

GROUPS

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Bradmore, Wolverhampton

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Ian Hingley, Tel: 0272 567509
2nd Monday, Warmley Community Centre, Deanery
Road, (A420), Kingswood.

CAMBRIDGE

Richard Palmer, Tel: 0353 88344
1st Thursday, Golden Ball, Boxworth.

CHESHIRE

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

CORNWALL

Sally A. Madgwick, Tel: 0208 74411
Ring Secretary for details.

CUMBRIA

Tracey Fogg, Tel: 0539 722569
2nd Wed., Albert Hotel, Bowness on Windermere.

DERBYSHIRE & SOUTH YORKSHIRE

Kevin Marsh, Tel: 0246 237910
2 & 4 Tues., Enfield Arms, Broughton Lane,
Attercliffe, Sheffield

DEVON

Richard Arcsott, Tel: 0803 612950
2nd Tuesday, The Welcome Stranger, Bickington,
Nr. Newton Abbott.

DORSET

Tony Summers, Tel: 0202 894419
1st Tuesday, The Royal Oak, Bere Regis

EAST MIDLANDS

Graham Chinnery, Tel: 0332 863453
2nd Wed., The Chequers Inn, Main St., Breaston, South
Derbyshire, J25 on M1.

EAST SCOTLAND

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

EAST YORKS

Dave Barratt, Tel: 0977 672402
2nd Wednesday, Kellingley Social Centre, Knottingley

ESSEX

Mark Kinard, Tel: 0279 777620
4th Tuesday, Green Man Pub, on A120, Takley.

GLOUCESTER

Charlie Morriss, Tel: 0453 885323
1st Tuesday, Painswick Institute, Painswick, Glos.

HERTFORDSHIRE

Alan Vincent, Tel: 0923 775263
1st Wed., Coach & Horses, Newgate Street, Nr. Cuffly

ISLE OF WIGHT

Mick Holbrook, Tel: 0983 866361
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KENT

Jeff Hayward, Tel: 0322 863521
2nd Tuesday, Pied Bull, Farningham, Nr. Brands Hatch

LANCASHIRE

Keith Westley, Tel: 0704 893215
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Bernard Green, Tel: 0344 50289
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Mark Snoddy, Tel: 091 386 0749
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John Mills, Tel: 0477 534425
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Anthony Dinsdale, Tel: 0200 28507
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Peter Banks, Tel: 0749 860396
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Euan Harrison, Tel: 0962 733781
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Bob Balderson, Tel: 0604 494947
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Stuart Dodwell, Tel: 0446 710851
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Pete Owen, Tel: 0793 750557
1st Wed, Jacobs Ladder, Stratton St. Margaret, Swindon

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Paul Webb, Tel: 0252 519224 (Daytime)
3rd Mon, District Arms, Woodthorpe Road,

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WEST ANGLIA

David Knight, Tel: 0933 313816
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Dennis Hayter, Tel: 0527 23550
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WEST YORKSHIRE

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

WILTSHIRE

Bill Riley, Tel/Fax: 0225 863811
1st Tuesday, The Toll Gate, Holt, Trowbridge

WYVERN

Steve Pighills, Tel: 0902 672479
Every Thursday, 10pm, Potter's Rose & Crown, Colley
Lane, Halesowen



TRAIL

FEBRUARY, 1994

No. 187

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

EDITOR: Mike "Nettlebed" Pedley.



Dave Giles, TRF Liaison Officer riding in the Peak Park, Derbyshire in '93. Spot the Packhorse bridge. (In connection with a 3-part article on significant issues for the TRF in the '90s.)

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All contributions to the Editor Please keep it short and sweet!
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RM250 1984 complete, except engine and exhaust. Full floater, renthals, good MX tyres, new seat cover (blue), good condition, £100 no offers (would make nice SP/DR project). KMX125 T/nd, VGC, other spares. Tel: 0823 480059 Rose.

WANTED KMX s. panels and rad scoops in green also fork guards. Tel: Nick 0604 701209.

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TRF OFFICERS

- CHAIRMAN (ACTING)** Richard Marshall, 1 Burlington Close, Breaston, Derby DE7 3UB
Tel: 0332 873416
- PUBLIC REL. OFFICER** Brian Wright, 3 Kensington Terrace, Sanderstead Road, South Croydon, Surrey, CR2 0PJ Tel:081 686 3458 (Wed-Sat) Tel:0679 63373 (Sun-Tue)
- MEMBERSHIP SEC.** Garry Watson, 6 Tennyson Place, Cleckheaton, Bradford, W. Yorkshire BD19 3DJ. Tel: 0274 870162
- SECRETARY** Peter Ballard, 210 Spring Meadow, Clayton-le-Woods, Leyland, Lancs. PR5 2PP. Tel: 0772 455487
- RIGHT OF WAY OFFICER** .. Tim Stevens, 101 Square Lane, Ormskirk, Lancs. L40 7RG
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- EDITOR** Mike Pedley, Nettlebed, Newsholme, Gisburn, Clitheroe, Lancs. BB7 4JF
Tel: 0200 445657

The views expressed in 'Trail' are those of its correspondents and not necessarily of the editor or the T.R.F.

EDITOR

As we bask in the wake of 'our' team's Ridgeway success, another threat lurks in the shadows - will it never end?

This time its the 'Gap' road in the Brecon Beacons. It's a few years since I rode this 'Classic' - with Tim Stevens actually - but as I remember it combines all we could want in a trail - spectacular scenery and an exceptional riding challenge.

Unfortunately, it is for this very reason - "the difficulty" - or as Powys Council would say "the danger", is that it is to be the subject of a TRO. I wonder if Powys accident statistics bare out this danger. How many of us have been killed or injured? Bill Kershaw is apparently already launching a campaign to fight this most unreasonable of TRO's - unlike the Ridgeway this one's not infested with rambles - so please, when you return your membership form and subs for 1994 bob in a small (or large!) contribution to our now much depleted fighting fund. What's a tank of petrol when literally any lane could be the subject of some well meaning Council's Nanny waving a TRO?

I hope, that following our 'Ridgeway' presentation the TRF has become a little less of a secret society and more of a nationally known and respected body. On a recent visit to the Peak Park Headquarters I was idly thumbing through an impressive copy of the 1992 Peak Park Structure Plan. Literally dozens of bodies consulted, but again no mention of the TRF. There was actually one paragraph on trail riding - it could be a means of the disabled obtaining access to the

Countryside - but there was always the "Cowboy" (their words) element who would disregard everything and there's no point consulting cowboys is there? Even "paintball" and of course mountain bikes are considered, but not us! If only these "cowboy" environmentalists would realise that if vehicular routes were clearly signed in National Parks the rider would have no excuse for straying from the RoW and the Rambler could easily avoid routes where he might meet vehicles - but that's too simple I suppose!

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COUNTRYSIDE COMMISSION'S 1990/91 SURVEY

This recently published 108 page report identifies the level of staff and financial resources devoted to RoW by local authorities in '90/91. The figures are supposed to be helpful in assessing progress towards the '2000 target' but there are many of them and they are not easily interpreted. A few are of more specific interest even though they are already 2 years old. For example, the total expenditure on RoW in England and Wales was £26m. Compare that with the currently claimed £200M *shortfall* in the cash needed by highway authorities to maintain the normal, non-trunk roads this year.

In 1991 there were still nearly 6000km of RUPP awaiting reclassification. Dyfed had 1280km although the County has since made proposals in respect of most of them. The other main contributors were: Gwent (650), Hampshire (369), Shropshire (330), Gloucestershire (312), Somerset (299) and Oxfordshire (286). Eleven County Councils reported all their RUPPs had been reclassified. Three County Councils recorded less than 20km of BOAT/RUPP in total: Warwickshire (1 + 3), Humberside (12 + 0) and Cleveland (20 + 0). Five claim 500km or more: Dyfed (96 + 1280), Hampshire (168 + 369), Lincolnshire (250 + 250), Leicestershire (450 + 50) and Powys (150 + 350).

The total length of all rights of way in England and Wales is recorded as nearly 200,000km made up of:

Footpaths	164,000km	80%
Bridleways	26,800km	15%
BOATs	3,200km	2%
RUPPs	6,000km	3%

Wales has the greatest length of Row per sq. km; the Yorkshire & Humberside Region, the least. The North West Region is credited with the largest population per km (451), Wales the smallest (75) varying from one of the most dense, South Glamorgan (558) to the most sparse Powys (11.68)

Expenditure on RoW in '90/91 averaged 61p/head in England and £1.20/head in Wales. When expressed as expenditure per km of RoW the figures become £143 (£282 in the North West) and only £90 in Wales. (So, those of us in Wales pay more for less well maintained ways which the English come to use).

One last topic of direct interest concerns Row Liaison Groups. Of the English County Councils 82% had such a group but only $\frac{3}{4}$ of them included vehicle users. In Wales it was far worse - 26% and less than $\frac{1}{2}$ with vehicle users. (If your County Council is one of the reluctant ones perhaps it is time to have another go at them using the statistics provided by the Countryside Commission).

Bill Kershaw, Gwent

GROUP NEWS

DERBYSHIRE & SOUTH YORKSHIRE GROUP

AGM Briefing:

Group Leader -	Kevin Marsh
Membership Secretary -	Andy Sealey
RoW Officers -	Paul Clarke, John Clarke, Peter Slater
Treasury Officers - Banker	Phil Hudson
- Accountant	Andy Sealey
Group Reps (rota) -	John Burkinshaw, Dave Bonsall, Phil Hudson,
(for exec. meetings)	Kevin Parker, Kevin Marsh
PR & New Member Officer -	Fraser Sill
Lane Clearance Officers -	Mike Craxton, Andrew Gavins
Fund Raiser -	Ian "Emo" Carr and team
Entertainments -	Andy Sealey and team

Cheers for now, keep on mud plugging, and all the best for '94.

Kevin Marsh

NORTHUMBERLAND GROUP

I had a couple of phone calls from the police regarding TRF members using the green lane which runs from near Hexham Racecourse over West Dipton burn to Channel Well. There is excellent documentary evidence that this lane is an old road and I have written to the police with the evidence.

A complaint was also made to the police that TRF members were parking cars and trailers at the Hexham race course car park which is private. I certainly wasn't aware that the car park was private and I don't think anybody else was. Can all members please stop using this car park.

The local representative of the British Horse Society also rang regarding the same lane (it's been a busy month!). A local stables is regularly using the lane with young horses and there is concern that a horse could be startled by a motorcycle on the lane with possible injury to the horse or rider. Please expect to meet horses on this lane and take extra care (stop and turn off engine) if you meet a horse rider on this lane.

Mark Snoddy, Durham

BRISTOL

The Bristol Group was formed in the early '70s and notable past members include Bill Riley, Ian Thompson and Dave Giles. We presently have over 80 members but it is apparent that there are quite a few National members living within our area who we never have contact with. We are due to start a membership recruitment drive using posters and leaflets at local M/C dealers but would also like to attract existing National members.

We meet every 2nd Monday monthly (see back cover for details) and usually organise a run every fortnight. As well as local lanes we also have 'away days'/weekends to Exmoor, The Lakes, Yorkshire and Wales. In common with other

groups, we continue to face opposition to our pastime and with the number of Public Enquiries scheduled this year, need all the help we can get.

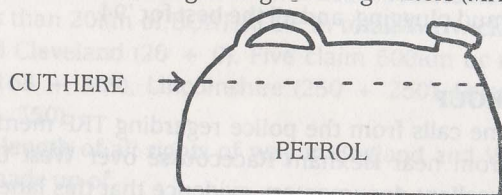
Even if you don't fancy joining us please do contact us as your knowledge and usage of local lanes could be invaluable in the fight to keep lanes open.

We welcome new members so why not call in at one of our club nights for a pint and a chat? Alternatively 'phone me for information about club activities/runs and get to know us that way.

Andy Horsman, Bristol Group Membership Secretary

USEFUL TIPS

Having to clean the air filter regularly on your off-road bike, I found a cheap and easy utensil to do this. Buy a 1 1/8 gallon plastic fuel can from your local garage and cut the top off with a hacksaw - this is the best thing I've found for the job. It doesn't melt, it's easy to clean out and it's big enough for large filters (MX).



Nick Evans, Northampton

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LIAISON Past - Present - Future

In the first of a three part report Dave Giles recounts how the TRF has built up its liaison with other principal players concerned with vehicles in the countryside, where that has taken us, and what we may expect in the near future.

"How might we improve our image?" asked a TRF member of the expert panel at our 1987 Derby Rights of Way (RoW) Conference: the panel comprising of an Inspector for the Department of the Environment (DoE) - Major General Shapland, the Head of Access and Recreation for the Countryside Commission (CoCo) - Jeremy Worth and a Byways and Bridleways (BBT) trustee and Don from Cambridge University - David Wallace were unanimous in their reply: "You already have a good image. But what you haven't got because you are only a small organisation is influence!"

"So go out and win friends and influence people" said David Wallace, and then again later on in answer to another question, "Remember, knowledge is power". We have cause to be thankful to this panel and to David in particular, because they were very influential themselves in shaping the future policy of the TRF.

This influence can be seen in the outcome of the 1989 TRF working party who were asked to up-date our Constitution; they recommended and we accepted that our Constitutional objectives should become:

- * to protect vehicular rights of way and our rights and that of others to use them
- * to work with all others who have similar aims
- * to co-operate with all countryside users to achieve the greatest benefit for all

(with tongue in cheek, I sometimes wonder what might have happened if the Ramblers association (RA) had accepted the invitation we extended to them to join us at that Derby Conference).

At a local level Fellowship RoW workers throughout the country have long known their counterparts in other organisations, but what began to happen in the late '80s, was a growing number of informal meetings between the chairman of the TRF and the full time officers of some of the other significant organisations. It began casually at first, through a telephone call and then dropping in when passing by.

The British Horse Society (BHS) at Stoneleigh, South of Coventry, was an early example. Soon an exchange of views had grown into general areas of agreement; that the BHS would not object to Byway reclassification on RUPPs if there was good vehicular evidence there, was one, and that the TRF would make our information on bridleway evidence available to them and their Arrow scheme was another. We knew through these discussions of the contention on Piper Lane, Derbyshire, long before it became a cause celebre in issue 9 of 'Byways & Bridleways', Autumn of '93. and it was no coincidence either that the BHS opposed the Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) at the Inquiry on the Ridgeway.

Similar opportunities have been created when in London to speak with the Countryside Landowners Association (CLA) and with the National Farmers Union (NFU). These are organisations of considerable influence with, in both cases, more

members in one County than the TRF has in the whole Country, but through the creation of this direct 'Hot Line' we have been able to diffuse more than one prickly issue.

In 1991 the CLA took the initiative over access into the countryside with their draft policy document 'A Better Way Forward' in which they stated a wish to foster a new climate of goodwill and co-operation amongst all concerned with access and recreation in the countryside. It called for concerted action through a new partnership between owners, users, local authorities, statutory agencies and the Government - to ensure that public rights of way are legally defined, properly maintained, signposted, waymarked, improved, modernised and managed.

In the original draft document there were aims to:

- * see a complete and definitive map by the year 2000
- * see an improved and modernised network of RoW suited to today's needs
- * provide a period of grace in which to clear up outstanding RoW claims. No more claims after that
- * regulate vehicular use of byways where problems arose by means of TRO's
- * contract landowners and farmers to manage RoW on behalf of the public through management agreements
- * set up Countryside Recreation Access Groups (CRAGs) in each county to improve communication and address local problems
- * extend warden services and enhance the policing of RoW

By then asking for comment from all concerned the CLA succeeded in generating a more constructive debate around their agenda.

This debate has largely been continued by the House of Commons Central Rights of Way Committee (CROWC), which is also known by the name of the MP who chairs it as the Haselhurst, or now most recently, as the Browning Committee. On this committee are representatives from the CoCo, RA, BHS, CLA, NFU and the motoring organisations group LARA, (Land Access and Recreation Association).

In the last two years CROWC has moved constructively towards consensus on the acceptance or modification of most of the original CLA proposals, and this will I believe be very influential in the run up to the year 2000. Developments include the use of TROs on byways only as a last resort after a careful appraisal of the facts and the failure of voluntary restraint measures. Similarly concern for education on RoW matters has featured more prominently than further talk of policing.

Central to all of this of course is the Countryside Commission who can be regarded as the Government's agent in matters pertaining to provision for access and recreation to the countryside.

The TRF has always argued that CoCo's remit was intended to cover all users, but they have never agreed to this and have continued to promote their policies of making provision for walkers, cyclists and horse riders only, as if our activity and rights didn't exist. So for most of the life time of the TRF they have not talked to us, refusing to believe that there was any need to liaise. Happily that has now changed and from the time of our '87 Derby Conference we have steadily built up our

relationship to the point where we now hold 2 informal liaison meetings a year with them. And with significant results; for they are now reviewing all their walking guides to ensure that they inform the public where they might legitimately meet vehicle users when walking a long distance path; and at least they are agreeing to the inclusion of Unclassified Roads (UCRs) in their 1993 RoW Survey. (In 1988 they didn't because UCRs don't appear on the Definitive Map). We have learnt significantly more about the framework within which they work and the thinking behind initiatives such as 'Recreation 2000', 'Visitors to the Countryside', 'The Parish Path Partnership', and now most recently the 'Milestones' initiative. All of which must be incorporated into our TRF thinking and actions.

The Ridgeway Inquiry into whether there should be a partial TRO on the Ridgeway was determined by 'the thinking of yesterday', what some of us refer to as 'trench warfare'. That the outcome will be far reaching in its affect I have little doubt, but that we are already talking to them about the future is as a direct result of the policy of liaison which we have been pursuing for the last 5 years.

NEXT MONTH: More about the '93 RoW Survey, the Parish Paths Partnership and the implications of the 'Milestones' scheme for us.

D. L. Giles

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LETTERS

BYWAY CLAIMS

Before serving official notices under Schedule 14 on landowners, it is very important first to write to the Parish Council or Councils whose area the lane crosses AND key farms. If you look on the OS 1:25000 map, farms are shown by name. Then send to each of them and the Parish your group's explanation of why the claim is being submitted.

From a public relations point of view, it is essential to explain that you are seeking the co-operation of neighbouring landowners, that having the lane shown as a Byway protects its character and status and that it is protected from being ploughed. Emphasise the conservation and recreation value of green lanes and that use will not change.

If you can persuade people not to object, the Highways Authority can make an Order without going to Public Local Inquiry, if your evidence of vehicular status is sound.

Remember, always write (or phone) informally first. Nothing gets up people's backs more than the sudden appearance of a WCA 1981 Notice on a lane. The farmers and general public and Parishes have no knowledge of RoW matters and are generally against change.

Hope this helps anyone considering a byway claim.

Gwyn Thomas, Somerset 83 AUA

P.S. Any TRF member is welcome to phone me on 0749 675294 if they need help. You can place a Notice at each end of a claimed byway if you've satisfied the County Council that you've contacted landowners.

THE OFFICIAL VIEW

Leicestershire Constabulary, Traffic Headquarters, St. Johns, Enderby, Leicester.
Dear Trail,

I am writing in response to a members letter in the January '94 edition of Trail (No 186) signed "A. K. Nobblefan, Bradford" on the debate over Road legal tyres for greenlaning Motorcycles. I am a TRF member and have been a keen Motorcyclist for twenty years and am at present a uniform Traffic patrol Motorcyclist with the Leicestershire Police.

Mr. Nobblefan tells the tale of the TRF member who was stopped by a Police Officer on route to a local run and warned that the Barum Motorcross tyres fitted to his machine and marked "not for highway use", constituted an offence and that the rider risked receiving penalty points on his Driving Licence if he continued on his journey. Mr. Nobblefan believes the Officer 'overstepped the mark' by doing this but I fail to see how this can be, surely, the Officer was only doing one thing that his job requires him to do ie: highlight offences. Would a Milkman 'overstep the mark' by delivering Goldtop? Furthermore, the rider only received a warning not to continue instead of being stuck in the book on the spot which the Officer could have lawfully done.

The Road Traffic Act defines the meaning of a Road as "any Highway or any other road to which the public have access and includes bridges over which a road passes", therefore if a pneumatic tyre is marked by the manufacturer "not for highway use" then I suggest this is pretty self explanatory. The Road Traffic Act also states under the Construction and Use Regulations that an offence is committed in relation to pneumatic tyres if "the type is unsuitable for the use to which it is being put".

Surely the experts as to how tyres are used are the manufacturers and not us as Mr. Nobblefan suggests and I believe the Courts would have the same view. Any Motorcyclist can tell you that an aggressive knobbly tyre tread pattern on a bike gives less stability than road bias types on hard surfaces and that is the main point of the Construction and Use Regs, SAFETY.

All this Law stuff is all very boring I know but that's the way it is, like it or not. If Mr. Nobblefan does not like it then he should Lobby the Government who make the law and concentrate less on making sarcastic remarks about the Police who enforce it.

Greg Archer, Leicester

FROM THE MEMBERSHIP SEC.

For obvious reasons, we have not included the name and address of the author of this letter, which was addressed to me as Membership Secretary - points raised in it affect all of us, so I have asked that the letter be included in the bulletin together with my thoughts on matter it raises.

Dear Garry,

I am sorry to say that I shall not be renewing my membership with the TRF because frankly I believe in value for money and the TRF does not offer any.

I have only just moved here from another area, and whilst I was there I used to attend my local TRF group on a regular basis. The lads who ran the group were always friendly and pleasant and organised runs out etc., but I don't pay £15 per annum for that - what I pay for is for you to 'Defend our rights'.

In my old area about 30 miles of RUPPs came up for reclassification, so I asked "what was the TRF going to do about it". To cut a long story short the answer was nothing.

I then phoned Tim Stevens who came down and told us or at least me what I could do about protests, etc., going through old records and the like. Then he went back from where he came never to be heard from again.

The group RoW officer had by this time stood down saying things like, it's a thankless task with no real help from above, and no expenses. When I asked for some TRF headed paper I was told "it isn't our policy to give headed paper to any old Tom, Dick or Harry".

If the RUPPs in question were only 100 yards long I wouldn't have bothered. When it's over 30 miles in a county without much more I think it is a disgrace!

Bearing in mind membership for BMF and MAG is only £15 per annum, I think £2.50 a year should be plenty for the TRF to cover the cost of the comic, because I'm afraid I can't see what else you get for it.

When Tim Stevens lost the (I think this is right) Bisley Lane Public Enquiry, it cost the BMF £15,000, not the TRF but the BMF. The TRF can't even pick up the bill for it's own botch-ups.

Having read the agenda for the TRF AGM, I was appalled that Tim Stevens can suggest that the TRF should cease affiliation to BMF, unless (what it boiled down to) Geoff Wilson was nominated for chairman, or some other high office position. I think this is very short sighted narrow minded and childish behaviour, and I will not give it my support by remaining a member.

I am, of course, saddened at the loss - for whatever reason - of each member, but more so, on this occasion, why? It's because this chap is going away, not because he has found a new interest or is merely apathetic, but because he seems misinformed/deluded about what is going on in the TRF and the BMF - I believe that he should know better and could even be a good TRF member should he channel his (better informed) energies in the right directions.

N.B. Answers to points raised by this letter next month.

Garry Watson, National TRF Membership Secretary

'TIS NOT ALL GRIEF

Back, last summer, I thought I'd take in a few lanes on the way to our local 'pub meet'. After just three lanes I had taken so much abuse from other users (on foot) that I gave up and went straight to the pub. I knew it was time to call it a day after I had stopped for a walker who then proceeded to berate me for being there.

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"Nag nag nag ...your sort ...etc."

"When were vehicular rights removed then? After all this was set out under Inclosure and is shown on Tithe as 'public road'".

"Ah well yes, you're right there, but do you really think it suitable for motorcycles?"

For the technically minded I must mention that even though this lane is between hedgerows from end to end, Hampshire C.C. authorised locked gates, at both ends, **under sect. 147 HA80** - true!!

Then one Sunday in the autumn, whilst sitting at this very key board, I decided that a couple of hours trail riding was in order. I checked my records and noted that I had not used a number of local lanes for over two years. All the sort of lanes that turn off from the routes regularly used to get to where you want to ride - if you know what I mean.

A surprising number of people about considering the overcast skies. I spoke to virtually all of them without one whinge - all smiles in fact. An elderly couple were delighted to witness my passage through a deep ford near Alresford. Disappointment all round when I DIDN'T go for an early bath. As I started on the next lane I was confronted by a sight that would bring raised beads of cold sweat to the forehead of the hardiest rider. Walkers as far as the eye could see.

I made my way carefully past a couple of young women at the back of the party and was about to ride around a middle aged gent when he turned to confront me. As quick as a flash his hands came from his pockets and I could see that he was thumbing a lift. I stopped to speak to him but without so much as a nod he knocked down the buddy pegs and was on the back.

"Hey" I said "This is a public road yer know and you should be wearing a helmet".

"I don't care pal, I'm b****in' knackered" he replied.

And so it was that we rode to the top of the hill to cheers and applause from the multitude of Sunday walkers.

The last lane of the day was the very same as the first one mentioned at the beginning of this piece. Way down ahead of me were two large horses plodding side by side. No problem. I switched off and admired the view. (For northern readers I should point out that this view does not resemble the 1994 calender picture. It is no more than a shallow valley with a patchwork of fields, hedgerows and old farm buildings). At length I restarted down the lane in the knowledge that the two riders would, by now, have reached part of the lane that is some thirty feet in width. As I drew close I could see that the male rider was 'Pixie', an old chum and a fellow not lacking in character. Ten minutes of good wholesome pi**taking and I rode home feeling good and grinning.

What a difference attitude makes. Make someone's day and smile.

Went on a couple of rides over the Christmas break which, from an interaction point of view, were un-remarkable. On a very wet day of 'Wet'n Wildsmith (He of bird bath fame) and I went to look at a few potential claims to see if they were on the

ground and useable. They were, and in the wet had a high grin factor. But we saw no one. The other was one of those days when I repeatedly tried to disprove one or two laws of physics. Physics was right and Pete and Malc laughed.

Dave Tilbury, Southern

GETTING WET

Whilst I must congratulate all concerned on the Ridgeway victory, if you read the inspector's report, with say a ramblers hat on, what you have got is a recipe to get it right next time. Be warned, they'll be back.

On a lighter note, the Thursday prior to Christmas saw Dick Somers and I head into wildest Hampshire for a spot of the sticky stuff. We were not disappointed. It was dull and overcast and just below freezing so it took a few lanes to get the blood flowing. In the area between Winchester and Basingstoke we found that our 4 x 4 fiends, sorry friends, no I was right first time, had been out to play. I came to one bit which as it turned out held 2 1/2 feet of water. This I discovered the hard way ie: too quick, but I struggled through without too much fuss.

Now being the nice kind chap that I am, I thought that I would warn Dick just in case he put the XL's fire out. "Keep up high on the right" I called as he rounded the corner. "O.K." says he and that's just where he gets the front wheel. Shame about the back one. Slippy slippy slid slid it goes and Dick is frantically gong for the "Big Dab". Up to his arm pits it came. "Dear me" he says "Aren't I a silly billy" (IF you believe that you will believe anything). Needless to say that brought the day to an end, but we still had 15 miles to get back to the car. We did this doing as many lanes as possible just to keep him warm. During that 15 miles he discovered a fact that not a lot of people know about. Normally you move a lot inside your clothes. When they are soaking wet this doesn't happen and it makes riding a bike very difficult.

Well here we are nearly at the end of January and I'm still having a chuckle about it. Well that's what mates are for in it.

Keep your powder dry, John Grew, West Sussex

OBITUARY

We offer our condolences to Mrs Nobles and family, who's husband and father, Geoffrey Nobles, died suddenly on the 28th of December 1993.

Mr. Nobles had been involved with the TRF since the 1970's and had ridden with several of our groups. He had an active interest in many areas of motorcycling, had been a competition rider, had a passion for Italian bikes and was a member of several motorcycling organisations.

I quote Mrs. Nobles: "He always enjoyed reading your magazine and remained an avid follower of everything to do with motorcycling and with the countryside up until his death".

This is the sort of man we shall miss - I hope we can all continue to share the enthusiasm for these good things right up until our departure from this wonderful world.

Garry Watson, TRF Membership Secretary

John Lower House
Countryside Centre, Hildesheim
Chilworth, Gosport, GU50 3RA
Telephone 0242 521881
Fax 0242 584270

Number 5925
Date 7 January 1994

Mr W H Kershaw
MOLARA
20 High Cross Drive
Newport
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NP1 9AB

COUNTRYSIDE COMMISSION

1993/94 CONDITION SURVEY OF ENGLISH RIGHTS OF WAY - SECOND SEASON

The Countryside Commission's survey of the condition of English rights of way has now entered its second year and we are, again, calling on your organisation's membership to assist with this major task by acting as volunteer path surveyors.

For a number of reasons beyond our control the first year survey season started far later than we would have hoped and the amount of notice given to volunteer groups was minimal. Accordingly the number of squares surveyed in 1993 was considerably below target particularly in the case of non-walker squares. Fortunately, the second year survey season will be a good deal longer than last years and, hopefully, enough time will be available for us to catch up with our targets.

To give an idea of the extent of the task facing us in 1994 we set out below a table of survey sample squares unallocated to volunteer surveyors as at mid October 1993, the end of the 1993 season.

TABLE OF SAMPLE SQUARES UNALLOCATED TO SURVEYORS AS AT 15 OCTOBER 93				
	WALKER	CYCLIST	HORSE RIDER	4x4/TRAIL RIDER
COUNTIES	36	174	170	188
METROPOLITAN BOROUGHIS	6	22	27	33
LONDON BOROUGHIS	5	16	20	1

We certainly need to see more wheels and hoofs on the rights of way in 1994! As in 1993, surveying will involve an examination of all the public rights of way within randomly selected 5x5km squares. For non-walkers surveying bridleways, BOATS and RUFFS squares will be doubled up into 5x10km transects. In order to complete a survey volunteers will need to:

COUNTRYSIDE COMMISSION

- 2 -

Check the legal definition of all the rights of way in the selected square by referring to the local Highway Authority's definitive Row map.

Give each path link a unique survey reference number.

Walk, ride, cycle or drive (as appropriate) all the path links in the square and complete a survey questionnaire form for each.

Pass the completed survey forms to an appointed local co-ordinator.

We would stress that it is not always essential for cyclists and horse riders to survey in the saddle, go to work. It is quite in order for those with the necessary experience to survey bridleways and byways on-foot but from the perspective of mounted rider or cyclist. The expense and inconvenience of mounting horses out to remote areas can often be avoided using this 'virtual horse' technique.

Most of the English highway authorities have pledged support and assistance to volunteer surveyors and many have appointed Row staff to act as local survey co-ordinators. The launch of our 'Milestones' initiative should generate further interest among the authorities.

We would be grateful if you could please draw year 2 of the survey to the attention of your membership and put out a call for volunteers. Volunteers may begin surveying at any time but should aim to be finished by July. Anyone wishing to assist with the survey needs to get in touch with our survey contractors who are:

Travers Morgan Environment
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☎ 071-278 7373; FAX 071-278 3476

Contact - Ruskin Hartley

*Your sincerely
John Butterfield*

JOHN BUTTERFIELD
Countryside Officer
Recreation & Access Branch

RoW MATTERS - SOUTH EAST

Kent

1. The matter of the 10 metre TRO's either side of the A2070 at Ashford on BOAT AE550 and the OCR Steeds lane is all quiet at present - hopefully the number of letters sent in to object to the TRO's were sufficient to persuade Kent CC that a bridge/underpass on both routes would be preferable. I have written suggesting that the RTRA is not the correct tool to restrict users from crossing a road. (Latest - we lost the fight - TRO'd).

2. Since the idea of voluntary restraint on MR226 (Pilgrims Way) at Wrotham near Maidstone has been suggested, the threat of a TRO would appear to have been shelved. As the original proposal for the TRO was put forward over 8 months ago, the counter arguments against the order, which was based on insufficient evidence, would appear to have been sufficient (sounds familiar to the Ridgeway?).

3. "Unsuitable for Vehicles" signs were recommended by the Warboys Committee for Unclassified County Roads and Kent CC have asked for an opinion on the siting of such a sign on BOAT MR181, known locally as Comority Hill Road, at Trottscliffe on the Pilgrims Way. During the Great Storm of 1987 a substantial tree root was left by the council clearance team causing the route to become more technical for 2 x 1 but impossible for 2 x 4 or 4 x 4. Although the root is gone the lane has caused Kent CC major headaches and the sign would appear to be cheaper than a TRO. So, yet another reason to call BOAT's UCR's.

4. Along with Ian Roscow and Steve Neville I attended the RoW workshop at Derby over the weekend of 21/22 November. A thoroughly worthwhile occasion and one to which I would recommend to the inexperienced as well as the experienced RoW worker. My thanks to the ACU SE centre for paying the fee.

5. The RUPP DB30A near Swanley, known as Tile Kiln Lane and runs from Kent into Bexley London Borough as a BOAT, has been restricted by barriers near the green. This has effectively made this into a bridleway bypassing the reclassification process. I have pointed out to Kent CC that I have 17 years user as I used to use this route to go to college.

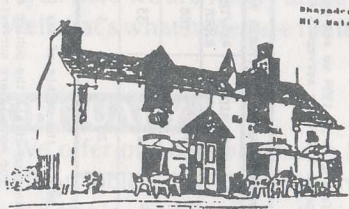
6. NS137 is a RUPP which stands in the way of the Strood/Wainscott bypass. Although a small amount of vehicular and documentary evidence exists, there would appear to be insufficient to enable a reclassification as a BOAT despite several AWD members placing much emphasis on this. Ian Roscow had been turned back by irate farmhands a while back and at a public inquiry it was stated that the route had been regularly used by AWD users. When the meeting adjourned for a site inspection it was found that the way was so overgrown it would have been impossible to prove regular use.

7. The majority of the Pilgrims Way in Kent is vehicular BOAT status but sections still survive which are RUPP and one of bridleway - MR48, MR60 and MR145 respectively. I have stated to Kent CC that considerable vehicular usage exists - much of this from past Kent TRF members John Higgin, Dave Tucker and if he can be found Fred Dwight (also ex-Kent Highways Dept.).

8. It would seem that quite a number of RUPPs and BOATs still have their surfaces ploughed out and although reinstated to some degree, the RoW Act appears to be ignored - in the case of KH220 at Lenham and parts of NS311 and NS195 at Cobham. This is even before the Channel Tunnel rail link has devastated the area. Others should be made known to the Group Rep. Steve Neville.

9. An Unclassified County Road near New Romney is due to be stopped up by "due process" so that a bypass can be built around the town. Now that Brian Wright has his second home in this area, this order prompted letters to Kent CC. They have replied stating that the order makers, the DoT finalised consultation in Feb 1993 thus causing some concern as neither the ACU or LARA were

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consulted, DoE Circular 2/93 is quite specific in this situation. The lane runs MR TR 035253-TR055251.

10. Signs attempting to deter vehicular users from utilising RUPPs at Hildenborough near Tonbridge, namely SR286 and SR157, have been placed actually on the routes. Although Kent CC have been advised about the signs, they still exist and do deter the unknowledgeable.

11. Until recently it had been assumed that no green lanes existed in the London Boroughs. Mindful that Highway Departments slide notices into the London Gazette and do not place them on site I contacted Phil Sadler who now distributes relevant inserts. In particular I wanted to be sent a notice that might appear stating a s116 HA80 on a lane recently claimed as a BOAT in the Bromley London Borough.

Surrey

1. Holehill Lane RoW 110, otherwise known as Skid Hill or Death Hill at Ranmore near Dorking is proposed for a TRO as the 4 x 4's cannot turn around when the route is barred by the locked gates enforced by the Railways Commission 1957 (until recently left unlocked) - all with user evidence should write to Surrey CC stating that vehicular rights have been re-established.

2. The London Gazette recently advertised two routes for s116 HA80. I had hoped to be at the Court but Brian Wright attended only to be told the cases had been withdrawn - I had written stating that I had used the ways - Fort Lane/Reigate Hill and Sandy Lane/Reigate Heath. Any users evidence to Surrey Highways.

3. Surrey CC have stated that due to unfavourable 4 x 4 use TROs would be applied for on several routes near Ash/Guildford. The reason bikes were to be included was because "... there would be an unacceptable degree of danger to motorcyclists wishing to use this route because of the condition of the surface" (sic.) I cannot remember a bike called a VOLVO? (Think about it!)

4. Brian, Steve Neville and Ian Roscow have been attending public inquiries into RUPP reclassification objections. Having been briefed on the meetings due to lack of time off work, the concrete evidence put forward by Surrey Highways seems sufficient in most cases for upgrade to BOAT. Recent cases were about RoW 5 (East Sheepwalk Lane) and 137 (East Drove Road). New cases soon, involve RoW 104 (West Sheepwalk Lane), 137 (West Drove Road), 515 (Beggars Lane) and 514 (London Lane) - user evidence to Surrey CC.

Tim Gooderson, Kent

RIGHTS OF WAY NEWS

Those of you who are farmers, or even farmers' boys or girls, might have seen an article in the Farmer's Guardian entitled 'Green Lanes of Conflict':

"If there is any doubt over status, if the land is not used by the public and if you consider it is a private right of way, then you should deposit a statement and plan with the highway authority to that effect. Moreover you should also lock the route, if there is a gate on it, at least one day a year".

The article makes great play with the conflict aspect, with the 'increased use of trail riding motorbikes', and it is written by John Blackhurst, the environmental,

planning and land use adviser of a solicitors firm in Ashbourne, Derbyshire. What better way to stir up conflict than to say it is bound to happen. We all know he is wrong, that even on our busiest 'National Trail' there is no evidence of real conflict, despite all the attempts to prove that there is. So what can we do about it?

Well, I am seeing the editor later this week, and I hope that he will allow us to put our point of view and correct his misleading article. We go along with the Country Landowners Association who say that where rights exist the routes should be open and on the definitive map. Perhaps Mr. Blackhurst does not know of the CLA policy, despite his fancy title. One thing is for sure, and that is if farmers take notice of his advice then they are likely to break the law, and come into conflict themselves with highway authorities and tall men in dark blue uniforms.

This article has reminded one or two of us that the TRF is not very good at responding properly about obstructions, whether they are locked gates, or any of the other charming additions to the country scene we come across from time to time. So, we have thought of an easier answer than all that letter writing. Postcards are now available so that you can advise the highway authority of every obstruction you come across, with the least effort on your part. Of course, you do have to fill them in, but they are designed to fit into any jacket pocket, Barbour, ex-army, or even parrot-fashion.

I don't suppose this is enough for one ex-member (see letter from membership sec.). He complains that he paid his fifteen quid and we didn't come rushing to his aid, or even if I did, I was not heard of again. True, I did only make the 500 mile round trip once, but I remain accessible on the phone and by letter. He complains that nothing was done about the 30 miles of RUPP in his county. Who is best placed to go to the record office, me, from 250 miles away, or him, on his doorstep? Why did I go to explain what to do, if I was to do it anyway? His RoW officer got no help, and no expenses, he whinges, but the help should not have come from me but from him. Local work must be supported locally, with national funds to sort out serious and one-off problems.

A further aspect of his letter calls for an explanation as he has got it completely wrong. He accuses me of trying to manoeuvre our AGM to suit a personal whim. Wrong. The motion about leaving the BMF was there for one purpose only, and that was because the BMF seemed to be going off-course and forgetting all about national clubs like the TRF. Our AGM followed straight after theirs, and I wanted the TRF to have the option of leaving if the BMF did not change, without having to waste another year's subscriptions. It did change, so I was pleased to withdraw the motion. Our ex-member was a BMF rep himself, so he knew what was going on, or he should have done. He did not attend the BMF AGM, or ours, so his assumption based on guesswork is inexcusable.

Perhaps he went to as many meetings for the BMF as he did for us. The real problem in this county (it is not alone in this) is that there has been very poor attendance from there at our executive meetings, where we decide how to help people. Meetings where we decide to allocate funds for equipment, and for research,

and all the things that your group reps tell us need to be done. Your officers have lots of odd characteristics, but we do not have crystal balls. If you want help, help is there for the asking, but for heaven's sake, you have to ask.

Perhaps I could also explain about the Bisley case, again. It wasn't me that lost Bisley, it was the BMF acting through a solicitor and a barrister. The case was lost because not enough evidence of use was available. Not enough of our members had done their homework and filled in use forms. It wasn't a TRF botch-up though, it was a case taken on by the BMF from the start, with the agreement of BMF directors, to assist its member club, and you should know that the TRF contributed very substantially to the case. Without the help of TRF members the bill would have been much higher, as everyone who was there will confirm, and I do not mean a few hundred quid, either, I mean 'as much again'.

Perhaps I have been doing this job too long. This letter shows that the message we have been peddling has been a waste of time, for one member at least. The message, that is, that the TRF is not something you just pay for and expect the officers to jump to your command. We do what you want, as far as we can, but we need your help to do it. On its own, the subscription is nowhere near enough, we need your time as well. If you think differently, please say so; but be ready to pick up the pieces. You will need a new RoW officer for a start. Perhaps, as Eccles said, I should have said that sooner.

Tim Stevens, RoW Officer

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL RIGHTS OF WAY CONFERENCE 1993

Kent CC invited Steve Neville as Kent TRF rep and myself as LARA rep to this all day bash at a very new conference centre near Maidstone last December. What surprised me most on signing on and reading through the paperwork was the disproportionate number of CLA, RA and NFU rep's in attendance. Some useful interpretations by George Laurence QC on common law cases ie: Wilts vs. Frazer, Riley case, R vs. Simms & Burrows, O'Keefe vs. IoW CC (strange one this), RA vs. Kent CC (important for s116 HA80 cases), R vs. SoS & Andrews and Mayhew.

Others speaking (dribbling?) included John Trevelyan (still harping on about vehicular users), Robert Shotton of the NFU and Andrew Stainton as past Chairperson of the CLA.

In the workshops I was fortunate to have Christine White of the BHS at the head of the table, while Steve and others had to endure leaders from the CLA, NFU & RA. Topics of discussion included a change in legislation, CLA & NFU interests (obviously), overcoming conflict and evaluation of the network.

At the end of the day the majority view was that Kent CC should initiate legislation to Central Government to stop noisy motor-sport. There were persons who were prepared to stand up in the time allocated to put forward the vehicular point of view (well done Steve) but also from some unexpected quarters. One stated that the statute law is already quite specific, the WCA1981 having been agreed by all concerned (the RA, NFU, CLA, etc.) and that it already was an offence to drive vehicles on footpaths

and bridleways. In other words, people should check the definitive map before assuming that routes were not vehicular ie: shown as a BOAT. At the end of the day Kent CC stated that they were not in a position to be able to initiate future legislation but if people felt strongly enough they should enlighten their Member of the House of WoodenTops - oops silly me - do I really mean Commons?

Tim Gooderson, West Kent LARA Rep.

NEWS FROM SOUTH WALES

The WTRA continues to perform a major RoW role throughout the Principality. As an Enduro Club, it is also influential in competition matters and is able to comment authoritatively on many countryside access issues. The same is true of the Cambrian Council of Welsh Motorcycle Clubs - a grouping formed in 1951 - which added a Countryside Committee to its structure in 1988. It is now consulted by, and liaises with, many agencies concerned with use of the Welsh countryside.

What we are short of in South Wales is an active TRF Group to concentrate exclusively on RoW matters working with WTRA and the Cambrian Council. A nucleus of individual members in the area is about to be invited to discuss the way forward. The lead is being taken by Stuart Dodwell, 28 Porthkerry Road, Rhoose, South Glamorgan (Tel: 0446 710851) who happens to be WTRA's RoW Officer. He will be contacting all known TRF members within 25 miles of Cardiff but if you know of anyone who ought to be a member, but isn't, please put them in touch with Stuart.

The Christmas edition of TRAIL had a N. Wales report from John Mills. He referred to the very few byway claims made in respect of RUPPs in Dyfed. The County is one of the largest in England and Wales and stretches from near Machynlleth in the North down to Carmarthen and Pembroke in the South. Of the initial 850 RUPPs (in Ceredigion) bids were put in for 97 to be BOATs. They were made by Aberystwyth and DMC (34), local 4 x 4 users (37), Teifi Trail Riders (36) and WTRA, based 100 miles away (31). That was in early 1990 and the outcome was acceptance of 30 to be Byways; the other 67 being rejected for lack of evidence.

In the November, another 400 were up for reclassification in Pembrokeshire - an area little used except for the Prescelly Mountains, for which the ARC took the initiative, and a few tracks known to the TTR. The reclassification proposals during

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*We welcome old
members and new!*

1991 were issued at a slower rate but were no easier to handle. In January '92 a challenge was made to the County Council about the adequacy of the research carried out by its staff. It took the whole year with letters to the Secretary of State and the Chairman of the Council to obtain a reply. The pressure did provoke some research but the officers claimed that nothing useful was discovered. During 1993 the local WTRA and LARA RoW respondents have been carrying out detailed research on a couple of tracks and this seems to be causing the County some discomfort. They are even more concerned that the reclassification proposals have produced hundreds of objections with the prospect of years of costly Public Inquiries which they may lose through poor evidence. A consequence may be a review of some of the bridleway decisions. All is not yet lost in Dyfed!

What is not good is that Powys is about to consider TROs on the Gap and on Monks Trod. There have been consultations about both but they have not prevented sub Committees recommending the imposition of TROs. All members of the main committee have been supplied with copies of the Ridgeway TRO decision letters and an appeal to look more carefully at alternative management measures if they are satisfied genuine problems really do exist.

The committee will have met by the time you read this. If they decide to go ahead, you will be asked to join in a protest when the Notice is published.

Bill Kershaw, Gwent, Tel: 0633 895241

SOUTHERN GROUP ACTIVITIES

New Forest

Within Hampshire lies that extensive area of heath, sand, bog and conifer known as the New Forest. Until the late sixties the public had unlimited access by vehicle. This was slowly restricted by the Forestry Commission by means of ditches and locked pole gates and the public are now deterred by Bylaws. Only one short route exists on the Definitive Map. Several bridleways are shown across railway bridges on BR land. Interestingly HCC have stated in writing to me that "the NF is an area where the public can wander at will". Last summer I presented a list (with evidence) to the Commission of approx. 50 miles of routes for discussion.

Whilst investigating the law surrounding 'crown' land and the Forestry Commission the following came to light which may be of interest to readers elsewhere -

Crown Land

Within the Southern Group we had always believed the story that Crown land was somehow excluded from the normal laws governing RoW. However close study of WCA 81 reveals that Crown land is specifically INCLUDED. Part IV s.67 states that "Part III shall apply to Crown land". Part III contains s.53 "Duty to keep Definitive Map under Review". S.67 goes on to state that Crown land includes land owned by a Government Department. The New Forest is vested in the Ministry of Agriculture Fisheries and Food but administered on its behalf by the Forestry Commission.

Forestry Roads

As I understand it the Forestry Commission is a Government body established in 1919 to provide a national supply of timber. The Commission is funded by Parliament by means of a 'Forestry Fund' allocated each year (Forestry Act 1967 s.41) The Commission is responsible for the construction and maintenance of a considerable network of roads either following older routes or constructed to serve its forestry needs. It may be a simplistic argument but the construction and maintenance of these roads, bridges and culverts have been funded by public money.

Will this bring such roads into the HA80 definition of 'highway maintainable at public expense'?

The Commission may bylaw public vehicles off 'the Lands of the Commissioners' but could this apply to publicly funded roads?

In the South we have little experience of contact with the Commission. Any comments or advice would be gladly received. If the argument is sound it may also apply to other roads constructed or maintained by former public bodies such as the Water Authorities.

Dorset

This County must surely be unique in having virtually no RUPPs or Byways. Both neighbouring counties of Wiltshire and Hampshire have hundreds of miles of both. Not Dorset, even though its history of settlement, agriculture and enclosure is broadly similar.

In April '92 I submitted a document to DCC detailing vehicular evidence on 36 bridleways and footpaths in 9 parishes in eastern Dorset. With help from the Hants rep of the AWDC the County also received a flow of letters complaining about the illegal gating of many enclosed lanes. The Council's initial response was hostile, "the landowner has not taken action that is intended in any way to prevent legal use by horseriders and walkers", "unfortunately I have been unable to locate your letter of ...", "Due to major overload on resources at present..." (four copies).

Over the past year some key personnel have left or retired from the Authority in both Transportation and Solicitors Departments. A recent letter stated "as regards the locked gates of which you complain I shall arrange for s.143 HA Notices to be served". Well done DCC. To date one gate has gone (Squirrels Corner). It's a start.

Good news also on Modification Orders. I understand that the Dorset TRF have had three claims considered by the RoW Sub Committee. I recently received a letter advising me to submit a formal claim to safeguard my right of appeal (with forms). I believe that the Sub Committee passed the application for BR10 at Witchampton (Badbury rings) although I await formal confirmation. Another well done to DCC.

Regards, Gareth Richards