

## GROUPS

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

**BLACK COUNTRY** Nick Hammond, Tel: 01384 221520  
1 & 3 Tues, 9pm, *The Mitre, Church Road, Bradmore, Wolverhampton*

**BRISTOL** Jon Black, Tel: 01179 044 748  
4th Mon, *Keynsham Rugby Club, Bristol Road, Keynsham*

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

**CHESHIRE** John Stansfield, Tel: 07899 844872  
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: 01709 367332  
2 & 4 Tuesdays, *The Angel Hotel, Sprinkhill, Eckington, Nr. Chesterfield, Derbyshire*

**DEVON** Richard Arscott, Tel: 01803 400937  
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 YORKSHIRE**  
Howard Wadsworth, Tel: 01405 860904  
1st Tues, *Boot & Shoe, Gowdall, Nr. Snaith*

**ESSEX**  
John Lay, Tel: 01206 263912, Mobile: 0831 886032  
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 Wed, *The Winget Social Club, Tuffley Avenue, 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, *Hindshhead 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, *The Red Lion, 127 Cassington Road, Yarnton*

**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** Rob Latham, Tel: 01952 592324  
2nd & last Wed, *White Horse, Shrewsbury*

**SOMERSET** Steve Hounsell, Tel: 01460 66452  
Last Thurs, *The Bell Hotel, Currey Rivel, Nr. Taunton*

**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, *The Carrier's Arms at South Marston, Swindon*

**SUSSEX** Bevis Billingham, Tel: 01243 585128  
Last Thurs, *Ashington Social Club, Rear of Red Lion, A24, 9 miles North of Worthing*

**TEESSIDE & NORTH YORKS**  
Mark Bieganski, Tel: 01904 656469  
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, Woolston, Wellingborough*

**WEST MIDLANDS** Colin Bott, Tel: 01386 834105  
1st & 3rd Thurs, *Wilmcote 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.*



Patron: Lord Strathcarron

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**All Contributions to the Editor .... Please keep it short and sweet!  
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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.*



Have we got your attention? It's essential that you read the Chairman's Sharing column, LARA News and other relevant items in this issue of Trail and then ACT now. Get yourself a post free copy of 'Improving Rights of Way in England and Wales' from the DETR by ringing 0870 1226 236 and respond by writing to your MP or by making an appointment to see him/her and voice your concerns at the content of this document. I know several people who are now unable to go walking in the Dales and Lake District because of Arthritis and other infirmities. They can, however, still see the countryside from the saddle of a trail bike, so curtailing trail riding curtails their countryside access.

Look for support in other quarters. Shooters and other country sport people use quads and four wheel drives to move their gear around the countryside, so they also rely on the green lane network. You could point out that because they are minority sports they are vulnerable, but if they help each other then they have a greater chance of surviving. When the 'anti's' have finished with fox hunting they will undoubtedly turn their attentions elsewhere, so fishermen, shooters and others 'BEWARE'.

To show my confidence in the TRF as guardian of the green lanes I am going to buy a new bike.

**T.R.F.**  
**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**  
**24th OCTOBER, 1999**  
**WATERSPORTS CENTRE**  
**NOTTINGHAM**

## Sharing

It has been said that all evil requires in order to triumph is that good men do nothing. That will be true in our own world of trail riding if you, the membership - every individual one of you - do not respond personally and so add your weight to the protest against the nonsense that is currently being proposed by the DETR in its document ironically called 'Improving Rights of Way in England and Wales'.

Far from doing what its title purports we believe that it will produce a far greater backlog of work for the Highway Authorities to clear, will remove current safeguards from historical routes and will make the completion of a meaningful definitive map extremely remote.

The whole afternoon of last Saturday's Executive Meeting on the 4th September was given over to considering the ramifications of this document and what you read above has been written after listening to the measured response from knowledgeable rights of way workers extrapolating from the facts and figures known to them.

We are not alone in our concerns: all of the other user groups share them to a greater or lesser extent and there has already been and there continues to be, on-going liaison between us. There is a common view that in its resolve to get the Right to Roam Access Bill - to which this new RoW legislation will be attached - onto the forthcoming legislative agenda (the Queen's Speech) that the DETR has not thought through the practical working of what it is proposing and furthermore that many MPs have not even seen a copy, let alone come to grips with its implications.

Read about the details elsewhere in this issue of Trail and use the following telephone number 0870 1226236 to obtain your own copy of the document so that you might see for yourself why the executive feel as they do.

As a result of these deliberations the representative Executive Committee of the TRF request and require of the membership:

1) That all members write to their own MP expressing their concern over these proposals. Your MP's address is in the local telephone directory (under Members of Parliament). Use the Lara News and other information provided in this copy of TRAIL in order to compose your letter, but personalise it with your own views. Numbers count.

2) Every Group to seek a surgery audience with the MPs within their area.

3) Principal Officers of the Executive to establish contact in order to let the TRF concerns be known to each member of the 'All Party Parliamentary Motorcycle Group' and other significant bodies.

THIS IS A CLARION CALL TO ALL TRF MEMBERS. PLEASE PLAY YOUR INDIVIDUAL PART.

See you on the trail.

Dave Giles, Chairman

## NOTICE BOARD

Motion For AGM  
I have withdrawn this  
motion (Notice Board,  
June TRAIL).  
Mark Holland

TO ENSURE YOU GET YOUR TRAIL BULLETIN IN PLENTY OF TIME BEFORE THE A.G.M. WE WILL BE SENDING IT OUT ONE WEEK EARLY NEXT MONTH. PLEASE ENSURE ALL COPY IS WITH US BY 28TH SEPTEMBER.

Forthcoming Meeting & AGM of the South Western Region  
Saturday 6th November 1999,  
10.00a.m. for 10.30a.m. start at  
Puriton Village Hall (on the A39 to  
Glastonbury, M5 J23, N. Bridgwater).  
EVERYONE is invited.

Agenda items to reach me before  
21/10/99.

Run Leaders workshop/forum in the afternoon - PLEASE ring me with numbers of interested members. This session will not run if interest is low.

Sally A. Madgwick, 1 Halgavor Road,  
Bodmin, Cornwall, PL31 1BW. Tel:  
01208 74411, E-Mail  
s.madgwick@plymouth.ac.uk

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# RoW NEWS

## OFFICERS REPORT

The consultation paper 'Improving Rights of Way' published by the DETR in July is the biggest threat to our continuing use of green lanes in the last ten years. We firmly believe that the proposals contained in it have been proposed as a sop to landowners in order to get the Right to Roam Bill through Parliament in the next session.

What is proposed, you may ask and what is all the fuss about?

Well the paper outlines 20 proposals, many of which are light on practical detail, but ones that are the greatest threat to us are:

Proposal 2 – To reclassify by statute all RUPPs to Bridleway and relieve highway authorities from the duty of having to carry this out in future.

Proposal 3 – To close the Definitive Rights of Way Map to claims based upon historical documentary evidence 10 years after the commencement of the Act.

Proposal 5 – Give Highway Authorities responsibility for determining their own orders to change the Definitive Map.

When these proposals are compared with the stated objectives of encouraging completion of the historical record and improving the quality of the legal record they will fail dismally if proposals 2 and 3 are implemented. It will only sweep the correct legal status 'under the carpet'. It will put a tremendous burden over the next 10 years on users, like us, forced to carry out vast amounts of research to claim routes incorrectly recorded and submit claims to the authorities. An estimate in only one county is that it is likely there could be over 1,000 claims for upgrades. As authorities are currently paring back their RoW budgets they will not have resources to deal with this lot for about 100 years and by then the use witnesses and claimants will be dead.

The majority of RUPPs reclassified so far under the 1981 W & C Act have been made into Byways, so their proposal 2 flies in the face of the current facts.

Under proposal 5 it will make the highway authority judge and jury in their own case, with no apparent recourse to an independent tribunal e.g. Public Inquiry. We already know of many authorities where elected members make quasi-legal decisions that fly in the face of the law and this will only give them more power.

There is general dismay from virtually all rights of way user organisations to the proposals, including the LARA, British Horse Society, Association of Regional Bridleways, AWDC and Cyclist Touring Club. As a consequence a meeting has been held of voluntary rights of practitioners from these and other organisations. As a result of the unanimity Tim Stevens from LARA has drafted a joint response to the DETR. It was also agreed that members from all organisations should write to the DETR objecting to the proposals and lobby MPs. A briefing paper on the main points of concern has been prepared and a copy is enclosed for you to action.

I will be sending a detailed response on behalf of the TRF nationally, but please send in your own response, as time is of the essence. We will endeavour to keep you informed of progress in changing the DETRs mind.

When speaking to County Council Senior RoW Officer last week he made a telling observation .....“we would be disenfranchised if these proposals go through”.

*Richard Marshall - National Rights of Way Officer*

## TO ALL NORTHERN REGION MEMBERS

The Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority are going to conduct a survey of use in co-operation with user groups. This is being co-ordinated by Matt Neil of the YDNPA from Hawes, Tel: 01969 667494.

This will take place on two Sundays 22nd August 1999 and 26th September 1999 between 10.00 and 16.00 at the following locations:

Junction of 98/135 & 138 SD935840

Junction of 98/132 and 191 SD885873

Junction of 98/127 and 129 SD830834

Please co-operate by stopping when requested, remove helmet and answer the few questions they ask, which will only take a minute or two and are not contentious.

Please pass this information on to all TRF members you know.

Many thanks.

*Sam Watt, Keighley, West Yorkshire*

## SNIPPET OF NEWS FROM NORTHERN SOMERSET

### Reclassification of RUPPS

### Good News

Through the efforts of the TRF - C.J. Rougier, of The Planning Inspectorate, has modified the Order from Bridleway making RUPP LA 19/82., Gt Stone Lane, AKA Mad Axe Man's Lane near Winford has been made a BYWAY.

## Bad News

Within hours(?) of the Decision being published a massive chain and padlock had been applied to the pedestrian gate at the junction with Pinchay Lane.

## & BANES

(Bath and North East Somerset Unitary Authority)

Presumably to stop hordes of enthusiastic trail riders from wearing out the Definitive Map(s) checking where all of BANES 71 Byways are, the good Rights of Way managers of BANES will, on demand, provide a beautifully tabulated (albeit in Times New Roman) Summary of RUPP Reclassifications by Parish/Path number & name/Grid Ref/Order no/Committee Decision/Sec. of State Decision - 3 pages in total of all 91 RUPPs The 17 Bridleways created include, the unfortunate Via Julia, and Norton Malreward CL 15/11 - but not for long if the landowner has his way - he's going for total extinguishment. In for a penny, in for a pound?

*Dave Clegg*

## THANKS TO THE TRF A YEAR ON

You may remember an article I wrote this time last year. Thanks to the TRF. Just to remind you, it was about a landowner who accused myself and two others of trespassing on their land RUPP13 Great Munden. Well at last we have a court date, the 8th September, though it will have gone by the time you read this.

We are, with the help of the TRF, bringing a case against the landowners in a bid to stay the proceedings. We consider this case to be a wrongful use of the judicial system. We consider that this case is being brought against us just to try and force the court to make a statement on the status of the Rupp, when in fact, as you know, the local authority are the only ones to be in that position. The authority have, in view of the pressure brought upon them by the land owners, made an undertaking to start reclassification next year. As well as this the land owners themselves are applying for a modification. If we are unsuccessful in our bid for a stay the case continues.

The thing that is a shame though, is that these folk have managed to use their money and influence to change a local authority's policy. What I mean by this is the £10,000 that the county have now put aside for a public enquiry could maybe have gone into education or housing, or maybe policing.

I will let you know how we get on. Whatever happens we would certainly not have been able to defend ourselves if it hadn't been for the TRF and the help of our fellow members.

*John Pritchard, Herts. Group*

## EXECUTIVE NEWSFLASH

The minutes of last Saturday's Executive Meeting will appear in Trail before the AGM but it would be helpful for the membership to have an opportunity to reflect over the following information.

Executive Officers for 2000 - the following Officers have said that they are prepared to stand for another year: Chair - Dave Giles; General Secretary - Karen Wilson; Membership Secretary - John Pritchard; Rights of Way - Richard Marshall; Public Relations - Mark Holland; Editor - Fred Ellison; BMF Representative - Derrick Collins.

We definitely need a Treasurer, a Vice Chairman, a Display Equipment Co-ordinator and a TRF Merchandiser. There are also opportunities to assist with a number of other liaison roles. The Secretary has job descriptions for the key roles. The TRF needs to get some capable new people into support roles so that they can learn the ropes before next year when the holders of several key jobs have said that they intend to stand down.

Mark Holland and Jeff Ward volunteered to withdraw their proposed motion for the AGM concerning Annual Subscriptions because their intention has been misunderstood and it has all become emotive. Representatives at the Executive accepted their offer, agreeing that we need to keep our focus entirely on the current rights of way issue at the moment. We do not want any distractions.

Instead the Chairman proposes to set up 2 working groups to look into the issues of:

- a) Membership: How might the TRF ensure that it better meets the needs and expectations of a new member and that the new member meets the needs and expectations of the TRF.
- b) Subscriptions and Funding: How best might the TRF structure its finances so they are adequate for and accountable to, the membership.

The first working group has already been formed, but I would be pleased to hear from anyone volunteering for the second. What is required in both cases is 'more light and less heat'.

There is a proposal to run a 'Chairman's Conference' in the South on Saturday 9th October, venue to be announced, but likely to be in the Thames valley. Contact Mike Hannigan 01794 515475.

*Dave Giles*

## REGIONAL NEWS

The South Western Region of the T.R.F. is, we think, active and successful. Two meetings are held every year at a point central to the region (inevitably a short hop for certain Groups!) and are open to everyone, not just Group Reps. Attendance varies from 80% to 100% of group representation and our meetings provide a chance to discuss both National and Local issues.

Our November meeting (see Trail Notice Board) is not only a general meeting, but it will also be our A.G.M. and a run leaders' workshop. Local Group Representatives will have received notification that it is the A.G.M. and that the Chairman will not stand for re-election, but I am writing this to all T.R.F. members, particularly, but not especially, those in the South West to tell you about the Run Leaders' Workshop.

It is nationally recognised that the future of the T.R.F. lies in Training and Succession. This workshop aims to train (or perhaps just encourage and give confidence to) run leaders. Most Groups suffer from a lack of people willing to lead runs. If you volunteered to do just one a year it would greatly ease the burden for the "regulars" and I would also guess that you may well enjoy it. Few things compare with showing people around "your neck of the woods" or of knowing what is round the next corner when they don't!

The workshop aims to tell you what you need to do and what you need to know to organise a successful days trail riding. The Region has a wealth of rights of way knowledge and it is envisaged that a part of the session will be involved with dispelling popular (and often wrong!) R.O.W. beliefs and will lay a firm foundation of facts to enable you to deal with situations you may encounter when trail riding.

To run this workshop we must have some idea of the interested parties. Please either contact your Group Rep. or telephone me (01208 74411) before the middle of October. No interest: No workshop.

*Sally Madgwick, Secretary S.W. Region*

# YAMAHA TW200 TRAILWAY

## - BIG WHEEL DAYS

Does anyone remember the dear old 1980s? Thatcherism was in full swing and a BMW or a Porsche was THE car to have. Because of this there was a spate of jokes at the expense of Skoda and Lada owners. One of these jokes went something like this: "Why do they say 'once a Skoda owner, always a Skoda owner'?" The answer was "Because once you have a Skoda, no-one will ever buy it from you".

Well, nearly a decade after the end of the 80s, I reckon I have discarded trail ridings equivalent of the Skoda - a grey import Yamaha, the TW200 Trailway. I've tried to sell/swap/exchange this bike more times than Cher has had plastic surgery. The result? - not a thing. No enquiries or interest at all. I've advertised in every journal you can think of, from our very own TRAIL magazine to LOOT by way of Auto Trader, the Used Bike Guide and half a dozen more.

Not one phone call - not a one.

The reason, I think, for this total lack of response, is the Trailway's principal feature - its tyres. The one feature that Yamaha actually sell this bike on is the very feature that makes it unwanted in the UK. I'll expand on this a bit later, because ownership of the TW200 (and seeing hordes of them in Greece last year) has made me question if anyone actually makes trail bikes with the UK in mind. I don't think they do - more of that later, too.

So, why did I buy a TW200 in the first place? For the same reason Adolf Hitler decided to invade Russia in 1941 - it seemed a good idea at the time. I was running an old Suzuki TS185C at the time (Nov. 1997) and wanted something more modern. Something quieter, less thirsty, faster, more low end torque and better suspension. As the TS185 had only 3" of suspension movement front and rear, I suppose anything other than a rigid framed, girder forked AJS would have done in terms of better suspension.

I read an article in TrailBike Magazine which sung the praises of the TW200. Economical, quiet, low seat height (I'm 6'2" with 34" inside legs but I believe in being able to get your feet down to paddle in mud), electric start and an amazing 5" of suspension travel! Not exactly XR600 territory but a 66% improvement on my TS185. These items, although desirable, were not the Trailway's main raison d'être. The be all and end all of the Trailway's design are its tyres. The front is bigger than the rear on most bikes - A130 x 80 x 18 which is about 5.00 x 18 in English. The rear however is colossal - a whopping 180 x 80 x 14. Imagine the rear slick on a Blade or an R1. Imagine it 10% bigger. Now imagine it with enduro type knobbles -

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ED04	(excellent for 125/200cc bikes)	4.10 - 18	£38.50
ED04	(for 250 bikes and above)	120/90-18	£45.95
ED12	(USA spec Enduro tyre)	120/90-18	£45.95
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that's a TW rear tyre.

The road test in TBM, and an accompanying article by Bevis Billingham sang the praises of these tyres. What really grabbed me was the claim that these tyres offer superb grip but cause very little distress to the "surface crust" (as Wainwright would have said) as the weight of the bike and rider are distributed over a much larger contact patch than on a "normal" tyre. The TW200, then as now, is not an official import (although Yamaha are officially importing the 125cc version as from June, so nearly all spares will be easier to get as the bikes are identical apart from the top end) so I had to find one. Not easy in Lancashire where sports bikes rule and trail bikes are about as common in dealers as they are at a Ramblers Association AGM.

An advert in TBM put me onto Tokyo Trail Bikes of Sandbach in Cheshire. Not only do they actually have a paddock of two acres or so where you can test ride the bike(s) of your choice, but they will actually let you go out with them to ride some local lanes to try the bike on an extended test.

Being a bit stupid, I refused the test ride on the paddock and the local lanes and contented myself with a ride around the garage forecourt at Beckton Motors which is home to Tokyo Trail Bikes. Oh how I wish I had taken the bike out on some trails - I would soon have learnt the truth. And the truth is that the huge tyres, for all the hype in TBM, are useless on mud, grass, wet clay and above all they are UTTERLY useless on wet muddy grass. And what do we have a lot of in the Yorkshire Dales? Wet muddy grass, of course.

At the time, the guys at Tokyo Trail Bikes assured me that the tyres gave fantastic traction on all surfaces, and I, like a lamb to the slaughter, believed them.

On the plus side, the bike was immaculate. Only 1500 miles on the clock, not a scratch anywhere, and only £1600 which included a £100 discount for TRF members. They delivered it to my home some 60 miles away for free, so I can't really complain about that. On the other hand, they've never had another TW for sale as far as I know, so maybe they were so glad to get shut of this one that they were happy to deliver.

I gave the bike a thorough check over and only found two faults. The chain adjusters were way out of line - I checked the wheels with two planks but they were OK so it was just bad adjustment. There was too much oil in the engine - the service schedule I got was for a Serow, which has the same engine, only 25cc bigger. That bike takes 1300cc of oil, the TW only 1000cc. An obvious overfill problem but better than not enough oil any day.

My first trip out at the end of January 1998 was a disaster. The depths of winter, snow, mud, rain, the Coal Road into Dent, all in the company of the Ribble Valley Group's contingent of Stephen Peterhansel wannabes. I knew things were going to be bad when I saw I was the only rider on a trail bike rather than an enduro bike. It took two hours to do the one mile long Coal Road... I went home, got into a hot bath with a tin of Stella Artois, and debated whether to take up

trainspotting or knitting.

A couple of outings later I had come to the conclusion that the knobbles on the TW's tyres are simply not aggressive enough. Also it needs a sixth gear, a better rear brake and a seat made of something comfier than cast iron. On the plus side, it is very economical - a best of 98mpg, an average of 85mpg. I've done about 4000 miles of (mainly solo) green laning in the 18 months since that inaugural disastrous ride and absolutely nothing has broken or dropped off. I've only had to replace the chain and sprockets - a 428 "O"-ring set from the importers cost £70 but took two weeks to arrive. As did a smaller rear sprocket, fitted in an attempt to make the bike a bit more tarmac friendly as I like to ride to the Dales rather than take the bike in a van - I always have to do 30 or 40 miles on tarmac each way to get to the good trails.

Three layers of low density foam bonded to the original high density foam of the seat have made the bike comfy for 20 miles instead of 20 yards but it is still agony after a couple of hours.

So what am I going to do with it? I can't sell it or scrap it so my option has to include actually riding it. I MUST get the seat reupholstered - it truly is appallingly uncomfortable. As for the tyres there are two options - have the wheels rebuilt as normal 21" front and 18" rear so I can fit enduro tyres or else try to source some OE tyres with a more aggressive pattern. I know these exist as I have seen them on hire bikes in Greece - there are three different types and the TW importers, the Container Company of Norwich, tell me they can get two of them. The rear tyre shows no signs of wearing though - it now has done a total of 6000 miles and looks as good as new. The front is an 18" so I am going to try a trials tyre on that.

If anyone fancies a TW phone me on 0831 476839! Although I don't expect anyone to phone - I wouldn't!

And trail bikes in the UK? No-one makes them with us in mind, I'm certain. Originally designed for the American off road leisure market, they have been seized upon as fashion items in countries such as France and as useful cheap transport in countries such as Greece where in many areas about 90% of the roads are not only unsurfaced but are full of holes, bumps, rocks and gravel. But they are DRY - not constantly saturated like in our septic Isle. People actually use trail bikes as viable day to day transport - but only as short distance commuters. People don't seem to travel like we do in the UK - certainly they don't go trail riding like we do. Who needs to go trail riding at weekend when you can ride unsurfaced roads every day on your way to school or work? In Greece I saw 14 year old girls and 70 year old men on TW200s - as well as whole families of 3, 4 or even 5 people! No helmets, no cops, no access problems and petrol at £2 a gallon! Lovely. And of course, this is what the TW is designed for. As actual TRANSPORT, not a recreational vehicle! A bike anyone can ride because of its 29" seat height - the balloon tyres running at 8PSI compensating for lack of suspension travel over rough surfaces. The roads are so badly surfaced that your effective top speed is

25mph so the lack of a sixth gear is irrelevant here. And as it is only used as a local commuter, the lack of comfort after a few miles is irrelevant too. Only we Brits actually go out for a day and FIND unsurfaced roads, so comfort is vital to us. But as 99.99% of UK roads are tarmac surfaced, who needs a trail bike? The UK market is for Race Replicas with a few tourers, cruisers and retros thrown in. You want to go trail riding? Get an enduro bike - you need that power and suspension for UK green lanes, especially in the North. That's what the big four manufacturers think anyway. Don't believe me? Well look at their official imports of Trail Bikes compared to Enduro Bikes:

Honda XLR125R versus XR250/400/600

Yamaha DT125R versus WR200/250 and WR400F

Suzuki DR350S versus DR350E and RMX250

Kawasaki KMX125 and KLR250 versus KDX200/225 and KLX300

Oh - mustn't forget the TW125 - the latest addition to Yamaha's UK trail bike range. Learn on it, commute on it, hang it on derricks behind your motor home. Just don't ride it long distances (i.e. over 10 miles) and DON'T expect it to be any good on green lanes.

Paul Atherton

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## TRAIL - WHAT DO YOU THINK?

- Does it provide the information you want?
- Does it address the right issues?
- Does it inform and entertain you?
- Could the content and format be improved?

Derrick Collins, Brian Harwood and Peter Hiley of the East Midlands Group recently looked at these issues and presented their conclusions at the last Exec. Meeting. They found that for an annual outlay of £14,000 (including postage, packing, printing, etc.), most members are generally satisfied and the objectives below are basically being met.

- Direct contact between executive and members
- The only contact with many members.
- The only membership benefit for many members.
- Evidence that the executive is doing its job.
- Confidence that all relevant issues are being addressed.
- Regular updates on ROW problems.
- News, information and entertainment.
- An advertising facility for members and suppliers.

They also concluded that major changes in SIZE, PRESENTATION (e.g. colour) and CONTENT would depend on a sustained additional input of REPORTS, ARTICLES, LETTERS, QUALITY PHOTOGRAPHS and ADVERTISING.

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Derrick Collins, Brian Harwood, Peter Hiley





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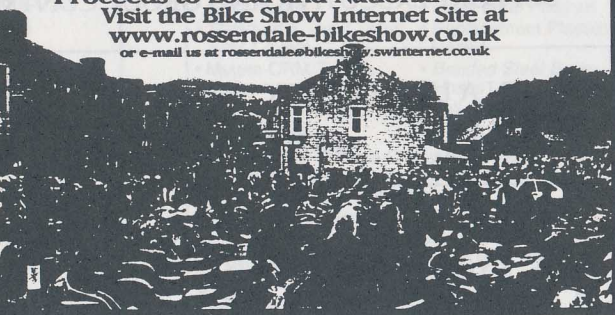
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## PENDLE WITCHES RUN.

For those of you not familiar with the area in Lancashire just South of the River Ribble, there is not only stunning scenery but a history of violence and bigotry centred around the Pendle Witch trials of 1612. Who were these witches? Certainly not the classic black pointy hat, black cat, whizzing about on broomsticks brigade, but probably ignorant peasants, social outcasts, scraping a living on the fringes of society by begging and stealing. Sounds familiar?

We (Lancashire TRF) don't tend to do much trail riding around Pendle, due to the shortage of non tarmac lanes. However there are some brilliant lanes covered with a strange, non-slip, firmish, black material albeit spattered with horse, cow and, I hesitate to say, bullshit. As part of a policy to widen the scope of club runs I organised an evening visiting various sites mentioned in the Lancashire witches stories. The poor unfortunates who turned up were issued with witch study notes and witch sticker in traditional black or optional blue gingham (for machines with black paintwork or Doris Day fans).

First the site of the ancient Ribble ferry and Salmesbury Hall, via several great medaeval lanes to get the feeling of that period, then along a tarmac ridge road over to Whalley and the ruins of the Abbey. On the other side of the river is Ribchester, a beautiful town of Roman origins where so many periods of history are represented. Even though Whalley Abbey is ruined (dissolved, dissolved?) many of the windows and stones appear in other buildings in the area.

Just up the road from Whalley is a village called Wiswell (pronounced "Whizzle") which is the home of our illustrious editor, Fred. I shall not be churlish (even though I come from Chorley - field of churls) and make any connection between Fred and witches, except to say if he had a broomstick it would have to be the latest model with the carbon fibre shaft and Kevlar bristles. There is, however, a really beautiful green lane out of the village.

We decided to give Sabden, home of the treacle mine and black pudding trees, a miss since some myths are better left to the imagination.

Picking up the ridge again we passed over Read bridge, site of a Civil War skirmish, Read Hall, the home of Roger Nowell, magistrate over the witch trials and worked our way over to Newchurch in Pendle to see the witch's grave and a shop called "Witches Galore" selling all sorts of witchy things.

A mixture of lanes, tarmac and non-tarmac, took us around Pendle Hill, passing through Barnoldswick (pronounced "Barlick") and Barley (pronounced "Barley") until we reached Rimington, a lovely linear village with a lovely pub, called the Black Bull, which is full of steam train memorabilia and a back room full of models. Yes, that's what I thought, but they turned out to be model cars, planes etc !

Incidentally, a couple of weeks previously Ranger Ron and I had been coming down a leafy lane close to Rimington when we both saw a large cat. No

not black but a greyish colour and not a common or garden moggie. We decided that no-one would believe us if we said we had seen some sort of wildcat, so our story is it must have been a witch's familiar.

After leaving the pub we rode into Downham, one of the loveliest villages in the country in my opinion and picked up the old King's Highway back to Wiswell passing Mearley Hall and Pendleton Hall. This lane really gives you authentic medaeval feeling to end the ride especially in the way it does not go through hamlets and villages but passes near to.

By this time it was 9:30 p.m. and just about dark and we could imagine modern day witches furiously kick starting their broomsticks so we headed home via a 20th century road.

We tend to think of the traditional image of a witch as being a peculiarly British thing, but I came across a shop full of witch dolls, broomsticks, black hats and all in a little town called Olite in a remote part of Aragon and the broomsticks did not have GB stickers on them!

If you want any further reading try Walks in Lancashire Witch Country by Jack Keighley. Leading the Way. 1-871236-33-9. Mary Higham's Chapter. Mist Over Pendle. A novel. Lancashire's Historic Halls. David Brazendale.

Rodger Davies. Lancs. TRF.

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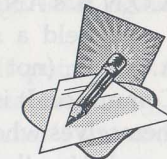
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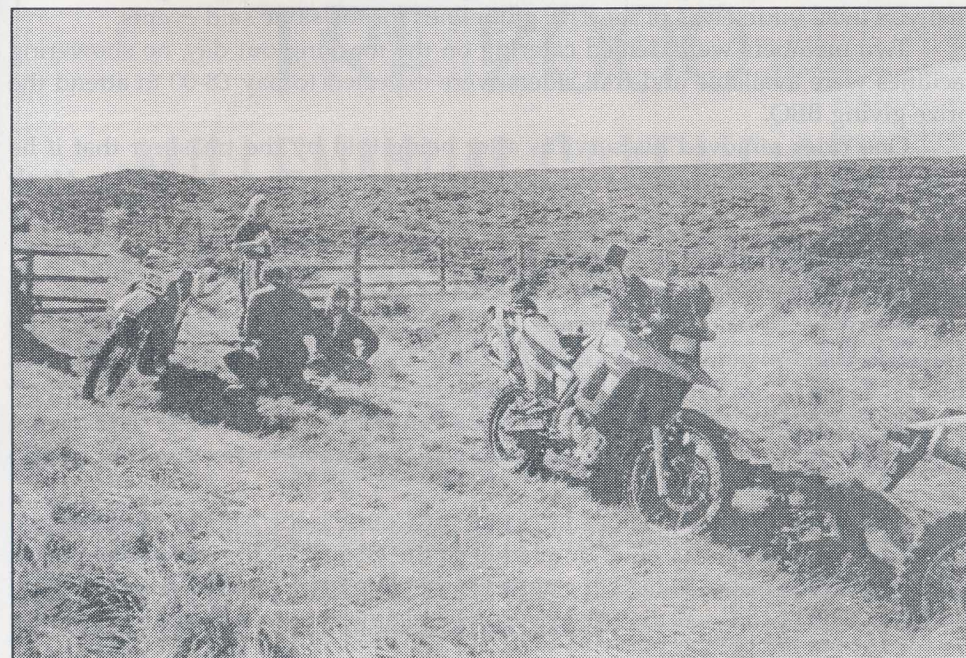
## CUMBRIA TRF BIG TRAILIE RUN

The photo below was taken during the lunch stop on The Street on the 1997 Cumbria TRF Big Trailie Run which was featured in issue 232 pp. 18 - 21. We did another BTR last year. The Roman Wall section enjoyed fine weather, but the Cheviot section got thoroughly washed out on the second day. We only managed Dere Street and had to abandon the rest as we were all seriously wet in appalling weather.

The idea of the Run is to have a ride designed primarily for big trailies, where the pace is more sedate and the conditions not so extreme, i.e. some mud perhaps but not bike swallowing buckets of it. (We hope!). The other advantage of a big machine is we can belt up the M6 to our chosen area. Try doing that on a Serow.

Norman Trehitt, Cumbria

Ed: If you did this year's run Norman we'd like to read your report.



#### A.O.N.B.'s AND ALL THAT

I held a seat for the T.R.F. for around eight years on the Mendip Hills A.O.N.B. (not to be confused with A.O.B. in committees!) Joint Advisory Committee. It is interesting how "the opposition" tend to keep their prejudices to themselves when a T.R.F. member is present with a well-considered response.

When the J.A.C. was first convened by Somerset County Council, they wanted us to be represented by the Ramblers' Association. I declined to be represented by the R.A. and was allocated a T.R.F. seat which I later voluntarily gave up to the local Bridleways and Byways Association, on the basis of the network being more important than one particular user group, especially motorcyclists, whom nobody loves.

Recently, the Mendip Hills J.A.C. has been restructured and trail riders, cyclists, walkers and horse riders have one "access spokesperson", Mrs. Angela Store of the B.H.S. I shall monitor future meetings to ensure that green roads and trail riding feature prominently in J.A.C. debates as per their Official Management Plan of 1998.

*Gwyn Thomas, Axe Vale*

P.S. There is a 'Public Question Time' on the J.A.C. agenda - make sure you speak If you do not have a direct seat or representative.

#### A CAUTIONARY TAIL?

Having just returned from participating at Euston Park Horse Endurance Ride, a word of warning to all liaison, organisers and trail riders, please ensure that you avail yourselves of the TRF guidelines for the same said events.

Two members were denied catering on the marking out day, no showering facilities were available and trail riders were expected to pay £8-00 to attend the prize giving BBQ.

One rider removed his services after being told by the treasurer that if he didn't like it "what is keeping you?". Nuff said!

*Reg. Moule*

#### D.E.T.R. CONSULTATION PAPER

See LARA News No. 24 enclosed with this issue of Trail

There has been little coverage in the pages of Trail of the Countryside Agency's recommendations to Government in their document "Rights of Way in the 21st Century" or the recent DETR proposals for legislation in response in their consultation paper "Improving Rights of Way in England and Wales". However, I know that user groups and individuals have helped to influence the countryside agency's recommendations.

Despite having reservations I felt that the Countryside Agency had taken on board the real fears users have in relation to the closure of the definitive map at some time in the future to further claims for routes to be added based on historical evidence. They proposed that closure to such claims should only take place after

the historic network has been researched and recorded to a high level against agreed criteria.

The DETR's proposals, however, are for a 10 year cut-off point and no assistance with research. This is tantamount to giving national treasures away to private individuals and is in no way in keeping with Michael Meacher's statement on 8th March, 1999 that there is "no question of failing to secure the proper recording and maintenance of rights of way".

The Countryside Agency saw a benefit in the eventual merging of B.O.A.T.S. and vehicular unclassified roads without a sealed surface into a single byway classification and the convening of a working group to identify and agree specific proposals to improve the management and recording of byways. The DETR is having non of this, proposing the reclassification of R.U.P.P.'s by statute as bridleways, whilst declining to record unclassified roads on definitive maps due to a difficulty in definition. This double standard suggests that the main theme to their proposals is cost saving.

Responses to the proposals may be sent BY 15TH OCTOBER, 1999 to:

Countryside Legislation Division

Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions,

Room 16/12 Tollgate House,

Houlton Street, Bristol, BS2 9DJ.

FAX: 0117 987 8250

# TRF 2000 MILLENNIUM CALENDAR PHOTO COMPETITION

Look through your photographs and send in those that would be suitable for the  
*Millennium Calendar.*

Colour photographs only please to  
Fred Ellison, Sheepcote Farm, Moor Lane, Wiswell,  
Clitheroe, Lancs. BB7 9DG

Copies of responses will be deposited in the Department's Library where anyone may inspect them.  
John Thorp, Widnes

#### PROBLEM SOLVED

In the August edition, Alan Kind queries the name of the NCE journal in his piece on North Yorkshire C.C. It stands for New Civil Engineer and is the official rag of the Institution of Civil Engineers. I hope this is of assistance - I don't get much chance to make use of the letters after my name.

Ian Hingley, BSc. C.Eng. MICE

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