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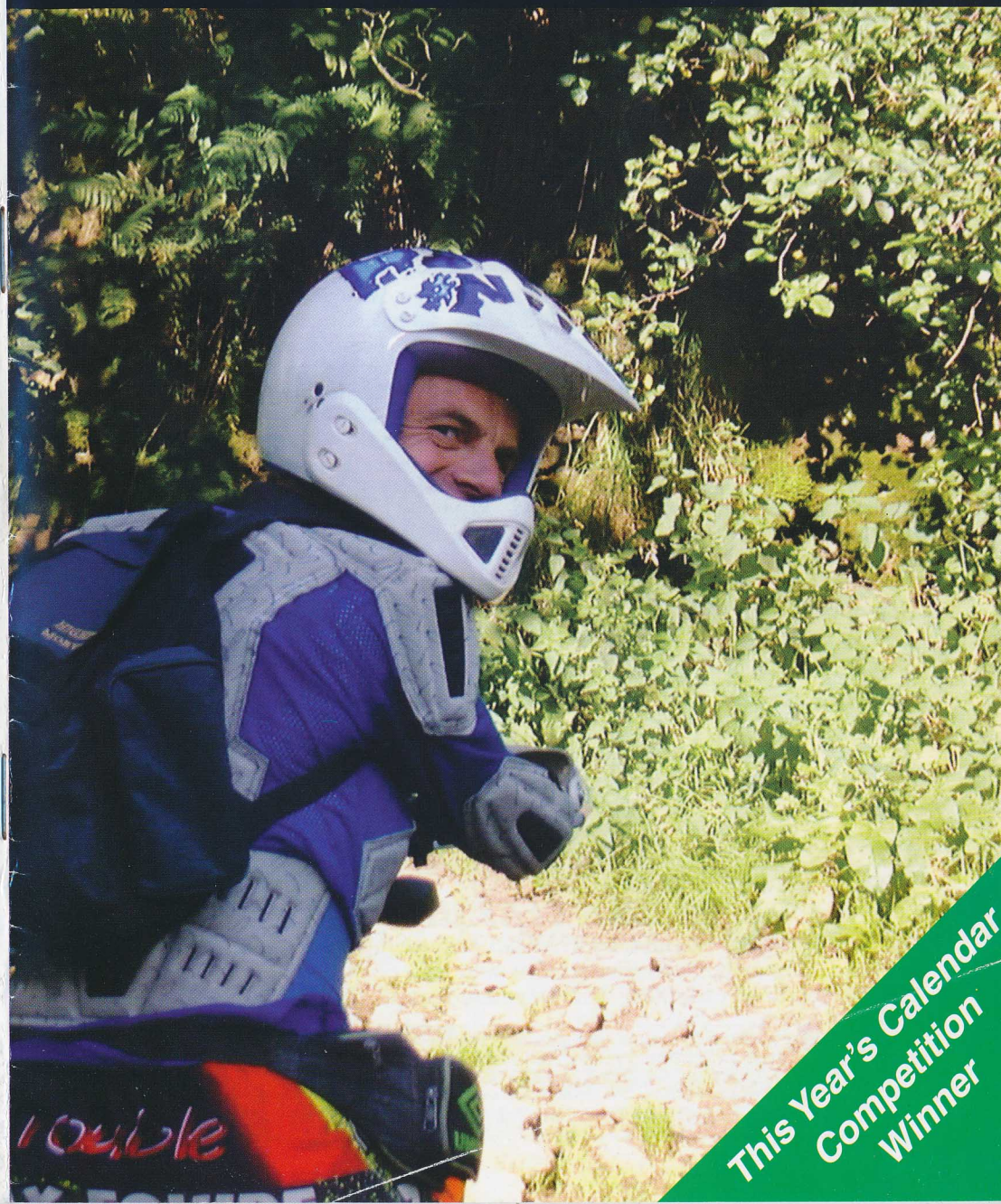


Patron: Lord Strathcarron

# TRAIL

The Bulletin of the TRF, the National Club for  
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Legal Carriageways. EDITOR: Fred Ellison.

JANUARY 2003 No. 293



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## TRF OFFICERS

CHAIRMAN .....	John C Pritchard, 8 Chantry Close, Bishop's Stortford, Herts., CM23 2SN. Tel: 01279 505343, Fax: 01279 501599, Mobile: 07879 804614, E-mail: trfchair@aol.com
VICE CHAIRMAN .....	Tim Stevens, 99 Cheshire Street, Market Drayton, Shropshire, TF9 1AE. Tel: 01630 657627, E-mail: timLARA@aol.com
MEMBERSHIP SEC. ....	Mary Stevens, P.O. Box 343, Market Drayton, Shropshire, TF9 1WT. Tel: 01630 657627, E-mail: memsectrf@aol.com
SECRETARY .....	Sally A. Madgwick, 1 Halgavor Road, Bodmin, Cornwall, PL31 1BW. Tel: 01208 74411, E-Mail: sally @samadgwick.freeseerve.co.uk
TREASURER .....	John Gardner, 119 Hallbridge Gardens, Up Holland, Lancs., WN8 0EP. Tel: 01695 622792, E-mail: john@gardner119.freeseerve.co.uk
PUBLIC RELATIONS OFFICER .....	Chris Marsh, Trilliums, Ashmore Green, Thatcham, Berks., RG18 9ER. Tel: 01635 869136, Fax: 01635 873914, Mobile: 07769 650780, E-mail: trfpublic@hotmail.com
EDITOR .....	Fred Ellison, Sheepcote Farm, Moor Lane, Wiswell, Clitheroe, Lancs., BB7 9DG. Tel: 01254 823893, Fax: 01254 887999, E-Mail: print@ellison.sagehost.co.uk
BMF LIAISON OFFICER .....	David Giles, 22 Ford Lane, Allestree, Derby, DE22 2EW Tel/Fax: 01332 552288, E-Mail: davegiles@dlgtraining.freeseerve.co.uk
LARA REP. ....	Richard Fordham, 8 St. John's Court, Bacup, Rossendale, Lancs., OL13 9BS. Tel: 01706 874698, E-mail: Fordham500@hotmail.com
MAG LIAISON OFFICER .....	Richard Stiling, Tough Art, The Corn Exchange, Corn Street, Bristol, BS1 1HQ. Tel: 0117 927 9795, E-mail: rstiling@blueyonder.co.uk
KEEPERS OF STATIONERY .....	Leaflets & Membership Forms, Mary Stevens. <i>Membership Secretary.</i> Letterheads & Compliments Slips, Fred Ellison. <i>Editor.</i>
DISPLAY EQUIPMENT CO-ORDINATOR .....	Leo Crone, Tel: 01325 463815 (7a.m. - 5p.m.). Display boards held at Unit 10, Red Barnes Way, McMullen Rd., Darlington DL1 2RR.
EQUESTRIAN EVENTS LIAISON OFFICER .....	Mark Holland, Corn Farm, Devauden, Chepstow, Monmouthshire, NP16 6NS. Tel Mobile: 07941 427774 (evenings).
ACTING RoW .....	Dave Tilbury, Oakbank Cottage, Oakbank Road, Eastleigh, Hampshire, SO50 6PA. Tel: 023 8061 8937, (8.30a.m. - 5.30p.m. only)
CO-ORDINATOR .....	SO50 6PA. Tel: 023 8061 8937, (8.30a.m. - 5.30p.m. only) E-Mail: dave@hants-lanes.fsnet.co.uk

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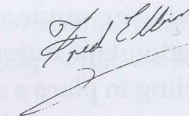
The views expressed in 'Trail' are those of its correspondents and not necessarily of the editor or the T.R.F.

## EDITOR

2003, what will it bring? There will be some challenges to overcome, a new chairman already known to almost everyone as the membership secretary for the past three years and now biting at the bit to get on with his new job, a new public relations man bringing lots of new ideas and the experience and expertise of those who have been there for some time - a formidable force! It is our aim and our duty to our children and grand children to keep open **their heritage** of a green lane network.

Yes we can, and must, do it. The 'team' are committed to this end and, with a little help from you, will do just that.

In my spare time I intend to do some trail riding and have just bought a new, to me, Suzuki DRZ400E with one of those wonderful electric start things which I can't wait to get out on but the exhaust noise is unbelievable for a standard item so any tips on quietening said item, short of buying a new one, would be appreciated and would probably be printed as tip of the month!



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### COVER PHOTO Aleck Coulson

'The Happy Trail Rider' on a pack horse bridge in Derbyshire

**CORRECTION:** The caption for December's Trail cover photo by Dave Loney should have read 'Winter in Llangollen'.

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**All Contributions to the Editor ..... Please keep it short and sweet!**  
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# FROM THE CHAIRMAN...

New Year, with of course many happy hours of trail riding and ferreting about in your county archives.

Now, before I go on with the business, I think it would be most appropriate for me, on behalf of us all, to sincerely thank Andre for all his work over the last two years, remembering too of course that he did step into the breach, or should I say the chair, at a time of need - I shan't elaborate, but am of the opinion it was our darkest hour. Thank you Andre, I think you and your committee did a splendid job.

Over the last couple of years the exec has put much energy into training, producing guidance booklets and disseminating information. The aim being to stimulate interest and equip our members for the task in hand, finally putting in place a small but unique incentive scheme. The task of course being researching and claiming Byways, and to that end, if I may, I will be frank; we will get our deserve and only what we claim! So do it now and do it well, if you do nothing you will have no right to complain.

So now I move on to the future and at my side a full complement of elected Principal Officers, and in these we have a fine and competent committee with new ideas and enthusiasm, enthusiasm that must not be dampened but may have to be tempered with the wealth of experience and knowledge that we also have. I quickly add that my committee is not only made up of these Principal Officers but also of the co-opted officers appointed by the Executive, and the Group Reps. The Group Reps being elected by each Ratified Group, and these members I will look forward to welcoming each and every one of these, or their seconds, at the next Exec Meeting on the 1st Feb and then at each subsequent meeting. The Group Rep, if we are to succeed, is the most important link we have for disseminating information to the members and then bringing back the members views to the Executive table. All members of course are welcomed at these meetings but the Group Rep is the voice of the many.

As I have said, over the past years, we have, thanks mainly to David Tilbury and Tim Stevens, armed our members (I add we are still hugely grateful to the pair of them) but now we need to complement their continuing

Firstly, though maybe a bit belated, I would as the newly elected National Chairman of our Fellowship like to wish you and your kin a Happy and Prosperous

work by raising the prowess of the TRF, and now thanks to Chris Marsh we can do equally as good a job with Public Relations (PR). Over the years PR has been a neglected facet of our business. If we are to be successful every man and his dog will have to know who we are and each time one of our members approaches a local authority that authority should tremble knowing exactly who we are and what we are capable of.

You will all by now have heard of the Strategy Group, now Chaired by Chris Marsh; the work being done by them will touch every one of you and I ask, no I demand that you do your bit, trust me it won't be much, but after meetings with the BMF and others it is apparent that we could never pay for the lobbying power we have in our members, paying for lobbying we are led to believe would be throwing good money away after bad, our members are clearly our strength, they are the MP's Customers as indeed are the members of GLEAM. GLEAM, yes a small focused group of folk with big PR and a huge amount of enthusiasm, enthusiasm we can match and overwhelm (remember the Ridgeway meeting at Didcot), as I said earlier we will reap what we sow, it is undoubtedly fingers out time chaps.

*John C Pritchard*

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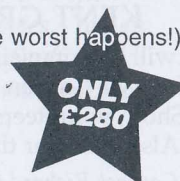
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# NOTICE BOARD

## FIRST EXEC MEETING OF 2003 DATE CHANGE

Saturday 1st February Gloucester (for venue details please see agenda). All other dates as published for 2003.

## BMF EVENTS - 2003

17-18th May  
BMF Show, Peterborough  
14-15th June  
Garden of England Show, Kent  
13th July  
Kelso Bikefest, Kelso, Scotland  
13-14th Sept BMF Tail  
End Show, Peterborough  
plus: 5-6th June National Rally  
21st Sept Rossendale Valley  
Motorbike Show  
*Dave Giles, BMF Rep*

## SEARCHING FOR ARTICLE

...or letter about one of our members riding with his missus on a hire-bike in either Lanzarote or Fuerteventura. Can anyone remember which TRAIL it was in? I fancy going & having a bit.  
*Ted Scott, ted99@clara.co.uk*

## KENT GROUP

...will be organising a stall at the BMF Garden of England Show, volunteers required. Also ideas for the display.  
*Contact Richard Colquhoun  
r.colquhoun@btinternet.com*

## OLD AGE PENSIONER TRAIL RIDERS

I hit the 'BIG 70' in March. I know we have a number of 'Senior Trail Riders' so I'm proposing a day's ride for O.A.P.'s...23rd March...but since few of us do 'that dreadful workstuff' maybe we could meet on a weekday probably in the Hertfordshire area & not too strenuous. If interested give me a ring & I'll pursue arrangements to put on a ride, an evening meal, overnight accommodation etc if needed. *George Cherry 01920 413730*

## PROBLEMS OF ACCESS IN THE PICOS MOUNTAINS

It looks as though Trail Riding in the Picos is likely to be severely curtailed. Much of the prime area has been declared a National Park with talk of introducing bears in some of the more remote & upland areas. While leading a group during the first week of October we were prevented entering several trails by Park Rangers driving National Park badged 4x4 vehicles. The main areas affected seem to be Rio Frio & Carron trails & the Bear Trail & of course it seems inevitable that we will lose the Sotres - Espinana route... at least.

I am pursuing further enquiries with local contacts & if members want further info they are welcome to ring. *George Cherry 01920 413730*

## ROGUE DRIVERS ON MARLBOROUGH DOWNS

I would be grateful for any help you can give with curbing the activities of a couple of 4x4 drivers who seem to be literally off-roading around the Smeathe's Ridge, Hackpen Hill & Rough Hill area of the Marlborough Downs.

A red landrover, swb, reg. No. F513 JOD, and a very muddy Suzuki jeep (no No. available) have been driving around on gallops in the area, cutting up the turf with inappropriate manouevres. They are apparently taking access along the Ridgeway, as they are entitled to assuming they are road legal, but then going onto private gallops & causing damage.

Can you please help to identify these hooligans & let me know of any details such as names, addresses, phone no.s etc? *Mike Furness (Ridgeway officer)*

*Contact Tim Stevens 01630 657627*

## Meeting of the TRF Executive Saturday 1st February 2003

*The Kings Head, Birdwood, Gloucester, GL19 3EF, 01452 750348. Junction 11 M5, head West on the A40 for Ross on Wye, The Kings Head is about 3 miles W from our usual venue on the LHS at Birdwood.  
10.00 for 10.30*

## AGENDA

Chairman's Welcome and Apologies for Absence

Approval of the Minutes from the meeting of 30th November 2002

Matters Arising

Substantive Issues

Ridgeway (TS/DT)

GLASS database (RF)

TRF Website (BR)

Elected Officer's Reports

- 1) Treasurer (JG)
- 2) Membership Secretary (MS)
- 3) Rights of Way (DT)
- 4) Public Relations Officer (CM)

Report from the Strategy Group (CM)

Risk Assessment (DT/JG)

Quads (JP)

Subordinate Issues

John Higgin's Bequest (SM)

Future Bequests (JP)

Status Reports:

Welsh Assembly (RS)

Counsel's Opinion on Human Rights Act (TS)

Map Romers (TS)

The Byway Bonus (SM)

Ecological Impact Survey (Steve Neville)

Updating Display Boards (Leo Crone)

BBTC (DT)

*Any Other Business Whilst every effort is made to accommodate AOB it is often difficult to give sufficient time at the end of a meeting to do justice to topics. You are therefore asked to keep AOB to a minimum. Should there be anything of sufficient importance to merit time for discussion in the body of the meeting you must advise the secretary well in advance with any supporting papers.*

Please see the list of Officers in Trail for clarification of initials.

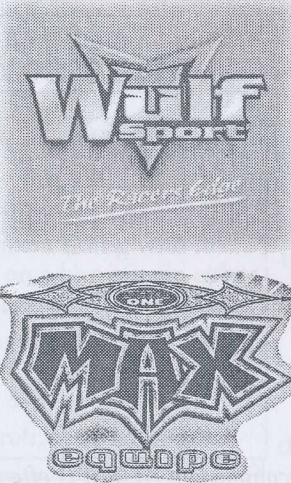
KENT NEWS

The temporary TRO on the Pilgrims Way at Boxley (KH64) has been extended for another six months. This seems to be a play for time whilst Maidstone B.C. applies for a permanent closure. The remaining work along the byway should take no more than a month, six weeks max (should easily have been completed during the first six months). Yet the order is for another six months. There is no alternative route, although walkers and cyclists are ignoring the order and have created a footpath around the gates at the Lidsing Road end. At the other end of the lane they simply squeeze between the fence and the bridge wall. Anyone wanting to write in and complain should write to The Strategic Director of Planning, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone, Kent, ME14 1XQ.

**Byway CB199 at Adisham GR TR212531.** The LARA voluntary restraint expired at the beginning of October. The Highways Authority missed an opportunity to carry out repairs when the byway was reasonably dry. KCC have imposed a temporary TRO for six months.

**Byway HE228 at Postling GR TR130386.** This lane has been badly churned up by 4x4s, the problem is the drainage and lack of maintenance. KCC are considering a voluntary restraint, although they have not approached any user groups or LARA with their proposal. They have also stated that if this does not work they will consider a temporary TRO and carry out repairs in the Spring.

*Richard Colquhoun*



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Report from  
**Chris Marsh**

UNITED WE STAND

It was a beautiful sight: Over 500 vehicle user together in a single room with a single message; co-operation and responsibility. One of the first actions that I undertook as the new Public Relations Officer was to attend the Didcot public meeting over the issue of the Ridgeway. This meeting clearly showed the manner in which we must move forward, so I thought it was worth outlining what I was planning on doing over the next year.

Public relations is more than just responding to negative comments. It is a proactive process of ensuring the public understands what the TRF is and why we trail ride. As the "governing body of trail riding" this covers a multitude of issues, some of which have been previously woeful in their coverage. In the future I believe we need to focus on three issues: the media, Government lobbying and our partners.

We have always had a good relationship with the media, but over recent years we have drifted away from some of our allies. Re-establishing regular dialogue with Motorcycle News, T+MX, TBM and the BMF and MAG publications will ensure that the

issues we faced are understood by all motorcyclists, giving us stronger voice. Recent contact shows that they are all hungry to help us and realise that the issues we are fighting for affect all motorcyclists, not just trail riders. I also hope to announce in the coming weeks of a major campaign to be held in conjunction with Motorcycle News.

Its not just the motorcycle press that are proving to be allies. A member recently sent a copy of an article from a motoring magazine that was not helpful to our cause. A call to the editor found me speaking to an ex-enduro racer who will be issuing the most grovelly of apologies in its next issue. The result? - another ally in another press medium and a key person within one of the largest publishing houses in Europe.

Government lobbying will also be a key focus for us. It is our experience that most MP's do not oppose trail riding, but simply

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do not understand it. Whilst it is easy for them to listen to the arguments of GLEAM, most MP's question that if you take their argument to the logical of conclusions, then all motorboats, jet skies, light aircraft and agricultural machinery must be banned. Getting MP's to understand that we are interested in ensuring that rights of way are preserved in their proper context is our only aim.

One of our biggest strengths is our web of partners. Although our membership is strong and growing, we need to exploit the resources that the BMF and MAG possess. A recent meeting with BMF's political lobbyist Richard Oliffe shows that the work we are undertaking is of keen interest to the European Motorcyclist Forum. This launches our strength from thousands to millions.

What else do I plan on doing this year? Well hopefully a lot more trail riding. Having spent two summers nursing two different and severe knee injuries, I've recently returned to a lightweight two-stroke. I rode three times during the Christmas holidays and in nearly 18 hours of riding I only met two horse riders, two other trail riders and three walkers. All encounters were with an exchange of greetings and pleasantries.

Conflict in the countryside? No there's just a little bug called GLEAM that needs exterminating.

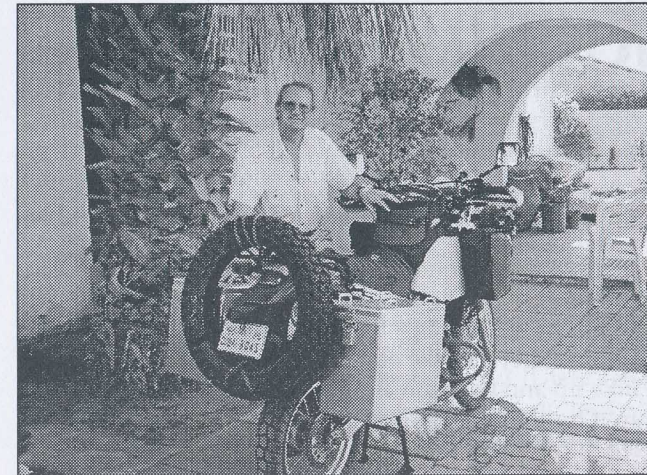
C.J. Marsh



## 'Go West... ...Young Man'

An expatriate, living in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) a one, Bob West (better known as Expat Man) is about to realise one of his life's ambitions, by biking along the Pan-American Highway, from the tip of South America, Terra Del Fuego, Argentina to Anchorage Alaska. This trip has always been the 'Holy Grail of Trail Riding' and is the one trip every adventurous trailer rider aspires to achieve.

The plan is to fly his brand new Suzuki DR 650 from Dubai to Buenos Aires, Argentina then take a ferry across the River Plate into Uruguay and then to Montevideo. Expat Man will un-crate the bike on the 16th December (all being well and customs permitting) then set off South. The initial plan is to be in Ushuaia (main town in Terra Del Fueggo) between Christmas and New Year. Expat Man hopes to meet up with like-minded (mad?) people. A couple of Irish guys have been in contact already and plan to rendezvous in Buenos Aires when he arrives on the 15th. December 2002. There is usually a gathering of 10 to 30 people either starting or finishing South American



trips and then start North about 2nd January. After this it is north mainly following the Andes through Chile, Argentina, Bolivia, Peru, Ecuador. Then fly the Darien Gap (impassable by bike due to 80 miles of swamp) to Panama and continue through Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Honduras, El Salvador, Guatemala, Belize, Mexico and finally entering the USA ending in Los Angeles. Expat Man estimates this to be about 9,000 miles in South America and 6,000 miles in Central America up to Los Angeles (LA) give or take a thousand or two. So if this all goes according to plan, Expat Man will arrive in LA about end of February or March depending on the start date, length of time waiting in Ecuador for a flight to Panama and general travel speed. The plan then would be to leave the bike in LA, come back to Dubai for a rest and go on a holiday to Thailand with his long suffering wife and daughter (maybe Expat Man could rent a bike and do some jungle trails!!) returning to LA at the beginning of May. From there it will be a trip inland, following the Rockies up through the USA into Canada and Alaska to Prudhoe Bay and Anchorage.

On the return, Expat Man intends to take a ferry back down the coast of Canada for a couple of days but generally keep a course closer to the coast back to Vancouver, San Francisco, Yosemite, Death Valley and Las Vegas on the return to LA. This round trip will be about 10,000 miles, travelling around of 300 miles per day.

Expenditure? Expat Man is allowing between 500 and 1,000 pounds per month depending on location and accommodation; camping or guest houses, etc. On top of this is starting costs, bikes, airfares, airfreight for the bike (£600) etc. The carnet is £4000, but this is returnable on return to the country of origin. This is to ensure Expat Man does not make a 'fast buck' by selling the bike while exploring the Americas.

Expat Man will be using the internet from points along the route for family back home. I shall endeavour to keep TRF members updated with the exploits of Expat Man with segments in February and March's 'Trail'.

One thing he can be sure of,..... every biker Expat Man happens to see or meet will always have time for a friendly chat and a few jokes regardless of age or nationality. Bikers are probably the friendliest group of people you will meet.

Graham Wadsworth, East Midlands TRF

# DON'T TRY THIS AT HOME

The lane led out from the trees onto open ground. My jaw nearly fell open with delight. Rising away to my right was an undulating field, red with poppies and slashed yellow with self-set rape from the previous season. The path that I was on bordered a field which was set, at its edge with a bright blue flower of the geranium family. Glorious I thought - a beautiful sight. Then I was on my side with my left foot pinned awkwardly under the rear fender of my DRZ, the rear wheel spinning determinedly. Long grass had hidden the upsqueltch (my own word) of a rut. That, and lack of concentration had been my downfall.

I was able to reach over and hit the kill button - the rear wheel stopped spinning. So far so good, but I still was not able to get the bike off my foot. Nothing was in reach that could be used to lever the bike up and cramp was beginning to set in. There was nothing for it. I put my right foot on the seat, shoved with all my might and at the same time pulled with my left leg. It came out bringing with it my severed winker, its lens hanging off like an opened oyster.

The danger of going out alone had been nagging at me for a while and I saw this as a timely warning. But you know how it is. Two weeks later I suddenly found that I had a Saturday without any demands on me. It would be nice to have a run out on the bike. Leaving my house I took the lane to Grove where I bought some sandwiches and a drink. I got onto the Ridgeway above Wantage and made my way westward.

The Ridgeway spilled me onto the road close to the M4 at Wanborough where I

looked at the map. The Fosse Way runs in an intriguing dead straight line from a point a few miles west of the Chippenham junction of the M4 to Cirencester. It goes diagonally NNW straight off the top of OS map 173 and carries on unerringly straight on OS map 163. It looked like a great run but I couldn't recall people talking about it or reading anything about it in regard to Green Laning. But that's not surprising, I'm a relatively new boy at this game. "Perhaps I had better go and have a look at this", I thought.

I picked it up at Fosse Gate about a mile west of Grittleton and was delighted with what I found. A minor tarred road interrupts it from time to time but it was great. Crossing the river Avon near Easton Grey was interesting. There is a bridge there but I couldn't imagine that the Roman soldiers had the benefit of a bridge and it didn't seem fair for me to use it either. I had to drop off the bank and there was a bit of a lumpy exit the other side but

nothing too serious. On a few miles and there was a notice saying, 'Warning to four wheel vehicles Ford Ahead'. Well I came to the Ford, it didn't seem much to me but then I came to the real Ford. The entry and exit were much easier than the first Ford but its depth in the middle did surprise me and I had to screw the throttle open wide to keep going. I am not very experienced with river crossing on a motor cycle; the power it sapped from the engine really surprised me.

I carried on. At some point the lane changed from flat and gravelly to earthy, then to earthy with ruts, then to earthy with ruts and mud, with a bank forming each side as it dropped downhill. Ahead was a puddle. It was perhaps 30 or 40 ft long. A lot goes through your mind at times. To turn around was not a very practical option. Something - a farm machine or a logging truck had made these impressive ruts, so that must have got along to where ever it was going. Anyway, it was summer; you must be able to get through it in summer, surely? There seemed to be grip in the bottom of the rut as I entered, it probably just carried on fairly shallow - but no! Quickly the water rose up all around the bike and we came to a halt with a dead engine, still with 20 feet to go. You absolute idiot! I screamed at myself. The bike almost supported itself upright in the mud and gloop. I stuck my knee out to the bank to support us and to think. "What shall I do now? I will never push this thing out of here. I've got a phone but whom do I ring? I am not even exactly sure where I am. Even if I get this out I can't see me being able to turn it upside down on my own to drain it out. You great idiot you!"

I eased myself onto the bank to try to get some purchase to see what shoving would achieve. Well not much, is the answer, but it did cause me to slip down into the water and with water up above my knees I was in a better position to shove and certainly more committed. Both wheels were out of sight below the water. I got to the front, fished under the water, grabbed the top of the front wheel and pulled. It moved forward a little. Another pull, but no joy. I moved round and behind the bars, took a breath and shoved for all I was worth. It moved forward again. This was encouraging. I couldn't understand why it was moving, but it was. Exhausted and sweating profusely I eventually got it so that the water was only about three-quarters of the way up the wheels. I sat on board, as much for a rest as anything but while there decided to prod the starter. I had done this previously, before the bike had marinated in the water for so long. At that time there was no hint that it might work. But this time it spun the motor over. Someone was looking kindly on me. I hung on to the switch, turning the motor over and over, then it caught. No spitting water, no steam, it just revved out - music! I stuffed it into gear and I was out of there.

I didn't push my luck much further. After a few miles I took to the road and made my way home. I mused as I went along. Could I have phoned the AA? It is the person that is in the AA not the vehicle. The tele adverts remind us of this. Technically, I was on a road. Do they have a duty of care? Interesting line of thought this. I had visions of an AA man toiling to get to me. Getting into more trouble than me.

Then I came back to Earth. What nonsense you get off on at times I reminded myself. I was just very grateful that I was not still in the mire. I am resolved; that in the future, I will not go looking at trails that I don't know, on my own. "No really, I mean it this time".

Alec Watts, Oxford

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## Autumn Trail Riding - September

moors south of Talybont Reservoir, the normal mist and bog were replaced by sun and dust, and even the dramatic washout at the start of the Gap Road seemed less challenging than usual. It's not often that the view of the Brecons there is on show, but today it was great.

We stopped at the far end by the gate for a fag stop – remember those in the good old days before the weed became a sin, there was much more conversation and smokers maybe didn't ( couldn't? ) ride so fast as some seem to feel the need to these days. We exchanged pleasantries with walkers, pony trekkers, and 4x4 drivers whilst we sat in the sun. We even held the gate open for them.

Next lane was the first half of Sarn Helen, rocky but easy, then on to the tarmac for a mile to pick up the lane north of Ystradfellte. It's limestone, which somehow seems out of place here.

Just over a mile south of Ystradfellte there is a little shop with a petrol pump. A sort of miracle for us as the new guy on a GasGas 250 had little petrol and no oil. We got both, plus ice creams. If you are in the area, make a point of calling, or on the day you really need it, it won't be there.

A few miles further and we rejoined Sarn Helen to go back north. Still easy, though the puddles were quite capable of delivering a soaking. The river crossing was as low as I've seen it.

A few years ago, on a torrential day, it was so full we'd have been killed if we'd tried to get across. There were two mountain bikers there, and I had some trouble persuading them of this, which goes to prove that they are even madder than trail riders. We were soaked, tired and desperate that afternoon, and it would have been horrible to retrace our wheel tracks. Luckily the farmer has a small bridge just further back. I'm sure he would not have minded us using it, certainly he did not come out in the rain to remonstrate when we rejoined Sarn Helen via his yard.

This time though, we waited whilst one of our number went back to see if he could find the brand new pack of tools he'd fixed, regrettably not firmly enough, to his bike, that very day.

The completion of Sarn Helen was the completion of our leisurely day. We rode back to our parking stop just outside Brecon, loaded the bikes, and then just to show that even I sometimes have clouds surrounding my silver lining, I drove off leaving my nice metal loading ramp lying in the layby.

*Steve Pighills, Black Country Group*

### THE BRECONS

Maybe the end of September is autumn, but it seemed more like an Indian Summer.

The run, which four of us from the Black Country Group made to Brecon, to take advantage of the Gap being open, could not have been more idyllic.

Two of us have experience, two were on their first run. Up over the

## GETTING POLITICAL

There can be no doubt that the TRF has to broaden its perspective and to set about not only telling folk in high places how badly the recreational motorcyclist could fare under CRoW Act 2000, but also soliciting their interest and assistance to effect change. During the next year you will hear a lot talked about lobbying – and this is essentially what we mean by the term.

The TRF is only the sum of its whole, and whilst as the National Governing Body for Trail Riding we can represent you all, you are all equally representatives for trail riding. You are all responsible users; folk who enjoy our recreation and who do not want to lose the right to continue riding our unique and historic network; significantly you are also ALL voters (yes even the women...).

Any voter may visit their MP. You may do this at Westminster, or you may do it at home, in your constituency. Nationally the TRF is embarking on a campaign of lobbying, and this will include the 660 Members of Parliament. However, it is not the National TRF that puts MPs in a job – it is you, as individual voters, and be assured that given that you introduce the case for trail riding evenly and fairly, that you treat them with respect (and remember

that they may be wholly ignorant of our sport) and that you are positive in what they may do to help us – you will not have wasted your time.

Below are some guidelines for visiting your MP, advice for those who have never done it. Please think about it, nationally we can support you with briefing documents and advice on key issues, but YOU are the voter, and YOU are worth listening to.

Make the appointment - Contact the constituency office (phone book) and book an appointment; it may well be at a surgery where you will have a timed slot to put your case.

Plan - Plan what you are going to say. Introduce yourself as a responsible motorcyclist and take a little time to explain what we do, the history of our lanes and how we share them and respect them and other

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users. Get your facts straight! Check with National TRF especially on CRoW Act if in any doubt. Go with others, especially if one of you has local "clout", introduce yourselves and plan what each is going to say. Ensure the team has consistent views.

Take a copy of the TRF's Sharing leaflet (available from mem sec) to leave with him or her. You are not representing the TRF but you are proving you are a responsible person.

Timing - Ask right at the beginning of the interview how much time you have. You will usually get 10 to 20 minutes. Pace yourselves accordingly.

Get Straight to the Point - Deliver your facts concisely. Do not waste time telling anecdotes. Leave fact sheet or briefing document when you go.

Give the MP Practical Arguments. Be positive in the way change could be effected.

MPs are notorious for not answering questions and talking about their own issues! Don't let them do this to you. If your MP is straying from the point, pull them back.

Research your MP - Find out what his background is, some MPs are members of GLEAM for example, it would be useful to know. Local libraries carry the Times Guide to the Houses of Parliament or contact the TRF secretary for information. Check on their majority.

Positive Outcome - Try to get a positive statement or action, let them know you will be back. Tell others of your meeting, tell the TRF National Secretary.

Follow up - Follow up your meeting with a letter of thanks to the MP. Answer any points left unanswered at the meeting.

Respect the MPs politics even if they are hugely different from your own.

Tempted? It is really okay and remember that they are obliged to listen to you (provided you are reasonable!) and you will have left an impression that can be built on.

Oh yes, and the best advice of all - SMILE!

*Sally Madgwick, Hon. Secretary with thanks to MAG and the BMF for their input.*

## THE TRUTH, LIES AND GLEAM

I sometimes think that the best thing that ever happened to trail riding was the invention of GLEAM. For just like the battle that Frodo has with his Ring, GLEAM has acted as the cause to unite all the warriors and focus our energies. Vehicles uses have always been the Hobbits of the countryside, busily getting on with our own business, while being respectful to everyone else: live and let live, leave and let be, was our happy song. The forces of evil were stirred by GLEAM, but our response was not to run, but to join arms with our fellows. The result? - a unified army that is now stronger than ever.

But like Soroman, GLEAM will be killed by a single arrow and the arrow will be called the truth.

Over the years GLEAM's members have thrown one poison chalice after another at us. The list of examples where they have presented falsified evidence is endless. From photographs to letters, numerous GLEAM members have had their "evidence" dismissed at public enquiries for being falsified. The reason why this occurs is simple; despite all their efforts, GLEAM have not yet been able to provide a single truth as to why vehicles should be banned.

But GLEAM have recently surpassed themselves as to the level at which they will sink. GLEAM recently reproduced one of our cartoons without obtaining our permission, thereby causing a breach of copyright. Our Chairman wrote to them seeking an apology for this illegal action. But their response was even better than we ever imagined. Mrs Still, their Secretary, recently replied with (this is the exact text):

What happened was this: a photocopy of the cartoon was sent to me several months ago by a member of GLEAM whose name I cannot now remember. There was no indication where when the cartoon originated. As editor of the Newsletter which we publish twice yearly, I decided to use the cartoon in our August 2002 newsletter.

This reply shows that GLEAM care nothing of others legal rights, intellectual property, nor even carry out the basics of checks as to where they get information from. In short the concept of truth is lacking in every one of their actions.

Isn't it strange though that an organisation that claims a membership of over 30,000 cannot afford their own artwork? Yet according to the minutes at their AGM, their 'freely' distributed newsletter is only 550 copies. This means that 29,500 of their members have elected not to receive their newsletter (although as a regular reader of it I can't blame them!). It's also interesting to note that while GLEAM claim the support of 83 MP's, only 12 list GLEAM's membership under the Hansards list of interests.

But then again GLEAM have always had a problem with the Truth.

*C.J. Marsh*

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## FUN IN HERTS

How much fun can you have? At the end of November 2002 I borrowed an XR400 from Rich in the Kent TRF (cheers mate – hope it still works OK) since he was off on a booze cruise over that weekend. I tested the bike on the local lanes

around north Kent and it was great, if rather huge (I'm used to a KDX200).

Two other mates were going to Herts on the Sunday, so invited me along as well. Bright and early we left and arrived at the start point at about 10-00. Unloading the bikes we geared up and set off. In spite of the rain the first few lanes were easy. The most difficult challenge was re-starting the XR at the end of each lane. I HATE kick starting big four-strokes! Both of my riding companions had electric starts. Later on in the day I rode Keith's DRZ 400E. What a brilliant bike. Easy to use power, great handling, reasonable weight; (anything is heavy after a KDX) AND the electric foot.

You can see the grin factor from the photographs as to what I thought of it. However just one thing Suzuki, how can you sell a bike with a silencer (sic) so loud that it won't pass even an Enduro noise test? Keith has put a baffle in his but its still marginal for acceptable noise. I've just gone and bought a second-hand DRZ for myself but its not often that an aftermarket exhaust (mine is a CRD) is quieter than the standard item. I'd say that unless you really want the extra power and handling that the enduro E version gives buy the more sensible DR400S. The enduro version costs an extra £500 to legalise properly. That's why some riders go for a KTM, which is road legal and quiet (but do they last?)

Noise is an emotive issue and with the move to big enduro four strokes its something the TRF needs to keep an eye (ear!) on. My dear old KDX is quieter and bikes like the CRM250's are commendable for their stealth. But they are two strokes and consequently seen as more wasteful on fuel and more polluting in this environmentally conscious 21st century. I'll probably be writing something on this in the near future since noise nuisance is something I'm going to get more involved with at work.

By the way, anyone want a really nice, light, easy to ride, quiet but smelly KDX200, recently fully rebuilt, with a stack of spares for £1200?

*Steve Neville, Kent*

## THE INTERNET CONNECTION

Have you got an internet connection? Have you visited the TRF website lately? If the answer to both of the above questions is yes, then you should be aware of the new 'members area' but if not, read on.

The idea behind this facility is to allow you, the members to have greater contact with each other and members of the executive. It also provides a means to share knowledge, files and even photos. With the recent addition of an email list we aim to speed up communication on rights of way and research issues. Items produced by the TRF are usually there before they are in 'Trail' for you to download. It is there for you to use, so if you can, please do so.

In order for you to get into the members area you will need to sign in with your 'username' and membership number. Full instructions are given on the website and are easy to follow. Once in, on your first visit you will be presented with a page with some questions (not all are obligatory) and once completed you are in.

There will be links to the latest consultation papers that could impact on your recreation. There will be advice on the questions YOU need to ask your MP. Remember, not only will you be able to stay in touch with what the TRF are doing in other parts of the country; you will be able to use the web site as a training aid on rights of way issues.

*Bill Richards and Dave Tilbury*

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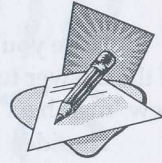
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# LETTERS



## ITS NOW OR NEVER

As a TRF member and one of the initiators of the Peak Group RoW Initiative I am phoned or written to on a regular basis regarding RoW issues. I feel from what I gather from numerous members it is about time the TRF woke up to the problems we all have!

The possibility of routes being downgraded is horrendous to say the least, let the TRF stop playing the politically correct route because now is the time that the TRF nationally really do need to get stuck in and stop the rot which may be causing some despondency amongst its membership.

This is not just aimed at the TRF nationally but also at trail riders who may or may not be members of the TRF. If they are not members we need these motorcyclists to add weight to our cause. So please file section 14, byway claims sooner rather than later. Don't just ride your bikes hoping other people will do the work for you. If you don't, there will be very few trails left to ride on.

Write to your MP complaining about the injustice on our minority group, your favourite RuPPs will become bridleways or footpaths, dual status routes will lose the higher rights which we need. Give the County Councils, MPs and Tony Blair Hell as that is what you will be left with. DO IT NOW, not when you have an hour or it will never get done. Your MPs address is The House of Commons, London. Tony Blair is No. 10 Downing Street and your Council Highways Department is in one of your local towns.

If the minority Gay community will be allowed marital status, then let us retain the status of our network of roads/routes and not allow the government to ride roughshod over us.

As with the GLEAM organisation, the ones that shout the loudest get heard, so let us shout at the right people. The TRF has to come out of the woodwork, stop being some bunch of nice easygoing old boys, and get its gloves off and put up one hell of a fight for survival. We have to become passionate about our hobby and do everything in the membership and National TRF Executive's powers to quickly execute the necessary RoW work and lobbying that has to be done. So get off your backsides everyone and help the cause gain some serious momentum.

Members, please inundate the councils with Byway claims, write to your MP, etc. don't let the bxxxxxx beat us and keep them busy sorting out claims and complaints.

Until then, try to ride only on routes with evidence, or as in Derbyshire you will get prosecuted and no-one will be able to support you from the TRF. I understand that evidence on a route from a neutral or non TRF RoW specialist does not seem acceptable to the National Executives way of thinking, it should wake up and use anybody that can help our cause.

*Yours sincerely, John Ward, Peak Group Initiative (Derby)*

## EXMOOR COMPLAINTS

The Somerset Group is about to start trying to claim over 300 routes and the complaints listed below will not help us. Please ask anyone you know who rides on Exmoor to help by taking care.

*Greg Hughes, Somerset Group*

*The following extract is taken from an email to Greg Hughes from Richard Eales, Assistant Ranger, Exmoor National Park*

We are aware that the riders concerned are not always TRF riders, but as you are in the field of riding the RUPP's it is felt that we need to work together on the problem of rogue trail riders.

Sunday 15th December - Complaint phoned in by local resident at Withypool@ 14.30 hrs; 20-30 motorbikes used RUPP Willingford Bridge to Withypool despite notices requesting that people do not ride/drive this RUPP when the ground is wet. Legally they do have the right to use it at any time, but it was inconsiderate and selfish to ignore Exmoor National Park Authority's special request.

ENPA Ranger stopped 5 bikes on a bridleway at Holes Corner on Alcombe Common, Minehead. The riders claimed they were lost but they did have a map with them.

Sunday 6th October - 12 bikes were stopped by an ENPA Ranger travelling on a bridleway over Winsford Hill.

Sunday 29th September - 8 bikes were seen by a ENPA Ranger travelling at speed along the RUPP at the top of Kitridge Lane, Withypool. The problem here is that it must be taken into account that a RUPP has more than one user group i.e. 4x4's, horse riders, walkers etc.

I would very much appreciate your help in an effort to prevent this problem by making sure that the trail bike riders you encounter are made fully aware of the law, as I feel it would be to everyone's mutual advantage.

## TRAILER INFORMATION

Do you know anyone who has a 1 bike trailer for sale, or do you know of a firm I can buy one from reasonably?

The alternative I have been considering is a bike rack. Would give the advantage of enormously less parking problems, freedom from the 60 limit (I got fined £180 for doing 76mph) and freedom from the 3rd lane restriction (I got fined £60 EXTRA, i.e. £240 total for the same offence because of this - did not know it was a serious offence - far less an endorsable one).

Do you think bike racks are a good solution? My car is a Peugeot 306.

I'm not very strong and I'm concerned as to how I would get the bike onto the rack. A portable crane on a trailer is not an acceptable answer.

*Gordon Dalgarno*

## REQUEST

A request from my BOSS (er indoors) to the BOSS of this mag: Would you please put a glossary of terms inside 'every' front cover so that we (the ROYAL 'we') all know what 'Glass' 'Gleam' etc stand for. She doesn't stand a chance of remembering it from one mag: to the next cos she is getting old and I keep forgetting as I am even older. I have been at this lark for over 10 years and still forget some. ER says that I am beyond help. Now what is ER real name?

Keep up the good work (and your feet).

*John Grew (I think)*

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**YAMAHA SEROW** 1995 Excellent condition. 18000 kms. MT21s. £1395. Tel: 01325 464586 (Durham).

**YAMAHA WR250 'L'** reg. Excellent condition. Large & small tank. £1250. Tel: 01254 823893 h or 01254 883208 w.

## 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** Bob Chapman, Tel: 0117 960 9660  
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, Sprinckhill, 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**  
Peter Hall, Tel: 01405 862616  
1st Tues, *The Plough, Snaith*

**ESSEX**  
Dave Anderson, Tel: 01277 657783  
2nd Wed, *The Swan Public House, Great Eastern, Nr. Dunmow*

**EXMOOR** Ian Sadler, Tel: 01884 821547  
2nd Wed, *The Hartnoll Hotel, Bolham, A396 1 mile north of Tiverton*

**GLOUCESTER** Charlie Morriss, Tel: 01453 885323  
1st Wed, *The Wagonworks Sports & Social Club, Tuffley Ave., Glos.*

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

**HIGH PEAK & POTTERIES**  
Graham Till, Tel: 01782 776338 or 01782 833222 (work)  
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** Richard Colquhoun, Tel: 01634 575090  
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, *Manvers Arms, Monks Road, Lincoln*

**LODDON VALE** David Cook, Tel: 0118 901 4481  
2nd Thurs, *Inn in the Park, Woodley Centre, E. Reading*

**NORTHUMBERLAND** Chris Moody  
Tel: 0191 387 3507 6-10pm or 07860 302001 (mobile)  
1st Tues, 8pm, *ATMEL (off A19), Silverlink, Newcastle-upon-Tyne*

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

**NORWICH** John Jenkins, Tel: 07721 880463  
2nd Wed (exc Dec), *White Horse, Trowse, Norwich.*

**OXFORDSHIRE** Kevin Lindsey, Tel: 01993 823865  
3rd Thurs, *The Red Lion, Cassington*

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

**RIBBLE VALLEY**  
Roland Wolstenholme, Tel: 01282 432088  
2nd Tues, *Pendle Hotel, Chatburn, Clitheroe (off A59)*

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

**SOMERSET** Kevin Parfitt, Tel: 01935 427858  
2nd Thurs, *The Bell Hotel, Curry Rivel, Nr. Taunton*

**SOUTHERN** Russ McDermid, Tel: 02380 812371  
3rd Thurs, *Southampton & District MCC, Woodside Ave., Eastleigh, (opposite Halfords)*

**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** Phil Male, Tel: 01793 731777  
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** Gary Hiller, Tel: 01932 851291  
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**  
Vic Price, Tel: 01380 724651  
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.*