. This will be resolved under item 11.

5. Matters arising (not otherwise on the agenda)

5.1 Proxy Voting

- At this AGM, Don Oakley is the proxy voter for 3 members.
- There is 1 postal vote.
- Fred Ellison had a list of people who had asked him to be their proxy voter. There ensued a discussion among the principal officers which concluded that these proxy votes could not be allowed because they had not met the official requirements. It was agreed at the previous AGM that members had a right to a proxy vote. Tim Stephens asked the TRF principal officers for a proxy voting form in the summer of 2010. The officers designed a proxy voting form which included the proposals for the AGM. The members were notified via the web-site and direct emails to group officers. A time limit on requesting proxy forms was set which gave the secretary enough time to send out the form on official TRF paper and receive it back from the member via land mail. Of the 10 people who requested a proxy vote by the deadline, 3 appointed a proxy and 1 voted on the official TRF form.
- The principal officers agreed to remind members before the next AGM that proxy voting is available.

6. Principal and Co-opted officers' reports

6.1.1 Vice Chairman: Don Oakley

Don joined the executive to try and help the RSG push through their ideas. He has driven through

management changes. He has responded diligently to all requests from members. He has always given a considered and in-depth view. He would like to see the number of officers reduced. He believes the organisation should concentrate on its RoW activity and he believes the funds should be spent now.

6.1.2 Secretary: Polly Cody

Polly still has a full-time job with a long commute, so it may take her some time to respond to requests. All meetings have been booked and minuted.

6.1.3 RoW: Robin Hickin

This year has been quiet from a RoW perspective and we are encountering different issues. Robin summarises the year:

- We lost the fight to keep the Gorbeck Road open
- We opposed the proposed TRO around Thirlmere and the authorities have decided to drop it.
- We won the prosecution case on Stockdale Lane
- We opposed the proposed TRO around Stonehenge
- We are supporting our member who are being prosecuted for riding on Sarn Helen and, after stalling on the part of the authorities, the case is about to go to court.
- Local TRF members won the DMMO to record Walna Scar as a BOAT but we subsequently lost it when the PIN's process was challenged in the High Court.
- The fight continues in Derbyshire where the county council are trying to reject all byway claims in the Peak District.

Robin appreciates the efforts of members and the RoW contractors, notably: Tony Whitehead, Leo Crone, Steve Pighills, Rodger Davies, Rod Jackson, Mick Hibbert, Martin Keswick, Christian James, Richard Sugden, Stuart Bosworth, and Pete Hiley, members of PROWI, PDVUG, and PBUG. All these people have fought to protect DMMO claims, fought injustices of TROs, and represented the TRF and its members at public inquiries, submitted reports and evidence to committees and authorities. These people have worked hard to protect everyone's right to use the public highways on the RoW network. TRF members owe these people a debt of gratitude.

Robin is concerned about the changes in the Brecon Beacons National Park. They have added a page on their web-site for reporting illegal riding and this is linked to the Dyfed Powys police where members of the public can make a statement to the police and submit photographs - all they need to pass the case to the CPS. Robin expects that this sort of mechanism will proliferate around the country. He is concerned that members of the public may use out-of-date information to make erroneous reports.

Robin estimates that the probability of completing the definitive map in England and Wales by 2026 is nil. In his local area of Warwickshire, the authority is processing 7 DMMOs per year and the current cost of pushing a DMMO on a BOAT is £10-15,000. Robin has noticed that the public and other organisations object to the loss of amenities. Many local bodies objected to the proposed TROs around Stonehenge and the BOAT status of Walna Scar received overwhelming support from locals. The government's web-site for petitioning bad legislation, where there were about 12 threads regarding the NERC Act, is no longer open. Robin advises everyone to write to their MP about the issues of the DMMO process and the problems that the NERC Act has created.

Robin has also seen cases where the argument against a TRO is indefensible. The TRF needs to work with the local authorities to make routes sustainable for the future.

Robin is keen that the TRF achieve charitable status. This would allow us to apply for lottery funding which could be used for lane maintenance.

This year, Robin has run 1 workshop with 40 attendees.

On average, Robin has received 8 emails per day, replied to 4 a day, travelled and attended other meetings. Charlie Moriss proposes that this meeting thank Robin and his team for promoting the core activity of the TRF.

6.1.4 P R: Richard Simpson

Richard thanks everyone who has contributed to the good name of the TRF:

- Two groups organised disabled days
- The Cambridge group videoed capturing a horse and returning to its owner. The video was posted on a

horse web-site which prompted good comments from the members.

Richard has been active with countryside organisations and motorcycles organisations. Richard's response to the Roy Hattersley Observer article was published on the Observer's web-site. Richard also took part in a balanced debate on Warwickshire radio.

Richard is active on both the TRF's and TBM's web-site forums. After the significant investment the TRF made in its web-site, he is disappointed at the number of TRF members who use it. Richard uses the forums when he wants to appeal to a large number of trail riders. He says the forums are a useful source of user evidence and he cites the support Richard Sugden achieves on the internet. When a proposed TRO is posted, we have 28 days to lodge objections. Social media and networking internet sites are the fastest and most effective way of raising support. Richard offered to help anyone who can't use the web-site.

Richard would be delighted to continue as PR Officer.

6.1.5 Bulletin Editor: Fred Ellison

Fred thanks everyone who has contributed to trail this year. The number of articles and photographs from members has been up and advertising revenues are up by 50%. Steve Taylor believes that we should satisfy all members by making postal copy available in addition to electronic copy.

Dave Giles proposes a vote of thanks to Fred.

6.1.6 Membership Secretary: Debbie Hutchinson

Debbie says that the membership level is steady. On average, she processes 25 members per week after the bulk renewal at year end. All renewals are sent out by post, but only 60% are returned by post the rest are either renewed online or don't renew. People don't renew for a variety of reasons including: job loss, accidents, cliquey groups and expectation of service level. The churn for 2009 was less than 2008. Some groups chase members to renew with South London & Surrey and Oxfordshire being the most successful. Historically, 30% churn is normal, but we should endeavour to reduce it.

The groups are missing out by not completing their group return form. At the last executive meeting, the groups were asked if they wanted a RoW blue book. Debbie contacted all the groups who had submitted a group return form: 2 had already bought one, 4 wanted one and the rest didn't respond.

Currently, the electronic PDF version of Trail saves £15 postage per month. Graham Till finds it difficult to locate the PDF of Trail so Andy will ask Adrian to put it on front page.

Debbie is happy to continue in the role of membership secretary.

6.1.7 IT: Simon Bingham

Simon offers his apologies for being tied up with work. However, the shop payment system is working and direct debit is available for subscriptions.

Simon believes that the TRF web-site and email are vital to the communication within the organisation. The TRF officers would like to get more information out to members. We have email addresses for the majority of members but the members must keep the membership secretary up-to-date with their latest email address.

A number of moderators have volunteered to police the TRF forum. However, it is a common problem that people write and post without consideration. It was agreed that a simple banner would indicate if a thread was public or TRF only. This will not get around the problem that we cannot know where people's sympathies lie when they join.

Simon is happy to continue as IT officer.

6.2.1 LARA: Dave Giles

Dave's report is available on the web. He has attended all the executive meetings in 2010. Dave says that LARA has difficulty raising funds and that the motoring organisations are fragmented. The TRF needs LARA to give us the legal situation on UCRs. Dave says that since we are governed by the same laws as other motorised users, a breadth of membership within LARA would be an advantage. Currently, LARA is perceived as having a certain amount of independence and local authorities consult it on RoW issues, whereas the TRF is not a statutory consultee. Although the ACU is a statutory consultee, they often fail to pass on any information to other interested parties. LARA is also monitoring: tranquillity mapping, PINS procedures and failures to follow protocols with respect to RoW.

6.2.2 BMF: Dave Giles

The BMF AGM took place yesterday, 9 October. In recent years, their membership has declined and thus

their income. Dave believes that their management team have grasped the problem and he believes they can turn the organisation around. The BMF is a motorcycle rights organisation and the TRF affiliate to them so that we gain access to the UK government and the European government. The BMF have sold their offices and taken business advice. Their core business is to pursue, protect and promote the rights of motorcyclists. They recognise that their volunteers are a core asset and that they must do more to involve them. They are implementing management techniques to achieve this.

John Gardner was also at the BMF AGM. There are 11000 individual BMF members and all TRF members are also affiliate BMF members. The Help for Heroes ride last year attracted 15000 bikes, so this year they would like to organise local rides. The next ride will be mothering Sunday 2011, where supporters will ride from a local meeting place to a local service depot e.g. an RAF base. John will be writing to Polly, to ask if the TRF would like to marshal the event.

6.2.3 Equestrian Liaison: Mark Holland

The BHS has raised the issue of national horse riding trails at ministerial level. Robin is concerned that the horse organisations may submit DMMO claims and this could result in misleading information on the Ordnance Survey maps. He notes that there are long distance bridle ways signed in Wales which in fact include vehicular routes. Jacquie Germain of the Gloucester group has not seen or heard anything among the horse riding community supporting the submission of DMMOs. Caroline Munby of the Dorset group is invited to the BHS meeting on Monday and will report back to Robin. Peter Hiley notes that in South Yorkshire the main opposition to vehicular use of the RoW network is Dr Karen Hinckley who is a horse rider.

Action: Mark Holland and another officer to meet BHS.

6.2.4 CCPR: Dave Tilbury

(Available on the TRF web-site)

The CCPR is another conduit into government and they take their members views forward on a neutral basis. The CCPR has a web-site, www.ccpr.org.uk, and this has a campaigns section. Under the September Policy Update there is a section on the Regulatory Burden Review which has a link to a Survey Monkey where TRF members can add their comments.

6.2.5 BBT: Dave Tilbury

The BBT continue to do excellent working promoting the appropriate use of Green Lanes. The TRF changed to accept electronic delivery of their magazine earlier this year. We only pay for 15 subscriptions, so we can't publish this on the TRF web-site. Any TRF member can pay for their own subscription to BBT which is about £15 per year and very worthwhile.

Andy thanks all the principal and co-opted officers.

7. Project Reports

7.1 Contractor's reports

The TRF negotiated with Alan Kind to work for us with respect to legal advice. Don Oakley would like the advice restricted to RoW matters and he thinks that we should not approach Alan on other legal matters.

7.2 Southern Contractor: Dave Tilbury

Dave has 3 main issues in addition to ongoing work. Dave is working on the material for a public inquiry and following the correspondence between the landowners and the highway authority to ensure that the RoW evidence is treated fairly. He is also opposing a DMMO made by a parish which downgrades a BOAT to footpath. He is opposing a DMMO from a local authority where they need to divert a restricted byway onto an unclassified road, however the local authority are trying to down grade that section of the unclassified road as a consequence. The East Meon project continues with good support from the TRF and voluntary labour.

7.3 East: Richard Sugden

Richard has been helping out in Derbyshire and is happy to continue.

7.4 North: Vacant

Since no one has responded to the request to cover the north, Robin has asked Alan Kind when he cannot deal with an issue himself.

7.5 West: Tim Stevens

Tim did not attend the meeting and he did not submit a report.

Andy thanks the contractors for their excellent efforts.

8. End of Year report (Arnold Brewer)

8.1 Accounts 2010

BA Consultants are sub-contracted to manage the TRF accounts. We have some assets including stock for the shop. We are owed income from advertisers and overpayment of corporation tax. Our net assets are slightly increased on the previous year. Subscriptions and donations have been maintained despite the difficult economic situation. Management accounts are available at the executive meetings.

Arnold Brewer asks if there is any correlation between a stand at the Dirt Bike Show and membership subscriptions. This year we have decided to take a bigger stand. In previous years, the show has broken even, but Arnold expects it will not be the case this year. In previous years, the stand at the BMF show has brought in few members, but it is seen as a PR opportunity as opposed to a membership drive. Charlie Morriss believes that shows are good publicity for the TRF regardless of the take up of membership. Don Oakley has also found the feedback from the DBS attendees very useful.

The RoW contractor expenditure has reduced significantly since the death of Brian Thompson. Arnold notes we are beginning to eat into the fund for legal fees. Members often send in modest donations throughout the year and these are gratefully received. Andy believes we should mount a campaign to top up the fighting fund.

Charlie Morriss asks if the TRF can afford a challenge to the Winchester Case in the High Court. Robin says you need £10,000 to start the action then £50,000. To raise the action to the Supreme Court we would need to start with £250,000. We would need to prove that these funds are available before starting any action to cover the possibility that the costs are awarded against us.

Robin Hickin proposes that these accounts are a true representation

Don Oakley seconds

The vote: all in favour.

8.2 A budget for 2011

Arnold presented 2 budgets: 1 based on past history the other based on proposed changes to the organisation. Don would like Arnold to continue to present monthly accounts because they have proved useful in managing the organisation through the year.

8.3 Membership Fees 2011

Based on his budget, Arnold recommends maintaining the current membership fee at £40. Charlie Morriss recommended 10 years ago that we would have to raise subscription fees to £50 and he is surprised that we have achieved so much without raising the fees. Increasing membership fees was considered earlier in the year and it was concluded that the membership would expect justification for raising them before cutting some costs. Mark Holland proposes increasing membership fees to £44. No one would second this proposal.

Arnold recommends maintaining the current membership fees. The recommendation is seconded by Robin Hickin.

The vote: 1 abstention, the rest in favour.

9. Matters Duly Submitted for Consideration not amending the Memorandum of Incorporation or Articles of Association.

Andy reminded the attendees of the TRF Standing orders.

9.1 Proposal that the TRF adopt the principal for Trust status application with the charities commission

The application has been lodged but the charities commission has asked for exhaustive proof that we adhere to our objectives. The CC said that the TRF is a RoW organisation so the application should be made on that basis. So rather than note everything we do including riders rights, we concentrate on the public benefit in RoW.

This proposal is made by Andy Gerrard and it is seconded by Robin Hickin.

As a charitable trust, the TRF would take 2 steps forward. Firstly, we change the public perceptions of the TRF from smelly motorcyclists to protectors of the nations green roads. Secondly, the TRF would gain access

to lottery grants and other charity funds. Andy hopes to achieve charitable status with-in 6 months. The TRF members will be members of the TRF charitable trust and we will be able to claim tax relief on fees and donations. Don Oakley notes that all members have had the last year to get involved with the TRF attaining charitable trust status and they the members should allow the principal officers to get on with it. When the application for charitable trust status is made, the TRF will need to state who their trustees are going to be. The appeal for voluntary trustees will go out via the executive. In applying for trust status, the objectives need to be loose, the aims need to be more specific, and then the benefits need to be tangible things which the organisation can provide. Andy informed the meeting that the Tread Lightly application had to be submitted 6 times to the charities commission advisor before it was officially submitted to the charity commission. Once the charity has been created, it can be left without moving the TRF organisation across to it until the members are happy with the management structure. Charlie Morriss reminds the members that they can call an EGM if they don't like the progress of the application for charity status.

Charlie Morriss proposes that the proposal be amended to

"Proposal that the TRF adopt the principles for Trust status application with the charities commission."

Vote on the amendment to the proposal: 1 against, 0 abstentions, carried

Vote on the proposal: 4 against, 0 abstentions, carried (1 postal, 3 proxy)

9.2 Proposal that the role of all co-opted offices cease and to be reconsidered by the principle officers at the next executive meeting

Proposed by: Don Oakley

Seconded by: Simon Bingham

Polly reminded the meeting of the current construction of the "executive": principal officers, co-opted officers and group representatives. All principal officers were present but only 4 of the 11 co-opted officers. Don thinks that there are too many principal officers (9) and too many co-opted officers. Currently, the decision making body is too wide and that hampers progress. Since Alan Kind and Tim Stevens are involved in LARA and the TRF, we don't need a LARA co-opted officer. Don says that the equestrian function is covered at a local level; therefore we don't need a co-opted officer either. Don thinks that only elected executive officers should run the organisation. If there are any gaps in the organisation between this AGM and the following executive meeting then the principal officers can agree that a co-opted officer remain in post until that time. In financial terms, there would be a reduction in honoraria.

There are a number of co-opted officers and he believes that are too many. Alan Kind and Tim Stevens work for LARA, so he believes we don't need an officer. The Equestrian officer is not required because it's covered on a local level. Some other officers are disruptive and they should cease. Andy said that after consideration the roles would be rewarded more appropriately. Robin says that the principal officers are elected and should be trusted to manage the organisation.

Mark Holland is concerned that the TRF may miss section 118 notifications no one monitors the London Gazette. A cynic might say the co-opted officers are being cut so that honoraria given to principal officers can be increased. Chris Hurworth is concerned cutting down on people will lead to less in achievement. He says that having a role and a name against it in Trail gives the public a place to direct their enquiries. Dave Giles believes the management of the TRF is too big for the principal officers. Dave Giles makes a return to the treasurer every month with respect to the RoW issues he covers in the east. In addition, last year he spent 381 hours on the BMF and LARA voluntary roles. Alan Kind and Dave Tilbury employees of LARA and thus would have a conflict of interest if representing the TRF.

Amendments:

Charlie Morriss proposes: That the roles of all co-opted officers be reconsidered at the next executive meeting. Proposal seconded by Jacky Germaine.

1 against, 0 abstentions, carried

Proposal: That the roles of all co-opted officers be reconsidered by the principal officers at the next executive meeting.

3 abstentions, 0 against, carried

9.3 Proposal that between the TRF AGM in October and the commencement of the following year in January that the elected executive committee formulate an objective 'Forward Plan' for the TRF with particularly relevance for Rights of Way matters.

Proposed: David L. Giles

Seconded: Charlie Morriss

Dave Giles believes that the executive should have a forward plan. For several years, the TRF published a strategy and it would direct where the organisation goes for the following year. Charlie Morriss believes that there was a lack of focus on the core objective of rights on legal RoW.

Andy told the meeting that the LARA forward plan formed a useful focus for that organisation. Andy is support of a formal plan because currently our plan is disparate and things get missed. Andy has an issue with who collates the forward plan and who maintains it. He believes the executive officers should agree the forward plan.

Dave Giles concludes that he is not against a small group of members coming up with good ideas but he wants to be sure that the whole membership agrees to it. Caroline Munby points out that the principal officers are elected so they can be voted out at anytime.

Amendment:

Charlie Morriss proposes: That the executive formulate an objective "Forward Plan"

0 against, 2 abstentions, carried

Vote on proposal

Abstentions 1, against 0, carried

10. Proposals to amend the Memorandum & Articles of Association

10.1 Propose that the TRF put in place a new management structure within TRF Ltd making a change to the titles and number of Executive Officers with immediate effect. (Amending article 2.2 of MOA of TRF to have 5 Principal Officers)

Proposed: Andy Gerrard

Seconded: Robin Hickin

Andy Gerrard states that this proposal comes about as an interim move towards charitable status.

Robin says that the principal officers will be helped by the group representatives who would continue to act as a conduit between the members and the executive in attending quarterly meetings. The principal officers would continue to be voted in at the AGM. In political terms, the government of the day takes advice then does what it thinks is in the best interests of the country. This works similarly in limited companies.

Don says this is a key change and it recognises that officers need to be adequately rewarded. Don states that officers should perform and that they should be available. He believes the membership secretary does an exceptional job for little reward. Don states that this is a structure for managing the organisation and there is an allowance for sub-contracting tasks. If the charitable application is successful, there will be a further 5 trustees safeguarding the interests of the organisation. Don considers that the organisation needs direction and must be accountable. Simon Bingham believes that the TRF management need funds available for employing people to do the work.

Although the proposed level of remuneration was seen as adequate, there were concerns that members who took on these roles could give adequate commitment for the money. The roles are on a self-employed basis and anyone taking on a role must be a TRF member and a director of the TRF.

There were concerns that making the organisation more professional would discourage the volunteers and would lead to a loss of good will as happened when motor racing changed from volunteer marshals to paid marshals. CAMRA, who pay professionals to run their organisation and have a vast local volunteer force, have gone from strength to strength over the last 20 years.

There were concerns about the estimated costs of Trail magazine and losing contact with members if Trail was no longer produced. Postage accounts for £12000 of the costs. Many members were in favour of the electronic version and it was suggested that the TRF charge extra for paper copies.

It is anticipated that the cost of legal services supporting our right to use the RoW network would go up in the future. It was generally agreed that the organisation should pay for these from the fighting fund and account for them separately from the RoW contractors' costs.

Amendment: MOA should be M&A

3 abstentions, 0 against, carried

Vote: 8 against, 5 abstentions, 24 in favour, motion carried

10.2, 10.3, and 10.4 are withdrawn on the success of 10.1

11. Election of Principal Officers

Prior to the meeting, no one has come forward to stand for a role. As a consequence of 10.1, the principal officers going forward will be:

11.1 Managing Director/Chairman

Arnold Brewer is currently the Managing director of TRF Ltd. Andy Gerrard is another TRF director. Andy Gerrard is happy to continue in the role of managing director. John Gardner proposes Andy Gerrard. Charlie Morriss seconds the proposal. Vote: all in favour

11.2 Technical Director/RoW

In other organisations the technical director also reviews any changes to the governing documentation. Robin would be happy to take on the role. Don Oakley proposes Robin Hickin. Charlie Morriss seconds the proposal. Vote: all in favour

11.3 Membership Director

It would be their responsibility to look at every aspect of membership: increasing membership, improving membership, and liaising with the groups. Debbie would be happy to take on the role. However, Richard Simpson points out that anyone who takes on a director role cannot take on a contracted role. Andy asked if anyone objects to Debbie continuing to do the sub-contracted role of membership administrator and no one did. Charlie Morriss proposes Debbie Hutchinson. John Gardner seconds the proposal. Vote: all in favour

11.4 Financial Director

Arnold Brewer is currently Financial Director of the TRF and his wife's company is subcontracted to do the day-to-day accountancy function. Arnold is employed by his wife's company to do the TRF work. This role requires someone with experience of being a financial director. John Gardner was treasurer for 5 years before Arnold; has the required experience and has retired from his full-time job. Don Oakley proposes John Gardner. Andy Gerrard seconds the proposal. Vote: 1 against, 0 abstentions, vote carried. Arnold Brewer remains a director of TRF Ltd.

11.5 Communications and Marketing Director

Simon Bingham and Jack Knight both expressed an interest in the role. Charlie Morriss proposes Jack Knight. Debbie Hutchinson seconds the proposal. Vote: all in favour.

11.6 Outgoing principal officers

Robin Hickin proposes a vote of thanks for the officers who have held their posts and performed admirably for a number of years: notably Fred Ellison, Simon Bingham and Polly Cody. Andy Gerrard proposes that the out going officers, Simon Bingham and Polly Cody, are award honorary membership. Fred is already a life member. Robin Hickin seconds the proposals. Vote: 1 against, carried.

12. Meeting Dates 2011

23rd January, 10th April, 17th July, AGM 9th October

13. AOB (At Chairman's discretion)

Andy thanks everyone for their efforts.

Weekend

along side Cadair Idris. From there it was down to the toll crossing/railway bridge - always a good place for a photo opportunity. Then on into Barmouth.

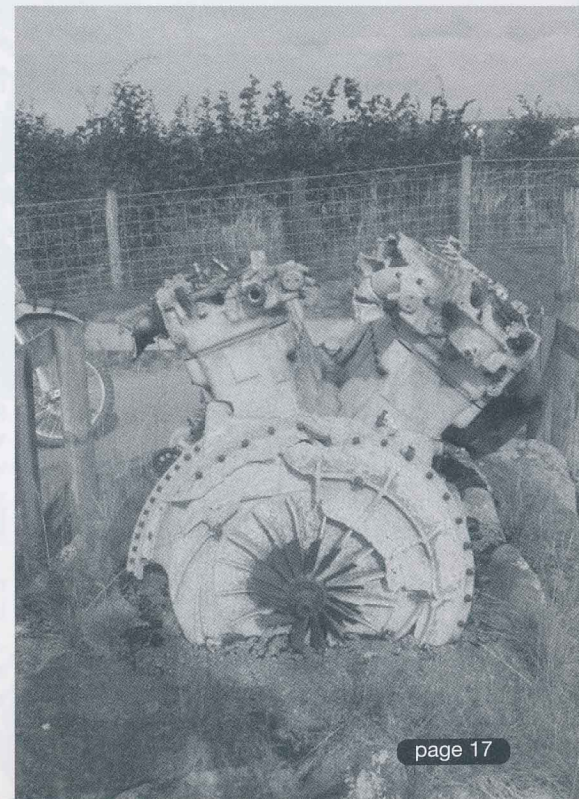
The lanes near Barmouth are brilliant - they climb steeply, quickly and on a clear day give the best views you could ever wish to see. By now the requests for food and drink were increasing - so time to wind up for the day and fill up the bikes ready for tomorrow's ride back.

After getting cleaned up at the digs we went for dinner plus 1 or 2 pints at the Victoria pub in Llanbedr. The weather was still so warm that we were able to enjoy this in the lovely beer garden of the pub, along with banter and "trail rider's tales" of the day.

The next morning (after going back to the digs for a forgotten wallet) we set off north up the coast to pick up a trail that started by a small chapel overlooking the Bay with Porthmadog in the distance. I was shown these lanes some years ago by a top man from Machynlleth - Hello Rafe if you are reading.

We pressed on to Coed y Bryein forest, where Paul got a puncture in his front tyre, but as luck would have it very close to a Café. So for us it was lots of tea drinking and watching him fix it. On our return journey we rode back through Bala to the

point where we had seen the orange markers the day before. This turned out to be a Wirral off road event. I was sure there would be a snack van there that would be just the job for a bite to eat and another brew. Here I bumped into an old mate, George, who does running repairs to bikes and tyre sales at these events.



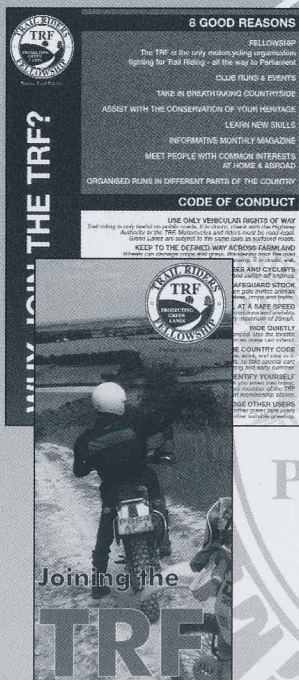
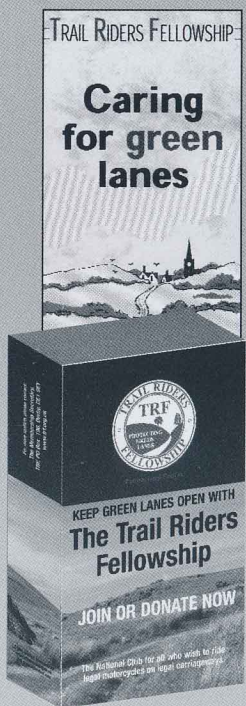
After a good catch up we said our goodbyes and we set off back along the Wayfarer. A quick time check revealed enough time to fit in a couple more bonus lanes before heading back towards Oswestry. After fuelling up and pumping up the tyres we began the ride back to Stoke.

Another mint weekend and just under 400 miles of fun - can't wait for the next big trip out - watch out Cornwall!

Dave Harding



TRF LEAFLETS & DISPENSERS



available from
Debbie Hutchinson,
 Membership Secretary

Letterheads & Compliment Slips
 for all external correspondence
 available to all Group Officers
 from Fred Ellison,
 Editor, 01254 823893,
 editor@trf.org.uk
 (Membership number required)

PROTECTING
 GREEN
 LANES



pennineprospects

working in and for the south pennines

Light Twite Pale Ale

IDEAL Christmas presents offer real ale enthusiasts the opportunity to help save an endangered small ground-nesting bird of the South Pennines.

Pennine Prospects, working in partnership with the RSPB, has been instrumental in a number of initiatives through the Watershed Landscape project to help the struggling Twite, which in England now only breeds in the South Pennines and whose population had dropped by over 90 per cent in the past 14 years.

Now the Little Valley Brewery has joined the fight to save the Twite, locally known as the Pennine Finch, with the introduction of the Light Twite, an organic bottle conditioned pale ale, which is only available from Hebden Bridge Visitor and Canal Centre.

"This is a bottle conditioned beer which continues to mature in the bottle using a traditional method of brewing that has been recognised by the campaign for real ale (CAMRA) as real ale in a bottle," explained Sue, who started the Little Valley Brewery with Wim van der Spek in 2005. Since then the brewery has gained widespread recognition. Charlotte Weightman, RSPB Twite Recovery Project, said this project has an added synergy.

"There is a special connection between the Little Valley Brewery and the Twite as, not only are they both in the South Pennines, but they also both use the same water. The brewery gets its water from Withens Clough Reservoir, which is in the very heart of Twite country."

The creation of the Light Twite Pale Ale, with a label designed by Hebden Bridge-based Watershed Landscape artist in residence, Angie Rogers, will help lift the profile of the Twite Recovery Project and with Christmas just

round the corner offers the perfect gift for real ale enthusiasts.

The Twite Recovery Project is supported by the Watershed Landscape Project with funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund and managed by Pennine Prospects, in partnership with the RSPB and Natural England, with support from Kirklees Council and South Pennines LEADER. A number of initiatives are being implemented to help protect the seed-eating Twite, from the restoration of hay meadows close to the moorland edge to the monitoring of bird numbers by volunteers, the introduction of new fire-fighting equipment to help prevent moorland fires which can devastate nesting sites and the introduction of wider educational programmes in local schools.

For further information please contact: For the Watershed Landscape Project Robin Gray at robin.gray@pennineprospects.co.uk or the Pennine Prospects main office on 01422 847612

For the Twite Recovery Project: Charlotte Weightman at Charlotte.Weightman@rspb.org.uk; For Little Valley Brewery Sue Cooper at sue@littlevalleybrewery.co.uk;





SALISBURY PLAIN

Living in the south of England is claustrophobic in the extreme. England is the 3rd most densely populated country in the world (395 people/km²) in the south east the density is 419 people per km². Our lives are driven by roads. In Reading I live in the "M4 corridor" and one could also live "within the M25", pick the wrong time of day and it will take you over an hour to travel 10 miles. Getting away from it all is a concept that involves flights to far away places or at least a couple of hundred miles from the south east if you are talking about the UK. 'Hell is other people', as Jean-Paul Sartre would say.

However, all is not lost. Deep within Wiltshire there is an area of wilderness that still today resembles a time before humans blighted England. Rolling landscape where you have almost a hemisphere of sky and views north, south, east and west without seeing a house or person between you and the horizon. Yes, I'm talking about Salisbury Plain. It covers 300 square miles - that's pretty big, about the size of the Isle of Wight or half the size of Greater London. Loosely it is defined by the Vale of Pewsey to the north, the river Bourne to the

east, the river Wylye to the south west and the Bristol Avon to the north west. To the south the plain peters out as the river valleys close together before meeting at Salisbury.

Although Salisbury Plain is synonymous with Stonehenge, in reality, that fantastic tourist attraction is in fact only one of a warren of ancient activity in the area dating back 10,000 years to stone age man. Iron age hill forts, barrows, causewayed enclosures and other henges abound. Of course that is now the reason as to why the plain is not home to 100,000's of people, because it is now home to the army instead! It is a place unlike any other in England, where you can actually ride all day off tarmac and get confused by the number of byways and tracks that you are actually allowed to ride on....that is of course as long as the red flag is not flying in which case keep out! Enter under a red flag and jail, bike crushing and the afterlife beckon. The good news is that the army are as skint as the rest of us and can't be bothered to work on the weekend, so Saturdays and Sundays are generally available to ride aimlessly or otherwise along miles and miles of tracks

otherwise used by tanks or other war machines. Again - a warning - do not stray off the track as (a) your bike may be crushed if caught or (b) someone will have the unenviable job of scraping bits of you into a bin bag - you have been warned! The cool thing is that you do not need to stray off piste as there are literally miles and miles of tracks to explore. Now, most of them are not particularly challenging, consisting of hard packed gravel, overlying the chalk plateau that defines the place, with a bit of clay clag and a few rutted muddy trails on the periphery. So you don't ride the area for technical challenges, more to enjoy a bit of wide-open scenery and to ride without worrying about the nutter in a Beemer behind you as you ride.

So, living in Reading, it's about an hour's drive to Burbage to park and ride for the day at the excellent café on the A338 south towards Amesbury, right in the north east extremity of the plain. We have been lucky to have been lead previously around by Andy from Somerset TRF, who stripped of lanes to ride since the spiteful NERC act took away RUPPs, now travels across the Somerset Levels to regularly ride his Tenere 650 on the plain. Several of the Loddon Vale group have also been out on rides on big trailies and charity outings. Previously I've also been out in an old Land Rover Discovery with Hants and Berks LR Owners Club, nice blokes, with an eye on not wrecking lanes for the rest of us. So not being completely unfamiliar with the area I was keen to lead a ride. Interestingly, I have noticed that there is a bit of reticence with leading a ride in the area owing to concerns regarding the rights of way and potential for being blown up or shot.... I've been on rides across from Basingstoke way and we reached Burbage and looked across the road to the 'military area' signs which may well have said 'here be dragons' as we turned around and rode home chased by the knowledge of possible beasts lurking the other side of the road, even if they are ungainly practically flightless great bastards.....

So, early November, an unseasonably warm

autumn, in the 11th warmest year on record and we assembled on Remembrance Sunday in Burbage car park at 9am sharp. Rather than dragging ourselves down the M4, we trailed my DR350 and Mac's XL650L down on my newly acquired trailer bought from fellow LV TRF member Eddie on the back of my Discovery only to have Mac tell me my bike keys were not in the cubby box..... being marginally paranoid about such things I went into melt down and was trying to mind map the wiring diagram of a 13 year old Suzuki based on a 10 second glimpse of a workshop manual when Mac 'hilariously' found the keys in his pocket! Well after a number of Anglo-Saxon rather than Iron Age expletives we unloaded the bikes which took approximately 1 hour less than loading them in the dark for the first time the night before... 'learning all the time' as Benny Hill would say. Simon (Honda XL 200ish), Alan Millyard (famous constructor of 5 cylinder 2 stoke Kwackers and Dodge Viper engined bikes) on a beautiful twinshock Honda XL175 and Pete (Gasgas 450) turned up hard core style on their bikes from west of Reading. Unusually and refreshingly all but one bike was air cooled - why need anything else for trail riding eh?

Simple, effective, Steve McQueen cool - in my head if nothing else!

So what was the plan? The problem as you may call it was either blat endlessly around local trails never venturing onto tarmac covering as many byways as possible or travel to a destination and back? Well I was driven by 2 drivers, Mac, professional adventureeer demanded lunch atop a mountain and my desire for a bit of looped circuit, so using a combination of Anquet maps and Map Source to download my usual bumbling route the idea was to travel to White Sheet Hill. OK, so not exactly tooling round Salisbury Plain, but more of a traverse 50 miles south then west to a byway I've seen many times in the past off the A303 ending in a very interesting looking escarpment at the source of the river Wylye, a tributary of the Hampshire Avon. This ticked Mac's box regarding lunch on a hill and my desire to loop around the plain, even if we had to back-track lanes there and back from Heytesbury.

We kicked off about 9.30am, travelling south along the A338 and turning right into a byway almost immediately up and over Crowdown Clump, past ancient earthworks travelling towards Everleigh. Climbing the gentle trail up to Everleigh gives a taste of the only real challenging conditions you are likely to face on the plain, that is slimy clay which can cause momentary loss of control leading to front end washouts. We all slithered our way up the ruts and onto Weather Hill and the "Old Marlborough Road" an old Roman road linking Sarum, (now Salisbury) to the Cotswolds, passing Sidbury Hill one of the ancient hill forts. After 5 miles or so of hard packed gravel we arrived in Bulford and turned west across the Avon and a byway around Larkhill. We could have travelled a bit further south and seen Stonehenge, with another contentious issue raging regarding TRO'ing the byways passing the ancient monument, never mind the A303.... Don't get me started.... Travelling west we passed Robin Hood's Ball, which refers neither to sport, dancing nor anatomy, but is in fact another bit

of history, even older than Stonehenge. Although never comprehensively excavated and its use is unclear, the ditches and banks will not have been much use for defence, but may have helped keep animals out. The site was constructed at a time of transition from hunter-gatherer to permanent settlement during the Neolithic revolution.

Passing the Bustard Inn we rode a byway parallel to the road before turning off down towards Orcheston and along another 4 mile byway, starting off a bit muddy then climbing up onto rolling down land above Chitterne. With yet more wide open vista, it was just possible to imagine days before Tesco, stone age man chasing bison, mammoths, lion, hyena and woolly rhinoceros with axes; the evidence for which lies just under the surface of the soil. We broke for a drink and to observe the Remembrance Day 2 minute silence, with just a faint zephyr of wind and a few skylarks to break the tranquillity. Here in the heart of a military dominated area, where many of our soldiers have trained and given their lives in service to our country, seemed the most appropriate of places to spare a few thoughts.

Climbing back on the bike, and the predominant sound of air cooled four strokes breaking the tranquillity we set off again and jinked south into Chitterne. Along this lane is the only real damage I've seen by 4x4s, with a fold in the hills capturing moisture and with clay overlying the chalk the bottom of the depression has been turned into a mud bath, looking like capable of swallowing bikes whole. I've previously seen all varieties of morons creating havoc, and although dutifully reporting them, they do not appear to have been dissuaded as yet. Riding up the hill from the mud pit was particularly slippery and tyres were filled with gloop, the bikes dripping water onto the slippery clay surface, so although things got all a bit squirrely no one came off.

Now on the western edge of the plain we had a bit more road work to do to pick up a lovely byway down into Codford St Peter, through

woods and dropping off a bit of a ridge. Here we said goodbye to Alan on his gorgeous twinshock XL175 as he had to get home for lunch and we forged on across the Wylye to another pleasant 2 mile or so lane from Tytherington to the A350. Unfortunately here again we experienced illegal use of the byway by locals on pit bikes and vans, treating the lane like a mini motocross circuit. I always notice when I see this kind of behaviour, that there are always walkers using the byway and it leads to us all being tarred with the same brush, which is most annoying. From the A350 we dropped down to the insanely busy A303 and got fuel and sarnies before turning off right and onto the 3 mile byway leading onto White Sheet Hill. It is a beautiful area, popular with cyclists, walkers, horse riders, bikers and 4x4 drivers, all of which we met as we trundled along. After a friendly chat to some horse riders we broke for lunch at 246m, our highest altitude of the day. On a clear day you can see South Cadbury Hill and Glastonbury Tor in the distance to the west, but today, things were a bit hazy so we were left with ethereal views down into the vale towards Stourhead and beyond. There were a few large dips filled with water along the lane, which always fills me with trepidation, not knowing what one may come across, trying to guess if there is a rut underneath, or a large rock to throw you off in a rather hilarious way (for onlookers anyway). Although deep, they were clean bottomed and we came through unscathed and got to eat our lunch dry and warm, overlooking the barrows and iron age fort - yes the area is riddled with them!

This was as far west as we were going to travel, and owing to the relatively low density of byways, we back tracked the same route back passing, Kingston Deverill, Monkton Deverill, Brixton Deverill, Hill Deverill and Longbridge Deverill, which string out along the river Wylye.... The limited variety of place names probably reflecting a similar restriction in genetic make up... Back in Upton Lovell we had returned to the edge of the plain so were blessed with a variety of byways from which to



choose once more so rode a different route back to Chitterne and travelling north and east, up around an army training area with an empty village closed off for house-to-house combat practice I guess. From Tilshead we skirted the Westdown Artillery Range with easy tracks and lots of warnings about being blown up if straying from the track. For the next 10 miles or so we never left the track, riding north towards Market Lavington, then east. This is where you need to check for red flags as the evidence of army use is obvious, riding past blasted tanks, used as targets. The ride along the top of the plain, overlooking the Vale of Pewsey and the white horse is stunning. The riding is easy, you can drive a car along it if you like, but the view is worth the travel. There is a well used track just inside

the warning signs, where we saw 4x4s and a few bikes hooning along. Don't ride on it, it's illegal and dangerous. There are a number of byways leading off north down over the escarpment, which vary from broken tarmac to very cut up clayey ruts. We chose to ride right to the end and dropped into East Chisenbury. I wanted to ride past the bustard pens, big, turkey-like birds, and apparently the heaviest flying animal in the world, but I missed the turning.

As time was getting on, from Upavon, rather than putting another few miles of byways in,

we rode back to Everleigh and up a different track to Burbage. Pete and Simon took off back towards Reading and Mac and I, now a well honed team, lashed the bikes on the trailer in half the time it took the evening before. All in all, an excellent day, lovely weather, 100 miles or so, with around 60+ miles off the tarmac. No crashes, no breakage, just a chilled out ride away from it all. It is well worth the trip to experience a little bit of wilderness in very busy and chaotic southern England.

Sean Comber LVTRF.

Dreams of Dakar

continued

17th June this was the only part of the journey I considered potentially dangerous. The road between Nouadhibou and the capital, Nouakchott is 500km and although there are 4 petrol stations they do not always have petrol. A motorcyclist some 3 months prior had chanced it and spent 3 days camped at the last station out of juice trying to beg a lift into the capital for him and the bike. So we filled up all the cans we had brought with us for this stretch, which we calculated gave us both a range of about 600km. Rebels and local bandits operate on this stretch of road mainly at dusk /night. A number of robberies and kidnappings had occurred, the last some 4 weeks previously on a convoy of Spanish aid workers, 3 taken hostage (1 shot in the leg while trying to escape), so the road was best done in a day in daylight. We left early and followed the trusty West Africa lonely planet guide which instructed travellers on this route

not to discuss journey route and departure details with any curious locals. Progress was slow, the army and police were out in force on numerous check points. The first 3 petrol stations were

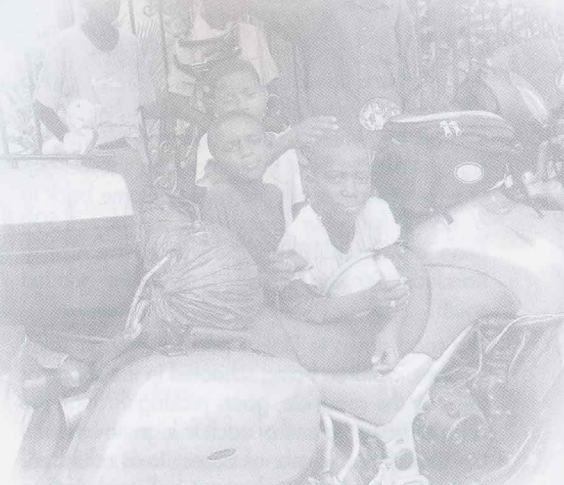
- 1 derv only
- 2 deserted
- 3 completely dry

By 380km all the jerry cans were empty and we had fuel for about 180km each so the 4th station was not absolutely necessary. Never the less when found open and with petrol we filled up. Our entry into the capital was briefly stopped by a herd of camel on the road (I think the local market was in full swing). Out with the trusty guide we headed for a hotel with aircon about the same price range as Dakhla, but once found the polite receptionist offered a room for nearly double the price. Politely declining his

offer of breakfast thrown in we found HOTEL Amman which offered aircon a passable restaurant and secure parking in the hotel foyer. Lugged the baggage up to the room along with 4 quite expensive bottles of Fanta, but what a treat, ice cold orange fizziness washing away the day's desert dust from our throats. That night we ate our meal to the back drop of the World Cup on the TV in the corner surrounded by 4 French and a number of Polish workers.

18th June Left Nouakchott for the border with Senegal at Rosso, notorious for thieves and corrupt officials (about the same thing). The border at Rosso had a reputation so poor I wanted to try the crossing at Diama barrage. The track starts in Rosso but is not sign posted so when the petrol pump attendant offered to show us the way I thought we were onto a winner. However when a merc turned up with 5 shaven headed heavies squeezed in and then dropped down a bank towards a small dust track between 2 houses alarm bells rang and we headed for the Rosso border post. Helen's description in the diary written up that night sums the next 5 hours well "We stopped at the large green gates, they swung open and we passed into the 8th gate of hell". Shooing away the usual throng of helpers I approached the customs window, only to be taken to one side by an armed border guard and told to "use one of the helpers, hand over the passports and pay the fees". Some 5 hours later and 120 euros poorer we had managed to get across the river, enter Senegal, buy all the necessary paperwork and bribe the right officials. The gates opened into the Senegalese Rosso. It was like something from the middle ages, animals milling across the road, women selling fruit and veg from stalls and blankets on the dirt road, the local smithy shoeing a horse and children everywhere. We edged through the melee and found the tarmac road to St Louis, that nights stop.

We entered the chaos of St Louis to a setting sun, normally a spectacular sight but this was the furthest thing from my mind. Finding a safe place to stay was priority number one. A benevolent French fellow traveller at Rosso who helped us through the nightmare of customs, recommended Hotel de la Poste as a secure



nights stop in St Louis. Our trusty Lonely Planet guide had it the other side of a large river we were nearing when the BM stopped dead. No lights, starter motor, nothing. In the gathering gloom and large crowd we started to get the tools out from the bikes while trying to keep an eye on anything not locked to the bikes. A well spoken Senegalese offered to help, which duly arrived in the shape of a very oily mechanic who quickly found the loose battery lead. Bike fixed and fired up I gave the mechanic the mini ratchet he had used and the helper a fee which then had sundry men asking for money for crowd control and being a general all round good egg which I not so politely turned down. The bridge over the river was being replaced a section at a time leaving most of the structure in a state of extreme disrepair. Steel sheets for the road surface with raised joints and the occasional 10 inch hole, all of which we passed over at night without too much drama. La Poste was at the bottom of the off ramp. A room was booked, bikes locked together in the car park next to the man who guarded the vehicles all night. Over our evening meal in a small restaurant next to the hotel we discussed our increasing disenchantment with the Africa experience, finding the further south we travelled the more desperate and poor the people became and the more corrupt the regime, but still tomorrow was D (Dakar) Day.

19th June We packed and headed out of St Louis, following a taxi. We all got pulled at a local checkpoint by a little man in a uniform with a gun who informed us the speed limit on

this road was (think of a number) 25kph. Taking our driving license and passports I followed him into his hut where I asked him to show me the sign instructing us of this draconian speed limit, at which point he offered a deal. Come back in 6 hours for your documents or pay 1500 Senegal francs (£18) and be on our way. Money handed over the 2 jaded travellers headed south.

The road down to Dakar passed through small villages, children being schooled in the shade of trees by the roadside, goats picking through the rubbish tip at the end of each village, towns with the usual chaotic mix of buses, taxis, children, domestic animals and street sellers bringing traffic to a near stop, open desert scrub and police checkpoints. All in 35°C and about 90% humidity (in our jackets at least). As we neared Dakar we encountered a dual carriageway rendered useless as a means of quick passage by 2 major drawbacks

1 No rules

2 Three foot high ten foot long speed ramps,

And so it was that the last 3 miles to the city limits took 1 1/2 hours. Breaking out the Lonely Planet guide we headed for downtown Dakar and after 1/2 hour of narrow streets found Hotel Mirimar 3 star with air con. We locked the BM

to a rail of the hotel next to the guard who sat on the hotel front 24/7, unloaded the Triumph and went off in search of the heart of Dakar.

What we found was a dirty, sordid city with a nice pizza restaurant near the presidential palace.

20th June Heading north out of Dakar back to St Louis we filled up on the outskirts where Helen insulted the petrol pump attendant by asking him to fill her bike with petrol, never having had instructions from a woman because of the grossly inferior position they hold in Senegalese society. Negotiating the perils of the road to St Louis we neared the lair of the little man with uniform and gun at 25kph but to no avail. We still got pulled and told there was a problem. HELEN HAD NOT INDICATED TO PULL OVER. At this point my patience ran out. Climbing off the bike I asked Helen not to give yer man anything in the way of documentation at which point I placed my considerable bulk between her and cop. Realising we were not ready to be turned over again he sent us on our way. La Poste still had rooms to let, beggars at the door and a man sat guarding the car park.

to be continued

Graham Till

Graham died unexpectedly at home on Sunday 4th December 2011.

Graham was a longstanding TRF member and Chairman of his local group High Peak & Potteries. He was very proactive in RoW being heavily involved in Peak District Rights of Way Initiative (PROWI), and in his attempt to integrate trail riding with the wider community he was involved with Peak District Vehicle User Group (PDVUG).

Prior to taking up trail riding he competed in many aspects of motorcycle sport but had been involved with the TRF for many years.

Graham will be sorely missed. His untimely demise is a great loss to the TRF.

Our thoughts are with his wife and family.

THE FORUM

BIG BIKES

Can anyone explain the modern trend of 'BIG BIKE' ownership. I mean 400's, 525's etc. ie KTM's Bergs, Husky's, et al. Do you really need that amount of power for gentle trail riding?

OK, if you enter enduro's, but most owners don't. Is it the 'street cred' thing or what? This trend goes alongside the other issue....Full face helmets and loads of body armour!! Is our pastime really that dangerous? Is it safe for people 65yrs plus or is it pipe and slipper time!!

For myself, trail riding is enjoying the countryside via our heritage of green lanes, not head down, hell for leather, covering as many trails possible in one day.

Now, where's my Barbour jacket and flat hat?

Danny Gelder, Lancs TRF.

AGE RESTRICTION

I opened November TRAIL, issue 399, and immediately realised the answer to all our trail riding image woes – it's staring us in the face!

Age restriction!

Either by bike, let's say pre 1950 bikes get access to all lanes, or, rider age limits, riders over 60 get to ride all lanes. Either bike or rider in period dress.

I fall into neither bracket but can see it as an answer to the problems all too apparent these days with global warriors mounted on hardcore enduro machines being the regular for 'trail' rides. I seldom come across the 'potter and stop to admire the views' type trail

riders these days.

I would love a full on off-road bike but am limited to two-up riding on an old R100GS or a distinctly road oriented F650 and sometimes one up on a delightfully humble white & magenta (IT'S NOT PINK!) Serow.

Yours (tongue firmly in cheek) Fritz, North Yorks.

RESPONSE TO 'IS THIS AN EPIDEMIC?'

Having just read the article by Martin Burman I thought I'd respond with my own similar experience. There are some details/measures I've kept to myself in case of 'another visit' by thieves.

I live in Kent & had several bikes in the detached garage inc a KTM 400exc, Beta Rev3 trials & a Honda XR400 & a road bike. The KTM & Honda were road legal & in particularly good cond, the KTM being only 5 weeks old at the time & both insured.

The garage was alarmed & all bikes were chained & padlocked as we slept last Nov 2010. I'd removed the baby monitor which is normally in there, to the house as we had a baby staying that night. For the first night in months I'd also not bothered to park the car up against the locked wooden double doors of the garage. The side door was secured with 2 padlocks, bikes chained & an exterior IR CCTV camera situated nearby covering the front doors.

First we knew was at 5am when my wife woke to notice footprints in the snow, then saw tyre

marks leading from the double doors & woke me.

Turns out by watching the cctv footage, the three thieves had cut the main door padlock using bolt croppers but still finding it secured from within, went to the rear & removed the roof tiles & climbed in before disabling the alarm, cutting chains & opening the main doors. They were there for about 2 hours in all, stealing the 3 bikes, numerous helmets, jackets, tools etc which they loaded into a recently & locally stolen van. They were even seen by a neighbour who later provided a statement to police.

Police were called and, I have to say, were excellent in their response which led to the 3 being arrested later that day. However the CPS 'refused all charges' despite there being, in my opinion, enough evidence to charge at the very least with 'Handling' as my jacket & gloves were found when their dwellings were searched.

No bikes or gear were ever recovered, apart from the jacket/gloves & the van, & in all my claim amounted to around £16k inc the new garage roof required.

The roof now has steel mesh beneath the tiles, the alarm much updated, car always parked against the doors & a dedicated baby monitor fitted with the 'parent unit' in my bedroom & new heavy chains/padlocks around the bikes. The double wooden doors have been replaced with steel frame/linings so, apart from keeping a dog there, I'm at a loss what other legal measures to take.

I have little doubt that the orange KTM was seen while being washed down after use, or perhaps the local scum saw it being ridden into the driveway & 'noted' it. We now take even greater care that no bikes are seen by passers-by once on the drive.

So, in answer to Martin's question, I'd agree with him that it's apparent that someone is always on the lookout for off-road type bikes to steal. On several occasions when outside I notice youngsters & 'other types' glancing up

the drive when passing. In my opinion keep them on view for the very least possible time. I now drag a fence panel across the door front before opening the garage to stop anyone seeing inside.

Les Day

RESPONSE TO 'IS THIS AN EPIDEMIC?'

I write in response to Martin Burman's article on "Is this an Epidemic"? And, given my experience, I would conclude it is an epidemic, especially for KTMs.

My 250 exc-f was "removed" from my garage 8 weeks ago. When I started to tell local friends about it, a lot of people said "I used to have a KTM". And their story always unfolded that it had been stolen and never seen again.

I'm extremely lucky to have had my bike recovered 6wks after the event. Ok, it cost me to recover it from the recovery company as I didn't want to claim on my insurance. I live in North Wales, 55miles from Liverpool and that's where my bike was found. So I'd like to thank Merseyside and North Wales Police for their vigilance and skills and I have to say all the phone conversations and interactions with both forces were very confidence inspiring.

And yes, I've been out laning since and the bike is fine except for a few cosmetics that I could inflict in 5 minutes on the right lane. All it needed was a new number plate!

As Martin implies, these people are extremely proficient, and are clearly well trained and experienced experts in their chosen profession. In my case, they carefully removed the PIR lamp and placed it outside without damage, moved my immobilised and alarmed Aprilia Tuono and without damage or noise to anything except the hasp and staple to gain access, took my beloved 2004 orange toy which was not an easy task even for 2 or 3 people.

Granted my naiveness, like Martin's thought simple security would be fine. However,

conversations with a neighbour who runs a security company has confirmed that if they "want it", they'll get it no matter what you do. All you can do is make it harder, slower and noisier "to get it-whatever it is" so only those who really really want it are prepared to put in the effort...

I now have 2 security rated hasp and staples on my garage door, one with a high security rated padlock, the other being a cheaper but alarmed and noisy padlock. The bike is now chained to a ground anchor, plus another alarmed padlock on the rear disc, and an alarmed wire rope around the frame and back wheel. And I have a PIR activated alarm. And I have a personal attack alarm to attach to the bike at some stage.

My security company neighbour also recommended a CCTV system which at £300 to £400 is hard to justify... until it gets nicked again.

In conclusion, it's cost me around £500 to recover the bike, change oil and filter just in case, and increase security on the garage, kids bike shed and the garden. Plus a few sleepless nights. And CSI got no prints or DNA from the scene. As they say, prevention is better than cure, and hindsight is a wonderful thing.

For all those who read this, or bits of it, please learn from my hindsight and Martin's article. I now know that it would have been better to spend the money on security before the event.

But as my boss says, we don't know what we don't know.

But you do know now, so please take the precautions. Most of you have newer and higher spec bikes than me - and they are so easy to knock..

Regards and Happy Laning,

Colin Park, North Wales.

ANOTHER GREAT TRAIL RIDE

I know DISCOVER has featured the Cornwall

Trail Riders Fellowship before, and I wanted to let readers know this summer's event was just as good with about 100 people getting together for an exhilarating day at Dunmere Woods.

We rode on quad bikes, motor bikes and sports cars courtesy of Cornwall Trail Riders and Camel Vale Rally Car Club. The event was once again organised by Ross Fisher, who worked tirelessly both before and during the event and we all reckon he's a true legend.

Exciting activities such as these are normally beyond the reach of disabled people like me, especially when they have an element of risk, which adds to the excitement. It allows me to try something completely new which normally I would never even think of doing and I love racing around the woods. Doing an event such as this for two hours makes us all forget about the disabilities and health problems which we may have.

A huge thanks to all the volunteers who freely gave their time to provide the burgers, sausages and bacon baps, coffee, tea and soft drinks, all for the price of a donation, and helping to lift us on and off the various vehicles. Thank you, a great day was enjoyed by all.

Pete Skea, Bodmin.

First published in 'Discover' magazine which is published by Disability Cornwall. Forwarded by Ross Fisher.

GRAHAM TILL

I just wanted to join the myriad of others and briefly pay tribute to Graham Till who recently passed away.

I was fortunate to have known Graham and rode with him in the Peak District on several occasions. The church at his funeral was packed to the max with a few also standing outside, testimony to Graham's popularity.

He was a great guy, will be remembered for a long, long time and is missed by many.

Earl Taylor, Potteries Clan.

MEMBERS CLASSIFIEDS

GAS GAS EC 300 2010 60 reg 9 months tax. Good bike, not being used enough £3200. VAT invoice available. Tel: 07790 396877 (Staffs).

WANTED KTM REAR WHEEL in good condition. Please ring Richard on 01223 365200 or 07711 688777.

YAMAHA WR250X 2010, 944 miles, blue, handguards, bash plate, as new, garaged. £3,700 ono. Tel: 01725 510958 (Wiltshire).

1998 SEROW First UK reg 11.05. Kick & electric model 1KH in orig. cond. 20,690km. Recent choke cable & f/fork gaiters. Currently Sorned as only used for horse trials. Fitted with worn Metzeler Enduros. Garaged. Contact: Colin Patient, Berks. Tel: 01189 696783 or colin@patient-family.co.uk Offers over £950, although may take small grandchild's trials bike in px.

HONDA CRF 230F 2008 One mint non reg (spare bike) with Honda paperwork/certs on newness for Enduro reg for £1950. One vgc, light use, already V5 road reg with full new 12 mths MOT & tax & lighting kit & V5 in my name for £2395. My personal bikes sold with no faults & a full trial. Pics avail on request. Tel: 0772 1480000, mario.costasa@gmail.com

YAMAHA DT 230 LANZA Elec. start, brush guards. Taxed & tested till May 12. Sale due to retirement. £1200 ono. Tel: 01524 781369 (South Cumbria).

HONDA XR 650R 2001. T&T. 11,000km, 2 owners from new. Recent swing arm & linkage bearings. EBC oversize front brake. X-ring chain. £1800. May partx 300. Call Trevor 07951 239063 (Sunderland).

FOR SALE 2007 SHERCO 450 injection Enduro. Hand guards, heated grips, Trailtech

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speedo, indicators, recent tyres & tubes, chain & sprockets. Reg oil changes. V. reliable. New bike forces sale. MOT till June, no tax on sorn. £2200 ono. Tel: 01989 764044 Herefordshire. graham.hutton671@bt internet .com

2003 YAMAHA TTR250R 6500 miles, t&t, till Oct 2012. All MOT certs available. New tyres front enduro rear trials. V.g.c., reason for sale new GasGas Randonne ordered. Tel: Gordon on 01743 872614 or 07799 697724 (Shropshire area).

ACCOMMODATION

BRENDAN CHASE B&B Windermere village centre location so close to pubs and restaurants, from £25 per night bed and breakfast. Off street parking for bikes. Tel: 015394 45638. Email brendan.chase@aol.com, website: www.placetostay.windermere.co.uk

HOLIDAY LODGES IN MID WALES (owned by member). Ideally suited for motorcycle enthusiasts. Large site with safe, secure hard standing for bikes and trailers. Utility/boot room in all, fully equipped workshops for those essential repairs. Self catering or provision for grocery supplies and home cooked meals delivered to your door. Excellent rates for TRF members. See our website: www.radnor-revivals.co.uk or telephone 01597 840308 for a brochure and information.

LLANERCHINDDA FARM GUEST HOUSE & SELF CATERING - Llandoverly, mid Wales. Ideal base for trail riding with local guide available, map room, secure lockup, spray wash & drying room. Contact: 01550 750274 or info@cambrianway.com or www.cambrianway.com

GROUPS

AXE VALE David Clegg, Tel: 01275 373652 (Home), Mob: 0793 1220895. dcciej@talktalk.net 2nd Tues, 8pm, Windmill Inn, Nore Road, Portishead.

BLACK COUNTRY John Oseland, Tel: 01902 656011 1st Tues, 9pm, The Longford House, Watling Street, Cannock.

BRISTOL Glenn Summers, Tel: 01454 619246 4th Mon, 8pm, The Midland Spinner, Warmley, Bristol.

CAMBRIDGE Tony Lacey, Tel: 07753 820520 1st Thurs, 8.00 p.m., The White Swan, Elsworth Road, Conington, Cambridge CB23 4LN.

CORNWALL Adam Hedley, Tel: 01579 349217 3rd Thurs, 7.30 - 8.00 p.m., The Borough Arms, Bodmin.

CUMBRIA & CRAVEN Roger Harris, Tel: 01539 725198 2nd Tues, 7.30pm, The Gilpin Bridge Hotel & Inn, Bridge End, Levens, Nr. Kendal LA8 8EP (on A5074 at junction with A590).

DERBYSHIRE & SOUTH YORKSHIRE Mick Ellison, Tel: 07780 674192

2nd Tues, The Angel Hotel, Sprinkhill, Eckington, Nr. Chesterfield, Derbyshire.

DEVON John Heal, Tel: 01626 366860 2nd Tues, 8pm, The Dolphin Hotel, Station Road, Bovey Tracey, TQ13 9AL.

DORSET W. John Williamson, Tel: 01929 553640, Mob: 07850 727873 1st Tues, 8pm, Greyhound Inn, Winterbourne, Kingston, Nr. Bere Regis.

EAST MIDLANDS Graham Chinnery, Tel: 01332 863433 2nd Wed, The Clock Warehouse, London Road, Shardlow, just off the A50.

EAST YORKSHIRE Simon Garthwaite, Tel: 07980 680026 2nd Tues, 8pm, Londesborough Arms, Market Weighton, York.

ESSEX Cliff eaves, Tel: 07515 330423 2nd Wed, The Cross Keys, The Green, Hatfield Peverel, Essex CM3 2JQ.

GLOUCESTER James Osborne, Tel: 01531 822728 1st Wed, 8pm, Wagonworks Club, Tuffley Ave., Gloucester.

HERTFORDSHIRE John Fox, Tel: 01462 811654 2nd Wed, 8.30pm, Shire Park Social Club, Shire Park, Central Drive, Welwyn Garden City AL7 1AB.

HIGH PEAK & POTTERIES Graham Till, Tel: 01782 510533/07971 477024 2nd Tues, 8.30 - 9.00pm, The Stafford Arms, Bagnall. (2 miles out of Leek).

ISLE OF WIGHT 1st Wed, 8pm, The Eight Bells Inn, Carisbrooke, Newport, IOW.

KENT Steve Neville Tel: 01474 742705 2nd Tues, 8.30p.m. for 9pm, The Moat Pub, Wrotham, near Brands Hatch.

LANCASHIRE Tony Davenport, Tel: 07538 195212 1st Tues, Black Bull, Hall Lane, Mawdesley.

LINCOLNSHIRE Paul Vernon, Tel: 01522 889079 4th Thurs, 8pm, Lincolnshire Poacher, Bunkers Hill, Lincoln.

LODDON VALE Eddie Mace, Tel: 01189 333380 2nd Thurs, Inn on the Park, Woodley, Reading.

MANCHESTER Phil Kinder, Tel: 07809 647293 2nd & 4th Mon, 9pm, The Fletcher's Arms, Denton.

MID WALES Tony Rooney, Tel: 01239 698349 Last Thurs, 7.30pm, The Crown Inn, Rhayader except July & December.

NORTHUMBRIA Nic Gilbert, Tel: 07940 133871 1st Wed, 8pm, The Staffs Club, Blaydon, NE21 4JB.

NORTH WALES Neil "Timpo" Thompson, Tel: 07980 555874 1st Wed, 8pm, Potters Wheel, Precinct Way, Buckley CH7 2EG. Ref SJ 279637.

NORWICH Jeremy McNulty, Tel: 07786 426055 2nd Wed, 7.30pm, White Horse, Trowse, Norwich.

OXFORDSHIRE Peter Cole, Tel: 01844 214075 3rd Thurs, 8pm, The Gladiator Sport & Social Club, 263 Iffley Road, Oxford, OX4 1SJ, next to Ridgeway VW Garage.

PEAK DISTRICT Alan Gilmore, Tel: 01332 553246 1st Thurs, 8pm, The Joiner's Arms, Church Road, Quarndon, Derby.

RIBBLE VALLEY Peter Ashurst, Tel: 07817 928329 2nd Tues, 8.30pm, Brown Cow, Chatburn, Clitheroe (off A59).

SOMERSET Fran Bunce, Tel: 01278 662605 2nd Thurs, 8pm, The Old Pound Inn, High Street, Aller Langport.

SOUTHERN Colin Lindstrom Tel: 07818 404240 3rd Thurs, 8pm, Southampton & District MCC, Woodside Ave., Eastleigh, (opposite Halfords).

SOUTH LONDON & SURREY Steve Sharp, 0208 773 4204 8.30pm, 4th Wed, Nescot Centre for Sports Development, Banstead Road, Ewell, Surrey.

SOUTH NORTHANTS Andy Gerrard, Tel: 07803 600571 2nd Monday, 9pm, The Old Sun, 10 Middle Street, Nether Heyford, Northampton NN7 3LL.

SOUTH WALES Christian James, Tel: 01446 410073 1st Thurs, 8pm, Ty Nant Inn, Morgantstown, Nr Radyr CF15 8LB.

SOUTH WEST WALES Terry Brooks, Tel: 07910 050001 Last Tues, Corner House Pub, Commercial Street, Ystalyfera, Swansea.

SUFFOLK Richard May, Tel: 01787 374003 Last Wed, Manger Pub, A134 Sudbury Rd, Bury-St-Ed.

SUSSEX Julian Flack, Tel: 01306 740586 Last Thurs, Ashington Social Club, Rear of Red Lion, A24, 9 miles North of Worthing.

TEESSIDE & NORTH YORKS Leo Crone, Tel: 01325 463815 (8am to 4pm only). 3rd Tues, The Ranch House, Thoraldby Farm, Nr Stokesley, map ref 93...493074.

VIRTUAL PEAK GROUP Paul King, kingy@virtualpeaks.co.uk Tel: 07966 289778. This is a virtual group at www.virtualpeaks.co.uk

WEST ANGLIA Mark Andrew, Tel: 01933 413458 1st & 3rd Thurs, Scott Bader Social Club, opp. Parish Church, Wollaston, Wellingborough.

WEST MIDLANDS Steve Whetton, Tel: 01527 451089 1st & 3rd Wed, Wilmcote Mens Club, Stratford on Avon.

WEST YORKSHIRE Paul Dearden, Tel: 07901 381629 1st Thurs RoW 7.30 pm, Main Meeting 8.00pm, Cue Gardens, Stadium Mills, Stadium Road, Bradford BD6 1BJ.

WILTSHIRE Vic Price, Tel: 01380 724651 1st Tues, The Bell On The Common, Broughton Gifford SN12 8LX.

WORCESTERSHIRE David Walters, Tel: 07767 204730 1st Tues, White Hart, Fernhill Heath, Worcs.



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