

# GROUPS

## BRISTOL

Richard Tallon, Tel: 0249 715426  
2nd Monday, Tennis Court Inn, Deanery Road (A420), Kingswood

## CAMBRIDGE

Howard Biddle, Tel: 0223 232879  
1st Thursday, Golden Ball, Boxworth

## CHESHIRE

J. Johnson, Tel: 061 427 6963  
2 & 4 Monday, The Robin Hood, Buxton Road, High Lane, Hazel Grove, Stockport

## CORNWALL

Roger Fogg, Tel: 0726 67198  
3rd Thursday, Ring Secretary for details.

## CUMBRIA

Roger Harris, Tel: 0539 725198  
2nd Wednesday, Albert Hotel, Bowness on Windermere

## DERBYSHIRE & SOUTH YORKSHIRE

David Bonsall, Tel: 0742 748688  
2 & 4 Tuesday, The Old Crown Inn, Handsworth Road, Sheffield

## DEVON

Martin Cooper, Tel: 0752 337491  
2nd Tuesday, The Welcome Stranger, Bickington, Nr. Newton Abbott

## DORSET

Pete Boyce, Tel: 0305 783210  
1st Tuesday, The Royal Oak, Bere Regis

## EAST MIDLANDS

Graham Chinnery, Tel: 0332 863433  
2nd Wednesday, Three Horseshoes, Hemmington, Nr. M1 Junct. 24

## EAST SCOTLAND

Les Mollison, Tel: 0382 738530  
2nd Wednesday, Glencarse Hotel, A85, Perth to Dundee Rd

## ESSEX

Neil Gamble, Tel: 0245 461643  
4th Tuesday, The White Horse, Old London Road, Widford, Chelmsford

## GLOUCESTER

Ron Carter, Tel: 045 382 2707  
1st Tuesday, Painswick Institute, Painswick, Glos.

## HERTFORDSHIRE

Alan Vincent, Tel: 0923 775263  
1st Wednesday, The Coach & Horses, Newgate Street, Near Cuffly

## ISLE OF WIGHT

Mick Holbrook, Tel: 0983 866361  
Last Thursday, Liberal Club, Longford Rd, Shanklin, I.O.W

## KENT

Nick Moon, Tel: 0322 862855  
2nd Tuesday, Pied Bull, Farningham, Nr. Brands Hatch

## LANCASHIRE

Keith Westley, Tel: 0704 893215  
1st Tuesday, Hindshead Pub on A49, Charnock Richard

## LINCOLNSHIRE

Alan Wilkinson, Tel: 0529 60793  
4th Thursday, The Mall, Woodhall, Spar

## LODDON VALE

Don Lewis, Tel: 0252 616359  
2nd Thursday, The Lamb, Theale, Berkshire

## NORFOLK & SUFFOLK - To be Advised

NORTH MIDLANDS  
Ray Morse, Tel: 0785 661543  
1st Tuesday, Leek Area - Contact group rep (above)

## NORTHUMBERLAND

Dave Vaughan, Tel: 091 529 3202  
3rd Tuesday, Ryton Rugby Club, Ryton

## NORTH WALES

John Mills, Tel: 0477 34425  
1st Wednesday, Hope & Anchor, Ewloe Place, Buckley, Chwydd

## SHROPSHIRE

Steve Rodenhurst, Tel: 0952 244161  
2nd & last Wednesday, The Bell, Crosshouses, Shrewsbury

## SOMERSET

Peter Banks, Tel: 0749 86396  
Last Thursday, The Globe Inn, Somerton

## SOUTHERN

Pete Wildsmith, Tel: 0703 617582  
3rd Wednesday, The Priory Inn, Bishops Waltham, Hampshire

## SOUTH LONDON & SURREY

Brian Wright, Tel: 081 669 4214  
9pm Every Wednesday, Epsom & Ewell F.C., West St, Ewell

## SOUTH WALES

G. Jones, Tel: 0239 810255 - Meets to be arranged  
SOUTH WALES (WTRA), Bill Kershaw, Tel: 0633 895241

## SUSSEX

Bevis Billingham, Tel: 0243 585128 Last Thursday, Ashing on Soc. Club, Rr. of Red Lion, A24, 9 miles N. of Worthing

## TEESIDE & NORTH YORKS

Leo Crone, Tel: 0325 380117  
1st & 3rd Wednesday, Blacksmiths Arms, Swainby.

## THAMES VALLEY

Bob Williams, Tel: 0344 24958  
3rd Monday, District Arms, Woodthorpe Road, Ashford, Middlesex

## WEST ANGLIA

David Knight, Tel: 0933 313816  
1 & 3 Thursday, Scott Bader Clubhouse, Opp. Parish Church, Woolaston, Wellingborough

## WEST MIDLANDS

Dennis Hayter, Tel: 0527 23550  
1 & 3 Thursday, Wilmcote Mens Club, Wilmcote, Nr. Stratford on Avon

## WEST YORKSHIRE

Gordon Carr Tel: 0535 644568  
1 & 3 Thursday, Bankfoot Cricket Club, Wickets Close, (off Cleckheaton Rd.) Odsal, Bradford

## WILTSHIRE

Bill Riley, Tel: 02216 3811  
1st Tuesday, The Toll House, Holt, Trowbridge

## WYVERN

Gwyn James, Tel: 0902 763824  
Every Thursday, Hill & Cakemore Ex-Servicemen's Club, Victoria Road, Blackheath



# TRAIL

JANUARY 1992

No. 162

The Bulletin of the TRF, the National Club for all who wish to ride Legal Motorcycles on Legal Carriageways.

EDITOR: Mike "Nettlebed" Pedley.



Voluntary Community Service: Bristol Group 1st January, 1992

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Try to make it interesting! . . . All contributions to the Editor  
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**WANTED XL125 R** Flywheel, possibly consider engine/bike with blown top end. 0793 487056 Evenings (Wiltshire).

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## TRF OFFICERS

**Chairman:** Dave Giles, 22 Ford Lane, Allestree, Derby DE3 2EW Tel: 0332 552288

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**Secretary:** Ian Thompson, Glebe House, The Square, St. Columb Minor, Newquay TR7 3HD Te:l 0637 872813

**Rights of Way Officer:** Tim Stevens, 101 Square Lane, Ormskirk, Lancs. L40 7RG Tel: 0704 894136

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**Editor:** Mike Pedley, Nettlebed, Newsholme, Gisburn, Nr.Clitheroe BB7 4JF Tel: 0200 445657

## EDITOR

Happy New Year! Is your free calendar pinned to the back of the garage door? Is your £15.00 membership fee (plus fighting fund donation) on its way to Peter Clarke? Good, then read on .....

What will 1992 hold for the TRF? Have we anything to look forward to with optimism or is it all to be doom and gloom again?

Last year's AGM gave us two important decisions which I believe give us that optimism. The first, of course, was the creation of the Bursary Fund to help those of you already slogging away on the TRF's behalf with valuable RoW work and hopefully to encourage those of us who aren't to have a go! (see p.19 November Bulletin for how to apply for your slice).

The second decision? Identification! Membership stickers! How often are we "tarred with the same brush" as we read the words "trail rider" in derogatory media articles when "hooligan on wheels" is perhaps more appropriate? Now, for the first time, we will be identifiable to others and those "others" who matter will eventually (I hope) look for identification knowing that a TRF sticker stands for a responsible rider with knowledge of his/her rights (where we will attach the stickers I do not know - bike or rider - but eventually, if it is to be fully effective, we perhaps need to decide).

Next, two more snippets from the Weasel, courtesy of Motor Cycle News:

It appears that South Yorkshire Police are to scrap the use of Bobbies on Trail Bikes for the purpose of apprehending illegal off-road riders. According to the Chief Constable, offenders enjoyed being chased by the police and furthermore a number of serious accidents had occurred as a result of these chases! (Willie Eckerslike is innocent!). The article doesn't say who sustained injury but the journalist unfortunately refers to the culprits as "Green Lane Hackers". Come on now, MCN, surely the police were not pursuing riders on legal green lanes? Another unfortunate throw-away remark? The police trail bikes? - traded in for video cameras and hiking gear! Watch it Willie!!

The other cutting concerns blood sports - you know "the unspeakable in pursuit of the uneatable" type. Like Dave Giles, (Trail 160), I don't intend to take sides but there is now a "motorcyclists again blood sports" organisation and a representative, via the columns of MCN, invited like-minded riders to "attend" a certain hunt gathering.

A flow of correspondence followed, for and against, liberally sprinkled with "upper class twits" and similar complimentary phrases. The letter which caught the Weasel's eye though was from one DMD of Yeovil, Somerset who declared himself a blood sports supporter and pointed out that these "upper class twits" are the very people who may in the long term help to keep our green lanes open!

The TRF has some strange bedfellows! Is DMD suggesting that foxes use green lanes or that our allies on horseback also hunt, or even that he (or she) is a fox-hunting trail rider "the unspeakable in pursuit of the unridable" so to speak?

Like the calendar? Thank printer Fred. Like your photo on it next year? Then send one in (with your next Group News Report!)

### NETTLEBED

PS Fred's just swapped his 250 XR for a DR350 Suzuki and wants to know if anyone has any platform motorcross boots!

# LETTERS

## Bike Preparation

On Sunday 24 November with about 15 others I attended the West Yorkshire T.R.F. Sections run from the Derby Dale Pie Hall.

Being only my second club run, I perhaps naively expected the group to ride 'Legal Motorcycles on Legal Carriageways'. The carriageway may well have been legal, but the motorcycles were amazing.

After just a short walk round the assembled machines, many illegal machines were obvious.

- 1) Motorcross tyres - illegal for use on the road
- 2) Plastic petrol tanks
- 3) Bikes without chainguards
- 4) No speedometers
- 5) None, or expired V.E.L.S. (one from 1989)
- 6) No Brake lights/defective lights
- 7) Illegal registration plates
- 8) Machines not properly Silenced
- 9) Any Insurance Lads?

It's a shame that an organisation with members keen to preserve green lanes, and who wish to ride legally, should be saddled with others who obviously aren't bothered.

The next club run I'll be on a big white BMW with some blue lights on it. That will be an interesting day out'

*B. Taylor. Huddersfield*

*It is not TRF policy to encourage illegal usage of lanes or machinery. The condition of any vehicle is the responsibility of the individual. Ed.*

## More on the "Lane Database"

This letter is by way of an accompaniment to my sub renewal. Like many members, I imagine, for various good reasons I take no active part in the social activities of the club, but confine myself to the odd Trall ride locally, and do my bit (such as it is) via an annual donation to the Fighting Fund. Yet I am sufficiently interested in the trail riding to feel that I OUGHT to belong to the TRF.

In return for my money, what do I get? Well, the Magazine of course, although excellent as this little item is, I wonder whether it is sufficient return. I joined the club not to go on organised runs, but to receive expert information on where I might legally and responsibly ride.

Surely, detailed Rights Of Way data is something every club member has a right to expect? I mean it's so fundamental to the whole issue of trail riding in the U.K. I really did expect to see it freely published to all members. Yet the T.R.F. significantly fails to do this to any degree.

There must be a wealth of Rights Of Way information within the Senior Officers & Members of the T.R.F. Information that could highlight those 'white' roads which are public highways or those RUPPs which are not legally rideable or which may be 'sensitive'.

So I thought that the idea, in the November magazine, of making a computer database of grid-referenced lanes, to be both simple and BRILLIANT.

So come on, The T.R.F.; don't be shy, nor operate for the few. Mount a major promotional campaign, and inform all members, via a news sheet attached to the magazine, of where they can legally ride. Be forward-looking: BROADCAST the information the ordinary club member wants; go high-profile, and then see your membership numbers take-off!

*Dave Dingley. Spencers Wood, Berks.*

## And more again...

I am a new TRF member and am finding it a little difficult to obtain reliable information on viable trails, so I feel that Steve Griffiths's idea (in Trail No. 160) for a database is excellent.

I would gladly pay a small fee to obtain this information.

*Steve Axon. Surrey*

## Improve your XT 350

In November's issue John Tait mentioned lower gearing for his XT350 and I was glad to know that I am not the only one who thinks the gearing is too high. I would like to know what size sprockets provide an acceptable compromise between lower gearing without making too obvious a reduction to top gear performance - most of my riding is along roads, but then some of the roads here are like trails! I agree with others that the starting is rather unpredictable. Although new this Spring my XT350 now makes a clonk when first gear is engaged from cold, and also it is becoming snatchy at steady slow speeds, say 30 MPH. I have not yet been able to decide whether this is cured by going up a gear or down a gear, it seems to vary. Any comments?

To whoever it may concern; the latest XT350s have had their performance reduced from 30bhp to 17bhp "for emission control purposes" Yamaha say. They can be de-restricted by fitting inlet rubbers designed for the pre-restricted XT350s. The two rubbers I obtained cost twenty five pounds each plus another twenty eight for fitting them. It was only after the job was done that I realised the rubbers could have been bored out to their original size - had I known what the original size was! The amount of reduction is amazing - over two thirds of the bore having been blanked off. Yes, it was worth it in performance increase. I am now seeing revs that were previously unobtainable. I nearly did not see them because while testing out the mod I rounded a corner and came across two milk tankers parked side by side while the drivers had a chat.

*Chris Lovell. 5 Montpelier Road,  
Ilfracombe, Devon.*

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## DONT TAR ALL BOATS!

After retiring from the motocross scene six years ago in order to buy a house, I found myself bikeless (thankyou building society). Four years ago I decided to raid the piggy bank and buy myself a 1986 XR250 for trail riding and enduro racing. Since then the Honda has done numerous enduro events and thumped its way around miles of green lanes.

The bike has for want of a better word had its 'bollocks'(sorry Ed) thrashed off in the enduro's and suffered four years of Northern trail riding' Since owning the bike it has had an oil and filter change every 3 outings and general service items (chains etc). The engine has never faulted once' Please don't categorise all XR's as crap, purely on your encounters with them Mr Neville.

If a single cylinder 250 engine is too much for you to strip down and rebuild properly then I suggest you forget the bikes and buy a lego set!

p.s. The rise in membership fee is making a lot of people think twice about joining

*H Sealey. Derbyshire & South Yorkshire Group*

# GROUP NEWS

## Devon Group

### 1. RE EDITORIAL CONCERNING BERKSHIRE C.C. AND THEIR ADOPT A PATH SCHEME.

Devon C.C. embarked on what sounds like the same scheme a couple of years ago it seemed like a good idea at the time to us as well.

The Devon T.R.F. Group were encouraged to become involved by the scheme co-ordinator and all the glossy literature. We initially saw it as an excellent way of getting proof of R.O.W. in writing correspondence between ourselves and D.C.C. and embarked on adopting as many lanes as possible in our immediate area - D.C.C. mentioned a lane check to be carried out approx twice a year. We targeted any lanes which we thought may be subject to future downgrades of high quality, etc.

I myself forwarded a map to D.C.C. (with approx 45 lanes marked on it which I was prepared to check) looking forward to being a foster parent - or so I thought.

A few months passed by without me hearing anything and the Devon T.R.F. attended a meeting at County Hall to discuss the scheme. The outcome was that we would only be allowed to adopt 2 sets of 5 lanes in Devon - they were worried that if we adopted all Devon's lanes we would highlight their existence and thereby encourage more use.

In the meantime we were trusted to be given hand tools - free of charge - from D.C.C. The garden shears proved invaluable on the hedge and the woodsaw for the D.I.Y. and some of the others have even been used to good effect on a few lanes - gaining local newspaper articles on 2 occasions. Unfortunately we have still not heard about the 10 lanes we adopted. As far as we can see the main problem with the scheme are two fold:—

1). Money available at D.C.C. 2). Manpower available at D.C.C.

The Scheme needs lots of both and, as councils are being subjected to smaller budgets, this kind of scheme is the first to suffer - other counties may fair better as Devon has the largest road network of any county.

### 2. RE - STEVE GRIFFITHS IDEA OF A-DATABASE.

I've got good news and bad news for Steve - The bad news is that Liz Hurley of the 4WD fraternity has beaten him to it. The good news is Steve could co-ordinate with her to combine our efforts (unless we don't want them to know some of them!).

For Steve's information the Devon Green Lanes Group which was set up around 11/2 years ago by members from the TRF, BHS, BBT, Land Rover Owners Club and the British Drivers Society who are currently carrying out a lane logging process by marking all Devons known lanes on a set of master O.S. maps which would be kept for future reference.

### 3. RE - MEMBERSHIP NUMBERS.

I cannot see the need for using the last 3 letters from the postcode in the way shown - they are not of any use to help identify where someone lives unlike the first part of the code which is very helpful. May I suggest that the membership number is changed as follows--

David Giles DE S1 EWT would become DE3 2F.

I would become PL7 4RF 85 & Not DE 85 RFT

At least this way the postcode is complete & therefore it is useful and if 2 members live at the same address the letters could be reversed as proposed with the other scheme. If needs be the 'T' for T.R.F. could be added on the end.

### 4. RE - DEVON GREEN LANES GROUP

This group has really proved beneficial to the people and users who care for Devon's lanes and it has created what we feel is a good working relationship between the groups involved.

We combine our efforts rather than doing our own thing and meet every other month at a fairly central venue in Devon and arrange lane clearing sessions which are usually attended by the different groups.

The Devon T.R.F. group (and the 4WD groups) stand to gain more than the others involved as the D.G.L.G.'s aim is "to record and protect Devon's Green Lanes" - not bridleways or footpaths, with the goal of the highest possible status on each lane we can provide evidence for.

I would recommend it to other T.R.F. groups as a way forward and we have had outside people attending on a few occasions to try to set up a similar group in their area.

### 5. DEVON GROUP NEWS.

You can put in Trail that if anyone is interested in or considering visiting Devon we are able to carry out map marking provided we receive advance notice. We are also able to provide guides and to set up long weekends taking in some of East Cornwall if required for those wishing to explore our area mostly visited only by ourselves. (I am hoping to arrange a 2 day run to advertise in Trail but don't have a date or suitable accommodation arranged as yet).

Please contact Martin Cooper on Plymouth (0752) 337491 before 9 p.m.

*Martin Cooper. Group Chairman, Plymouth.*

*The Devon TRF Group is a member of the following National and Regional Rights of Way Groups :- Land Access and Recreation Association, Byways and Bridleways Trust, Devon County Council R.O.W. Consultative Group and Dartmoor National Park R.O.W. Group.*

## National Rights of Way Workshop DERBY March 28-29 All your questions answered:

The latest legislation, what books are useful, how to record evidence, committees and how to make the best of them, what to do and what to say when stopped on the trail, how to help other users and gain their support, what else might we all do?

**Come and meet your colleagues from up and down the land and share your experiences. If you think you know nothing we will all help you learn, if you think you know it all would you like to teach the rest of us?**

Cost? About thirty quid all in. Have a whip round at club and bring three or four of your keen lads with you.

More information from Tim Stevens, 0704 894136.

## NO USE IS NO USE!

Every now and then a club like the TRF receives a slap in the face, a kick in the teeth, and a knee in the groin all at once. This happened last month in Gloucestershire, a county of happy memories, where I spent my apprenticeship, bought my first new motorcycle, and so on... The slap in the face, etc, was an extinguishment. Our rights were killed off, extinct, for ever. Why? Because I could not prove that we needed it. Why? Because there were very few records of anyone using it. *Someone*, (several someones, even) let us down. *How terrible* I hear you say. If the same thing was to happen near you, could you produce evidence of use? Really? Good on you, but you are a fairly rare chap! If you could not, **START NOW**. There is no place in the TRF for hangers-on. Or perhaps there is, and we were wasting our time. The finger is being pointed, at all of us who have not recorded our use. Yes, me too, there are many lanes I know I have used but nowhere is anything written down. None of us is entirely innocent, but none of us would find it that difficult to do better.

The latest news is that the magistrates seem to have got the law a bit awry, because one of their reasons for stopping up the lane was "*It was clearly never intended for motorvehicles.*" Will I see you in court?

## WHO IS ENDANGERED BY WHOM?

The great crested newt *Triturus cristatus* is a cause of concern to TRF members in Surrey. The council have decided that there is so much danger to these cuddly little amphibians from passing vehicles that they are considering a TRO on a lane near a pond. Passing rambblers, their dogs and children present no danger, it seems, and neither are the newts likely to be trodden on by horses. So there. I am reminded of a similar case in America where the conservationists have stopped a desert race because of the alleged presence of the desert tortoise. Meanwhile, unknown to the motorcyclists, land elsewhere in the desert was being sold off for development with a scheme to collect the tortoises and sell them as pets, or give them a lethal injection. I kid you not, those are their very words. Of course desert tortoises should be looked after, and so should great crested newts, but I am still not clear why we present a threat and children with jam jars don't.

## SUPERSTITION RULES

Superstition has always played a large part in our lives, both in our intimate dealings (touch wood) and in affairs of state (read any coins lately?), and of course everything in between. Even motorcycles (no thirteen millimeter nuts on a Honda). One way it shows is our need to have something, or someone, to hate, just because we do not understand. Think of the first reaction to Aids (serves them right). It was this superstition which chased the wolf into oblivion, (no conservationists then), and burnt the 'witches', and this fear of the unknown lives on. We no longer worship old bones for the good of our souls, this has been replaced by more sensible concerns for the good of our planet. Newts have a proper place in this concern, and it is a callous trail rider who cares nothing for the myriad critters who share the lanes. However, we must remember that many witches were killed *because they counted for nothing* Among those claiming to be saving their souls by burning them alive were others who were glad to be rid of those they hated. Similar notions, where the blame for everything was laid at the door of people with a different way of life, have killed millions within living memory, so there is nothing mediaeval about such feelings. As for the newts, how much of the concern is real, and how much is based on

a wish to be rid of us, we can never be sure. No-one will admit to being ruled by irrational fears, of course; superstition is always what other people believe in. Our problem is that we must find a way to show those who are influenced by superstition rather than the fact that we are not the wolves, or the witches, or even the Untermensch, that they think we are.

## DO NOT SHOOT THE PIANIST

You will remember the silly comments of one hiding behind the name Rick O'Shea, telling us all that executive meetings were just an excuse for a beano at the members' expense. Now we hear that a member in the south west left the club because it *was just an excuse for officials to massage their egos*

This got me thinking. Do you, TRF member, yes, you, really think that our four or five meetings a year, when we cannot go riding with you, are some sort of privilege? Come and see for yourself, but do have a decent breakfast first.

I think the comments about egos were actually quite true, in my case, at least. I cannot speak for others. One of the things I enjoy about this job is the feeling that I am doing something worthwhile for all motorcyclists, even for Joe Public and I am vain enough to think it is sometimes appreciated. It makes me feel good if I can help a new member through the labyrinth of rights of way law. It makes me feel good when I sit across the table from a Secretary of State, or a top civil servant, or a barrister and argue for our rights. It makes me feel good when I sign my name to a letter appealing against a court decision, not just as a member of the public, but on behalf of all our members. If that is massaging my ego then I plead guilty. But I tell you all now that if it did not make me feel good I would not do it. Comments about executive beans by members who have not even got the bottle to sign their names, and snide remarks about my motivation do not make me feel good. In fact they make me want to say '*O.K. mate, If that's how you feel you can do this job yourself. Pop round for the stuff next weekend and Mary can have a bedroom back.*' And I can go Trail Riding again.

As an ordinary member I say that we spend too little time encouraging our officers to work on our behalf, and not just the national chaps who might get the glory. We need local workers just as much. We need them because we cannot be bothered to do the work ourselves. And this year we are going to need more of them, at national and local level. If you cannot make people feel good about volunteering and staying volunteered you can say goodbye to the TRF.

## BRADFORD AND LEEDS

A letter from Leeds Council says it all. When considering a TRO on a green road they consult the *various Footpath Groups*. Meanwhile just down the road two ladies asked the Bradford Council to stop up a green lane on their land because it was 'unnecessary'. History does not record if they were the two old ladies who used so many vehicles to go to church. Anyway, local lads were ready for them. They got the bicyclists roused, they stirred up the carriage drivers, they alerted the ACU riders, they even got a councillor or two on their side. On top of all this they got up a petition with hundreds and hundreds of signatures. Result: the case has been withdrawn. I was quite looking forward to it, really, as with all that support it would have been a useful antidote to the lost cause in Glos. All down to the old ego again, you see. Don't we all like to be on the winning team every now and then?

## YOU ARE INVITED (see ad. for RoW Workshop on Page 7)

Here is your chance to do your bit. Everything will be laid on for you, you might even call it a beano. But bring your own ego.

Tim Stevens, National Rights of Way Officer, BMF Access Officer, & general big-head.

## MORE ON GLOUCESTER...

Through the national magazine I would like to thank Tim Stevens for coming all the way down to Gloucestershire to spearhead our objections at Dursley Magistrates Court to an Extinguishment Order on U.C.R. 51191 near Bisley.

He rode his bike all the way from Lincs to Glos on a filthy wet and windy night, Negotiated the little known trials section at Junction 13 on the M5 (lorry load of pallets all over the road) and arrived at his estimated time of 7.00pm. After an evening meal we discussed plans for the following day.

9.30am Tues 19th November we were in court without the support expected. Tim led our objection against the County Solicitor, who spent most of the morning trying to prove that the U.C.R. did not have public vehicular rights.

The County Solicitor had obviously put a lot of work into this case, calling three local people, including the village postman, who swore they had NEVER seen motorcyclists using this lane. One old boy even starting his answer before the question had been asked!

All the usual points were raised by the landowner (builder by profession) security, safety, frightening his Prize Steers and he was unable to understand how anyone would want to use the lane when there was a tarmac road near by. We've heard it all before.

Ian Blair a local farmer was also objecting to the Extinguishment on behalf of the B.H.S. and spoke very well, having had some training to become a solicitor. The 4WD withdrew their objections. We thought that with the B.H.S. also objecting it might go our way but at the end of the day we lost.

We have learnt a great deal from this case. The importance of support at court cases and public enquiries. It's no good people promising to turn up and then backing out at the last minute. The importance of keeping records. Also report to councils obstructions, incorrect signs, narrow gates etc., so that it's on file that the TRF are using the lanes.

It astounds me that the Glos County Council can support a land owner to extinguish public rights, when it is their duty to assert and protect the rights of the public to use and enjoy any highway for which it is responsible.

I am sure that Tim Stevens will have something to say about this case and can only say thanks again Tim for doing your best.

## PROJECT ARROW—CHRISTMAS RIDE

December 8th was the first circular ride organised in Glos. by the B.H.S. promoting their Project Arrow (Access & Riding Rights Of Way) calling it their 'Christmas Ride' it started at Minchinhampton Common Reservoir 10.30am covering a 20 mile course through Avening, Horsley, Kingscote and Chavenage Green. Members £3 non members £5.

We were asked to help out with the ride just to report any mishaps and contact doctor or vet if needed. So Vic Lodge (Honda SL125 prolink) and myself (Honda XL125RF) arrived on a cold frosty morning and after a few photo's with the organisers about 30 horseriders started off in three groups. Two groups doing a 10 mile shorter route, the rest doing the full 20 miles. Each group was led by a member of the Stroud Endurance Riders Group and riders under the age of 16 years had to be accompanied by an adult.

The sun appeared later in the morning and it was a beautiful day and the ride went without mishap with the last riders returning around 3.30pm. Everyone seemed well pleased with the day and went home with the prospect of another circular ride in North Glos. in the Spring.

*Geof Wilkie. Glos.*

## RECLASSIFICATION OF RUPPS POWYS AREA OF BRECON BEACONS NATIONAL PARK

The National Park, acting for the County Council, has started the review with consultations on half a dozen tracks in the Brecon and Llangorse Lake areas. The aim is to complete the exercise by the end of 1992. Park staff are undertaking historical research and so far, there is no sign that byway status will be resisted where vehicular rights are demonstrated from records or from usage. Even so, challenges can come from other directions and we need the fullest possible support for each track.

### RETENTION OF VEHICULAR USE DEPENDS ON PEOPLE LIKE YOU

The need is for evidence of use of every unsurfaced way in the Powys area of the Park going back more than 20 years. Some between 12 and 20 years will also be useful. This may mean calling on friends and acquaintances who were active riders in the 60s, 70s or early 80s. The tracks are on OS Sheets 160 and 161 and are shown as RUPPs or 'white roads' (eg the one passing through 152287 on 161) or even as black dashed 'paths'.

On behalf of WTRA, the Cambrian Council, the TRF and all other vehicular users of unsurfaced ways in Wales, I appeal for your assistance - particularly for some of the 100 or more little used, lesser known tracks. Just let me have the name and address of anyone who is able and willing to confirm use of any of the tracks 12 or more years ago. If map references or photocopies showing the routes used can be supplied, so much the better, but don't delay - the first few tracks are already under scrutiny.

This is an excellent opportunity for reminiscing with old friends, but please put pen to paper before you accept too much hospitality from them.

**REMEMBER: IF YOU DON'T MAKE TIME TO HELP, YOU MUST NOT BE SURPRISED IF THOSE WORKING ON YOUR BEHALF LOSE ENTHUSIASM AND ALLOW THE TRACKS TO BE DESIGNATED BRIDLEWAYS.**

**Bill Kershaw, 20 High Cross Drive, Newport, Gwent, NPI 9AB  
(0633) 895241.**



DIRECTOR OF LEGAL SERVICES  
A. R. SYKES, SOLICITOR

Mr Carr  
Westfield Farm  
Tim Lane  
Haworth  
BD22 7SA

My Ref: GL/SPN/432-020  
Your Ref:  
Tel: 0274 752083  
Fax: 0274 752065  
Contact: S P Nelson

5041CA002L07/BB35

12 December 1991

Dear Sir

HIGHWAYS ACT 1980 - SECTION 116  
PROPOSED STOPPING UP OF ALTAR LANE, BINGLEY  
FRIDAY 31 JANUARY 1992

I refer to the proposed stopping up of part of Altar Lane which was re-listed to be heard on Friday 31 January 1992.

The Council has received a considerable number of objections to the proposal and has, therefore, decided not to proceed with the application.

Yours faithfully

Director of Legal Services

## Victory claimed in highway campaign

CAMPAIGNERS last night claimed victory in their battle to save an ancient highway under threat of closure.

Mountain bikers and off-road motorcyclists last month launched a campaign urging Bradford Council not to seek a court order closing to traffic Altar Lane at Bingley.

And last night one of the organisers said they had heard the authority had dropped its plans because of the strength of their opposition.

Bradford Council moved for a closure order after farmers complained that the quiet country lane had become a haunt of vandals who smashed their walls, and that the burnt-out shells of stolen cars had been recovered there.

But organisations including the West Yorkshire Trail Riders' Fellowship use the lane for recreation and want to keep it

open for themselves and the public.

The chairman of the fellowship, Mr Gordon Carr of Keighley, said petitions were being raised by several groups to preserve a right of way that had lasted down the centuries.

Mr Carr said last night he had now received a letter from Bradford Council announcing that they had decided to drop their attempt to obtain a closure order on Altar Lane.

"I am pleased that this has happened," said Mr Carr.

Coun Bill Nunn, who had taken up the objections of Mr Carr with Bradford Council, was not available for comment yesterday.

But a spokesman for Bradford Council confirmed that because of the strength of opposition they were no longer seeking a closure order for Altar lane.

## Public Relations Officer

Brian Wright

When Gwyn Thomas told me the other week that he was happy for me to take over the job right away rather than wait until next year, I rushed out and perused my local Smiths Bookshop. My eye was drawn to a publication called Trail & Scrambler but wait, it was all about walking and rock climbing. A closer look at the title revealed the word "walker" after Trail. Can any member explain to me why the recent use of "our terms" by the walkers? Are we to look forward to the launch of the B.O.A.T. Rambler? and the Carriageway Hiker?

The little bi-monthly magazine the Countryman has an interesting leader concerning Government Minister Edward Leigh, who introduced the Rights of Way Act 1990, publising a Mitsubishi motorised path reinstater in Lincolnshire. The promotion included a walk of some local paths, during the course of which a signpost was discovered in a ditch. I quote "The C.L.A. and N.F.U. looked on glumly. Nobody said so, but the suspicion is of deliberate vandalism by a farmer or owner". Apparently, the machine has been used only three times in the year. It takes two men to operate, plus the County Footpath Officer. Obviously there is plenty of scope here for a good Public Relations Officer Richard Marshall has contacts in Lincolnshire and I have asked if he will point out that the T.R.F. could operate there own "mobile path restorers" at a fraction of the price.

I have sent a small article to The Countryman pointing out that Byway status would protect against both ploughing and hedge grubbing etc.

If some member can suggest a farming publication I will send a letter pointing out how much cheaper our service would be. (The R.of W. Act 1990 empowers the Council to send the bill to the farmer). It sounds as if the Mitsubishi costs £100's of pounds to operate.

Although I am happy to respond to letters criticising us, I would prefer members to feed me information similar to the above so that I can be pro-active rather the re-active.

As members are aware the T.R.F. have an excellent Survey on the condition of green lanes. One of the conclusions was that "The predominant characteristic of the obstacles to passage....would appear to be deliberate and illegal stopping up". The Club should not miss any opportunity to publicise this survey, especially to people in power. I should be pleased to receive members ideas.

Brian Wright.



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**H**appy New Year; mine began well this year with a ride with the Bristol Club starting from the Globe just outside Bath at 10am on New Years Day! Eight years ago this was the traditional 'home' run so it was interesting to see how the lanes had changed. For the most part they were now wider and showed more evidence of use, particularly by horses. Another sign of the times was that we had to move two abandoned cars which completely blocked the lanes. One of them a newish burnout 4x4 Sierra wedged in a sunked lane which took the combined efforts of a strong workforce to move aside; without us I feel sure it would have completely blocked this way to all users for a very long time. Later in the morning we met another 'obstruction' in Mr Robinson of Weston who has resisted all previous attempts by our local RoW officers to explain our rightful use of a RUPP (designated Byway) across the land he farms. When he quoted the local NFU officials as his authority, I think he was somewhat taken aback to hear that one of the 'vandals' before him had been in NFU headquarters only ten days before seeking agreement that in cases like this all parties should stick to the Law.

That, I think is the message for 1992; Local Action, Working as a Team, and following-up the liaison initiatives that have been made at the top with the Countryside Landowners Association (CLA), National Farmers Union (NFU), British Horse Society (BHS) and the Countryside Commission. Every Group should plan to make personal contact in its own area with the County representatives of each of these organisations early in 1992. Being known through face to face contact will repay you handsomely as the access to the countryside initiatives involving these bodies begins to take effect. So make that a Group Target and I will provide the names and addresses you require.

Meanwhile back on the ride, we completed about 45miles by mid-afternoon, including two lanes that I had never ridden before (in an area I grew up in), and welcomed in the new year on the trail.

*Dave Giles. National Chairman.*

## EXECUTIVE MEETINGS IN 1992

8th February : 9th May : 26th August : 28th November

All these meetings will take place in Walsall.

Every group should send a delegate. Observers are welcome, but please tell the Secretary or Chairman you wish to attend.

## 1ST NOVEMBER AGM NOTTINGHAM, ELECTION OF NEW OFFICERS

**NEXT MEETING:** the main item on the Agenda will be an exchange of information around the Clubs, whats happening with us and how we are managing new initiatives. Please ensure your delegate attends.

The T.R.F. was again represented at The Bristol Dirt Bike Show. Our exhibition was in a prime spot courtesy of Taylor Racing of Chippenham/ Calne/Swindon who also supplied us with a DR350 for our stand (and can supply you with all your trail riding needs).

We are obviously expected to be at the show, many members visit us to renew both friendship and membership. But more importantly to leave their helmets under our Table'

T.R.F celebrities were a bit thin on the ground but we were honoured to see Dick Sutton, Brian Wrigley (New Pro), Bill Kershaw (WTRA), Martin Cooper, Denis Hayter (Group-Reps) and of course King Bevis Billingham who kindly introduced us to his 'subjects' from Sussex.

The show of course sells most makes and models of Trail Bikes and has a huge range of 'Off Road' clothing and accessories at competitive prices.

We sold membership and sweatshirts to a value of £600. Answered many sensible questions on R.O.W. Types of Bikes/Clothing etc, and importantly highlighted a few problem areas within the T.R.F.

It would seem we have a need for new groups:- In the Swindon area and around the Newport (Gwent) and Brecon areas in Wales. There are many experienced riders in these areas who are either unaffiliated to a local group or simply not members of the T.R.F. The Bristol group is willing to co-operate with the members Secretary to help get any of the initial organisation of groups in these areas started.

The general feeling this year was that visitors and riders at the show were more aware than ever before of the TRF and of the need for care and consideration on the countryside by all users.

'Perhaps we are getting through at last!. Lastly, many thanks to all who helped with the show.

*Richard Tallon Bristol Group Rep.*



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## The XR Strikes Back..

In response to a recent article in Trail magazine entitled "Owning an XR250", I feel I must put pen to paper to defend my and countless other XR250's.

First a little history. Back in the late 1970's most off road machinery and dual purpose bikes went through some major changes and there was a real demand for a reliable mount that didn't fall to pieces after the second or third ride. At this time Honda were selling (and very well to I must add). The XL250 and 250s, on the whole a good bike, the frame being the biggest let down and a silly 23" front wheel. The same engine was being used in the XR250. By about 1982 Britain started to see some serious Enduro/Trail bikes appear in the shops. Those were the days, when you could go to your local dealer and take the pick of the bunch! 1983 saw the new radical four valve head and completely new engine for the XR range (except the 200), but as mentioned in the said article it had its problems, firstly it had no oil cooler, this lead to major engine heat build up under load.

The top end was very weak. If the bike was ridden hard you could experience valve wander, which was caused by too soft valve springs and in general a poor top end. The power output wasn't what you would call stunning but at the end of the day not bad. To add to it's problems a twin carb was used, fiddley and more to go wrong, this also had an effect on the performance. More of a gripe than a problem was the suspension, it was not up to much! Get brave in a rocky section and it would tie you in knots, but what about that stupid 17" rear wheel, the one you could never get knobbies for. I would not say the bike was crap, but I wouldn't have one. If you do own an 83-85 Honda XR250 then I suggest you replace your valve springs with heavier ones, and change your oil every 200-250 miles. This I must point out is the period of XR that was mentioned in October Mag.

Now, back to the present, in 1986 Honda made all the changes that had been cried out for: A better frame, better 41mm forks, better rear shock, oil cooler mounted behind the light unit, 18" rear wheel, a single carb, better lights and, you guessed it, a better tuned and beefier top end including those heavy duty valve springs. I have just seen the 1992 Honda XR 250 and guess what? Not one change to the engine in seven years, in 1990 it was given a rear disc and that's it. Obviously there will always be one problem, there is with every bike, but on the whole the bike and engine are bullet proof, providing of course the machine is looked after and has routine maintenance checks. The bike is not perfect by a long way, its still underpowered and lacks in the suspension department, but I would recommend one to anybody even Mr Short. I felt I must put pen to paper to defend my trusty steed.

As Bob Buck once said "The're just a two stroke with valves", nice one Bob!

On the subject of the Cornhill Inn, Rhayader, I have been twice with the Lads and on both occasions had a really good time. Cheers Bob and Mark.

p.s. Would Honda UK please give me a job' (creep creep)

*David Bentley. Cheshire Group*

## Tyre Tribulations

Or Trail Riding  
can damage your health

The following is nothing to do with the old TRF Knobbly V Trial V Trail Tyre saga but I agreed to put pen to paper as a sort of penance.

In anticipation of a trip to the Monks Trod and Strata Florida I decided to replace my well worn Metzeler Motorcrosser (as a firm believer in making life as easy as possible) so getting suitable equipment for the Trod meant another 4.00X18 Metzeler.

Unfortunately, I was told by someone who I thought a reputable dealer, whose name I won't reveal in print, that the Metzeler 4.00X18 was no longer available and that they "just so happenend" to have "in stock" a Barum 400 x 18. Metzeler "look a like" in everything but rubber mix (as subsequently found out on some "fast" tarmac road when instantaneous sideways motion of the rear of M/C sent me towards a 8-10ft drop into a stream).

Anyway, back to the preparations for the Trod —the Barum was fitted with requisite swearing, grazed knuckles and nearly 70 psi required to seat the beads concentrically into the rim

A small, all 4 stroke mounted "team" rode the very soggy Trod (on the wettest day for months according to the locals). The Barum performed admirably, so much so, I wondered why I'd never used Barum's before.

Nothing to do with tyres but no current article in the Bulletin is complete without a mention of the Cornhill Inn - where we stayed and did our Pre-Trod training at £1 a pint for real Ale and mega breakfast both of which were really appreciated when we ended up at "Fizz House" at lunch time with no hot food'

So, after a day "up the Trod" and a somewhat less strenuous day exploring some of the Non-Enduro Trails to the east of Rhayader I was invited to join an even smaller "team" for a three day outing to Hexham. However, three days became two due to work commitments (work being the curse of the drinking class as well as trailies).

Towards the end of the second day and only 10 miles from "home" (the B&B at Hexham) and with the blocks of the Barum barely radiused, something shiny was spotted between aforementioned blocks. Initial reaction was "That's one hell of a nail head". The tyre still had air in it and closer inspection revealed that the "nail" rather than trying to puncture the tube from the outside was, in fact a tyre lever trying to Escape from within the tyre casing. I had wondered where that tyre lever had gone when I 'tidied up' after fitting the Barum!(anyone who's seen my garage will know that "tidy up" is only a figure of speech).

Of course, I would like to blame someone or something (next door neighbour's cats possibly) other than myself for costing me approx £10 a day in rear tyre costs alone for my two outings.

Incidentally, 400X18 Metzeler Moto-Crossers are still available and I have since, by chance, located (and, very carefully) fitted one to the XR200 - all I need now is an RAF type "shadow board" to fit in my bum bag.

From slightly poorer of Portishead

*David Clegg. Avon*

P.S. At least on this outing to the Hexham area I brought an XR200 back with me: Ref: June/July 89 Bulletin.

# The XT and the DR..

## HELPFUL HINTS AND RELIABLE REMEDIES.....

John Tait's queries recently around his XT350 are familiar to me. I fitted a new F.I.M. pattern 'MT71' to my DR350 and it transformed the grip characteristic. Tho' it does sound like an army wagon on the road, when it's leaned-over onto it's shoulders it goes quiet and feels safe on wet tarmac.

On gear ratios, a high gear isn't the usual reason for too much wheel spin, quite the opposite actually. A low gear plus high throttle equals spinning wheel. The answer is to anticipate the problem, get the bike going at the speed you'll need on the soft bits before you get there, then turn the power down just enough to maintain forward motion. The art is to do it right all the time. The pleasure in our sport is to get it right some of the time! Please, are we allowed to call what we do a sport?

If you think the seats too high on the XT, you should keep off a DR! I should tell you, I have a TLR 200 as well and nothing has a lower seat than that; I've embarrassed myself and got cross-threaded on it wanting a serious low-side dab and pulled it over on top of myself. One of those cases I don't tell the wife about! Another case of not getting the art right. If we were all that good, we'd get bored, give up riding and take up Bungee Jumping.....

## Starting The DR 350S

Concerning the valve lifter. For a while I despaired of the DR 350's unpredictable starting. I disconnected the cable at the kickstart end and took it up to underneath the clutch lever in the conventional Pre-65 position, to an old decompressor lever (not easy to find a good one these days). There are 4 useful benefits from having a manually operated valve lifter.

No.1 Cold starting drill - Don't put your hat on, you may be about to become overheated, Petrol on, full choke, close throttle and keep it closed. Push K/S gently to a compression, lift valve lifter, gently push K/S a further 1/2~stroke. Allow K/S to come back to top of it's stroke, now make your first positive full-swing kick. If it doesn't start this time, it will next if you go thro' the procedure. Don't keep stabbing it like the 2 stroke boys do, you're a man Now, when it starts leave the throttle alone, step back and put your hat on. While you're doing this, the revs will build up to 3000, - Now you can use the throttle and start having fun.

Hot Starting, no problem. Find a similar engine/stroke position using valve lifter, just a touch of throttle and just one prod from the top. You'll soon love this bike - it's as good as many and better than most.

No.2 Gentle braking on grotty, steep, slow downhills. Stand up, hang your tail over the back wheel, close the throttle. Leave back brake alone, use gentle front brake. Now lift the valve lifter. The engine won't stop, the back wheel won't skid or lock. You'll be amazed how controllable the bike is at a safe, slow speed and it'll go where you point it as long as you leave the back brake alone. As soon as there's grip for the back wheel, drop the valve lifter and the engine will come gently to life and you can ride off wondering what all the fuss used to be about. p.s. Don't use the valve lifter at high engine speeds.

No.3 It can be used on downhill tracks or steep hillsides to re start the engine instead of by kicking up. Sit or stand on bike, engage 2nd or 3rd gear, lift clutch and valve lifter, let the bike roll, drop the clutch first, when the engine is turning then drop the valve-lifter. It'll fire-up and you can drive off in your usual style. The trick with this exercise is to locate your levers so that clutch can be operated over the handlebar with the fingers in the normal way, but the valve lifter must be available for your thumb under the bar - got it?

The above trick can be used in stubborn cold start situations, but you've to learn to run alongside and jump on side saddle as you release the clutch to get the back wheel biting then leap off and run with the engine turning before you drop the valve lifter. I can do it, I've had plenty of practice. I bet you can't do it first time.

No.4 Now you've got a valve lifter you can throw away the kill switch and ignition switch, they're unnecessary and are a source of trouble e.g. on Strata Florida.

Let's finish on a point of agreement, I usually throw away the Japanese Handlebars along with the tyres and fit Renthals to get a better aggressive driving position with more mobility around the bike. I can't bear to be pushed back on the seat behind bars the shape of a wheel barrow.

Get Up and Go.

*Gordon Carr.*  
West Yorkshire T.R.F.



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