

## GROUPS

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1 & 3 Thurs, 9pm, The Mitre, Church Road, Bradmore,  
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### BRISTOL

Martin Harding, Tel: 0117 969 6674  
2nd Mon, Warmley Community Centre, Deanery  
Road, (A420), Kingswood

### CAMBRIDGE

Richard Palmer, Tel: 01353 688344

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., Carbrook Hall, 537 Attercliffe Common, 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 YORKSHIRE

Howard Wadsworth, Tel: 01405 860904

1st Tue, Boot & Shoe, Gouddall, Nr. Stainth

### ESSEX

Aelwood Finch, Tel: 01245 329118, Mobile: 0374 471251

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

### GLOUCESTER

Wayne Little, Tel: 01452 611735

1st Tue, Painswick Institute, Painswick, Glos.

3rd Tue Worcester Auto Club, Perdiswell Park, Worcester

### HERTFORDSHIRE

Colin Adlam, Tel: 01727 875618

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

### ISLE OF WIGHT

Mick Holbrook, Tel: 01983 866361

1st 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 460793

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,

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### NORTHUMBERLAND

Steve Bertram Tel 0850 863620 11am-6pm Tel & Fax 0191 261 9629

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John Mills, Tel: 01477 534425

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

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Pat McGuire, Tel: 01844 238414

3rd Thurs, Duke of Marlborough, 1.5 miles N. 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, Pendle Hotel, Chatburn, Clitheroe (off A59)

### SHROPSHIRE

Lynnton Powell, Tel: 01743 358423

2nd & last Wed, White Horse, Shrewsbury

### SOMERSET

Kevin Parfitt, Tel: 01935 72343

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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

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9 miles North of Worthing

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### THAMES VALLEY

Don Hoaglin, Tel: 01474 704530

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

Richard Hawker, Tel: 01527 893874

1st & 3rd Thurs, Willmote Mens Club, Stratford on Axon

### 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

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### WYVERN

Steve Pighills, Tel: 01902 672479

Every Thur, 10pm, Potter's Rose & Crown, Colley Lane, Halesowen



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# TRAIL

APRIL, 1997

No. 224

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

EDITOR: Michael "Nettlebed" Pedley.



Level crossing at Jolly's Bottom

### CONTENTS

Editor	3	To All TRF Members	11
To All Groups	4	RoW News	12
Draft Agenda	5	To Ban or Not To Ban	16
Display Equipment Update	6	Chairman's Bike Tests	17
BMF News	7	Membership Secretary	18
TRF - Wimps or What?	8	Letters	21
Scum Alert	10		

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

It's that time of year again. Spring is here and so is the TRF Coast-to-Coast. (Many thanks to Phil Fawcett and everyone else who helps to organise it). As usual it was hugely oversubscribed. This is the one event in the TRF calendar where so many of us get together for what is as much a social gathering as it is a ride, covering every kind of terrain from rocky climbs to river crossings and deep bogs and some gentle lanes. In a word everything that's good about trail riding. If you did miss out because your entry didn't get there on time or you just feel downright adventurous then Phil is organising a trip to the Italian Alps from the 10th to the 18th July, taking in the "Stella Alpina Rally" (non-competitive) which is Europe's largest gathering of trail bikes - anyone interested? Phone Phil on 01287 634972.

If this is all too strenuous for you then I'll see you at the Executive Meeting on May 17th 1997 at 10.30am at The Barn, Hockley Heath, Solihull, (A3400, M42/J4, M40/J16). These Executive Meetings are necessary to formulate TRF policy and to enable us to carry on with our our day to day trail riding.

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*We welcome old members and new!*

I am heartened by the response I have had of the "1997 Group Returns". I have had a steady flow of returns dropping through my letter box via the good old "snail mail". But we do seem to have a number of Groups where the load is being shared by an inordinately small proportion of the Group or is the Group that small? Since Dave Giles coined the phrase the message is still "sharing". From personal experience, once established, members must do more than just *ride* if the TRF is to grow. (Read and act on pages 11, 12 13 & 14 of TRAIL 223 just for starters).

Maybe those Groups who haven't submitted a 1997 Return and have access to the wonders of the silicon chip could try scanning and sending a completed Return to: david.clegg@gbsea.mail.abb.com.

Ditto, e-mail future National Exec. Agenda items - because by the time you read this, in TRAIL 224, the Agenda, for all you keen TRF'ers, for the next TRF National Executive Meeting 10.30am, May 17th 1997 at The Barn, Hockley Heath, Solihull, (A3400, M42/J4, M40/J16) will be set - albeit, not in tablets of stone, but the

next best thing, an HP Deskjet 600!

On behalf of the National Executive, we really would like to see or meet the Group Rep of some Groups as it would appear that the Group Rep is the only member of some Groups!

We always have a very narrow window of opportunity between one TRAIL arriving and the dead line for the next TRAIL. In this case only about two days - as I'm off to the the infamous "Taly Bont - not on Usk", for a couple of days of the annual Banks' Bitter Easter Marathon on the now trusty R80GS - the wiring harness having been "sorted" - and not by throwing money at it!

*D. C. Clegg, National Secretary*



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# DRAFT AGENDA

## TRAIL RIDERS FELLOWSHIP

National Executive Meeting 10.30am, May 17th 1997 at  
The Barn, Hockley Heath, Solihull, (A3400, M42/J4, M40/J16)

1. Welcome and Apologies
  2. Tabling of Any Other Business
  3. Minutes of Previous Meeting:
    - (a) approval
    - (b) actions
    - (c) matters arising
  4. Reports
    - (a) Principal Officers
    - (b) Sub-Committees and Projects
    - (c) Co-opted Officers
    - (d) Regional Representatives
  5. TRF Forward Plan
    - (a) Cataloguing of Vehicular Rights of Way
    - (b) TRF Regionalisation
    - (c) Hierarchy of Routes Initiative
    - (d) Develop External Liaison
    - (e) Improve Publicity
    - (f) Develop Member Skills
    - (g) TRF 1998 Forward Plan
  6. Discussion of Motions for AGM.
  7. Any Other Business (parts may be discussed earlier according to priority)
  8. Points for next draft Agenda.
- Chairman's Closing Remarks.

This is the only agenda input received to date  
- to those who contributed, thank you for sharing the load.

## RoW NEWS CORRECTION

### RuMPPs/RuPPs in Somerset

These are the official statistics from County Hall:

194 miles of RuPPs  
434 individual RuPPs  
*Sent in by Gwyn Thomas*

## DISPLAY EQUIPMENT UPDATE

During 1996 I prepared the Display Panels for use at 14 events. These included major motorcycle shows such as the BMF Rally at the East of England Showground, the Dirt Bike Show at Donington and Bike Expo 96 at the Sheffield Arena.

Displays were mounted at the Countryside Seminar in Cardiff, the Motor Sports Federation Conference and the LARA Conference and a new series of photographs was featured showing TRF members "Caring for Green Lanes". Other new material showed our involvement with Horse Events, with spectacular photographs and a description of this aspect of TRF activity by Colin Patient.

Groups which took advantage of the availability of the Display Panels included the Cheshire Group (Young Farmers Show), Lancs. & Ribble Valley Group (Rossendale Valley Motorbike Show and East Lancs. Bike Show), Teeside and North Yorkshire Group (Police Motorcycle Day) and the Lodden Vale Group.

Thanks to Roger Harris of Cumbria Group, whose enthusiastic response to my request for photographs produced some superb shots for enlargement, the panels have been further updated for 1997.

The South Northamptonshire Group will again be presenting the TRF display at the BMF Rally and as announced at the February Executive Meeting, the Group has generously offered to finance the operation. The Rally is on May 18th and will be preceded by a Grand Parade of Motorcycling through Peterborough City Centre on Saturday May 17th in which the TRF will be represented.

The BMF have announced a new event for '97 - the Garden of England Motorcycle

Show at the Whitbread Hop Farms at Beltring on Sunday 22nd June and it is hoped that the Kent Group will co-ordinate a TRF stand at this event. Stuart Dodwell has already launched our programme for this year with a display at the Cardiff Conference and at a local motorcycle show, so the message has to be "Book early for your local events".

Groups wishing to use the equipment should request a Booking Form and return it to me in good time before the event. Please use the address and telephone number shown in TRAIL as the Display Panels and records are all kept at my factory, not at home.

I would like to take this opportunity of thanking all the members who have used the Display Panels for looking after them so well and for returning them promptly after their events - your co-operation has been appreciated.

Jeff Ward, Display Equipment Co-ordinator  
Ed. - is Roger Harris the only one out there with a camera?

## Sprockets & Chains

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## BMF NEWS

### BIKE VENUES UNDER THREAT

The BMF has warned that popular biker meeting places could come under threat this summer because of the current boom in motorcycling.

Increased popularity first caused major problems at the **Waterman** pub near Warwick two years ago, resulting in a two week ban followed by a permanent limit on numbers. It also brought problems last year when a ban was imposed at the **Watersides** in Stratford on Avon where parking on pavement areas, tolerated for more than 20 years, was banned and bike parking moved to a local car park.

**Box Hill** in Surrey is now under threat of a parking charge being introduced from 1st May for all vehicles including bikes, one of the underlying reasons being to control numbers.

The latest venue to be threatened is **Rivington Barn** near Chorley, Lancs. where a £15m redevelopment, the Lever Park Management Plan, has been submitted by North West Water and no account taken of the hundreds of bikes that regularly gather at weekends. Despite the Lancashire County Plan stipulating that motorcycle parking should be catered for in such developments, the planned 900 space car park does not provide for motorcycles.

Calling on all riders to notify BMF HQ (0181 942 7914) of all such instances so that representations can be made to the relevant authorities. BMF director Alan

Bridgman, who masterminded the BMF's *Right to Ride* campaign said: "We are very concerned at increasing instances where traditional meeting places are coming under threat. Bike numbers are certainly a factor, as is anti-social behaviour by a minority, but we need to know of any possible threats at an early stage if bikers are to be treated fairly."

### Sounds a Familiar Story!

Mention advocacy to the average mountain biker and he or she will simply shrug and turn the other way. But try to close mountain bike trails and that same rider will often exhibit a loud outcry. The sad fact - as access veterans can attest - is that the threat of trail closures is often the only thing that can convince many cyclists that there's more to mountain biking than just riding. *Mountain bike/march 1997*

*Sent in by Gwyn Thomas, Somerset*

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## TRF - WIMPS OR WHAT?

Do you remember the school bully? There were always one or two who would pick on smaller or less aggressive (more civilised?) boys.

Since joining the TRF in 1983, I have personally encountered a few adult bullies on or near green lanes (RuMPPs) - Roads used Mainly as Public Paths. I remember a shotgun-wielding farmer in South Wales and a man in my own village who threatened to "pump one into me" and later slashed two tyres on my car. That particular green lane is now safely a byway.

There is a family of bullies who intimidate 70-year old lady horse riders on a RuPP near Wincanton in Somerset. I am reliably informed that horse riders have stopped using the lane in question because they are now too scared to use it. I also hear that TRF groups have been forced to turn back on this same RuPP. Since 1970, the TRF has used green road RuPPs safe in the knowledge that Roads used Mainly as Public Paths have vehicular rights. To my knowledge, not a single prosecution has succeeded against a TRF rider using a RuPP on a motorcycle and that includes sidecar outfits.

In the unitary authority of North Somerset is a RuPP known affectionately by Bristol TRF riders as "Mad Axeman's Lane". Use your imagination why it was so-called back in the late 70's!

Properly called Great Stone Lane, the ancient highway is deliberately obstructed and the Highway Authority have resolutely refused either to clear it themselves or allow the TRF to do it. Only "trained arboriculturalists" can do such skilled work. The Ombudsman has also supported the Highway Authority's inaction - it's not maladministration.

I used to ride Mad Axeman's, alias Great Stone Lane in the 1980s with the Bristol Group TRF. It was always difficult. There was, and still is, a plank "bridge" crossing the highway. You have to "limbo" under it to go up the lane.

In March '97 I went back to see what the lane was like - on my bicycle. Surprise, surprise, it was even more obstructed - small boulders lined the

approach, a wooden gate and board was tied to the "bridge" plank and further on still, the holloway was completely blocked by tree cuttings. It took me an hour and a half to clear the lane on this section, even to walk up. Near the top, a mass of brambles and overhanging saplings again obstructed my passage. I happened to have a folding pruning saw in my pocket, so I spent another happy hour bramble bashing.

There is a farmer living next to Mad Axeman's Lane (no, he's not the original axeman). He's just as aggressive however and approached me on a "quad" from his field adjoining the lane. I've never heard such language. Kenneth Tynan the theatre critic who first used the "F" word on television in the early sixties would have been impressed. I was accused of being abusive to his recently bereaved wife (I'd walked up the lane the previous day) and that the lane was a footpath only - "the council were looking into the matter". I was a f\*\*\*ing liar to claim I'd ridden the lane on a trail bike and a fellow TRF member and National Committee member was similarly described.

Not surprisingly, the local TRF are not using Mad Axeman's Lane. THEY SHOULD AND MUST. When the lane comes up for reclassification as a byway, bridleway or footpath, s.54 Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 all those objecting to byway status will say to the Inspector, "I've never seen a trail rider or horse rider or bicyclist all the time I've lived here". Of course they haven't. They would say that wouldn't they, to echo a certain lady's famous phrase.

And they'd be right, at least in the past five or six years. So, are we all wimps or what? Pick up the gauntlet when challenged. The law is on our side, my fellows. But you must have "bottle". Don't do what most horse riders do and go somewhere else.

There may not be anywhere else, if the bullies have their way.

*Gwyn Thomas, Somerset*

P.S. But don't travel alone. Go with at least one other, even if you are on foot. Take a video camera, tape recorder or still camera with you. It's getting as important as that. And invite me to come with you. I can't abide bullies, school or green lane.

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# SCUM ALERT

Bristol Group Member, Tony Steel, while having his tibia and fibula pinned in the Casualty Dept of Morrision Hospital, Swansea had insult added literally to injury when his Suzuki DR350S was stolen from the hospital car park. The entire rig; trailer together with fellow Bristol Group Member, Steve Cousins' XR250 was lifted in seconds - apparently with the help of a petrol driven disc-cutter the sparks and noise from which were seen and heard and reported by other visitors but not acted upon quickly enough to prevent the loss.

Did Tony/DR just happen to be in the wrong place at the wrong time? Were the m/cs targeted or was it an impromptu theft (with a disc-cutter?). Or, in the words of the song (Bob Dylan?): "If it wasn't for bad luck, wouldn't have no luck at all". But having had an XR stolen and disappear without trace, some years ago what can we TRF'ers do about this ongoing and insidious problem? Insure with Smith and Wesson?

Details of the kit stolen as follows:

Suzuki DR350S: Reg H246 DBK  
Frame No: SK422XXXXX101669  
Engine No: K 404106592

Honda XR250: Reg F625 NCJ  
Frame No: JH2MEO623KK  
Engine No: MEO6E5502463

Trailer: TRF Patent "Angle Iron and Scaffolding" MkIII

*Any information please contact Dave Clegg.*

## Seen in Rambling Weakly

Walkers band together in new mutual friendly society. The *Provincial & Informal Ramblers' Association*, or Prov IRA for short, will encourage its members to wear the new style of bobble hat which covers the whole face. Any member trying to get out of Sunday walkies will be kneecapped. Motto: *Once in, in for life!*

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## • TO ALL TRF MEMBERS •

Following TRAIL 223 I would like to make the following offer to those members who have ridden all 6000 miles(?) of RUPPs (Co.Com. statistics - not mine) in England and Wales and wish to undertake an expedition to some far off foreign land in which I have had the pleasure of trail riding (at not more than 25mph) and all in the call of duty, of course:

Not only, map marking for: Goa, India; Yamaguchi Prefecture, Japan and Arizona, USA, (I could throw in the Picos area of Spain but half the TRF must have maps of

there by now) but also, advice on the most suitable trail riding "tool" to use when encountering dangerous obstructions in the Western States of the USA, i.e. a Smith and Wesson, Model 29-3 revolver. Uses readily available Winchester rimmed rifle ammunition, is short enough to attach to the cross brace of your Renthals and with a 230 grain hollow point bullet would stop almost anything on four legs on the North American Continent, and, is legal - in certain States. Check with the local Wildlife Preservation Officer or when crossing the State or County line.

Incidentally, TRFers, how's the trail riding in Scotland these days? Devolution and all that - different laws for different circumstances. I really must go there some time. Any offers for an R80GS suitable - i.e. "nothing too difficult/no ruts narrower and deeper than the rocker covers and stopping at lunchtime (yes, I know real ale can be a problem north of, err, St. Albans or is it Cumbria?) type trip?" (and I promise not to bring a Model 29-3).

*David Clegg, National Secretary*

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## RoW OFFICER'S REPORT

Public Inquiries can be one of the more tedious parts of our hobby. Its bad enough having to prove vehicular rights during RUPP re-classifications but having to fight against a downgrading of an already established BOAT is beyond the pale.

### SURREY

So it was that Tim Stevens and myself attended a proposed downgrading of BOAT 513 Shere on the 25th and 26th March. TRF/ACU support was excellent, thanks to all those members who took time off work to attend. The 4WD groups were not there! OK there are some we don't get to such as Halvergate Marshes (see below); lots of chaps from the Breckland LRC but only one motorcyclist.

The proposal was that somewhere in the dim and distant past the local authority had made a mistake on the definitive map and put in CRB/RUPP when the road should have been a bridleway. This had been perpetuated and now the poor (sic) landowners (Bray Settled Estate/Hurtwood Control) had a BOAT crossing their common and you can't have a road across a common (eh!). On our side we had user evidence going back to the 1960's plus the fact that we never really found out what the "mistake" was. Also there is another BOAT 512 that is tarred which had more or less the same history as 513. Oddly the council officers had supported BOAT status and it was not until it went to council that the recommendation to refuse the downgrading was turned down. A nimby councillor who attended the P1 was responsible for that. Tim gave him a good grilling. Ian Roscow took my place on the second day when the estate concluded their evidence. The council's barrister grilled Tim about our case but I gather that Tim gave better than he got.

The opposition also tried to rubbish our user evidence along the lines of "we have never heard you or seen you or your bikes, therefore you can't have used it". They had a zillion letters copied and passed around the local parish to this effect. Also the lane had been blocked so how could we possibly get through? I argued that we know that we have ridden the lane and if we have not been noticed what exactly is the problem? They could not believe that there were not 3 foot deep ruts and that half Surrey had not heard us whilst riding the BOAT. Tim rode a huge ST1100 Pan European and myself a GPZ600R down the lane that morning (obviously not one of our more "technical" lanes). By the time the p.m. inspection came you could hardly see our tracks. QED. We wait with bated breath for the result.

In case you are wondering about UCRs and RUPPs here is what the DoE say...

*Firstly I must explain that the Department of the Environment cannot authoritatively interpret the law as only the Courts are empowered to do that. What is set out below is the Department's informal understanding of the law*

*In answering your letter, I have assumed that the ways you refer to as "County unclassified roads" are what are more commonly known as "unclassified county roads" or UCRs. Unfortunately UCRs have never been properly defined in law. In general a UCR is a highway which is maintainable at public expense over which the public have a right of way for vehicular traffic. Whilst a byway open to all traffic (BOAT) is also defined as carrying vehicular rights, it is a specialist category of highway which is required to be shown on a definitive map of rights of way.*

*Although they both have vehicular rights, BOATs are defined as being mainly used for the purposes for which footpaths and bridleways are so used. No such presumption exists for UCRs, so the full range of rights can be exercised without any presumption as to the use. In this sense a UCR has "higher" rights than a BOAT, although I accept that this is an arcane*

*distinction.*

*A highway without any presumption as to the limits of its use (albeit the presumption is a theoretical one) is a more "substantive" category of highway and would subsume the "lower" rights that exist over the same way. If a way was recorded as a UCR, or its equivalent then in the Department's opinion it would not be appropriate to record it as a BOAT and place it on the definitive map.*

*It is possible that North Yorkshire County Council and the Yorkshire Dales National Park have considered the question of the relationship between UCRs and BOATs and have reached a different conclusion. As far as I am aware this matter has never been tested in the Courts: until it is it will remain a matter of opinion as to whether a UCR may properly be recorded on a definitive map of rights of way as a BOAT*

*You state that the highway authority are causing BOATs in the area to be closed to vehicular traffic for ever. I should explain that the rights which exist over a highway exist in perpetuity, unless extinguished by due process of law. I assume that the highway authority are prohibiting vehicular traffic by way of traffic regulation orders made under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984. This requires public consultation and the highway authority should take into account any objections or representations made to the proposed order.*

*In answer to your specific questions in the penultimate paragraph of your letter, if the "unclassified roads" you refer to are either UCRs or BOATs then, by definition, they will have vehicular rights. The problem is that some routes are loosely called "unclassified roads" without the rights over them ever having properly been established.*

*I can confirm that in general footpaths and bridleways do not carry a right of access by vehicles. However, you should bear in mind that under the provisions of section 56 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, the recording of rights of way as either footpaths or bridleways on a definitive map is:*

*"conclusive evidence that there was at the relevant date a highway as shown on the map, and that the public had thereover a right of way on foot [and a right of way on horseback or leading a horse] so however that this paragraph shall be without prejudice to any question whether the public had at that date any right of way other than those rights" [My italics]*

*The legislation therefore provides for the possibility of the existence of additional rights, if it can be demonstrated that the definitive map is wrong, or where rights have either accrued or been dedicated by the landowner.*

*With RUPPs the situation is rather more complicated. Parliament acknowledged that the definition of RUPPs originally contained in the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 did not make it clear whether vehicular rights existed or not. Section 54 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 consequently put surveying authorities under a duty to review those rights of way classified as RUPPs and reclassify them according to the rights found to exist. Until this exercise has taken place in respect of any individual RUPP, it would be unwise for any assumption to be made as to whether vehicular rights exist.*

### LANCASHIRE

A TRO is going ahead on Slater Fell Road BUT the good news for us is that motorcycles are to be permitted. All our letters DO get noticed, sometimes. The CC recognises that motorcycles don't damage the surface in the same way as say a tractor or Land Rover. They say that they will re-examine the TRO at a later date. Will they repair the damaged section in the middle (which having ridden the lane is not that much)?

### NORFOLK

A re-classification of a RUPP on Halvergate Marshes in East Anglia which has been used by a local 4WD club for more than 20 years has been decided. The inquiry centred on a bid by club members to reclassify the lane as a BOAT (Byway Open to All Traffic). The

inquiry heard that the club had come to regard the route as a general public vehicular right of way. The inspector said such use was unlawful.

"Leisure use of four-wheel drive vehicles on roads designated as footpaths or bridleways could be illegal", so said the local rag. following the public inquiry. A spokesman for Birketts solicitors of Ipswich, who raised arguments at the inquiry, said: "The Road Traffic Act 1988 provides that it is an offence without permission of the landowner to drive a motor vehicle on a road which is a footpath or bridleway. This misses out the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 section 56 which states that these rights are without prejudice to higher rights.

The view of LARA and the TRF is that it is for any user to be able to show that he had reasonable grounds to believe that a route he intends to use is a right of way of the required status. But for anyone who wishes to convict a user he has to show that there is no doubt about the lack of rights. The standard of proof for the user is not high and we suspect that factors such as 'lots of people use it and I have been told it is a RoW by someone I have no reason to think is lying' are enough. Historic evidence that has been ignored by an inspector must also count. All you need do to avoid conviction is to raise reasonable doubt. This follows legal advice by the TRF following the North Stoke farce.

#### TRF GUIDANCE NOTES

Due to lack of space I'll save this for later.

*Steve Neville, National RoW Officer*

#### SUFFOLK GROUP

I only managed the first hour of the meeting where we managed to arrange the forthcoming Derbyshire trip and discuss the latest RoW changes. The TRO order on Parsonage Lane (see last TRAIL) appears to have been signed on the wrong lane - does this invalidate the order? Is it worth challenging?

Thanks to Steve Neville for sending examples of section 56 correspondence. I hope we can make use of it in the near future.

No runs to report, but two horse rides have been marshalled successfully - there's always a need for more TRF helpers though.

Last notice of the AGM - 30th April, 8.00pm, Walnut Tree Cottage, Gt. Waldingfield - number on back of mag. It would be nice to see all 8 Suffolk members there and of course everyone else is welcome - we need all the support we can get.

Anybody know of any possible pub venues for group meetings in the Stowmarket area, close to the A14? Hopefully we'll be at a new one by May or June.

A reminder of the first evening run on May 14th - give me a ring if you're coming along.

#### PROVISIONAL RUN LIST

April 25th - 27th	Derbyshire - (also a Horse Event - see above and below)
May 4th	Horse Event - see below - a Run if any demand
May 14th	Evening Run - 1st of the year - 7.00pm`ish start
June 1st	Sunday Run
June 11th	Evening Run
June 29th	Sunday Run
July 16th	Evening Run
August 3rd	Horse Event - see below - a Run if any demand
August 13th	Evening Run
August 31st	Horse Event - see below - a Run if any demand
September 28th	Horse Event - see below - a Run if any demand

October 4th/5th	Army Trial - possible marshalling/assistance
November 2nd	Sunday Run
November 30th	Sunday Run
December 17th	December Meeting - 24th and 31st might be off!
December 21st	Sunday Run - weekend after the meeting
January 4th	Sunday Run - weekend after the usual meeting date

#### HORSE EVENT LIST

Contact Peter Mumford on 01473 725646 or Steven Canning on 01359 231018 if you can help

April 27th	Thornham Park, Suffolk	May 5th	Thetford Forest
May 25th	Reeves Hall, Nr. Barningham	June 14th	Hockham, Norfolk
June 22nd	Holkham Bay, Norfolk	July 6th	Kings Forest, West Stow, Bury St. Edmunds
July 19th	Bacton BBQ, Stowmarket	July 26th	Wimpole Way, Cambs.
July 27th	Hockham, Norfolk	Aug 3rd	Angles Way, Hommersfield
Aug 31st	Euston Park, Suffolk	Sept 28th	Rendlesham Forest, Hollesley
Oct 19th	Puddingstone, Thetford Forest		<i>Richard May</i>

#### NEWS FROM WALES

The Gap Road (available only during March and from 1st September to 15th October) was included in a memorial run on the 2nd March for the late John Shattock, a larger-than-life, enthusiastic member of the Welsh Trail Riders Association. Although a large number of riders turned up, they split into small groups for the run and advance notice was given to the National Park Authority so that the Wardens knew what was going on and could allay any concerns expressed by other users in the area.

Powys and Ceredigion are consulting about options to allow a number of damaged BOATS to recover/be repaired and to avoid the problem continuing in the future. Voluntary restraint is a possibility but TROs are currently more likely. As the real damage is undoubtedly due to excessive use by 4 x 4s, those of us being consulted will argue against unjustified restrictions on motorcycle use. What is particularly worrying is that the Brecon Beacons National Park and, it is believed, Gwynedd are also intending to consult along similar lines at the same time as most of them are embarking on further RUPP reviews. If convincing answers cannot be found to the damage issues, our efforts to avoid RUPPs with less than cast-iron evidence being classified as bridleways, stand little chance of success.

For the time being everyone should make a special effort to 'tread lightly' on Monk's Trod and Moelfre City in Powys, Sarn Helen in the NP, and on trails in Ceredigion East of Talybont, North of Ponterwyd and East of Devil's Bridge and in Gwynedd East of Tywyn.

An Extinguishment and Diversion affecting three very short, unused and uninteresting BOATS in a Y formation was started by Dyfed and is now being pursued by its successor authority, Carmarthenshire. The extinguishments will be of no significance to the trail riding fraternity and the diversion is good news because it means that an associated, longer BOAT (currently without a satisfactory legal exit) will continue through to a county road. Neither of the Prescribed Organisations objected to the proposals but on a matter of principle, a lone trail rider did, and that combined with a series of errors by the local authorities is why the matter has dragged on causing wasteful expenditure to them and to the landowners. Whatever the history, wherever the fault lies and whatever the principles, the presence of these BOATS on OS maps is a nonsense and in my opinion the trail riding movement would be better served by giving support and co-operation to local authorities and landowners in such circumstances.

*Bill Kershaw*



## TO BAN OR NOT TO BAN - 'TRAIL RIDERS GUIDE' VIDEO

I felt sure the March TRAIL would contain comment about our Chairman's earlier commendation of the 'Trail Rider's Guide' Video. The video was shown at the Countryside Seminar (Forum for Motorised Sports in Wales) as an example of how NOT to promote 'responsible behaviour' which was one of the agenda topics. The Seminar hoped the video would be condemned by bodies like LARA and the TRF and be withdrawn from circulation forthwith.

The following points were included in a letter sent to one of the joint presenters sadly with no response:

- The opening shot, superimposed on the Unsuitable for Motors sign, was of someone hanging their back wheel out on a forestry road. Absolutely not what trail riding is about.
- A clearer view of the same shot appeared later not being used as an example of what not to do but to show how trail riders benefit from wearing smooth soled boots. Not what trail riding is about.
- The synchronised helmets-on/move-off sequences suggest that trail riders are fully-kitted, faceless warriors, deliberately and irresistibly going into battle side by side for added protection against all who get in their way.
- Interspersed with telling the newcomer (that's who the tape is aimed at) what bike to buy, the shots are of being stuck in a Welsh bog, enduro scenes and a 250 two-stroke fighting its way through deep mud in a sunken green lane. Not what trail riding is about - especially the latter which is specifically condemned by the LARA Code.
- There was a reasonable scene with riders passing an open gate. It may have been broken or permanently tied open but it would have been so much more helpful to have shown an opening and shutting sequence. As it is, it provides an opportunity for others to say there was not even someone ready to close the gate when the group had gone through.
- Body armour has a place but should never be needed for trail riding. It encourages excessive behaviour, is intimidating to other users of the countryside and destroys your likening of the pastime to motorised rambling.
- Perhaps the biggest criticism of a video sold as a Guide to Trail Riding is the grossly excessive amount of time given to enduros - even though low key and pretty uninteresting. I have no quarrel with what Geraint does on his own land but the way it comes over on video leaves viewers with the impression that open moorland in Wales and elsewhere is where you can go to 'play'.
- There is an error in the statement about where it is legal to ride. It was said that RUPPs can be used, whereas they are unproven and should only be used after checking for potential problems with local knowledgeable riders.

The idea of the video is great but the first attempt misses most of the really important responsibility issues and allows too many unfortunate impressions to be gained by the newcomers it should be influencing. I am very sorry to have had to write in these terms - it has nothing to do with having paid £12.45 for an item not complying with the Trades Description Act but all to do with concern that without giving the right guidance to the next generation of riders there is no future for trail riding *Bill Kershaw*

## Chairman's Bike Tests

Now for something completely different! A report on my latest acquisition - preceded by brief reports on my previous trail bikes.

I started off, back in 1971, with a khaki BSA B40, bought straight from an Army Sale. Initially it could tick over and run so slowly that, in first gear, you could get off it one side, walk round the front and get back on the other side without it stalling! The disadvantage with that was that it did not go appreciably faster in fourth gear than it did in first! This was partially corrected by fitting an SU carb. Road handling was OK but trail handling and performance left a lot to be desired.

Having by now become severely infected with the trail riding bug I, in a rash moment, bought a Yamaha DT400MX. (The MX stood for Moto X!) Complete opposite of the B40. Excellent handling and suspension, amazing BHP, but virtually no low down torque. Fine on the flat, but practically impossible to get moving again on a rocky hill.

By now you would assume I would have a good idea of characteristics to look for in a trail bike. Yes? No!

Another heart ruling head decision left me as the proud owner of a BMW R80GS. It had always been my ambition to have a BMW and now I had one which was a trail bike as well. I persevered with the BMW for several years, much to the

consternation of my pals in the East Midlands Group, who got tired of pulling me out of tractor ruts, bogs and up anything slippery! My best description of the BMW was that as a trail bike it was a pretty good road bike!

Next came a Honda XL250S. A classic in it's day. Excellent engine, but very interesting handling with the combination of that 23" front wheel and spindly forks. The only bike I have had with a complete mind of it's own - it had the capability of turning right when you turned the handlebars to the left - with the result that I spent a lot of time examining the bottom of ditches and the inside of bushes, etc. Come to think of it, things haven't changed that much since then!

My Son, having read every available motorbike magazine, then decided that I needed a Kawasaki KMX200. What a

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joy! Comfortable, good handling and spirited performance typical of a two-stroke. Only real problem was occasional boiling, but easily solved by the fitting of a Tandy computer fan.

Then decided to get back to four-stroke again and acquired a Honda XR250 with 280 conversion. Excellent bike with lots of low down torque, but could be difficult to restart, particularly after being layed down! Main reason for changing it was to get fully street legal with stop lights, indicators, etc.

Next came a Kawasaki KLX250G (the trail version). Smooth, good handling and torque, but without the urge of the 280 engine in the Honda. Everything basically worked very well with one notable exception - even more difficult to restart than the Honda after stalling or dropping. Other people do not seem to have as many problems as me. (Perhaps the old fella's legs are giving out as well as his eyes?)

All of this leads up to the latest steed. A Honda CRM250. A two-stroke grey import, apparently developed from the CR moto-crosser. This has proved easy to start and restart - apart from when I tried to float it down the Tamar River between Devon and Cornwall! The handling both on and off tarmac is really excellent - both predictable and forgiving. The performance was very good even with it's standard 14/42 gearing, seeming to be capable of going anywhere subject to the usual amount of two-stroke gear changing. Now on 13/50 cogs to give me more chance in road trials or trail bike trials, making it highly capable in the nadgery bits, whilst still having an acceptable 60-65 cruising speed. I think that I have at last found the perfect trail bike but, judging by my past choosing expertise and changes of mind, who knows how long this opinion, or bike, will last? Have recently used it in a road trial with good results and in the supposed trail bike section in a half-day trial, with rather less good results, although I think this was more the pilot's fault than the bike's!

Next on my agenda is a trail bike enduro - that could be fun!

*Tony Stuart, Chairman*

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## MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY

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### TO ALL GROUP REPS

By the time you read this you should have received a list of your paid up group members plus a list of lapsed members. If you haven't had these yet, please let me know.

There are two groups that I can't send lists to as the reps listed are not paid up members. No names mentioned but one of the groups is in a county famous for it's cream teas and the other from the area whose team won the boat race recently.

### GENERAL

I only keep a small supply of spare magazines - so if you've only just renewed I'm not able to send out missed copies.

*Graham Stratford, Membership Secretary*

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# LETTERS

## MY EXPERIENCES

My experiences over the past few years trail riding and particularly my experiences whilst riding a few days ago have compelled me to put fingers to keyboard and write to you.

Our future on the trails, as we all know is under continuous threat from many quarters; rambblers, landowners, etc. we all are familiar with these. However I am convinced that the biggest threat is from within. We, or a good number of trail riders are not only providing the coffin, the nails, and hammer but also the muscle to hammer them in! Do we have some undercover rambblers on trail bikes I ask myself? I am referring to the common and becoming more common, practice of avoiding the rough rocky (difficult) trails or parts of trails, to ride up the (easy) soft verges and in doing so destroying the trail and our future with it. Surely the reason to go trail riding is to enjoy the countryside and in the process be presented with a challenge. If the trail is too difficult then the solution surely is to ride trails within the capacity of both bike and rider.

I used to think that our biggest threat was from 4 wheel drive vehicles, and on some trails in North Yorkshire this is undoubtedly the case, but the damage done to some trails in the Yorkshire Dales is down to trail riders alone. I recently watched a TRF member, at the top of the climb on Lady Anne Clifford's Highway from Cotterdale go straight up the grassy bank instead of following the rocky trail, in a few years (or sooner) this will be a water washed gully and bikes will be a memory on this fantastic road. I have been riding trails in the North of England for the past 15 years and have witnessed the wear and tear due simply to increased usage, but more recently have been utterly saddened by the totally irresponsible behaviour of people who should know better.

As an organisation set up to preserve the trails and our use of them for the future we desperately need to educate our members and others as to what is acceptable use and what is irresponsible use of our ancient road heritage. Rest assured our days are numbered if we don't do it soon.

*Rob Cruickshank, Cumbria*

Ed. - If you see someone doing this sort of thing then point out the error of their way and if you were thinking of doing it yourself think of the implication.

## LIFE BEGINS AT 40

I became an official BOF when my 40th birthday crept up on me, and I realised that if I was going to get some fun out of life I'd better make a start... so I bought an electric guitar and a trail bike to cheer myself up. Seven years on the guitar is still beyond my skills, despite endless patience on the part of Peter Thompson and others, but I now have three trail bikes and life membership of the TRF.

Having owned British iron until I got married and sprogged, I restarted road riding in the early 80's during the rail strikes, on a Moto Morini 500 Strada which my brother Andy suggested as it still had R/H gear change, Brit-style. It had to go to repay a credit card debt, but I got an AJS 350 in part exchange, and intended to green-lane it. Andy had joined the TRF in Devon and suggested a small Jap trailie like his KMX200, but I found a 1974 Honda XL250 Motosport and started on that.

Charles Whittaker of the Sussex Group contacted me out of the blue and invited me to attend the informal E Sussex group meeting, which led to an accompanied run and my first broken lever. I enjoyed it so much, many more club runs and many tears in my wax jacket suggested something more modern might help so an XT350 replaced the XL and lasted until last summer when the head cracked terminally. The XT took me trail weekending on the Ridgeway, South Wales, Exmoor (where I met some of the TRF luminaries), Southern France and Brittany; all transported on a clip-on rack on the family car.

My British iron past began to niggle at me... and I acquired a Greeves fitted with a 500 Triumph motor, for less tricky lanes. It's similar to the one the late wheelie king Dave Taylor used to have, but not as well sorted and certainly not as well ridden. The Grumph is surprisingly capable in slippery conditions but steep gradients show up the limits of only 4 fairly close ratio gears. It looks like Steve McQueen's bike in the Great Escape, but there the resemblance ends.

I fancy doing some touring in Spain, perhaps with George Cherry's MotoTours (I met him at the Exmoor weekend) so in readiness I bought a Cagiva Elefant 750. It's the early one, using the Ducati Pantah lump, and is a great road bike with useful off road ability. I replaced the plastic bash plate with a homemade alloy one, and have managed to pick the beast up unaided when I have dropped it getting cross-rutted. It's 'kin heavy, but not as bad as the Guzzi 850 I've had since before my 40th.

As you see, I like Italian vee twins, so when the XT expired I bought a MotoMorini Kanguro 350. (A whaa...?) It looks very like the XT but with an aircooled heronhead vee twin lump. It's not much heavier, especially as I removed all the original heavy and irreplaceable plastics, the type-approved silencers and the carrier. It now has Polisport or Acerbis placky bits and two neat little alloy silencers (trials cub ones) and on T61's (the narrow 275 x 21 front is so much better than the 300 section one) it's quite competent. It goes very well on the road, has 6 gears with an ultra low first and the rest are close ratio, handles very well on tarmac and acceptably off it, but could use softer springs all round. I haven't had time to experiment with the adjustable monoshock, and it's possible that the front could be better with an oil change.

My job in the City is quite stressful, and I so enjoy the contrast of a weekend's mudplugging in woodland or on the Downs. The glow of a successful run lasts several days into the week, just thinking back to the tricky little sunken lane. I've always enjoyed country walks, but since becoming a BOF trail riding has almost completely taken over.

We even take the bike on holiday, it costs nothing to take on the car rack, and we can still belt along at 70 with wife and two teenagers and luggage. Sue and I explore the towns and villages while the boys go tottie hunting on the beach, and I spend early evenings trail-riding the many un-tarmaced lanes which seem to be everywhere in France, and some are waymarked if you know what to look for.

Having just watched a Top Gear feature on a 88 year old trials rider still at it gives me hope for a long and entertaining life on two wheels. Meanwhile, if anyone has experience of MotoMorinis I'd love to hear from them.

*Patrick Wallace, Brighton*

## RoW OFFICERS - HELP US TO HELP YOU

I often read in TRAIL that you get a poor response to requests for user evidence. I know it would help me if you would draft out a letter with accurate detail of the lane concerned, appropriate wording and the correct address. Brief details would do and could be included in your reports in TRAIL.

Along with every other member we can then check our records and diaries and give you the positive support that you need to safeguard our rights - hopefully in volume!

Thanks for all your efforts to date, I only want to support you as best I can.

*Eric Haworth, Cheshire*

## CLASSIFIED

**BRENDAN CHASE B&B** Lake Windermere. From £14.00 each x 4 sharing. Bike lock-up. Parking. All rooms C/H, CTV, H & C. Pub & Grub handy. Tel: 01539 445638.

**DR350S.** "J" reg. Trail use only. Good condition. Some tax. £1500 inc. spares. Tel: 01538 753717 (N. Staffs).

**YAMAHA XT250** 1981. T & T. Monoshock, O-ring, gold rims. T61s. £550. Tel: 01482 441240 (E. Yorks.)

**XT350 "G"** reg, 15K miles, £1750 or n/o. MOT & Tax, new tyres, exhaust, brakes, clutch. Tel: Johny 01737 350465 (nr. Epsom, Surrey).

**SUZUKI DR750** Doctor big, 1990, blue, low mileage, 12 months MOT, long tax, immaculate condition throughout, £1850 or part exchange XR250/KDX200 or whatever. Tel: 01200 445657.

**WANTED** XT550 front and rear wheel, bigger petrol tank or any cycle bits considered surplus to requirements. **FOR SALE** 3 x new Bridgestone trail wing 40 120/90 x 16.63 tyres. Bought and fitted in error to BMW R75 WW11 outfit. Brand new £30 each, or £75 for three. Tel: Reg Moule 01299 401609 (Worcs).

**WANTED** Yamaha DT175MX, road registered and in good condition. Tel: Rupert Kemp on 01252

792672 (Surrey).

**DT175MX** 1981 Powdercoated frame rechromed and ground fork tubes, 520 O-ring conversion new bolts, etc. throughout. Alloy rims with new heavy duty spokes, no corrosion anywhere. Built to keep but then I tried a Serow so it's for sale at £650. Phone Brian on 01772 792231.

**WANTED** Exhaust system, rev counter and clock for BMW R80GS. Tel: 01200 445657.

**WANTED** Kickstarter for 1980 KLX250. XT350 also fits. Tel: G. B. Thomas 01749 675294.

**XT500 "S"** reg, T & T, non-runner, many new parts. Unfinished project. £750 ono. Tel: 01279 850737 (Essex).

**YAMAHA DT125MX "V"** reg. Fitted 175 motor, totally rebuilt, many new parts. New paint, £825. Loads of spares also - Geoff 0161 427 6296. Would part ex for Serow?

**BMW K100RS** 1984, 45k, MOT, History, excellent condition, £2250 ono or swap for 200 - 350cc 4-stroke electric start trail bike. Tel: Richard May on 01787 374073 (Sudbury, Suffolk).

**HONDA XL185** 1978, one owner from new, 12 months MOT, some spares, £465. Tel: 01737 553599 (Surrey).