

GROUPS

AXE VALE Gwyn Thomas, Tel: 01749 675294
2nd Mon, *The Star, Star (A38), Nr. Shipham, Somerset*

BLACK COUNTRY Chris Braznell, Tel: 0121 421 3086
1 & 3 Tues, 9pm, *The Mitre, Church Road, Bradmore, Wolverhampton*

BRISTOL Martin Harding, Tel: 01179 696674
4th Mon, *Keynsham Rugby Club, Bristol Road, Keynsham*

CAMBRIDGE John Brooker, Tel: 01767 692805
1st Thurs, *Golden Ball, Boxworth*

CHESHIRE Tony Bramah, Tel: 0161 366 6813
2 & 4 Mon, *The Robin Hood, Buxton Road, High Lane, Hazel Grove, Stockport*

CORNWALL Tony Stuart, Tel: 01208 862960
3rd Thurs, *The Ship, Wadebridge*

CUMBRIA Richard Smith, Tel: 015394 33470
2nd Tues, *Derby Arms Hotel, Witherslack, Nr. Kendal*

DERBYSHIRE & SOUTH YORKSHIRE
Kevin Marsh, Tel: 01246 237910
2 & 4 Tuesdays, *The Angel Hotel, Sprinkhill, Eckington, Nr. Chesterfield, Derbyshire*

DEVON Richard Arscott, Tel: 01803 612950
2nd Tues, *The Welcome Stranger, Bickington, Nr. Newton Abbott*

DORSET Paul Jackson, Tel: 01305 772208
1st Tues, *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 Tues, *Boot & Shoe, Gowdall, Nr. Snaith*

ESSEX
Aelwood Finch, Tel: 01245 329118, Mobile: 0374 471251
2nd Wed, *The Swan Public House, Great Eastern, Nr. Dunmow*

EXMOOR Ron Rickarby, Tel: 01271 326653
2nd Wed, *The Hartnoll Hotel, Bolham, A396 1 mile north of Tiverton*

GLOUCESTER Wayne Little, Tel: 01452 611735
1st Tues, *Painswick Institute, Painswick, Glos.*

HERTFORDSHIRE Colin Adlam, Tel: 01727 875618
1st Wed, *The Old Guinea, Ridge, Near Potters Bar*

HIGH PEAK & POTTERIES
Simon Lowe, Tel: 01298 70680
1st Tues, *Stafford Arms, Bagnall & 3rd Tue, Cheshire Cheese, Buxton*

ISLE OF WIGHT Mark Gregory, Tel: 01983 867730
1st Thurs, *The Royal British Legion, Pyle St., Newport, IOW*

KENT Gary Westbrook, Tel: 01843 590184
2nd Wed, *Pied Bull, Farningham, Off A20, Nr Brands Hatch*

LANCASHIRE Keith Westley, Tel: 01704 893215
1st Tues, *Hindhead Pub on A49, Charnock Richard*

LINCOLNSHIRE Alan Wilkinson, Tel: 01529 460793
4th Thurs, *The Queens Head, Kirkby-la-Thorpe, Sleaford*

LODDON VALE Bernard Green, Tel: 01344 450289
2nd Thurs, *Inn in the Park, Woodley Centre, E. Reading*

NORTHUMBERLAND Steve Bertram
Tel 0850 863620 11am-6pm Tel & Fax 0191 261 9629
1st Tues, 7pm, *Just Harleys, Sandysford, Newcastle-upon-Tyne*

NORTH WALES John Mills, Tel: 01477 534425
1st Wed, *Hope & Anchor, Ewloe Place, Buckley*

OXFORDSHIRE Kevin Lindsey, Tel: 01993 841179
3rd Thurs, *Duke of Marlborough, 1.5 miles N. of Woodstock*

PEAK DISTRICT Simon Mason, Tel: 01773 713188
1st Thurs, 8pm, *Travellers Rest, Ashbourne Road, Derby*

RIBBLE VALLEY Peter Higham, Tel: 01200 424947
2nd Tues, *Pendle Hotel, Chatburn, Clitheroe (off A59)*

SHROPSHIRE Lynton Powell, Tel: 01743 358423
2nd & last Wed, *White Horse, Shrewsbury*

SOMERSET Kevin Parfitt, Tel: 01935 472343
Last Thurs, *Ring for Details*

SOUTHERN Russ McDermid, Tel: 01703 812371
3rd Tues, *The Phoenix, Twyford, Nr. Winchester*

SOUTH LONDON & SURREY
Steve Sharp, 0181 773 4204
9pm every Wed, *Ewell Sports & Social Club, Banstead Road, Ewell, Surrey*

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 Thurs, *Welsh Institute of Sport, Cardiff, 8pm*

SOUTH WEST WALES
Mark Rowntree, Tel: 01792 844316
1st Wed, *Lodge Gorseinon, 7.30pm*

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*

TEESSIDE & NORTH YORKS
David Crone, Tel: 01325 258252
3rd Wed, 8.30p.m., *Blacksmiths Arms, Swainby*

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, Wellesborough*

WEST MIDLANDS Richard Hawker, Tel: 01527 893874
1st & 3rd Thurs, *Wilmslow Mens Club, Stratford on Avon*

WEST YORKSHIRE Gordon Carr, Tel: 01729 830569
1st & 3rd Thurs, *Bankfoot Cricket Club, Wickets Close, (off Cleckheaton Rd), Odsal, Bradford*

WILTSHIRE Bill Riley, Tel/Fax: 01225 863811
1st Tues, *The Toll Gate, Holt, Trowbridge*

WORCESTERSHIRE David Gunster, Tel: 01905 616400
3rd Tuesday, *The Fox at Bransford, Worcs.*

WYVERN Steve Pighills, Tel: 01902 672479
Every Thurs, 10pm, *Potter's Rose & Crown, Colley Lane, Halesowen*



Patron: Lord Strathearn

TRAIL

NOVEMBER 1998

No. 243

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

EDITOR: Fred Ellison

A well known Exmoor Lane, April '98. Photo by Colin Patient, Loddon Vale.

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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.

E D I T O R

Another AGM over and welcome back to the Executive Committee to Dave Giles and Richard Marshall. A warm welcome also to John Pritchard, who will be our new Membership Secretary

I have received some very interesting articles from members who have travelled to far flung places to trail ride. Were they fed up with our bad weather or unnecessary confrontation or was it just for a change of scenery.

How about some trail riders' impressions of their bikes - new or old. There's always someone asking me what bike or apparel they ought to buy - but please keep it short and snappy. I've had some excellent articles, but 5 - 6 or even 12 pages is far more than we can accommodate.

Two differing views on helping at Horse Events are given in our letters section. Maybe you feel that we are allies with a common aim or maybe you feel we are thought of as labourers to be used but not associated with.

Four carriage drivers attended our meeting this month and couldn't believe how knowledgeable and well organised the TRF are. They said it sounded so much fun that they are now even considering buying trail bikes.

Don't forget - it still isn't too late to order your TRF sweatshirt/t-shirt/hat for Christmas.



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Suzuki DR200 Djebel	M reg electric start , as new 2,400 miles T & T	£2,300.00
Yamaha Serow 225	Electric start 9,000 miles, in white & green	£1,600.00

Chairman's Chat

Another year gone by! and I have just returned from the 1998 A.G.M.

Dave Giles was elected Chairman, Jonathan St. John will continue as

Secretary, Richard Marshall has taken over as our new

Rights of Way Officer and John Pritchard as our Membership Secretary.

There were no volunteers for the position of Vice Chairman, but Dave Giles will decide whether one is needed.

Jeff Ward, who looks after the display equipment and Rob Sawyer, who deals with our merchandise, also wish to step down, but as no volunteers were forthcoming by the A.G.M. they both agreed to carry on for a short while. Jeff has put an article in Trail previously and Rob, I understand, is going to do the same this month. So PLEASE let's have volunteers to take over these two posts. The other Officers and Co-opted Officers indicated their willingness to carry on.

Lord Strathcarron responded on behalf of the T.R.F. to a question in the House of Lords on Monday, 2nd November, asking what the Government intends to do about illegal use of the countryside by users of unlicensed and

uninsured motorcycles. I have briefed Lord Strathcarron and he will be sending me the relevant page of Hansard so that I will be able to report back to you.

On the 9th December I will be representing us at a Countryside Commission Conference in London. Again I will inform you of anything which is relevant to us.

I indicated at the A.G.M. that, whilst I no longer wished, for personal reasons, to serve on the Executive Committee, I am very happy to represent or assist the T.R.F. in other ways - perhaps as a roving (or raving!) ambassador.

Tony Stuart

NOTICE BOARD

From National Treasurer

Copies of the Audited Financial Accounts can be obtained from me (address as per inside front cover). Please supply an A4 size self addressed envelope and your current membership number.

TRF Personalised Sweatshirts
Have your name or group name embroidered around the TRF logo at NO EXTRA CHARGE.

Available from Rob Sawyer. See Merchandise Order Form.
What a good idea for a Christmas present.

Lost in Edinburgh

I am a new member in Edinburgh and am trying to find some like-minded members. So far I have only contacted one. We would like to find other members who could either take us out or provide us with some routes, etc. I ride a DR250 and am willing to travel, especially to the Borders area. I would be grateful for any help as to the best of our knowledge there is only one other member in Edinburgh.

The detail of the two riders & the signpost in the bottom right hand corner of the "Caring for Green Lanes" leaflet has been copied and is available in

LASER CUT OUTLINE

at a very reasonable cost. It measures 10" x 12" and looks good on my camper van! Any colour, any size (but size change costs more) I've had lots of good comments since fixing mine! Details from Colin Patient.

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RoW NEWS

RoW REPORT

Although I was only elected at the AGM, I am developing a Rights of Way action plan for 1999 to endeavour to meet the objectives of our Forward Plan. The outline five point plan I have at the moment is:-

1. Organise a number of rights of way training workshops around the country over the next 12 months, in order to sustain and develop our network of rights of way activists.
2. To develop a Rights of Way Team to help provide on-going support, advice and information to our rights of way activists.
3. Ensure that we continue to be consulted and provide responses to initiatives from central and local government that impact upon our recreational activity.
4. Share the latest news and information with our rights of way activists to help them to be effective, possibly through a RoW Newsletter or the TRF Web site.
5. Plan for future succession.

This will be subject to review and hopefully approval as part of The Forward Plan, at the January Executive Committee Meeting.

I am gratified that I already have had a number of volunteers to be members of the RoW Team. What I am seeking from the team members is that they are prepared to carry out a specific task or role, thus spreading the workload. For example Richard Hawker has agreed to continue distributing London Gazette notices and Charlie Morris has volunteered his services to carry out emergency research in the Public Records Office at Kew. If anyone is prepared to, or considering, joining the team, please give me a ring.

I am not due to take over from Steve Neville until January, but if anyone does need to get in touch, could you restrict your calls to between 7 & 8 pm.

Richard Marshall, National Rights of Way Officer elect

LONDON GAZETTE RoW RESPONDENTS

At the AGM on Saturday, I mentioned that there were a number of persons on the list of respondents who had not replied in confirmation of their continuing interest in receiving notices published in the London Gazette. This is despite the fact that I included a Stamped Addressed Envelope for their convenience, and that all the letters were sent out with a return address to cover the event of non delivery.

This list as a reminder that I would like this confirmation, even now.

Avon/North Somerset, Gwent - was M. Harding, Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Northamptonshire - was D. Knight, Dorset - was D. Vatcher, Isle of Wight - was P. Mogg, Oxfordshire - was N. Cunliffe, Shropshire - was J. Hillstone, Surrey - was B. Wright.

I am still sending notices to those persons, at the address which is shown on the list originally handed to me, so if they are reading this, please confirm that you are receiving them, and that you wish to continue receiving them!

To each of the groups covering the respective areas, please would you look at the subject, and try to help out those respondents where one person covers many counties - many hands make light work. The groups may also wish to consider how they deal with this subject, especially whether any group member has a computer with a modem, who could receive them by e-mail on behalf of the group. It is simple, and it is quick and dirt cheap! If there is no computer owner in the group, why not consider buying one from funds. They need not cost much more than £350 brand new and up to date, and the internet connection from Dixons stores in the high street is now free of charge. You could even see our TRF page as advertised in the front cover of Trail! Communication between groups is now within the grasp of all of us, via this medium, and all at next to nothing running cost.

Richard Hawker, West Mids Group Rep, and circulator of LG notices.

SAVED BY THE TRF

We all deal with confrontations differently. The differences are not only down to personality but relate to our experience and knowledge of the law / lane / landowner. John's reaction to the letter from the land owner's solicitor was understandable but could the response have been more productive?

My first question in such situations is to find out why the land owner is of the opinion that vehicular rights do not exist. I might have responded by offering to sign the disclaimer if the land owner could produce some evidence to show that vehicular rights did not exist. Two benefits accrue. Time and knowledge. Time to look into the matter further. Time to visit the local police station to find out how the registration numbers were linked to an address. The 'knowledge' aspect is most unlikely to be revealed which would work against the landowner in court - as would the fact that he had taken no steps (as I believe is the case) to have the Definitive Map modified to have the way shown as bridleway. (Why? Because he wouldn't succeed).

At the end of the day I doubt that he would succeed in being granted an injunction because the law requires that a remedy is only granted to those with 'clean hands'. The obstruction, lack of action to correct the Definitive Map and the somewhat dodgy acquisition of addresses would not favour the landowner.

Dave Tilbury

TRF MERCHANDISE

Having advised the assembled multitudes at the AGM that I wish to step down from the job of looking after the merchandise for the TRF, it was suggested that I write a note for the next issue of TRAIL to attract the attention of those who could not attend.

The merchandising service is just that, a service, not a commercial venture or a money maker, but has been in existence for a number of years since Richard Tallon set it up and, as my Scottish friends say, "it washes it's face". I have looked after it for two years and there is money in the bank with a significant stock holding, mostly of T shirts and badges. There is an arrangement with our suppliers which means we don't have to tie up money and storage space for sweatshirt stockholding. Current stock occupies three large cardboard boxes and all the paperwork goes in one box file.

In my view it needs someone with afresh perspective and some new ideas to move forward. It does not take up a lot of time as it currently operates, but could do with some thought being put into development.

So, if you are looking for a way to help the TRF without too much aggravation, this could well be the thing for you. It really is a very simple operation and I will offer assistance to my successor for as long as it is required. Please call me on 01952 813129 to discuss any concerns you may have.

Rob Sawyer

Riding With Roger (Harris that is) - THIS MONTH'S TIP

Remove the locknut on your valve stem, it is part of a massive conspiracy to rip out your valve stem especially when the tyre "creeps".

Use a metal dust cap on your valve stem (if you can find one these days) with a dab of grease under it. They won't leak. Better still, use one with the valve core removal bit on it.

A TIP

FROM JOHN BORWICK-SMITH IN SUSSEX

Use a Walkers crisp packet for transfer of petrol as they are petrol proof.

A DAY AT THE RACES

WELSH TWO DAY

Weather: rain & miserable

I arrived early Thursday morning and met up with William and four others - TRF members from Windy Corner. As I was the one with the map I was asked to lead the sections on Strata Florida. OK we went to Rhayader, then round the Clearwen Reservoir track. This was quicker and nicer than going by road, then onto Strata Florida, because we were riding north to south and the two day boys were south to north. I took the group along the fire road, so as to avoid oncoming riders, where we stopped and watched the sidecars and early number riders. We weren't there long and decided to move on. William's bike had trouble starting so the other four carried on round the fire road, deciding to meet up on the way back. The trouble turned out to be lack of fuel, so William went back to the garage to re-fuel. I carried on down the fire road, trying to find the other four, which I never did. I came across their tyre tracks, but took one wrong turning, ending up at the end of the diversion (because the river crossing on Strata Florida was deep and I mean deep!) They had diverted the two day boys round the fire road, missing the three deep river crossings and re-joining Strata half way down. So this is where I ended up. Keeping an eye on things and making sure the riders re-joined the track was a marshal - an official anyway! - sitting in his four wheel drive off road vehicle with a hefty front bumper which had a towing winch attached. I was passing the time of day with him when one of the competing riders rode up to us. "You a marshal? There's a guy back there come off his bike, he ain't moving, looks dead to me!" Then off he went - that was it. The man drove off in his four wheel drive to find this "dead" body on the track. Of course, he's driving against the oncoming traffic! and these two day boys don't hang about, they get a move on. I'm left there thinking well I'd better follow him, he may want help - who knows what he may find!!

I followed and by this time I had a travelling marshal following me as well! The man in the four wheel drive ain't hanging about. He's in a ditch... up the embankment... getting it sideways... sliding all over the place... oncoming riders are dodging out of the way. He's taking up a lot of wide space on these narrow tracks!! He's a man on a mission, which is fair play considering he may have a "dead" rider on his hands. I think about overtaking him to try and slow the oncoming riders down, but this was impossible so I kept well behind him.

We came to a blind bend, BANG... there's a rider coming round the corner at speed. The poor lad didn't stand a chance and smashed into the four wheeler sideways on!! There was a hell of a bang and an instant cry of pain from the

rider who is certainly well and truly floored to the ground, writhing in agony. Because it's a blind bend I carried on round the corner, parked the bike and slowed all the remaining riders down. I must say they were all very good slowing down to walking pace and acknowledging me. By the way, the weather was still damp, low cloud base and misty. The poor lad had definitely got a broken leg and a smashed up bike as well. The frame had two large impact dents, smashed front wheel, bent forks... a real mess! The four wheel drive man was looking after the lad. Fortunately, he had a two way radio and had summoned help. The lad was getting cold, so my coat and anything else we could find went over him to try and keep him warm. The ambulance was having difficulty getting to us, due to the bad track and our remoteness. All the riders had gone past, even the stragglers. I could see the ambulance's headlights in the distance. There were also two vehicles about a mile away, but they were not moving. They were attending to the original casualty! (Apparently he knocked himself out and broke his leg) We got in radio contact with them - GET SOMEONE DOWN HERE... QUICK. A four wheel Suzuki Jeep arrived with a female first aider. She put a splint on the lad's leg, gave him oxygen from a little portable bottle, said "Can't stop, got to go back" then disappeared... Great. Five minutes later the oxygen ran out!! The poor lad was back in pain. The ambulance eventually arrived - three cheers. Out came a special adjustable stretcher, but they couldn't get it adjusted, it didn't seem to want to click into position... plenty of cussing... got there eventually. It's a good piece of equipment. In theory it opens out like a giant hinge then slides under the patient and clips together. In practice they can't get it right, it won't close! Well it won't, because it's getting snagged up on all the over-trousers put down for the patient to lie on. So remove the trousers... that's better, but no, it still won't close shut! I got down there and put a bit of strength behind it... that closed it. The patient was lifted up and put on a proper wheeled stretcher so the special stretcher had to be removed - but it won't UNfasten! More strength required - you have to close it even more to release the spring catch - right, sorted that out. We now wheeled the patient to the ambulance which was parked some fifteen feet away, not a great distance unless you've got a broken leg and are being wheeled up a bumpy, stony fire road with no oxygen!! We got to the ambulance - right, all lift together, let's get him in. ONE - TWO - THREE... in he goes - almost! He'd been positioned on the stretcher wrong and was too far down! When they tried to move the stretcher into position his broken leg caught the first aid cupboard!! so he had to move up a little bit. What an unnecessary agony!! But he was now safely in the ambulance, which had to turn round and go and pick up the first rider to be injured! WHAT A HELL OF A DAY HE MUST HAVE HAD!!!!

R. J. Carvill, West Midlands

The Daily Telegraph - A Newspaper?

The following appeared in the Daily Telegraph on Monday, 19th October (reproduced with permission from Telegraph Syndications) on page 5 in the news section.

9,000 miles of 'green lanes' could be open to off-road vehicles

By Daily Telegraph Correspondent

THE Countryside Commission wants to open up 9,000 miles of "green lanes" to off-road vehicles, including routes that are footpaths or bridleways.

The proposal, contained in the commission's paper *Rights of Way in the 21st Century* has outraged environment campaigners.

"This is an ill-conceived notion that flies in the face of common sense," Andy Dunlop, of the Green Lanes Environmental Action Movement, said.

"Damage by off-roaders regularly leaves green lanes impassable to walkers and riders and does not need further encouragement," he said.

"And to impose vehicular rights where they do not exist is monstrously unfair to landowners whose freehold rights are being violated.

"The Countryside Commission are trying to say, 'we're having that - that's ours', with no argument and no compensation, all so that four-wheel drivers can tear around the countryside."

The commission concedes that the proposal represents "rough justice". But Roger Ward, a senior

rights of way policy officer, insisted that it was needed to break the backlog of cases as local authorities, landowners, off-road enthusiasts and environment groups fight over the status of green lanes on which the public's rights have yet to be defined formally.

"Re-classifying these lanes individually is a huge undertaking," he said. "So we propose sorting the matter out in one fell swoop. We can see an element of rough justice but then we also need a system which is administratively effective."

However, the Ramblers' Association also condemned the proposal. "People are entitled to quiet enjoyment of the countryside and that is impossible if you've got off-road vehicles buzzing around all over the place," said David Beskine, a rights of way officer.

"The law at the moment is complex, but that is because it takes into account everybody's rights. This proposal would trample over those rights and the commission should think again."

Jeremy Iles of the charity Sus-tans said: "The wholesale opening

up of green lanes to motor vehicles would destroy the very peace and tranquillity people go to the countryside in search of. To allow vehicles where they are not allowed already would be a backward step."

The commission's proposal would apply to ways now described as Unclassified County Roads of which it estimates there are 6,000 to 9,000 miles, and to Roads Used as Public Paths of which there are 3,000 miles.

Local authorities are reviewing the status of the latter based on established use. About half are being classified as Byways Open to All Traffic, and half as bridleways, but the process is time-consuming and expensive. Under the commission's proposals, all would automatically become by-ways.

As for the UCRs, the commission's paper claims that they are "essentially carriageways", and should also be open to all traffic. However, research shows that many of them are actually public footpaths or bridleways, with right of way for vehicles reserved for private access by landowners and residents.

When we see such a biased article on a subject we understand it casts doubt on the integrity of all the other articles and on the media in general.

Note the techniques:

- using the words "green lanes" - a colloquialism which Countryside Commission does not use directly in it's document.
- de-personalise and demonise with "off-roaders".
- using the descriptions "footpaths or bridleways" when it should say "definitive footpath or definite bridleway" or accurately "dual status".
- vague terms such as "open up".
- using "off-roaders" to imply that the routes are not roads.
- nothing is quantified - so "has outraged environmental campaigners" does not say who they are (if they even exist) and the degree of concern.
- avoiding balance by seeking opinion from the "off-roaders" - further de-personalisation.
- putting incorrect statements in quotes is a way around the Press Complaints Commission's guidelines. (The PCC is a sham anyway as it is run by the newspapers) The worst example is the quote from Jeremy Iles from Sustrans - that poor, struggling "charity" which had £42 million from the Lottery.
- leaving out quotation marks around dialogue so it may be twisted. An example here is at the top of the second column. It is doubtful that Roger Ward said what is written.

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On right track

SIR—It is not accurate to say that the Countryside Commission proposes to open 9,000 miles of green lanes to off-road vehicles (report, Oct. 19).

We are proposing a package of improvements in the administration of all "rights of way" — the hugely important, and underfunded, network of paths, bridleways and tracks that provide everyone with access to the countryside. As part of this we want to clarify the status of a range of tracks, many of which already have (or, on examination, are likely to prove to have) vehicular rights.

Our research shows that the vast majority of more than 6,000 miles of "unclassified country roads" already have public vehicular rights. The rights over other tracks, known as "roads used as public paths" (RUPPs) are less certain, but the present piecemeal process of dealing with them could take hundreds of years and immense sums of money to complete.

Our proposals would lead to tracks being better known and managed, primarily for walkers and cyclists. Vehicular use would continue to be allowed where it is compatible with these other recreational uses, and the ground surface can take it.

RICHARD SIMMONDS
Chairman, Countryside Commission
Cheltenham, Glos

• mis-using the term "open to all traffic" from BOAT (last paragraph).

• putting facts towards, but not at the end. This saves having to print a correction as they "have made it quite clear in.....".

• the last sentence is the sting in the tail, but written without quantification. What is the "research"? ".....many....." could mean 5% to a Telegraph journalist, whereas to most people it means at least half.

The whole article is crafted to get around PCC guidelines and to cause maximum impact. Facts are not allowed to get in the way of a good story. Why is it considered to be a 'good story'? The answer is in the last eight words of the article - property rights, land ownership, privacy, property values. The article is written for those people who seek to deny the pre-existing, even responsibly exercised, rights of others within the boundaries of land to which they hold title. Such articles wind up such readers with blame on the "off-roaders" - "good old Telegraph for alerting us".

The Chairman of the Countryside Commission took the trouble to write the

above letter to the Telegraph:

The full 22 page proposal is published by the Countryside Commission as document CCP 543, available free of charge from John Dower House, Crescent Place, Cheltenham, GL50 3RA. Tel: 01242 521381, Fax: 01242 584270. Available also via the web: www.countryside.gov.uk.

Mark Holland,
Hon. National Public Relations Officer



letters

TRAIL RIDING IN CORFU



What a trail riders paradise is Corfu! NO access problems anywhere - simply ride any path, road, trail, beach that you want to. Anyone can go anywhere! No gates on ANY type of trail, no fences, no keep out or private property signs. No challenges from irate farmers, no rambler, no big landowners. No helmets, no speed limits outside towns, no speed cameras, no speed bumps, no traffic calming measures, no parking restrictions. No police presence, no crime, no anti-motorbike attitude, because everyone rides bikes! If this is Europeanisation, lets have a United States of Europe with no British influence A.S.A.P.

Paul Atherton

P.S. Petrol is £2 a gallon, and the Greeks have no oil. We have enough oil to

be self sufficient - and we pay £3 a gallon. I wonder why? AND a new Yamaha Serow is only £2300 O.T.R.

MY VIEW ON MAPS

In my view the best maps that the OS ever produced (for our purposes anyway) were the 189 sheets of the one inch series, published in the late 60s and early 70s. They can be readily identified by their glossy red covers and they contain most of the information of the earlier series, all motorways up to the date of publication and show trails very clearly.

If Phil Lord has any of the above maps that he doesn't want I would be very happy to take them off his hands.

Bob Combley, Oxford

MISSING MAPS - HELP?

Thankyou TRAIL for your recent adverts on my behalf re Marking of Maps for my holiday around Exmoor.

I would like to say a big thankyou to all those members who helped me out.

Unfortunately, two of my maps are still out with people - they are numbers 181 and 180. Could those members who have them still forward them in the stamped addressed envelopes provided. I have arranged for post to be forwarded.

Many thanks, Andy Bailey

GARMIN GPS 12

I read with great interest Don Hoaglin's article GPS and the Motorcycle July 98. As a result of this I have recently purchased a GARMIN GPS 12 from MAPLINS price £129.99. Don gave a good appraisal of the unit he has, a GARMIN GPSII and I agree with all his advantage and disadvantage views, particularly the bit about crashing while reading the display. I don't know if Don's unit will do this or not but the GARMIN GPS 12 has the facility to "download" and "upload" the info in it's memory both "to" and "from" a PC, (via a plug in lead, also available from MAPLINS) using a Computer Program I found on the Internet called "GARTRIP" a "Sharewear" version of which you can get by E:Mail, pfeifer@fh-offenburg.de The "Sharewear" version will allow you to do everything the program is capable of apart from SAVING any information but, if you pay the registration fee of \$30 (about £19) which is well worth it!! the Originator one, Heinrich Pfeifer, will send you an Activation Code, so you can use it's full and very large potential.

Since acquiring "GARTRIP" I have been riding around N.Yorks like a

loony, logging every trip I have made, then "downloading", saving editing, scaling, resizing and printing every trail, road, track, BOAT, RuPP, TIZ, WIZ, and FIZZ that got in the way.

On a more serious note, once you have been on a journey and got the info onto your PC, you can keep each trip for ever as a separate file and reload it at any time and re-ride that trail. You can also mark on the route any special points like FUEL, FOOD, or any possible danger ie; WIRE and the GPS will automatically flash a message on the screen as you approach this WAYPOINT. The more expensive GARMIN GPS12XL even has an audible warning (if you can hear it !)

Frank Kitching, Teesside and N.Yorks Group

HORSE EVENTS - EUPHORIA?

Following on from what our outgoing Chairman said at the AGM about our involvement with various horse events, I would just like to add a word of caution to the euphoria.

Yes it is a reasonable chance to enhance our image with the horse riding fraternity, but does it always work?

In the West Mids group, we get involved each year with 2 or 3 long distance rides, and about 6 events where we collect the cross country scores. It brings in perhaps £6-800 per year to our funds, except this year, when two events were cancelled, but we were not informed of the cancellation by the organiser!! Hardly a way to treat us "loyal servants" who have helped every year, two times each year over two - two and a half days each time, for the last 7 or 8 years.

Then how about the British Horse Soc. representative on my local county council rights of way forum - talking to her after the last meeting, she was very effusive about how we help out with society events, and how good we all are, so I ask her if we can count on her support for byway claims instead of bridleway, "oh no!!, we can't have motor bikes mixing with the horses on narrow lanes".

And does it work in the reality of the "battlefield"? No!!!!

I attended the PI on Buckle Street, Saintbury, Gloucs, in August, and speaking against use by motorbikes were the usual "suspects"/horse riders. This Buckle Street is the one which has been used year after year after year in the Colmore Cup Trial, since around the time of the first world war, and yet there were landowners willing to stand and say they had never seen any motor vehicle ever on that road. And no help for us from the horse riders, only anti reaction.

So, let's not get too carried away with our relationship with horse riders

- they are no different to many other human beings in this respect - they will use us so long as we are convenient for them to use(?abuse), and they will ditch us as soon as we lose our value to their particular circumstances!

What may be an idea to investigate is whether a better relationship can be struck up at organisational (higher) level in the hope that it filters downwards to the local levels.

Richard Hawker, West Mids Group

ASSISTING AT LONG-DISTANCE HORSE EVENTS

TRF members have assisted for many years at these events and found it a fulfilling experience.

The horse event organisers obtain landholders' permission for trail riders to ride in places we cannot usually enjoy - forestry tracks, bridleways, and private land. They aim to minimise hard surfaces, so we are able to ride on almost continuous off-tarmac, enjoying some breathtaking scenery on the way.

At the same time we gain a valuable donation to use mainly for our rights of way research.

How we help

1. Marking the route - from 1:50,000 scale riders' maps or, when the route or TRF helpers are new the horse event organisers provide 1:25,000 scale maps. It is often quite a challenge to find the route, especially on open moorland or in forests. Routes are usually marked with orange tapes, or with flags on open ground. Marking is done in less than one day - giving less time for vandals / saboteurs and minimising disturbance to landholders.
2. Reporting problems to the organisers - collapsed gates, locked gates, obstructions, hazards, problems with landholders, clashes with other events, etc.
3. Checking the route on ride day(s) - at every event markers are sabotaged by being removed or re-routed by walkers and dog-walkers unwilling to share the countryside with others; or by local residents who object to a number of horses passing their house once a year.
4. During the rides, co-ordinate with the Organisers and Radio Operators (usually 'Raynet' amateur radio volunteers at checkpoints) - rectify sabotage; seek lost entrants; escort ambulances, veterinary surgeons or farriers; carry messages or items; etc.
5. 'Sweep' the route to ensure all horse-riders clear - depending on circumstances.

6. Re-mark for any different routes at different times during the event.
7. Clear all markers after the event - and close / lock gates as required. The route is cleared soon after the last horse - helping to keep landholders and other countryside users co-operative.

A horse event Organiser had heard from others in her Society about the TRF helping at events. In previous years she and two others had marked over three days from horses, but saboteurs were stripping out the markers almost as they were placed. She had then been out at 5 a.m. replacing markers on the ride day. When trail riders helped at this lower Wye Valley Ride there was some sabotage. However, the locals soon learned that it was pointless sabotaging the route as we would quickly reinstate. The Organiser said she had enjoyed a stress-free day and we were a "Godsend".

Endurance Riding

The horses are mainly of Arab bloodstock, bred and trained for travelling long distances at between 6.5 and 10 m.p.h. The welfare of the horse is paramount. There are strict veterinary checks for lameness and maximum heart-rate before, during and after the ride.

Events usually have a 10 or 20 mile Pleasure Ride and various classes with distances of 30, 40, 50, 60, 75 or 100 miles. There can be up to around 140 horses entered.

In England and Wales events are organised mainly by the British Endurance Riding Association (BERA - ex-British Horse Society) or the Endurance Horse and Pony Society (EHPS).

Benefits from Assisting:

1. Enjoyable.
2. Horse-riders and landholders see us as helpful, responsible people: not "demon scramblers on footpaths" as portrayed by the media. In return, horse-riders often support claims for vehicular rights of way.
3. Similar for adjoining house residents. Note that many have not been informed of the event, particularly if on a tarmac road or not a landholder.
4. Similar for walkers, other horse-riders, cyclists etc. Some of these may only see us on the marking day or from a distance so it is imperative for trail riders to wear a tabard with 'HORSE' prominent.
5. We often meet landholders and others and get into conversation about our assistance at horse events, trail riding, green lanes, and rights of way work.
6. Donation.

Getting Started

Colin Patient (tel 01189 696783) is the TRF National Horse Events Co-ordinator (for 1998) and can put you in touch with TRF members with experience to share.

There is also information compiled by Mark Holland.

Most events are outside the winter and on Sundays with marking on Saturdays. For TRF helpers who have travelled far, accommodation is organised - from camping to hotel. Refreshments are provided free at the venue.

Critical points include:

1. Early liaison with Organisers.
2. A TRF member to co-ordinate sufficient reliable TRF helpers. If your motorcycle is not suited for horse events for reasons of noise or tractability then, honestly, it is not suited to trail riding. Occasionally, non-members help but everyone follows the spirit of the TRF Code of Conduct.
3. Organisers obtain permission for trail riders to ride on other than public carriageways, and issue a 'Letter of Authority'.
4. On the event insurance as Officials.
5. Organisers provide a tabard with the word 'HORSE' prominent - preferably in 'HORSE EVENT STEWARD'.

Other types of horse event

TRF members also have extensive experience at cross-country trials - where they circulate to collect scores from jump judges.

Mark Holland, Hon. Nat. P.R.O.
P.S. Thanks to Colin for his work so far. He is willing to continue next year.

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HEADGEAR
Baseball Cap (black only with TRF letters in gold) £1.95 (not by post)

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MUGS (white with green logo) £3.50 inc. p&p

BADGE (enamel pin badge with round TRF logo) £1.00 to TRF Fighting Fund

SIZE GUIDE: An XL sweatshirt or T-shirt would fit a 42"-44" chest but it would need to be an XXL pullover to fit the same person for a loose but comfortable fit.

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TWO MEN'S COAST TO COAST

(with apologies to Leo)


The great day arrived and off we went. We got through the first lane without mishap and Alex stopped to close the gate. Many people were milling around as other groups went through as well. I had visions of Alex & I being left so went on with others to the first junction to wait for him, and waited, and waited. Going back to where the lane came out, deserted. Back to the junction, deserted. Two days coast to coast and I had got lost in the first half-hour. Alex had the maps and I had the tools which are not very good for finding your way with. Having noticed red markers on the trail I reasoned that someone had been ultra efficient so I followed them. Soon I came upon a lad mending a puncture with a hairy person standing watching him. After I had explained what had happened the hairy one said "are you Ron Walker". I had to admit it but wondered how he knew, as to my knowledge we hadn't met. Although I'm well known as the village idiot it surprised me that my fame had spread so far. It turned out that this was Roger Preston who I had spoken to on the phone once. He didn't hold any grudges and adopted me.

We had a smashing first day although not uneventful. Roger got wiped off his bike by some line across the trail at chest height. He broke his clutch lever assembly even though he had bark busters fitted. We found some serious water filled ruts, one covered a lads tank even before he dropped it. What a great day. I just about kept up and even managed to open a few gates, not many though as Ross was with us and he seems to love opening them, beating me to it every time. He's great to ride with, in fact they all were. That's including the nice young lady called Trudy whose riding put me to shame.

In Hawes I found out Alex had had to drop out. His kick start had broken at the gate where I'd left him. He'd struggled on with the others for a while, them damaged his thumb and had to give up.

Next day, brimming with confidence, I inflicted myself on the original group. Leaving Hawes on the trail leading up to the Pennine way I was catching up and as I closed with the chap in front I thought "I've cracked this, I'm good", then wallop. A rock punched the boot fastening into my ankle and the over trousers seemed to explode at my knee. Eventually I got back on the bike and carried on, managing to navigate the snotty bit which Mike Watkins had taken us up a few weeks previously. The lads were waiting at the gate at the top. Over the next 20 minutes the pain in the foot went from excruciating pain to just agony and I started to enjoy it again. Then going up another snotty bit a rock moved and the same ankle hit a solid rock knocking my foot off the footrest. After that my bottle had gone and I didn't have the guts to attack the hard bits. Standing up on the pegs seriously hurt and I was grateful for any flat bit where I could sit down. We went up Starbottom Fell which was up to then the hardest climb I'd done. One lad offered to ride my bike up but as I couldn't walk it wouldn't have helped. Stopping for lunch at West Burton meant we were now 10 miles further away from the West Coast than when we started and I was shattered.

Reasonably smooth stuff from then on meant I could sit down more. The foot seriously hurt, was bearable but made me even slower than normal unless we were



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on the tarmac where I could hold my own. Climbing up the last trail one of the lads had a puncture. To save time they sent me on ahead with the words "if you see water go round as the bogs here are deep & we lost a bike completely last year". A hundred yards further on I rode over a crust and the back wheel dropped through, disappearing completely. The lads had seen it happen and soon had me out again. After that I was even more careful.

What beautiful views, the trail ran along a high ridge where you looked down into valleys thousands of feet below and with the old road being on the top it was in very good condition even though it hadn't been touched in hundreds of years. We got to Morecambe without further problems. I was shattered and the foot was giving me hell but I'd made it. Alex was waiting with the trailer.

Six months later my foot's still swollen but isn't bothering me any. The boot fastening has been removed with a Velcro fastening in its place. Shall I do it again? You bet.

Riding's Fun, but it sometimes hurts

Ron Walker

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"Open a one-inch Ordnance Survey map," wrote John Ebrell in the *Motor Cycle* in June 1963, "and a whole new world lies before you." He was referring to the network of green lanes that criss-cross Britain, and the pleasure that could be had traversing them on a motorcycle. John is pictured at Long Lane, Clapham, West Yorkshire on a BSA SS80, while his friend Ray Kemp is more suitably mounted on a Greeves trials machine.

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YAMAHA XTZ660 TENERE "J" reg. 25000 miles. Blue. Good condition. Tel: Richard 01249 650589 (Wilts).

3 BIKE TRAILER Indispension, mini wheels, lights, locking hitch. £105. Tel: 01539 725198 (Cumbria).

KAWASAKI KLX250 1994, 9000K. T & T April '99. Acerbis 14 litre tank and original. DEP silencer and original, well maintained and good condition. £1850 ovno. Tel: 01604 832162 (Northampton).

SUZUKI DR350 trail bike. 1994, excellent condition, T & T, MT21s, Renthal bars, bark busters, spare tyres. £1950. Tel: Newbury 01635 38987.

HONDA XR250 "C" reg, T & T, ideal off-roader, easy starter and reliable. Knobbly tyres. Good condition, £795. Tel: 0151 475 2133 (Liverpool).

KAWASAKI KLX650 C2 1996 "N" reg. 8000 miles. VGC. £2900. Tel: 01452 856102.

KAWASAKI KDX200 1990, MOT Sept. '99. Good chain, sprockets, tyres. £890. Tel: Leeds 0113 252 2299.

HONDA CRM 250 Mk2. "H" reg. MOT Oct. '99. 1900km only. £1800. Tel: Graham 01788 544104 (Rugby).

HONDA CB72 250cc. Excellent condition. 12 months MOT, cheap ins., many new parts, offers around £2500. Tel: 01773 834654 or 0961 536016.

1997 KLX300 Good condition. £2800. Tel: 01287 633509 (Teesside).

HONDA MTX125 trail bike. Tax, MOT, sensible trail accessories, some spares. First class bike. £700 ono. Tel: Paul 01242 234713 or 0802 777877.

YAMAHA TW200 Balloon tyres, brand new (still in crate). White & Blue, electric start. £2595. Tel: 01454 778249.

SUZUKI DR350 PARTS Front wheel, forks, shock, swing arm, front and rear brake assemblies inc. callipers and various other bits. Make me an offer - it's all got to go. **Wanted XT600Z Parts** Rear wheel (drum brake), seat, shock, plastics for an '86-'88 Tenere. Tel: 0118 962 9307 (nr. Reading).

KAWASAKI KMX200 1989, MOT, little trail use hence very good condition, recent rear shock and replated bore. £900 ono. Tel: 01202 880876 (ans. phone).

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