

GROUPS

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1 & 3 Thurs, 8.30pm, The Mitre, Church Road, Bradmore,
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George Pritchard, Tel: 01761 452606
2nd Mon, Warmley Community Centre, Deanery
Road, (A420), Kingswood

CAMBRIDGE

Richard Palmer, Tel: 01353 88344

1st Thur, Golden Ball, Boxworth

CHESHIRE

Nigel Hockin, Tel: 0161 456 8270
2 & 4 Mon, The Robin Hood, Buxton Road, High Lane,
Hazel Grove, Stockport

CORNWALL

Sally A. Madgwick, Tel: 01208 74411

Ring Secretary for details

CUMBRIA

Roger Harris, Tel: 01539 725198

2nd Tuesday, Derby Arms Hotel, Witherslack, Nr. Kendal

DERBYSHIRE & SOUTH YORKSHIRE

Kevin Marsh, Tel: 01246 237910

2 & 4 Tue., Enfield Arms, Broughton Lane, Altercliffe, Sheffield

DEVON

Richard Arscott, Tel: 01803 612950

2nd Tue, The Welcome Stranger, Bickington, Nr. Newton

ABBOTT

DORSET

Tony Summers, Tel: 01202 894419

1st Tue, Greyhound Inn, Winterbourne, Kingston, (Nr. Bere
Regis)

EAST MIDLANDS

Graham Chinnery, Tel: 01332 863433

2nd Wed, The Chequers Inn, Main St, Breaston, South
Derbyshire, J25 on M1

EAST SCOTLAND

Les Mollison, Tel: 01382 738530

2nd Wed, Glencarse Hotel, A85, Perth to Dundee Rd.

EAST YORKS

Dave Barratt, Tel: 01977 794143

2nd Wed, Kellingley Social Centre, Knottingley

ESSEX

Aelwood Finch, Tel: 01245 329118

2nd Wed, The Swan Public House, Great Eastern,
Nr. Dumlow

GLOUCESTER

Wayne Little, Tel: 01452 611735

1st Tue, Painswick Institute, Painswick, Glos.

HERTFORDSHIRE

Colin Adlam, Tel: 01727 875618

1st Wed, Coach & Horses, Newgate St, Nr Cuffly

ISLE OF WIGHT

Mick Holbrook, Tel: 01983 866361

Last Thur, Liberal Club, Landguard Rd, Shanklin, IOW

KENT

Jeff Hayward, Tel: 01322 863521

2nd Tue, Pied Bull, Farningham, Nr Brands Hatch

LANCASHIRE

Keith Westley, Tel: 01704 893215

1st Tue, Hindshead Pub on A49, Charnock Richard

LINCOLNSHIRE

Alan Wilkinson, Tel: 01529 60793

4th Thur, The Queens Head, Kirkby-la-Thorpe, Sleaford

LODDON VALE

Bernard Green, Tel: 01344 50289

2nd Thurs, Inn in the Park, Woodley Centre, E. Reading

NORTH MIDLANDS

Simon Lowe, Tel: 01298 24388

1st Tue, Stafford Arms, Bagnall & 3rd Tue, Cheshire Cheese,
Buxton

NORTHUMBERLAND

Steve Bertram, Tel: 0191 261 9629 (daytime only)

1st Tue, The Beamish Mary, No Place, Co. Durham

NORTH WALES

John Mills, Tel: 01477 534425

1st Wed, Hope & Anchor, Ewloe Place, Buckley

OXFORDSHIRE

Pat McGuire, Tel: 01844 238414

3rd Thursday, Duke of Marlborough, 1.5 miles North of
Woodstock

PEAK DISTRICT GROUP

Phil Sadler, Tel: 01332 344495

1st Thursday, 8pm, Travellers Rest, Ashbourne Road, Derby

RIBBLE VALLEY

Tony Broughton, Tel: 01200 423239

2nd Tue, Penide Hotel, Chatburn, Clitheroe (off A59)

SHROPSHIRE

Lynton Powell, Tel: 01743 358423

2nd & last Wed, White Horse, Shrewsbury

SOMERSET

Peter Banks, Tel: 01749 860396

Last Thur, The Canal Inn, Wrantage

SOUTHERN

Russ McDermid, Tel: 01703 812371

3rd Wed, The Ship Inn, Owlesbury, Nr. Winchester

SOUTH LONDON & SURREY

Brian Wright 0181 680 5734 Wed-Sat, 01797 363373 Sun-Tue

9pm every Wed, Epsom Heath & Football Club, Priest Hill
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SOUTH NORTHANTS

Trevor Gardiner, Tel: 01788 815927

2nd Mon, The Live & Let Live Pub, Harpole, nr. Northampton

SOUTH WALES

Stuart Dodwell, Tel: 01446 710851

1st Thur, Welsh Institute of Sport, Cardiff, 8pm

SUFFOLK

Richard May, Tel: 01787 374073

Last Wed, Manger Pub, A134 Sudbury Rd, Bury-St-Ed.

SWINDON

Pete Owen, Tel: 01793 750557

1st Wed, Jacobs Ladder, Stratton St. Margaret, Swindon

SUSSEX

Bevis Billingham, Tel: 01243 585128

Last Thurs, Ashing on Social Club, Rear of Red Lion, A24,
9 miles North of Worthing

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Leo Crone, Tel: 01325 380117

1st & 3rd Wed, Blacksmiths Arms, Swainby

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Don Hoaglin, Tel: 01474 813977

3rd Mon, District Arms, Woodthorpe Rd, Ashford, Middlesex

WEST ANGLIA

David Knight, Tel: 01933 313816

1st & 3rd Thurs, Scott Bader Clubhouse, Opp. Parish
Church, Woolaston, Wellingborough

WEST MIDLANDS

Dennis Hayter, Tel: 01527 523550

1st & 3rd Tue, Wilmcote Mens Club, Stratford on Avon

WEST SOMERSET

David Dyer, Tel: 01643 841139

2nd Wed, Anchor Inn, Exbridge

WEST YORKSHIRE

Gordon Carr, Tel: 01535 644568

1st & 3rd Thur, Bankfoot Cricket Club, Wickets Close, (off
Cleckheaton Rd), Odsal, Bradford

WILTSHIRE

Bill Riley, Tel/Fax: 01225 863811

1st Tue, The Toll Gate, Holt, Trowbridge

WYVERN

Steve Pighills, Tel: 01902 672479

Every Thur, 10pm, Potter's Rose & Crown,
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TRAIL

SEPTEMBER, 1996

No. 217

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

EDITOR: Michael "Nettlebed" Pedley.

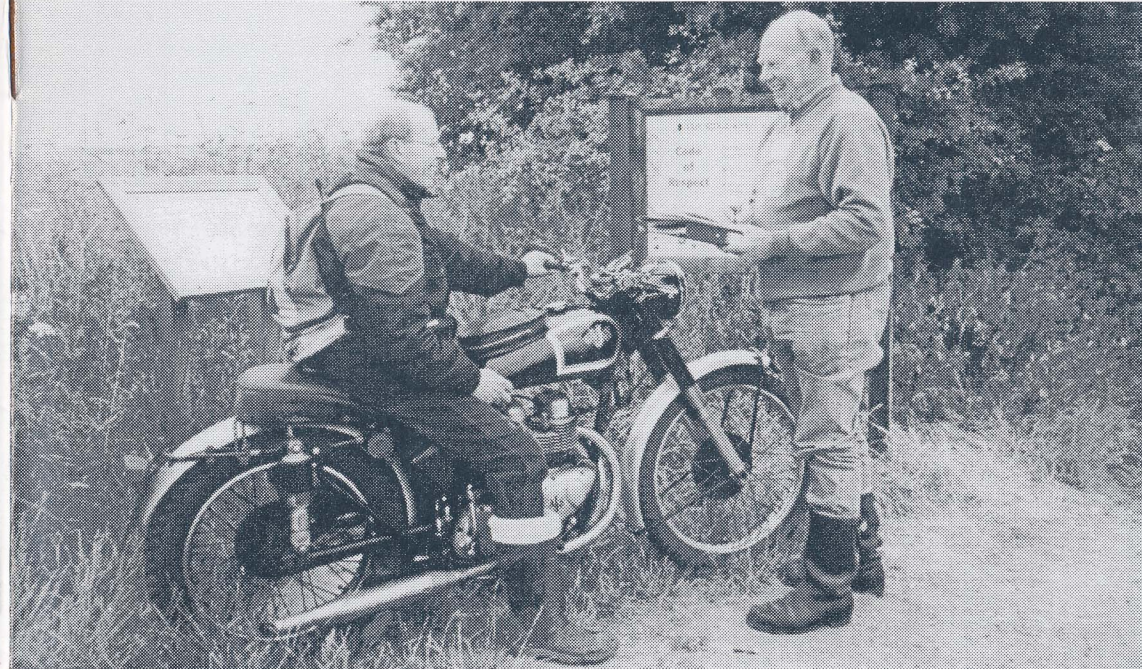


Photo taken by Sheila Hallam - refer to article on page 20

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All Contributions to the Editor Please keep it short and sweet!
COPY DEADLINE: FIRST POST, 1ST TUESDAY OF MONTH

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

EDITOR

The Ed. is on holiday but he asked me to remind you that it's time for the calendar photo competition again and if you'd like to see your picture in full colour on walls around the country this is your chance to win yourself a designer sweatshirt (see page 15 for more details), and at the same time help to promote the TRF in a good light.

Fred Ellison

TRF TREASURER

It is with regret that we have to announce that the TRF Honorary Treasurer, Tim Ley, was found dead on Tuesday 3rd September.

In addition, the Committee have found serious irregularities regarding funds. The Committee have acted to secure the financial future of the Fellowship and we have already put in place controls that should prevent this situation arising again.

Some Groups and Members have already offered the TRF financial help in the way of donations. Any other members or groups wishing to do the same please make cheques payable to "The Trail Riders Fellowship" and post them to the Acting Treasurer, Alan Wilkinson at 29 Christopher Close, Heckington, Sleaford, Lincolnshire, NG34 9SA.

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Chairmans Report

It is with deep regret that I have to inform you of the sad death of Tim Ley who has been our Treasurer for many years. Our condolences go to his widow and family.

Data Protection Act - all members are reminded that details of members may only be disclosed to other TRF members with good cause to require them and MUST NOT be given to any other persons or organisations.

Further to my last paragraph on page 5 in July TRAIL, I am now most pleased to report that the Crown Prosecution Service are to drop the case. We had already appointed a Solicitor to act for us and he is now looking to recover his costs from the Police.

This vindicates our decision to support a member using a lane for which he had good evidence of vehicular rights. Praise must also go to John Clarke of the Derbyshire and South Yorks Group for the considerable amount of supportive evidence which he was able to make available to our Solicitor. This is another very tangible benefit of membership.

Being of Scottish descent and naturally mean, I have been looking at my postal and telephone costs. There is a major difference between telephone costs nationally, i.e. daytime 9.78p (inc. VAT), evenings and night-time 5.8p, but weekends (midnight Friday to midnight Sunday) only 3.29p. The same prices apply to faxes, which means that you could send a daytime fax taking over two minutes for less than the cost of 2nd class postage and therefore much cheaper in the evening or at the weekend. From this it seems to me that for a couple of sheets of A4 it is both cheaper and quicker to send a fax.

The TRF caravan was used for the first time at Donnington. Whilst the opinion of the few members who turned up was that it would serve a useful function, the public attendance at Donnington was abysmally small and Kevin Marsh's marquee and the caravan were not visited by many people. Nevertheless the opportunity was seized to push copies of TRAIL and leaflets in the hands of as many people as possible in the main Exhibition Hall - so hopefully the trip wasn't a total loss.

Further to reports and comments from Tim Stevens, Steve Neville and our Editor in previous issues, it is most important that we react positively to the DoE and DoT Document - Vehicles on Byways. If you think you have sufficient knowledge to give them your determined, but constructive opinion, please take the few minutes to put pen to paper and do so. Your National Committee are certainly not letting the grass grow under their feet on this one!

Alan Wilkinson from Lincolnshire has kindly stepped into the breach and agreed to be our new Treasurer. This means that we are looking for a volunteer to be responsible for Magazine Advertising. Brian Wright wishes to step down as Deputy Chairman so again please may we have nomination for this post for the AGM.

All the other National Officers are prepared to stand for re-election. Nevertheless re-election is not automatic and must be the choice of those members attending the AGM. Also all the Co-opted Officers are happy to carry on in their present roles.

Looking forward to seeing lots of you at the AGM!

Tony Stuart

R O W N E W S

LAKE DISTRICT HIERARCHY OF TRAIL ROUTES INITIATIVE - SUMMER 1996 UPDATE

TRAIL MAINTENANCE

Many of us were involved in getting very wet on the first Trail Management Group Maintenance Day on 26th May. Despite the weather a lot of people made fairly light of a lot of work. Special thanks go to Jenni Gorman for coordinating the day and to Steve Tatlock for deploying all the labour so effectively.

Please keep **6th October** free for another trail maintenance day. Meet at the Grizedale Visitor Centre at 10.00 a.m. Please enthuse your club members to come along to help.

BETHECAR MOOR

All arrangements have been completed for an eighteen month (from 19th July 1996) Traffic Regulation Order on Bethacar Moor, during which time repair and research work must be undertaken which will enable us to pursue the whole trail management principle with a greater understanding.

I attended a very useful meeting of people from Colton Parish (in which Bethacar Moor lies). Apart from one person who appeared to resent the fact that users were taking an initiative and weren't leaving it to the National Park and Highway Authority, most folk seemed to support the progress that is being made.

WALNA SCAR ROAD

Since 1st January and 1st June, Phil Clague (LDNP Ranger) and voluntary rangers have been surveying all categories of recreational use of Walna Scar Road. A six month period of voluntary restraint (VR) began on the Walna Road on 1st June, during which time further survey work will be done and Cumbria County Council will be looking at options for some basic repair works involving the National Park Authority and Voluntary Groups. Watch this space.

Very recently Phil very badly injured his hands while arresting the fall of a climbing companion, so action on Walna may falter a little. We need to help as much as we can whilst the VR is in place.

NEW CODE

I think that most of you will have seen the very fine Green Road Code for Vehicle Users published by the Lake District National Park, with financial support from the Sports Council and LARA centrally. We need to make sure that full use is made of the code to help educate those users who we don't reach through the Clubs ... and maybe even some that we do.

PRESS REPORTS

The Westmorland Gazette gave some coverage to the code and the Bethcar TRO, but perhaps predictably got much of the detail wrong. 4x4 drivers will be upset because they get blamed for the defiance of voluntary restraint on Bethcar, when we know well that motorcyclists also defied it, for reasons which may not be so obvious. And motorcyclists will be upset because the Gazette doesn't give them much credit for being part of the solution. So maybe scores remain about even. Nevertheless we all are quite used to the press playing no positive role in such initiatives and should not be knocked off the rails by poor reporting.

RADIO & TELEVISION

Bob Cartwright (Head of Park Management at the Lake District) and Geoff Wilson (Chairman of the Hierarchy of Trail Routes Group) have become minor media stars in Cumbria (is anyone a mega media star on Radio Cumbria?) The progress of the HoTR initiative is of general public interest, and the message seems to be getting across.

LDNP ANNUAL REPORT

Even better is the page in the recently published Annual Report from the Lake District National Park Authority. A copy of the page is enclosed, along with a copy of a letter I wrote drawing attention to the continued misuse of the term "Off Road". It serves to illustrate how vigilant we all have to be in how we make any form of presentation if we are to succeed in changing perceptions permanently.

HoTR CONSULTATION

The consultation exercise which takes the Hierarchy of Trail Routes principle to other user groups and interested organisations is well underway. We have had very encouraging replies from the CLA, National Trust and Yorkshire Dales National Park. The Ramblers called, in what appeared to be a very constructive frame of mind, for some clarification of a few points. The Friends of the Lake District were not included in the consultation round and called politely asking if we could include them also. We were happy to, of course. We eagerly await further responses in advance of our next meeting on 18th September.

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• GROUP NEWS •

SUFFOLK GROUP

The last evening ride took place with again only Chris and I from Cambridge. We met at Bury St. Edmunds and headed North East towards the Norfolk border. Darkness beat us before we got that far, but it was a good evening - we even found some mud to test out the new Serow. It felt very odd after my old XT - you sit on it rather than in it!, but it seems like an excellent, easy to ride tool for general trail riding. We were nearly joined by a new member(?) from Honington and his mate from Teesside, but the excitement of Suffolk lanes proved too much!

At the meeting were Chris and I (again!), John and our two ex-member regulars Steve and Dave - OK it was Bank Holiday week. John revealed that he has become a Bandit and has had to sacrifice his XT. Hopefully this is only a temporary situation as he is one of the very few staunch supporters.

Unfortunately I didn't make the planned Sunday run. I was going to take Steve and Dave over the border into Essex. Luckily(?) in this case no-one else was involved.

We've had two requests for assistance over the last month. Ipswich Cycle Club want us to act as a course sweep for their mountain bike events and Suffolk MCC need marshals for their enduros. Hopefully we'll do the former on September 29th and the latter on September 15th.

Many thanks to Charlie Morriss from Gloucester who rang to answer my RoW question from last month. Extinguishing or diverting footpaths and bridleways does not change any existing vehicular rights on a route. I wonder if Suffolk CC know this? Charlie also mentioned a survey which was conducted by the Government in WW2 of agricultural land. This resulted in a series of maps similar to those from the 1910 Finance Act. This is the first I have heard of this survey - ask your local records office.

We have Sunday runs scheduled for September 29th and November 3rd and a horse ride on October 5th/6th. Is anybody still reading this? I don't think we're really that boring.

Richard May

KIR TRAIL SPORT

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TR1 (matching front tyre)	3.00 - 21	£26.00

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BR92 (90% off / 10% road tyre)	4.60 - 18	£42.50

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VE33 (std fitment to XR Honda's)	4.60 - 17	£36.00
VE33	5.10 - 18	£37.00
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EAST MIDLANDS TRF GROUP MEMBER

Telephone : 01949 850530 (anytime)

THE FUTURE OF TRAIL RIDING

LARA

DoE and DoT

Consultation: Vehicles on Byways

continue

It is most important that you write in response to this consultation. Please encourage your colleagues and club contacts to do the same. These points may help you with your response. Write to Mr. Ryan for certain - address following - perhaps also your MP if he is remotely sympathetic to motors or sport, etc. Please add a note saying which clubs you are in, including any not directly connected with motoring, such as the Country Landowners Association, The National Trust, The Ramblers, Sheepwatch, GLEAM, etc.

• This is a fundamental change in a law that has worked well for hundreds of years (Queen's Highway) and for no good reason.

• Green roads are no different from tarmac, in principle, and motors no different from horse carriages. Who will be next?

• This change would favour the rich carriage drivers and landowners and penalise the poor motorcyclist.

• No real problem to justify an all-year, all-motors, all-lanes ban. Local management by co-operation is better all round.

• The few damaged lanes would not be damaged with sensible timely maintenance, but they don't get any.

• Where there is some damage, other lanes in the same areas are not available (TROs, obstructions, etc.) and this concentrates use (give examples).

• Most damage is due to agriculture and forestry, and this penalises a lesser culprit and lets the major culprit

destroying lanes.

• Almost all users agree to sensible voluntary restraint deals, much cheaper, more flexible, than any sort of ban.

• Yes, there are changes needed, but in council attitudes, maintenance budgets, acceptance of voluntary maintenance offers, removal of inflammatory term Byway OPEN TO ALL TRAFFIC, etc.

• Sensible minor changes have been agreed by House of Commons Rights of Way Review Committee, but the minister has said 'no serious problem, so law will not be changed'. Now this idea comes along, not agreed by RoWRC at all, and Ministers consult on it. Is this fair, or are strings being pulled?

• If this scheme is adopted, lanes will become overgrown, ploughed out and then extinguished for lack of use. Nobody wins except the landowner.

• If this scheme is adopted, many users will be unable to do their sport, so will look elsewhere. Motor sport is already desperate for venues and cannot cope with a rush of new people needing to take part on private land.

• If this scheme is adopted, cross country cars and motorcycles will become useless, the market will be flooded, with serious consequences for the trade. They will fall into the hands of the only ones who can use them, those who are prepared to break the law. Such users care nothing about Codes of Conduct, riding on footpaths, other users, etc.

• Currently, responsible users can set a good example and exert peer group pressure on the uncaring user. If this

scheme is adopted, there will be no responsible users. There may well also be an increase in irresponsible ones, who no longer see any point in good behaviour.

• If this scheme is adopted, much motor sport from grass roots novice trials to the RAC Rally will be stopped. Loss to the economy will be serious, not just makers and workshops, but hotels, landowners who hire out land for speed sections, etc. Second largest income for Forestry Commission is Rallies, and they all involve some use of green lanes to link sections.

• If this scheme is adopted, the countryside will be littered with signs. Who wants that?

• If this scheme is adopted, access for many other activities will be stopped, including caving, hang-gliding, falconry, hot air ballooning, hunt following, etc., etc. (add any that go on in your area).

• If this scheme is adopted, many non-motoring events including horse trials, carriage driving events, mountain bike events, etc., will no longer be able to use motorised marshals. Many such events rely on motorists, especially motorcyclists, to find lost competitors, mark out routes, etc.

• If this scheme is adopted, there will be no more trips into the countryside for the disabled, elderly, disadvantaged children, etc. organised by 4x4 Clubs.

• This is a slap in the face for co-operation, for Green Lane Day, etc. Thanks everyone, but clear off!

• Sensible deals to improve the network for everyone are being worked out in the Lake District and elsewhere. This scheme would make this work impossible.

• The Government says we need more facilities for sport, so what is the point in closing 6,000 miles of such facility?

• If a group of teenage hooligans was destroying a swimming pool by careless use, you wouldn't close all the swimming pools to all teenagers, would you? (Try to think of alternative scenarios).

• Councils take years to deal with obstructions, Byway claims, etc., so what chance of them agreeing to open specific routes within a reasonable time?

• Some councils put on TROs for no good reason, so what chance of them agreeing to open specific routes at all, or without at least a 'guarantee' of no damage at all?

Choose from the above pointers those which seem best from your point of view, and add your own ideas, too. Try to include examples from your own experience, especially where your claims can be cross checked with others.

Tim Stevens, LARA Information Officer
CONSULTATION PAPER FROM THE DoE & DoT: Vehicles on Byways: this is what they say:

1. In the Rural White Paper (Cm 3016), the Government acknowledged the concern that exists about damage and disturbance caused by the inconsiderate use of motorised vehicles on byways. The White Paper continued: "it has been suggested that the Government should introduce general legislation to protect byways, by banning motorised vehicles from them except for access to property. We do not believe that a conclusive case has been made for such action. Nevertheless, we will discuss this issue further with the Local Authority Associations and others with an interest, to see whether general

legislation may be desirable".

2. This letter seeks your comments. It is recognised that this is a subject area that raises difficult questions about the balance between the general opportunity to enjoy access to the countryside - which the Government wishes to maintain and enhance - and the need to protect the local environment. A single, simple, answer that takes account of the interests of different user groups has proved elusive in the past and we are under no illusions that the situation is any easier now. This discussion paper, outlining some possible options, should not be taken as implying any Government commitment to legislate in this area, nor any view that it would be appropriate or desirable to do so.

3. This consultation exercise covers England and Wales. The Welsh Office is consulting simultaneously in Wales on the same basis as set out in this letter. Scotland is not covered. The Government does not believe that conflicts of interest arise to any significant extent between motorised and non-motorised users of byways in Scotland. Such roads also play a greater part in the highway network than is the case in England and Wales, and the Government takes the view that there is no reason to consider changing the existing legislative situation there.

The current situation

4. The White Paper describes the actions that the Government is taking within the existing legislation. These include working with user groups to develop voluntary codes of conduct and advising highway authorities. Research is in hand to provide the basis for a good practice guide, expected to be published in the late summer. The Government

continues to encourage local authorities to use their existing powers to make Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) to control or prohibit the use of motorised vehicles on specified routes that are subject to particular problems.

Is there a need for change?

5. The first question is whether these actions are likely to be sufficient, or whether further action may be needed. Views are sought on this point. Clearly, there are advantages in following a voluntary route where possible. But there is a suggestion that the bulk of damage to byways is caused by a minority of reckless drivers, who are unlikely to comply with a code of practice even if it is endorsed by organised user groups. It could be argued that a new mandatory restriction, creating an offence in law backed by the threat of criminal sanctions, would be a more effective deterrent than those currently available.

6. The use of TROs is well established for the regulation of traffic on highways of all types. There have been complaints in the past that the procedures for making such orders, designed to ensure that the views of objectors are properly aired, make this approach more cumbersome and expensive than is appropriate for dealing with byways. The Government is currently preparing simplified procedure regulations that will reduce the burden. But as long as the roads in question are legally open to all traffic, then the Government thinks it right for the principle to remain that restrictions on the right of free access are a serious matter that require full justification, up to and including public inquiry as necessary.

7. However, the Government

considers that more use might conceivably be made of temporary TROs, made under section 14 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984. This section permits orders to be made, among other things, "because of the likelihood of serious damage to the road". When made in respect of a byway open to all traffic, they may continue in force for up to six months. It seems to the Government that such orders could be used to restrict use of byways by motorised vehicles during the winter months, or at other times when weather conditions led to a serious risk of the surface of the byway being badly cut up. The procedures involved in making an order of this sort are less extensive and hence less costly. However, one reason for this is that there is no requirement on the authority making the order to invite and consider objections. The Government would welcome views on whether the greater use of such temporary orders might offer a way forward.

8. Enforcement of TROs has also been cited as a problem with existing arrangements. It is unlikely that many police forces routinely visit byways, rather than occasionally being summoned in response to a particular complaint. The Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 allows the use of bollards and other obstructions to help give force to restrictions imposed by TRO. However, there are clear practical difficulties where a right of access by motorised vehicles to premises or property is retained, particularly if it needs to be exercised by more than one or two people. It has also been suggested that a barrier system capable of deterring motorcycle access is also likely to cause problems for horse riders.

9. Enforcement would remain a difficult issue under any regime. It would therefore be important that any change in the existing legislative position was accepted by those who use byways, so that there was a high basic level of compliance. Supporters of the case for change argue that a general presumption against use of byways by motorised vehicles would enjoy such support and the majority of drivers would be prepared to comply with the restriction. It might be claimed that part of the difficulty with present arrangements stems from uncertainty about whether a particular byway can or cannot be used by motorised vehicles. Views would be welcomed on the question of enforcement.

Possible options for change

10. If further action is considered to be needed, the most attractive course of action, in the Government's view, would be the creation of a new class of highway. This might be officially named a byway, on which motorised vehicles would be generally prohibited, except for access to premises, property or equipment. Those requiring access would be most likely to be local residents and farmers, other land owners, managers, or tenants who need to use byways to reach property and statutory undertakers servicing their equipment.

11. The definition of the new class of highway would be crucial. There would be little point in a definition that required the local traffic authority to designate roads individually and to consider objections before doing so - this would be little different from the TRO procedure except in name. The definition would need to apply automatically, unless it were disapplied

by the traffic authority with regard to part or all of a particular road.

12. What would be needed would be a criterion, or set of criteria, ideally immediately apparent to road users, that demarcated a byway (on which use of motorised vehicles was not generally deemed appropriate) from other types of highway suitable for use by all vehicles. Such a change would require amendment of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

13. The most promising definition, in the Government's view, is one relating to the surface of the road. A "byway" might be defined as a highway without a metalled surface, over which full vehicular rights currently exist, but to which restrictions would henceforth apply automatically. The Government will particularly welcome comments on this point and suggestions for alternative definitions if this one is felt to be unsuitable. It is recognised, for instance, that problems have arisen on Byways Open to All Traffic (BOATs) that were metalled at some stage in their life but which have not subsequently been maintained to that standard. A definition that turned on the existence or otherwise of a metalled surface might require local authorities to provide such a surface where it does not currently exist, should they consider it appropriate for a byway to remain open to all traffic. It would be necessary subsequently to maintain the metalled surface to an adequate standard. Alternatively, if such a definition were to apply, it might be necessary to remove what was left of a metalled surface where it is not proposed to maintain it for use by all traffic. Comments on the resource implications of this would be welcomed.

Implications for the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981

14. It is proposed that the new category of byway would be shown as such in the definitive map and statement of minor public rights of way that the Wildlife and Countryside Act requires local authorities to maintain. Byways would comprise some highways that are currently defined as Roads Used as Public Paths (RUPPs) or BOATs, together with any other public highways not currently on the definitive map to which the proposed definition applied. Arrangements would need to be made to add these to the map, together with the removal of any ways with vehicular rights that did not meet the new category's definition. A clear distinction would therefore be drawn between the definitive map network for non-motorised users and other highways in the countryside where vehicular rights could continue to be exercised.

15. To do this, it seems to the Government that it would be necessary to remove the designation "BOAT" from the 1981 Act, to be replaced by the new category of "byway". Byways would continue to carry vehicular rights, but except for vehicles using byways in order to gain access to premises and equipment, those rights would not be exercisable. If the definition of byway were to relate to the lack of a metalled surface, vehicular rights would be automatically reinstated where a surface was subsequently provided and the definitive map would need to be altered.

16. There would be implications for the future handling of the RUPP reclassification exercise. The options for reclassifying RUPPs would be either as byways, or as bridleways or footpaths

where no vehicular rights were found. Where RUPPs were reclassified as byways because vehicular rights were found, those rights would automatically be suspended. RUPPs that would in current circumstances be classified as BOATs and which did not meet the new definition of byway would be removed from the definitive map and subsequently shown on Ordnance Survey maps as unclassified roads.

Implications for the Year 2000 target

17. These proposals would have implications for local authorities' ability to meet the target of having the rights of way network properly maintained, well publicised, and legally defined, by the Year 2000. The Government does not believe that these proposals should unduly affect the first two requirements of publicity and maintenance, but they are relevant to the question of the legal definition of the network and may therefore affect matters there. Comments are invited on the likely impact and how this might best be handled.

Other possible legislative routes

18. It has been suggested in the past that restrictions could be introduced by the Secretary of State for Transport making an order under section 20 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984. This section provides for the prohibition or restriction of use of vehicles on roads of certain classes, subject to such exceptions and conditions as are specified in the order. The powers have never been used.

19. If it were decided that further action is needed, this approach would have the advantage that new primary legislation would not be required. The disadvantage, in the Government's view, is that it would not appear

possible to use section 20 to establish anything beyond a national blanket ban with specified and generalised exemptions, for instance for access. Since byways vary to such a degree in their nature and usage patterns, the Government feels that this would be a rather crude approach, which would be likely to create anomalies. The Government's initial view, on which it would welcome comments, is that any scheme should ideally make provision for some degree of local flexibility and discretion.

20. The Government's working assumption is therefore that primarily legislation would be needed to make appropriate change. Before promoting such legislation it would need to be satisfied that the balance of advantage lay that way, in terms both of public acceptability and of administrative simplicity and cost effectiveness.

Signing

21. Restrictions imposed by order must be indicated by the provision of traffic signs, which then need to be maintained in such a state as to be clearly visible. It is likely that under any new arrangement the legal status of a particular highway would also need to be indicated by the use of traffic signs. The Government doubts whether a distinction could be drawn up between ways that motorised vehicles could legitimately use, and ways that they could not, that avoided doubt in all cases, without a requirement to sign restrictions. This might be a particular problem where a right of access by motorised vehicle was retained: a driver seeing one vehicle using a byway would need clear guidance on whether he or she was also entitled to use it.

Excluded Vehicles

22. Views are sought on the types of vehicles that might be automatically excluded from using byways. This consultation document refers throughout to "motorised vehicles", on the presumption that any restrictions would apply equally to two and four wheeled motorised vehicles. Consultees may wish to comment on whether motorcycles and mopeds might be treated differently to four (or more) wheeled vehicles.

23. The Government does not consider that it would be appropriate for any national restriction also to apply to non-motorised vehicles, such as those drawn by horses or other animals, but will welcome comments on the point. In considering both situations, consultees will need to bear in mind that Government's view that it would seem appropriate for any national scheme to make provision for local variations, to exempt particular categories of vehicles from restrictions on particular byways.

Resource implications

24. If a new category of highway were to be created, it is likely that local authorities would be under a duty to erect traffic signs to give effect to the associated restriction. This would constitute a new burden. Where they decided to exercise the option of varying the national prohibition, it is envisaged that they would first have to advertise their intention and provide an opportunity for representations to be made. It would also be necessary to amend the definitive map. Both activities would involve additional costs. Against this, there would be potential savings in that authorities would no longer have to make traffic regulation orders to introduce new

restrictions on the use of byways. There might also be savings if the existence of the new category simplified the process of reclassification of RUPPs.

Request for comments

25. The Government will welcome views on any of the issues raised in this letter, including suggestions for different approaches if consultees wish to make them.

26. **COMMENTS** from National and English organisations should be sent to: Kevin Ryan, Traffic Policy Division, DoT, Zone 3/17, Great Minster House, London, SW1P 4DR - **by Friday 27th September**. It would be helpful to receive two copies of each response, so that the Department of Transport and Department of the Environment can each have one.

27. It is DoEs normal practice to make copies of responses generally available in their Library at the end of consultation exercises of this sort. The Government will assume that respondents will have no objection to the contents of their letters being made public and attributed to them unless the response contains a statement to the contrary. All responses may in any case be included anonymously in a published statistical analysis of the results.

28. Telephone enquiries about any aspect of this document, or of the consultation exercise, may be made to Mr. Ryan on 0171 271 5118, or to Jonathon Edwards on 0171 271 5094.

Signed by order of the Secretaries of State for the Environment and for Transport:

Roger Pritchard, Assistant Secretary, Countryside Division, DoE.

Andrew Whybrow, Assistant Secretary, Traffic Policy Division, DoT.

You Are Invited To The
TRAIL RIDERS FELLOWSHIP
1996 NATIONAL
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

on Saturday October 12th, 1996
at 10.30 a.m.
to be held at the

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M42, Junction 6 - A45

Admission to the AGM will be by valid TRF membership card

Just to whet your appetites - along with all the usual AGM stuff the following
Motions were submitted before September 1st, 1996:

*Motion 96.1: DoT/DoE letter, TRF response to
Motion 96.2: TRF membership structure, revision of
Motion 96.3: TRF Constitution, update and amendments to
plus: TRF 1997 Forward Plan: The Chairman*

See you in the Bracebridge Suite

WANTED

Pictures for the
1997 TRF Calendar
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Entries to Mr. Fred Ellison, Sheepcote Farm, Moor Lane,
Wiswell, Clitheroe, Lancashire, BB7 9DG.

Please enclose a SAE if you want your entry returned.

NOTICES

SOUTH WEST REGION (est. 1989)

Notice of Autumn Meeting 1996

TRF members are cordially invited to the next meeting of the South West Region of the Trail Riders Fellowship, to be held in the Village Hall, Cossington on Saturday, 9th November 1996, starting at 10.30 a.m.

All will be welcome, particularly those not in regular contact with local groups and those from other parts of the country. Cossington provides an ideal opportunity to meet fellow members from neighbouring groups; all who are interested in making the TRF an effective and enjoyable organisation can compare notes and exchange ideas at this informal event. Following on a couple of weeks after the National AGM this meeting will be a useful opportunity for further discussion on topics raised. The need to develop a co-ordinated response to the increased activities of those intent on denying us access to our countryside will no doubt make this year's meeting particularly valuable; if you have any good ideas, bring them along.

Each group in the SW and our National Officials are usually represented. Expenses, including tea and coffee, but not lunch, will be covered by donations from SW Groups. There is plenty of space so feel free to just turn up; lunch is available at a local hostelry. Cossington, near Bridgwater, Somerset, grid ref. ST360402, is approx. 4 miles east of M5 junc23 (Nth Bridgwater); take the A39 towards Glastonbury and look out for the left turn. See you there or get in touch if you have any queries.

Peter Banks, Somerset Group Rep.

THE 4TH EAST MIDLANDS REGIONAL MEETING

will be held at
Rutland Sailing Club, Edith Weston village, near North Luffenham
on Saturday 28th September
in the Commodore's Room - Coffee from 10.30 a.m.
Meeting starts at 11.00 a.m.

Inexpensive lunches available in the cafeteria - Ruddles Ales.

Guest Speaker will be Sam Watt, who will explain the West Yorkshire Group's Rights of Way Recording System, which has been adopted by the seven Groups which comprise the Northern Region.

Seven TRF Groups were represented at our last Regional Meeting and we hope that we will have the opportunity of welcoming members from Essex, Norfolk and Suffolk to the September meeting. There will be a general discussion session in the afternoon.

It would be helpful if members who have not attended the previous meetings could contact me beforehand so that I can advise the caterers of the approximate numbers expected.

Jeff Ward, Meetings Secretary, Tel: 01536 267036 day, Fax: 01536 408787

It is with great sadness that I have to report the death of one of North Wales' most enthusiastic trail riders - Elwyn Williams. He died on 3/8/96 of a heart attack at the start of a day's trail riding near Foel (between Welshpool and Mallwyd) with his good mate Mick, at the beginning of a UCR he was instrumental in getting re-opened for use.

I had the privilege of knowing Elwyn for the past 10 years, when he first appeared at North Wales TRF Group. He never ceased to amaze me with his knowledge of roads and

tracks in the area north of Machynlleth. As he was retired he often went riding on his own in the week and he used to turn up at meetings with news of a new road he had just found, after talking to the farmers in the area - and was it legal? More times than not it was and we added another RoW to our list.

He was born in Llanfyllin which is more or less in the centre of OS125, and so seemed to know all the farmers in the area, or they were a relation, or they were an old school friend. Consequently he very rarely encountered any irate landowners - in fact they encouraged him to use more interesting permissive routes.

He was dedicated to riding motorcycles and would turn up at a run start in Dolgellau having ridden from

A GOOD FRIEND REMEMBERED

home in Crewe, ride with us all day and then ride home again. In his youth, he told me, when he drove trains to Machynlleth, he used to take his motorbike in the Guard's van and get in some trail riding during the overnight stop.

He and I had many exploration runs where we spent all day finding old routes that had not been used for years - and opened them again for use. Only last year we spent a day riding UCRs near Mallwyd that hadn't seen wheels for years.

He will be missed by us all, including many fellow

trail riders from all over the country, whom he had led around his patch. He was always cheerful and good natured and took great pleasure in sharing his discovered roads. Occasionally, if upset by the antics of "over eager" riders, he used to exact revenge by leading them briskly from lane to lane and get them completely disoriented.

His ashes have been scattered on the Wayfarers and he will be especially remembered each time we ride this old byway.

His trail riding exploits will not be forgotten for a long long time.

We extend our sympathy to his widow Margaret and to all his family.

John Mills, Chairman, North Wales Group



BMF FIGHTS GREEN LANES THREAT

The Government's latest attempt to resolve the use of Byways (or green lanes, as they are often known), has come under attack from the BMF.

Writing to the Department of Transport on the publication of the consultation document, 'Unauthorised Use of Motor Vehicles', the BMF's Geoff Wilson points out that the very title presupposes that prior authorisation is required to use a Byway, when this is not the case. "Posing a question in this way is bound to bias any response" says Geoff.

As members of LARA (Land Access and Recreation Association), the BMF has fully supported voluntary codes for Byway use but now fears that increased use by four-wheel drive vehicles has resurrected a debate over 'green-laning' that could see moves being made for wide-spread Byway closures.

Byways are part of the Queen's Highway and should remain open to all those who pay road tax say the BMF.

ANTI-THEFT INITIATIVE HITS RACE MARKET

Recent inspections of race bikes by specially trained BMF marshals have reinforced suspicions that stolen bike engines are finding their way onto the racing scene.

At Oulton Park, inspections revealed that eight of twelve sidecar outfits examined had either no engine numbers or false numbers while at Croft another five machines were found to have dubious engine numbers.

The marshals were working under the joint BMF/MAG Anti-Theft Initiative and were trained by BMF Security Director Alan Bridgman and Ken German of the Metropolitan Police Vehicle Squad.

Working with the full support of the ACU and particularly the New Era Club and Cheshire Centre ACU, Alan Bridgman said: "ACU regulations forbid the use of machines without identification marks but neither the police or ACU have had the resources to carry out thorough checks. With our help the Clerk of the Course can now exclude machines from racing. Our aim is to show thieves that the road racing scene is no longer a ready market for stolen parts".

Issued by Jeff Stone, Press and Public Relations Manager

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TRAIL RIDING TIPS

What do you do when you are out riding and you come across a blocked lane? The blockage could be for many reasons - fallen trees, locked gates, stiles, etc.

While some obstructions are natural others are most definitely manmade but the principles are the same. If you are sure you are on a legitimate route then you may either deviate from the route to get around the obstacle or move the obstruction. Quite often locked gates can be removed from their hinges, but if you do that make sure you put it back afterwards.

Legally, you may find yourself on sticky ground if you go 'equipped' to move an obstruction, so carrying bolt croppers for locked gates is not really advised.

Whenever you meet an obstruction you should report it to the County Council. State when you tried to use the route, what the obstruction was and of course its location. Stating the lane number as well as the grid reference may help to get a quicker response.

A legal aspect from Wayne Little, Gloucester

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Gummer rejects speed limit on Windermere boats

Before you say what have Windermere boats got to do with the TRF, read on and form your own conclusion as to whether trail riding has a future in our National Parks and one wonders why the Countryside Commission supports LARA.

A speed limit of skiing were incompatible Parks are not the place 10mph for powered with nearly all other for noisy sports. Power boats on Windermere recreations on the lake. boats on Windermere has been rejected by the Roger Clarke, the bring pleasure to a Government, despite the Countryside Comm- minority, but are an recommendation of an ission's director of policy, increasing source of inquiry which said that said: "We are very aggravation for the speed boats and water- disappointed. National majority.

Seen in *The Times*, Thursday August 8th 1996

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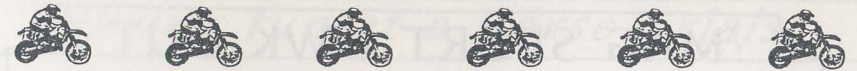
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THE RIDGEWAY - A NATIONAL TRAIL

see front cover picture

- Ridgeway interviewer Mike Hallam @ Sparsholt Firs, SU344 850. Mike Hallam is interviewing Gerry Holdstock on a Matchless G9 500cc ISDT replica.

There is a phrase "Use it or lose it" and this is often so true. Currently the Ridgeway Volunteers are interviewing - between April and September - many users of the Ridgeway on behalf of the Countryside Commission with a view to the Countryside Commission establishing "a management plan" for the next decade.

Recently a new joint leaflet has been published by LARA and the Countryside Commission. It deals with "If you wish to take a motor vehicle on The Ridgeway ..., Finding your Way, Codes of Conduct, Off Road Driving Centres, a Driver's Countryside Code of Conduct, Temporary Voluntary Restraint and Useful Addresses which includes The TRF P.O. Box.

The summary as at mid July is that only 21 motorcyclists were interviewed, by far the smallest group when compared with 111 four

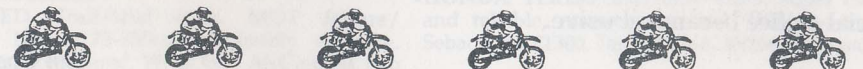
wheel vehicles or 1624 walkers.

Mike Hallam of the TRF Oxfordshire Group is one of the Ridgeway interviewers and recently he interviewed a user of The Ridgeway, Gerry Holdstock, who was riding an ISDT AJS 500cc twin.

If we want to make our view known to the Countryside Commission, there must be a need for those TRF Groups local to the Ridgeway "to use it, or lose it" and to be sure they are interviewed!!

If you want a copy of the leaflet, write to: The Ridgeway Officer, Countryside Service, Department of Leisure and Arts, Holton, Oxford, OX9 1QQ.

Editor's note: one of these off road driving centres is actually called "Trak 1 Off Road Racing", and whilst an illustration on the info. leaflet shows a modern Land Rover, the motorcycle depicted is an early fifties BSA or similar with no silencers - hardly representative of today's Trail Rider.



MAG SPORT NWK OUT GREEN LANING

After a morning's fun watching the GPs on the dish, I took out two newcomers to the world of greenlaning, instead of taking out the ZZR11, ZX7 and the EXUP. The ear to ear smiles at the end of each lane around the Biggin Hill area proved it is one of the best activities with ones clothes on. Upon encountering an arrogant home owner which lies alongside a picturesque BOAT the retort went something along the lines of;

- Home Owner: You are not allowed to ride along a bridleway!
- Tim G.: That is correct.
- Home Owner: That along there is the North Downs Way!
- Tim G.: That is also correct.
- Home Owner: Only for the use of horses and walkers!
- Tim G.: And also known to Kent County Council as SR297 which is a byway, as shown by the signs at each end.
- Home Owner: But that don't mean you can ride your bikes there!
- Tim G.: Do you know where I am allowed to ride along?
- Home Owner: No, of course not!
- Tim G.: Then how do you know where I am not allowed to ride?
- Home Owner: Why don't you ride along the tarmac roads?
- Tim G.: Why don't walkers only walk on the pavements that are provided and the horseriders only use roads and race tracks and fields in stead of bridleways?
- Home Owner: If you leave mud on the road outside my door I'll get the Police to nick you.
- Tim G.: That is why we pass your door before starting the BOAT
- Home Owner: Why is that?
- Tim G.: So we don't leave mud on your doorstep - Good Day.

I had to leave out tete a tete at this point as the expletives emanating from his facial orifice became abusive.

Tim Gooderson

Having fun at a Horse Trials

Before the Public Relations Officer has a heart attack and has visions of the volunteers from the South Northants Group terrorising this equestrian event by roaring around without helmets, frightening the horses and leaping into the water jumps, I would like to put your minds at rest by explaining that this photo was taken after the event had been finished for some time and all the spectators had left. After an enjoyable day helping with the event and being exceptionally responsible, well behaved and extremely efficient, it was at the suggestion and encouragement of the event organiser - who also happened to own the farm where the event took place - that we had a little play on the course. Remarkably he also suggested that we bring the whole of the South Northants group over one day when the equestrian events were not being held and play around on the course to our hearts content - which I'm sure you will agree was a very generous offer. All



in all it was an enjoyable day out and I would urge anyone who has not yet volunteered to cover one of these events to at least give it a go and you never know it may not turn out to be quite so boring as it sounds!

*Tessa Lantsbery,
South Northants
Group*

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