

GROUPS

AXE VALE Malcolm Preece, Tel: 01275 844757
2nd Mon, The Star, Star (A38), Nr. Shipham, Somerset

BLACK COUNTRY Nick Hammond, Tel: 01902 700749
1 & 3 Tues, 9pm, The Mitre, Church Road, Bradmore, Wolverhampton

BRISTOL Paul Andrews, Tel: 01179 659255
4th Mon, Keynsham Rugby Club, Bristol Road, Keynsham

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

CORNWALL Sally Madgwick, Tel: 01208 74411
3rd Thurs, The Ship Inn, Wadebridge, 8pm

CUMBRIA Anthony Hayhurst, Tel: 01539 721115
2nd Tues, Derby Arms Hotel, Witherslack, Nr. Kendal

DERBYSHIRE & SOUTH YORKSHIRE
Kevin Marsh, Tel: 01246 811949
2 & 4 Tuesdays, The Angel Hotel, Sprinkhill, Eckington, Nr. Chesterfield, Derbyshire

DEVON Rob Williams, Tel: 01626 364564
2nd Tues, The Welcome Stranger, Bickington, Nr. Newton Abbott

DORSET Martin Diamond, Tel: 01202 571325
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
Dave Anderson, Tel: 01277 657783
2nd Wed, The Swan Public House, Great Eastern, Nr. Dunmow

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

GLOUCESTER Wayne Little, Tel: 01452 611735
1st Wed, The Winget Social Club, Tuffley Avenue, Glos.

HERTFORDSHIRE Dave West, Tel: 07768 402424
2nd Thurs, The Old Guinea, Ridge, Near Potters Bar

HIGH PEAK & POTTERIES
Simon Lowe, Tel: 01298 70680
1st Tues, Black Horse at Endon (A53, about 3 miles west of Leek, Staffordshire) & 3rd Tue, Cheshire Cheese, Buxton

ISLE OF WIGHT Andrew Hawkins, Tel: 01983 617232
1st Wed, The Eight Bells Inn, Carisbrooke, 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, Hindshead Pub on A49, Charnock Richard

LINCOLNSHIRE Paul Vernon, Tel: 01522 889079
4th Thurs, The Dog & Bone, John Street, Lincoln

LODDON VALE David Cook, Tel: 0118 901 4481
3rd Thurs, Inn in the Park, Woodley Centre, E. Reading

NORTHUMBERLAND Chris Moody
Tel 0191 387 3507 6-10pm or 0860 302001 (mobile)
1st Tues, 8pm, The Swan Inn, Heddon on the Wall

NORTH WALES Richard Hughes, Tel: 01244 533855
1st Wed, Capenhurst Social Club, OS 116 371 740

OXFORDSHIRE Kevin Lindsey, Tel: 01993 823865
3rd Thurs, The Red Lion, 127 Cassington Road, Yarnton

PEAK DISTRICT Neil Walker, Tel: 01788 811919
1st Thurs, 8pm, Travellers Rest, Ashbourne Road, Derby

RIBBLE VALLEY John Hargreaves, Tel: 01254 721897
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
2nd Thurs, The Bell Hotel, Curry Rivel, Nr. Taunton

SOUTHERN Russ McDermid, Tel: 02380 812371
3rd Tues, The Phoenix, Twyford, Nr. Winchester

SOUTH LONDON & SURREY
Steve Sharp, 0208 773 4204
9pm 1st 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

SUFFOLK Richard May, Tel: 01787 374073
Last Wed, Manger Pub, A134 Sudbury Rd, Bury-St-Ed.

SWINDON Keith Owen-Bines, Tel: 01793 751129
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 Julian Ogle, Tel: 020 8579 9778
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 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
Alan Yandell, Mob: 07811 250431
1st Tues, The Bell On The Common, Broughton Gifford

WORCESTERSHIRE
David Gunster, Tel: 01905 452742 Mob: 07970 919790
3rd Tuesday, The Fox at Bransford, Worcs.



Patron: Lord Strathcarron

TRAIL

MARCH, 2002

No. 283

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

EDITOR: Fred Ellison.



Lane 34 at Bouth near Haverthwaite

Photo by Edwin Duckett

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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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TRF Website <http://www.trf.org.uk>

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EDITOR

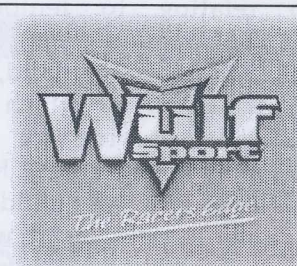
Have you missed the Coast to Coast? or possibly not been a member long enough to have had the opportunity to take part in a very enjoyable social activity meeting people and making friends with people from all over Britain and even a few from abroad.

Well, here's a chance to take part in a different Riding and Social Event. Frank Kitching and friend Paul have organised 'On Your Bike in North Yorkshire' on Sunday 5th May (May Day Bank Holiday). It is a sort of two wheeled treasure hunt and includes free camping. For those who want it a Barbecue and social evening will follow the event and you could extend your stay by arriving a day or two before or staying on afterwards for a day or two and NO, it is not a race.

Finally it should be a lot of fun and THE social event of the trail riding year.

See you there.

Fred Ellison



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FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Dear Member

Towards the end of February I entered the Holsworthy one-day trial, along with Peter Gedye and Graham Smith, also Thames Valley members. Whilst the day was a bit wet this only added to the challenging conditions of the trial. I was taken by surprise by some of the sections but nevertheless enjoyed the day. As usual, thanks go to the organisers for their time and efforts.

Now to business. You will have heard, or read elsewhere in this copy of TRAIL, about our visit to DEFRA. It was essential that the TRF put its case. The person representing DEFRA was receptive to what we were saying. It was very difficult to judge the influence our representations would have on the drafting of the Statutory Instruments. This will become evident during the consultation period. However the next stage, which starts now, is equally important. We need to reinforce the message via lobbying by TRF members to their MP or direct to DEFRA. This is the part YOU now have to play. Don't assume someone else is going to do it on your behalf. See elsewhere in this copy of TRAIL for guidance.

On a separate matter, have you become aware about a move to withdraw the current 14/28-day planning provision relating to temporary change of use on land. This allows events to be held on land, the planning permission for which does not specifically provide for such events e.g. Car Boot sales, Horse Trials, Bike Trials etc. This would have dramatic consequences, as it would require formal application on each occasion and the attendant bureaucracy, which is substantial. The expression 'Banish rather than Manage', springs to mind. Whilst it has been suggested that this is aimed at limiting the impact of Car Boot sales on environment grounds, it is yet another illustration of the mind set of some of those in power to achieve an end by employing sweeping changes, the fall out from which will deny enjoyment of a currently legitimate

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pastime. It is my view that more time should be spent tackling directly the problems created by those who disregard/abuse the law in the countryside and cause an illegal nuisance, whatever form that takes. I recognise that this current move does not directly impact upon trail riding today, however it is the insidious nature of such moves, which worries me and how, in combination with such steps, they will adversely impact upon all motor-cycling in the longer term.

Turning to matters financial. I had occasion to get involved with the TRF's holding of 7 HBOS (Halifax and Bank of Scotland) shares. I won't bore you with the detail but suffice it to say the Club has 7 shares, which it wishes to sell. My proposal is that anyone who wishes to purchase these shares can do so from the club at the market value less £5 being the cost of a stamped transfer. If we can't find anyone, it will cost us 50% of their current value in broker's fees. So put your hand up and contact me direct. This is on a first come, first served basis.

Finally I know you are saying to yourself, so how did he get on at the Holsworthy trial. Let me end, therefore, by saying the Pope and I have a lot in common. We both kiss the ground a lot!

Happy Trail Riding

André Confavreux
National Chairman

OPEN TO ALL MEMBERS

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88 Newton Road, Great Ayton, Middlesbrough, North Yorks. TS9 6DG
or Paul Suggit 01642 723398 after 5pm

RSVP BY 15TH APRIL 2002

NOTICE BOARD

HOW TO CLAIM A BYWAY

Our leaflet 'How To Claim A Byway' has brought comment from the BHS in Somerset. They have "masses of evidence for byways" and little help in progressing it. I'm sure this applies elsewhere also, so please contact your local BHS representative to see if we can help each other.

Dave Tilbury, Hants.

ILLEGAL MOTOR CYCLING IN SHERWOOD FOREST, NOTTINGHAMSHIRE

Forestry Commission staff, horse riders and TRF members have seen motor cycle riders on tracks in Blidworth Woods in Sherwood Forest, Nottinghamshire. These are not vehicular rights of way and should not be used without permission. At present the East Midlands Group of the TRF has a good relationship with the horse riders and Forestry Commission - we mark routes for long distance horse events through Sherwood Forest - do not jeopardise this relationship. Various details of the riders have been given - lycra clad, with/without number plates, from Hull, some riders have stopped and given way to horse riders. If you can identify anyone from these details please tell them to stop riding non-vehicular routes in Sherwood Forest.

Peter Hiley, East Midlands TRF

TRF STAND AT THE MOTORCYCLE SHOW

We are looking into having a TRF stand at this years Motorcycle Show. It will be held at Birmingham NEC from 14th - 24th November 2002. I am trying to gauge how many TRF people would be prepared to help. We need people to organise/co-ordinate the stand and/or to help run the stand. If you are interested would you please indicate how you would be able to help and for how many days.

Please contact Steve Sharp Tel: 020 8773 4202 h or 020 8666 4204 day/work or Mobile 07710 012712 or e-mail steve.j.sharp@bt.com

Report from Dave Tilbury

Another month - another report. I am conscious that my name is appearing frequently in TRAIL these days and I'm not entirely comfortable with that. Hence this report will be brief. I will also preface this copy with comment on the TRF elected Officers. Although you are reading a report by me you should not lose sight of the fact that this is the visible tip of a veritable iceberg of work carried on by the other elected Officers, co-opted officers and volunteers around the country.

To mark or not to mark, that is the question. Is it better to highlight those ways that are carriageways despite the definitive map or turn our back on slumbering rights until such time as they are recorded? The debate rumbles on.

A number of counties are suffering an outbreak of TRO disease. I will do what I can to assist but it must be remembered that I cannot usefully write a letter of objection if I am ignorant of the background.

On February 13th I drove to Norwich to speak at a meeting of the embryo Norfolk group. John Jenkins has done a good job of galvanising local riders and it seemed to me that many of the fifty or so present at the meeting were keen enough to part with their membership fee. Needless to say they have a wealth of local knowledge between them and a hundred questions...

There is considerable feeling amongst those on high that motorcyclists are evil.

Minister Michael Meacher has written to all police chiefs asking that they clamp down on motorcyclists. I'm sure he meant to target irresponsible motorcyclists but this was not clear in his communication. I was with André when the TRF took their concerns to the Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) and, amongst many positive comments (see elsewhere in this publication) we were assured that DEFRA were not anti motorcycle.

To follow on from the success of the How to Claim a Byway leaflet we plan to organise regional training seminars to keep the group RoW Officers, and any other interested members, as up to date as possible on CRoW and claiming BOATS. Again there should be a page elsewhere in this edition with details.

Well, I said I would be brief. Much more has happened and a fair bit is about to happen, but we must await the decisions from the March Executive meeting

Dave Tilbury



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FUNCTIONAL GROUPS

It's okay, read on, this isn't an article about chemistry, it's more interesting than that, especially if you believe yourself to be a member of one of the following Groups: Axe Vale, Cambridge, Derbyshire and S. Yorks, East Yorks, High Peak and Potteries, Kent, Oxford, Suffolk, Sussex, Thames Valley or Worcestershire.

As far as the TRF is concerned it is very hard to tell whether these Groups still form part of the national network of TRF Groups. This is perhaps a little extreme since of course we know that very active groups like say Thames Valley and Sussex exist, its just that none of the Groups listed above, in spite of three approaches to send in their annual group returns (as agreed in our constitution) have done so.

Its even worse if you happen to be a member of Kent, Suffolk or High Peak and Potteries because the addresses and information we have for these Groups wasn't updated in 2000 either.

Yes, I know, more nags than Martin Pipe and what do you expect from a woman, yep we've heard it all before, but the truth is that National TRF NEEDS up to date information on Group's officers so that it can not only effectively disseminate relevant information but so that it can properly co-ordinate an effort to mitigate the effects of the CRoW Act.

Contrary to popular belief we don't want your money, nor do we want to come round and steal your bikes. We most certainly don't want to stop communicating with Groups or indeed cease to recognise them either. But it may be that we have no choice - being bound by our constitution as we are.

Following on from the circulation of How to Claim a Byway, the Executive intends to approach Groups to offer (financially supported) training and to move towards a co-ordinated approach to identifying lanes that need claiming. The TRF is working hard to soften the blow of the CRoW Act and it is kind of difficult when asked the scale of our problem to say "err well, we don't know".

Which is what, lets face it, I have to say when asked about any of the Groups listed above. Please submit the form to me - or request another.

Sally A. Madgwick

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C11/C02 (The Legendary Stoneking)	120/90-18	£36.50

IRC Road Legal Grippy Trail Tyres		
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EAST MIDLANDS TRF GROUP MEMBER
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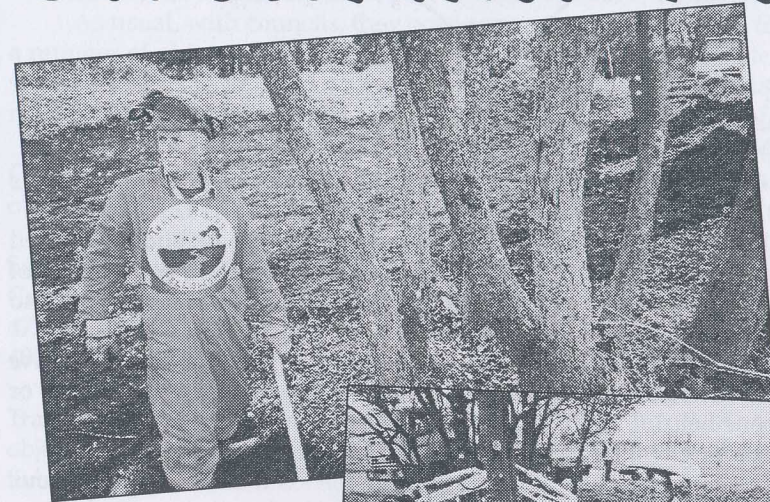
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Funding - by
the Mendip
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RoW NEWS

HELP PLEASE - BRENZETT

Neil Smith has been struggling to keep a UCR clear down in Brenzett and has asked for some help.

We are proposing to have a green lane day on Sunday April 7th. The lane is located at GR TR015257. If you can help out please ring Neil on 01797344452.

Ian Roscow has set a web site up www.trailridinginkent.co.uk and has agreed to post any news and info for Kent TRF. Hopefully this will become a good source of info for any riders wishing to ride the lanes in Kent. Kent County Council have also set up a new web site with a good PROW content. www.kent.gov.uk

Kent group will be running a stand at the BMF Garden of England show. We will need some volunteers to help out. We're also on the lookout for a marquee or large tent, can anyone help?

Next group meeting will be map marking and a look at the TRF web site.

Richard Colquhoun

ALL MEMBERS PLEASE NOTE

1. That U5531 on OS Sheet 90 trail no 90/30 GR 316028 to GR 316034 now has a permanent TRO on it. There was always a certain amount of confusion with this short lane that goes through a ford as it only had a TRO sign on it from one end only. Well now it has signs at both ends so it is no longer open for through traffic.
2. That there have been complaints regarding trail 97/147 OS sheet 97 GR 641793 to GR 657809 about members using this footpath. Even though it is listed on the Casterton enclosure award of 1814, so it no doubt will be claimed eventually, please do not use it from now on. Of course if someone wishes to put in a byway claim please do, as the sooner it is claimed the sooner we can all use it again.

Robert Wilson, Cumbria

TEMPORARY CLOSURE TO VEHICLES TRO NEAR CIRENCESTER, GLOUCESTERSHIRE

It has had major maintenance and is closed to allow the surface to dry and stabilise. Part of it is co-incident with the Macmillan Way promoted footpath so is used by many people.

DO NOT INCLUDE this BOAT in your rides even if there are no notices. There will be a review in a few months.

Location is west of Rodmarton village between ST9499 and ST9397 in two stretches with County Council ref. BRO-1 and BROL-10.

Your co-operation is appreciated.

Mark Holland, Gloucester Group

EAST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL BLANKET TROs

The East Sussex (Old Coach Road & Other Byways Open to All Traffic (BOAT), West Fittle to Jevington) (Prohibition of Motor Vehicles) Order 2002

ESCC, have confirmed that the proposed TRO are "Permanent, not temporary".

As usual, with councils, they only answer one question at a time, so if you have a number of objections or questions, please send these as separate letters. Also send separate letters if you are objecting for more than one organisation. If you are a member of a number of clubs, please send the relevant number of objections.

Due to the short notice of this action (objection closing 5th March) and that the Council have not made any contact with user groups pre the action, please keep objecting.

Details from last letter: East Sussex County Council, Legal & Community Services, Helmut W. H. Carwright (Director), Legal Services, P. O. Box 2714, The Croft, County Hall, Lewes, East Sussex, BN7 1AL. Tel: 01273 481000, Fax: 01273 472815, 483496, 481254, DX97482, Lewes 3. Letter from: Mr. Murray, direct line 01273 481919.

Mr. Dury, the Engineer and Case Officer dealing with this matter at the Transport & Environment, Transport Strategy Office. Tel: 01273 482269. Unresolved objections and matters will be put before the Council's Planning & Highways Subcommittee for their consideration.

Mr. Dury is now looking at my letter.

Peter

RoW TRAINING Training - a series of seminars for members

The leaflet How To Claim A Byway has been received throughout the rights of way user groups with enthusiasm and the TRF are not about to let this momentum fade. Even Gerry Pearlman, the rabidly anti trail riding solicitor for the RA, has warned his chums that groups like the TRF are still in the fight and well able to scupper his vision of a vehicle free countryside.

So, how do we move forward from here? The drive to find capable members with time to devote to the cause is proving fruitful but there is a catch. Not all TRF members are up to speed on rights of way law, especially the Countryside and Rights of Way Act. It is proposed, therefore, to run a series of seminars to address CRoW, lobbying, claiming a BOAT, etc.

To assist us in the arrangements we need input from YOU. If you might be interested in training - no commitment - please get in touch with Dave Tilbury and have the following information to hand:

1. In which county do you live?
2. Would you prefer evenings or a weekend?
3. If a weekend could you devote two days?
4. How far would you be prepared to travel?
5. Your membership number will be needed.

It is envisaged that the seminar would be without cost to the delegate (even a free lunch) although the details are yet to be finalised. Please contact Dave at: dave@hants-lanes.fsnetco.uk or 023 8061 8937.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Dave Tilbury

READ THIS – ACT – OR SELL YOUR TRAIL BIKE!

One thing that must be very clear in the minds of all TRF members is that WE failed to effectively influence the CRoW Bill and as a result our recreation is seriously threatened. **It must be equally clear that this is YOUR last opportunity to influence Parliament regarding the value of the TRF as an organisation and the benign nature of the activity known as trail riding.**

The Chair and one other attended a meeting with the Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) recently to put our thoughts to Mr David Waterman, the man heading up the team who are drafting the Statutory Instruments that will bring Restricted Byways and s.34a of the Road Traffic Act into effect. Mr Waterman gave the latest schedule for this drafting process as follows:

S. 34a – (this amendment to the Road Traffic Act could prevent a rider adducing evidence of carriageway status in defence of a prosecution for riding on a footpath, bridleway or restricted byway) consultation is scheduled to start in mid May 2002 and run for 3 months. S.34a could be in place by the end of this year [2002].

Restricted Byways – (all ways shown on definitive maps as RUPP will automatically become restricted byways on affirmation of this statutory instrument – RBs do not include an automatic right for passage by mechanically propelled vehicles – note s.34a above!) consultation is scheduled to start in early September 2002. Again this will run for 3 months and it is unlikely to be effective until April 2003. So, please note, *all that are RuPPs on the definitive map will remain as RuPPs until at least April 2003.*

S. 63 – (this provides a member of the public a means to make a local authority remove obstructions from footpaths, bridleways and BOATs via court action – similar to s.56 Highways Act 1980) should be consulted on in early March 2002.

Both s.34a and RBs require an affirmative resolution from Parliament. This means that whatever is put before Parliament will either be accepted or rejected. It will not be subject to modification, thus the importance of the meeting and the relevance of the consultation period.

There will be a Register of Claims and the rules governing this could be in with the creation of s.34a as discrete part of that statutory Instrument. We need to make our MPs aware that most local authorities have far more potential claims

'turking' than they are usually prepared to admit to and there needs to be a means of including all these in this register.

DEFRA assure users that they are looking for a fair and practical way forward, but that what ever they draft needs to be acceptable to the Members of Parliament. Please take special note of this. This is a hint that we must influence your MP.


This all means that we will need to keep an eye on the DEFRA web site for the consultation papers and respond accordingly. In the mean time a quiet evening would be well spent in writing to your Member of Parliament, pointing out that the Statutory Instruments (related to RBs and s.34a) are against the original intentions of Parliament in improving rights of way and access for all. They also could have unforeseen long term effects on the viability of a number of the established RoW user groups – other than vehicular – and, due to the impact on the responsible user, could exacerbate real problems (as opposed to prejudice). The few idiots that are out there will be having a field day because the organised groups will crumble and not be there to exert influence.

If you are prepared to write then the following could usefully be addressed.

In the creation of the Register of Claims ask that it be made retrospective to catch as many as possible of the 'dormant' claims that local authorities are not progressing. This will be of enormous benefit to all RoW users.

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<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p style="font-weight: bold; font-size: 0.9em;">All model KTM's available</p> <p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.1em;">Please phone for superb deal</p> <p style="font-size: 0.8em;">Free Spares & Accessory List Available - please call</p> </div>		<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p style="font-size: 0.8em;">All bikes are road legal, fully serviced and covered by our no Quibble Warranty. We always have CRM Demo Bikes available for Test Rides including the AR. Please give us a call to arrange a no obligation Test Ride.</p> <p style="font-weight: bold; font-size: 0.9em;">Awesome Range of CRM Accessories</p> <table style="width: 100%; font-size: 0.8em;"> <tr> <td>* Alloy/Stainless Bash Plates</td> <td>* Alloy Oval Silencers</td> <td>* Performance Front Pipes</td> </tr> <tr> <td>* Frame Guards</td> <td>* Disc Guards</td> <td>* Extra Wide Footrest</td> </tr> <tr> <td>* Rear Racks</td> <td>* Bark Busters</td> <td>* Plastics & Decals</td> </tr> <tr> <td>* Two Colour Seat Covers</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>* Mugen CRM Tuning Parts</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </table> </div>	* Alloy/Stainless Bash Plates	* Alloy Oval Silencers	* Performance Front Pipes	* Frame Guards	* Disc Guards	* Extra Wide Footrest	* Rear Racks	* Bark Busters	* Plastics & Decals	* Two Colour Seat Covers			* Mugen CRM Tuning Parts		
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Seek immunity from the effects of s.34a until such time as the local authorities have created their Register of Claims.

Seek some means of challenging the absence of 'claims' from the Register of Claims.

Suggest a built in suspension of the effects of the Statutory Instruments for a specified number of years to allow the public time to make applications related to the vehicular rights that may exist over RuPPs, CRBs and CRFs. After all it is the highway authorities that have failed to carry out their statutory duty to get RuPPs reclassified and the CRoW Act only rewards authorities for that failure.

Exemption from the s.34a rule preventing production of evidence on:

- routes subject to a BOAT Definitive Map Modification Order, or a properly completed application for BOAT that has not been processed by the authority (i.e. any route so listed in the Register, which is why it needs to be retrospective in application).
- routes reclassified as bridleway under the '68 Act (which did not remove the vehicular rights) on the grounds of suitability. (e.g. That would include all of Staffordshire, Worcestershire, Cumbria and many other areas)
- routes originally recorded as CRF/CRB (where vehicular rights can be shown to exist. (e.g. Dorset, where all CRB and CRF routes were wrongly added to the definitive map as bridleway following an aborted map review.)

Make your letter personal, emphasising how much you have enjoyed using old roads on your motorcycle; how it has allowed you to explore the countryside without using a motorcar; that conflict is rare and how you stop and chat with most people you meet.

Two useful sites are shown below. The HMSO site has draft Statutory Instruments and so, in time will require a visit.

<http://www.legislation.hmso.gov.uk/>
<http://www.defra.gov.uk/wildlife-countryside/index.htm>

If you are unclear about any of the above please call the acting RoW coordinator, Dave Tilbury 023 8061 8937 or (preferably) e-mail dave@hants-lanes.fsnet.co.uk

Nevada Motorcycle Adventures

The trail riding adventure of my life!

The best trails, I seriously doubt if they come any better anywhere in the world. We crossed deserts, rivers and climbed mountains. The scenery, varied, stunning, something you have to experience to appreciate. Views, absolutely awesome. From day one I was absolutely gobsmacked by the sheer beauty of this vast wilderness. The mountains were magnificent. We mere mortals can only stand in awe when privileged to witness such scenery. Perceptions of Nevada as "Death Valley" quickly dispelled. This trip was not all biking. Saloons always had at least one character. There is much more I could say about this trip. If you have even a drop of Castrol R in your blood then get out there and experience it for yourself. Me, I'm going back as soon as I've got enough brownie points with the wife. From: "Welshman Out West" by Mike Rees, published in *Off-Road Review*.

Contact 775-359-4380

e-mail info@nevadamotorcycle.com

MILESTONES/MILLSTONES OF MOTORCYCLING

PART 9 CLUBBING IT

What is it about human behaviour that, if two people have something (anything) in common, they will inevitably form a club in which, one person will do all the work and the other one will criticise. (*Please excuse this statement. It is a cheap shot and downright rude. There is no excuse for this sort of behaviour and, rest assured, I will be giving that Davies character a piece of my mind-conscience*). The same scene is being played out in upstairs pub rooms all over the country where clubs and societies are busy doing - er, what, exactly? While it is easy to understand an organisation that exists to fulfil a specific purpose (The COOP for instance) it is a bit more difficult to contemplate the *raison d'être* of, say, the MZ owners club (*I apologise again - conscience*). Yes I know that clubs can provide sources of cheap spares, legal help and lots of new friends to talk to, but I can't get over the feeling that the phenomenon is, well, a little sad (*There he goes again*). Let me make my case.

Firstly there are joiners and loners. Joiners are attracted to the idea of the strength of numbers and feel comfortable in a crowd. Loners still join clubs but the reasons are a little more obscure, so obscure in fact that I give up, but you can often spot them sitting quietly at the back of the room.

What do people talk about at club nights? "My ETZ150 is suffering from excessive smoking from the exhaust. What can I do?" "Well, this is endemic to this type of engine, without the precision of a metered oil supply. Have it put down". The strangest clubs exist. How about the Mini-bike Club, in which people customise Honda 'Monkey' bikes with carbon fibre and titanium goodies, at obscene expense, to look

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like a 916 replica?

Even stranger is the Ford Capri Owners Club. Remember Capris (Crapis)? Not a great motor hen new, but there is now a separate club for Mk1, Mk2 and Mk3. The Mk2 owners don't talk to the Mk3 owners and the Mk1 owners don't talk to anybody. I have often said that I wouldn't join any club that would have me for a member but, here I am, a member of three motorcycle clubs. Since I don't consider myself a joiner, what went wrong? I would have joined the apathetic bikers club but I couldn't be bothered turning up to a non-existent club night. The cynical bikers club beckoned but I thought it would be a waste of time.

Once, when sitting on a French quayside, dressed in flip-flops and bermuda shorts and consuming a large ish part of the E.C. wine lake, a group of bikers, all dressed in matching leathers and helmets, were regarding us with the same look you would bestow on pond life. One of the characters detached himself from the group and spoke to us. "Have you ever given any thought to protective clothing?" "Sure, these are Frank Thomas steel-soled flip-flops and fire-proof bermudas". We're the something or other BMW owners club, do you belong to a club?" "Certainly, we're (the words came unbidden from the ether, channelled through a wine befuddled brain) the 'Ramsbottom Gay Bikers'." Our Bavarian-o-phile left suddenly and, aided by a little more wine, the club was formed.

Pretty soon we had the logo, the members (all three of them), the specially designed pink T-shirts and the constitution. Club holidays included a trip to Lesbos (nice chaps - bit strange - soft bits) and the Picos de Europa (R.G.B. go over the top). In a cultural exchange I was made a 'Pastor Honario', a honorary shepherd. Got the certificate to prove it. After two or three years the club failed. But why you ask? Well it happened due to typical club reasons. To keep a club going it takes people with vision, the capacity for hard, unpaid work, energy, commitment, and an influx of enthusiastic new members. We had none of these!

After meeting a pair of young ladies in a local pub, I ended up finding some bargain motorbikes for them and their friends and thus the local chapter of the Chorley Lesbian Bikers was formed. My proudest achievement was being accepted as a member. I blew the deal, however, with comments like, 'I feel that I am a lesbian trapped in a man's body' and 'Is it cool to watch'.

A strange phenomenon occurs along a short length of the A49 in Lancashire. Apart from the Lancs. TRF there is the V.M.C.C. an august body of gentlemen who stand around discussing the arcane pleasures of owning 'classic' (i.e. old, vibratory, crude, leaky, black) machinery. When I turned up once on a filthy shed of an XL125 of dubious vintage, I got the

distinct feeling they were not pleased to see me. Also there is the Lancashire Harley Davidson Club. The local chapter of 'Hell's Civil Servants' (since they all seem to be social workers, solicitors and accountants) has been known to terrorise the A49, tearing the headings off estate agents advertisements. Further along the road there is the 'Westhoughton M.C.C.' a wonderful group of individuals devoted to promoting a positive image of motorcycling through charitable works, wearing out knee sliders and moped racing (Is that cheque in the post yet?) The 'Big Trail Bike Club' meets in the area as well and is made up of an adverse collection of individuals. With 'Ranger' Ron Varey at the helm anything can happen. Wayne lives on a canal boat with a grass roof, rides a Yellow Africa Twin with his dog in a cage on the back and is famous for attempting the non-stop 'J.O.G.L.E.', John o' Groats to Lands End. Norman 'Pizza Boy' Trewitt seems quite normal until he gets onto the subject of G.O.C. (Gods Own Country), which is around Hadrian's Wall, I believe. So think for a minute about a typical club meeting. Do you look forward to going or is it a chore? Do you have an input? Do you want to make a contribution? Is it the same hard core of members that do all the work. Do you have 'vision' which is not blurred by alcohol. Your club needs you.

Rodger Davies

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Good Moaning

My last letter produced a crop of e-mails and phone calls, so with a little luck I shall have a few trail riding friends meeting up with me this year - great! So much better than riding alone. ... again

I rarely ride the same route twice due to the choice of ways to go and my poor memory. Recently I found one track that I hadn't ridden before. After some distance it crossed a single track tarmac road where there were about ten or so cars parked - right in the middle of nowhere. My first thought was that the cars belonged to hunters (although it was Sunday) so I proceeded along with more than usual caution. Round the next bend the explanation for the cars was obvious. There was a steepish rocky gully with fourteen or fifteen French walkers clambering up it. I stopped, switched off the bike and prepared to wait until they had cleared the gully. The group leader, who was near the top waved me to 'come on up.' I responded with lots of hand-flapping to the effect that I was in no hurry and would wait. He wouldn't hear of it and he got all his group to stop and shuffle to either side of the gully and then they all waved me on. I started the bike, they cheered as I had accepted the challenge, then I bounced up to the top to the cheers and whistles of this mad crew. On reaching the top, I stopped the bike, acknowledged their applause and rode off with a big smile on my face. Obviously they half expected me to entertain them by lobbing the bike into the scenery, but even so would this have happened in England? I think that most French people have had experience of two wheels, mo-peds, scooters or motor bikes and this engenders a different attitude, after all, the walkers had no idea that I was a mature Englishman. It would be more likely to be a young French lad out enjoying himself.

It is not all sweetness & light however, as there is a creeping form of restriction happening and suddenly a whole department is a no-go area. As I understand it, Alsace is completely closed to 4x4's and motorcycles. Other areas, Ardennes, Jura, Rhone Alpes and Provence Alpes, Code d'Azur have many many proscribed routes and care has to be taken to avoid prosecution.

My own area, the Aude, has some restrictions particularly during the tourist season which is sensible, I suppose, but this also applies to most of the rest of France with only a dozen or so departments completely open.

I do not know what can be done to reverse this trend - very little I fear, as there is no rights of way law as such. 'Moto Verte', the leading off road magazine here did a big article on the problem to try and wake everyone up to the danger. It will be interesting to see the reaction in next months issue. With the French,

anything or nothing could happen.

I still haven't taken the XT600E off road. The little XT125 is so easy to handle off road. The power or lack of it means that traction is rarely a problem even on trail tyres. The anti-lock (drum) brakes also cope within limits so perhaps upgrading the motor to 200c.c. will make this more of an all round bike by improving the on road performance.

Alternatively I could sell the 600 and get either a 250 two stroke (Gas Gas Pampera III perhaps) or try and locate a good four stroke 125/200 (DR or XL) The Serow that I had in England would be ideal here too, but as it has never been imported into France, getting one registered here is impossible.

The XT600E is good on the road, has a decent sized tank, comfortable seat, easy starting with the electric boot and power aplenty for the hills. I would like to ride to the Pyrannees and do some of the mountain trails and perhaps cycling every day which I do, and more frequent trail riding might mean that I can manage the beast, otherwise there will be a very clean low mileage XT regrettably for sale.

A note to Rodger Davies - I too thought that 'Metisse' was French for mongrel, but when I used it to describe my Labrador-based dog there was a burst of self conscious laughter from my French audience. Apparently the word has racists connotations, so don't use it! Also if he is serious about acquiring an XLV750 there are quite a few about here in France. They are seriously big and heavy, though the condition varies from good to down right diabolical (no M.O.T for bikes here remember) so don't buy sight unseen.

Thanks Peter Allt for the info on Annie Seel who rode in the Paris/Dakar. It's nice to know she finished. Our two French friends didn't, but they will be back next year.

The 'Good Moaning' in the title refers to the policeman in 'Allo, Allo', the Englishman who thinks he can speak French. I prove every day how easy it is to make mistakes that have the French either smiling or looking very puzzled. Do you know the French word for fiance? Do you know the French word for cul-de-sac? Answers next letter.

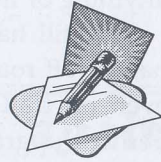
If David Punshon would like to send me his address or e-mail address, I'll send him some tips on moving to France - they helped me.

If anyone wants to ring on 0033 468 33 89 72 or e-mail mhcarefree2@aol.com, feel free.

Ride Safe.

*Mike Kirby, South of France Section
And Hazel, (long suffering wife, decipherer of scribbled notes on scrappy bits of paper, typist, e-mailer and general listener to phone calls about bikes.)*

LETTERS



A GREAT DAY'S RIDING

On Saturday 9th February 2002 a small group from Hertfordshire travelled to just outside Cheltenham in Gloucestershire and were taken on a days riding by Vick Long from the Gloucestershire group. This run was organised following a phone call to Vick, who arranged to meet us.

The days riding was, in my opinion, some of the best I have ever done with a wide variety of trails, from steep climbs to single tracks with ruts. Throughout the day the run was led faultlessly and at a pace to suit the riders. Vick made us feel very welcome and took us to an excellent lunch stop; the food and views were superb!

I would like to thank Vick for a great day's riding and for making us feel so welcome.

Ken Marshall, Herts. Group

ANOTHER BRIDGE TOO FAR

It all began one day when an old friend arrived on my doorstep bearing gifts.

Well, not so much an old friend as a long time friend and for gifts read 'gift' singular, one gift!

I was well pleased to see both 'Phil' and the gift proffered, a 400 x 18" Motorcycle trials pattern tyre, what else?

Well, it was 'slightly second hand' but all the better for that - as most riders with a disobedient set of tyre levers can tell you and also hadn't we seen similar tyres climb all manner of slopes in the French Alps?

So, with said tyre fitted to the XR I was on my way to a meeting in Rugby via the M1 South. The motorway was due to be closed later that morning to make way for a new 21a junction involving removal of a motorway bridge at one stage with a trailer said to have 200 road wheels. This was believed to be a first time in England operation!

On the return journey expecting to have to divert before 21a there wasn't a solitary sign to be seen so I continued North on the M1 soon to find myself on the wrong end of a four mile tailback! However, spurred on by thoughts of the Skegness Lifeboat men who abandon their cars for motorcycles in near gridlock, it was a pleasure to be able to thread carefully through the nose to tail vehicles and to reach home all in one piece, speaking for myself that is and not for the tyre which by now had lost most of its central 'chocolate block' treads.

Bottom line? Alls well that ends well, but pushing the 'economy theme' too far can be dangerous.

Derrick Collins, East Mids. Group

CONSTRUCTIVE CRITICISM

I note with considerable interest our Chairman's concern of the increasing abuse being shown to vehicle users on our green lane network in the February issue of Trail. This comment is backed up by the numerous reports about TRO's and similar devices being used by Councils to remove our legal rights. The TRF members who have taken action to fight such orders should be congratulated for their efforts.

It is agreed that this action is likely to continue.

As an item of constructive criticism I do not believe that the TRF have developed a sufficiently robust political argument to begin the fight. I further believe that the hard work so far accomplished is being undermined by this lack of clear stance and immature comments that appear on our website.

The TRF needs to develop a considered stance on vehicular rights to the countryside that must be based on politically robust arguments. In the age of professional political lobbying the argument 'cause it's our right' holds little water. Our stance needs to convey a clear political message that becomes the focus of our argument and allows us to form key alliances with similar organisations. This may even include the Ramblers Association on certain issues.

The key to successful lobbying lies in irrefutable argument. The RA has a head start over motorcycles, due to their historic perception by the general public. Our argument must be based on fact to dismiss such myths. In keeping with our aim "to conserve our heritage of green lanes for everyone to enjoy" our argument should be based on three key issues:

1. The TRF wish to preserve the historical context of ancient roads, which can only be accomplished if they are preserved as a road based legal right of way.
2. The use of the vehicles rights of way contribute £XX to the economy as a whole and moreover £XX to rural economies.
3. The recreational use of vehicles on legal rights of way does not harm the environment and stops illegal trespass on other land.

We need to write a clear statement that is used as a mantra by all members for these issues.

The fact that I am unable to cite the values in issue 2 shows the limited understanding we have in our own argument. If this was calculated I am convinced it will far exceed the contribution made by any other recreational group, including ramblers. In a time when the government is on the ropes over the rural economy, we should be hard campaigning to gain awareness and ground over these issues.

The Ramblers Association is not our enemy. We should learn lessons from them and congratulate them on such a well fought out political campaign. We must realise that their basic campaign is for access to the countryside and preservation of rights of way. The same thing the TRF is fighting for. Our difference of opinion is over the extent to which vehicles should have access.

The Ramblers have accomplished their aim by the use of notable figures. We have support as well. But has the TRF given Honorary Memberships to Jeremy Clarkson and Nick Knowles (presenter of the excellent Ridge Riders – the only TV show to ever film green laning)? We need these public figures on our side.

To gain political momentum we need to then combine our concerted stance with these public figures.

We need to remove the counterproductive comments that appear in places like our website. Comments such as the ones over ramblers wishing to remove benches and the jet setting mountaineer are unhelpful. As the Conservatives realised to their cost at the last election, no gain is ever made by mocking your opponent. Personally I agree over the removal of benches. Would we want them to start appearing on our favourite lanes? And with regard to the detriment of the environment by planes, can I inquire as the location of the TRF's environmental policy? Mockery is a vicious master. It is interesting to note that the Ramblers website contains little reference to vehicles rights and none are negative.

The environmental issue succinctly demonstrates the complex nature of our argument and how we must think laterally. The main opposition to vehicles using rights of way is that they damage the surface. Agreed. We cannot argue against it, the evidence is too great. What we can argue against is the limitations by council to allow us to repair the damage or put preventative measures in place to stop further damage. As an example in West Berkshire we have one green lane clearing day per year. We are not allowed to use any powered machinery, thereby making the whole exercise futile.

The TRF should use this restriction as an argument. It could further its cause greatly by such actions as;

- Donations to councils to assist in repairing damage. Or organise payment direct to contractors to carry out the work in agreement with the council.
- Organising more compulsory green lane clearing days based on a survey of lanes, say four times a year. Get members licensed to use a chain saw and similar equipment to assist.
- Get in touch with the local offenders unit and introduce community work programmes to assist in lane clearing for local offending youths in exchange for supervised lessons on how to ride a motorcycle.
- Set a clear environmental policy over such issues as damage and its repair, vehicle emissions, noise levels and lane use.

It could be argued that the RA do carry out any of the above. That's the point. The TRF should be seen as the constructive organisation working to improve the

countryside. Let the RA take the heat over land access.

In sum, we need to up the argument to a more political one based on key facts. We need to attract key public supporters of our cause. But more importantly we need to get our house in order as to the clarity of message and put forward positive actions to support our argument.

We have an unprecedented right to the countryside in this country, both by foot and vehicle. Let's not lose it.

C. J. Marsh, Loddon Vale Group

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KAWASAKI KDX220 R 1999, 1300 miles, lighting kit, new rear tyre. One owner from new. Good condition. Trail use only. £1950. Tel: 0191 488 1951.

SUZUKI DR350SP "M" reg. 8k, T&T, VGC, reliable, Renthals, Hand/sump guards. Green lanes only. Ideal dual purpose bike. £1400 onco or p/e Serow. Tel: 01438 317566 (herts.).

HONDA XR250 1998 "S" reg. Hand guards, new chain & sprockets, green lane use only. Good condition. Ski accident forces sale. £2150 ono. Tel: Chris 01386 860611 (Evesham, Worcs.).

YAMAHA XT600E 1998. 10,000km. Blue/white, road use only. French registered and located in the South of France. £2,200 or Euro equivalent. Tel: Mike Kirby 0033 468 33 89 72.

FOR HONDA XL185/XR200 High performance camshaft - brand new. Also two Haynes manuals for XL/XR80 to 200 (No. 566) and Genuine Honda manual for 70s 100/125s (TL, CB, CD,

CL and SL). Make me an offer for any or all of the above on 07773 508474 (Shrewsbury).

PRE:65 350 TRIALS ARIEL Tele/Rigid, road reg. £1000 ono. Tel: 01903 813652 (Sussex).

WANTED Camshaft for 1975 Honda XL250 Motorsport. Any information appreciated. Mobile 078555 9135499 (Dorset).

MALAGUTI GRIZZLY RCX12 kids rev and go. Much money spent. Superb little bike. For sale due to needing newer bigger bike. £350 ono. May p/ex plus cash for CR, RM, KX 80. Tel: John 01254 721897.

HONDA XL Degree 1991. 13000 miles (in K) MOT Oct. 4-stroke water cooled. Very low seat height. Elec. start. Owned for 4 years, now going abroad (really). All in good condition. This is a gutsy bike. £1100. Tel: Phil 01491 574458.

CRM MkII 1993 New clutch, swing arm bearings, wheel bearings, headstock bearings, hand guards, frame guards, bash plate. £1500 ono. Tel: John 01254 721897.

HONDA XR400 Dec. '97. 3000 miles, trail ridden only. Excellent condition. £2250. Tel: 07958 907301 (Sunderland).

YAMAHA 225XT SEROW "J" reg. VGC. Some extras and spares. Mature owner. All MOT certs. £1340. Tel: 01332 551816 (Derby).