

Spring 2021



## ELECTRIC AVENUES

All you ever wanted to know about Pedelecs, e-MTBs, E-Bikes and much more

## Gawthwaite Good to Go

Conservation in the Lake District National Park



- ★ **Directors' Reports:** Doug Cartwright and John Vannuffel update us
- ★ **Group Profile:** Mo Rapley explains what SW Wales has been up to
- ★ **Motorcycle Trail Adventures:** A different approach to trail riding
- ★ **Roll of Honour:** The TRF recognises all those who have 25-50 years membership
- ★ **Raffle Winner:** It's frantic Fantic time

## Home by Seven

Exclusive reader offer on Steph Jeavons' critically acclaimed travel book

## Lockdown Lovelies

What went on behind closed doors in 2020

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# EDITORIAL



**W**elcome to the Spring 2021 edition of Trail. Could we? Dare we hope? That the roadmap for the lifting of lockdown will be adhered to this time. If I look at my wall planner, I can see that on Easter Sunday I'm clay shooting and a couple of Sundays after that it's the Timber Woods Long Distance Trial. Yeesss!

As you can see from the photo, I have already started preparing my bike. The Adventure Spec Mini Fairing to which I've mounted my roadbook reader has been fitted and there are a few other bits and pieces to add, but this is mere child's play compared to what some of you have been up to during lockdown – have a look at the Lockdown Lovelies, see page 34.

There have been no events on which to bring you reports. But I'm sure that you will be able to sympathise with the Wiltshire Group, whose big Wessex Wanderer event had to be cancelled fairly late in the day as it was scheduled for the weekend before restrictions are due to be lifted. Hopefully the event will be run later in the year.

Also in this issue is the Roll of Honour, names of all those members who've been with us continuously for 25 years and more. The pandemic



prevented us from celebrating the TRF's fiftieth anniversary but we're still hopeful that something can be arranged at the ABR Festival at Ragley Hall over the period 25–27 June.

Fortunately the lack of Fellowship activities hasn't left us bereft of content for this issue. Step forward international journalist and TRF stalwart Paul Blezard, who has compiled the ultimate guide to electric bicycles on the trail and elsewhere. Like it or not, the future of trail riding will probably have pedals and will definitely be battery powered.

It was also great to get a report in on conservation work. Yes, the TRF is about keeping lanes open and ensuring that there will be somewhere from which to enjoy the countryside in the future, but someone's got to get their hands dirty and what better place to do it than Gawthwaite in the Lake District National Park, see page 46.

The days are getting longer, summer is on its way and let's hope we'll all be in a better place as a result. Don't forget, Trail needs your contributions and for the Summer Issue they need to be sent in by 21 May.

Hope you all have your jabs and feel safer.

**Rick Kemp**, Editor@trf.org.uk



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# Chair's REPORT

New Chair and Northern Group Director **Doug Cartwright**, [doug.c@trf.org.uk](mailto:doug.c@trf.org.uk), looks forward tentatively to the future and hopefully getting back out on the trails...



## There is light at the end of the Tunnel

**A**nd it's not an oncoming train! As I write this on a wet and windy day in Yorkshire and with all my bikes tucked away there does seem to be good news on the way. Not only are there signs of spring and temperatures rising above freezing it looks to like the world is starting to emerge from this awful pandemic that has affected many of us and our loved ones for over a year.

The situation, as ever, is changing quickly with regard to government guidance and the law and to find the latest on Covid and the TRF visit the web page for the latest details. Stay safe.

TRF Directors thank everyone for their efforts during this crisis and especially to those of you who have been on the front line through to those of us who have simply helped deliver prescriptions to the vulnerable or act as carpark attendants at vaccine and testing stations. I have seen TRF members doing all of this and exercising great restraint and thought for others. Thank You.

Although we have not been able to meet in person recently the Team TRF has carried on and I am now very familiar with quite a few Zoom living rooms and back drops! Directors continue to meet twice a month on Sunday mornings, in between numerous subgroups meet to follow up.

Just as spring is here the Green Road Map GRM is starting to show colour as we gather more data and test out the front end. I will leave the details of that to be covered by Graeme, Gavin and John elsewhere in the spring issue. We continue to improve the current membership system and Andrew is leading our efforts to define and ultimately implement a new membership system that will better reflect the needs of our expanding organisation in both numbers and activities. Speaking of which, our membership at the end of Jan was only 28 short of 6000, a remarkable achievement given the current climate. It is also getting very close to the target of 6500 members we set ourselves as a target for 2022. I have also been able to attend

some local group Zoom meetings and it is great to hear about the engagement in local rights of road and the increasing interest in electric bicycles and motorcycles and this is definitely a segment that could offer a lot to the TRF on sustainability and even access. What we need here though is someone to lead that initiative. Any volunteers...?

## Lobbying for our Rights

Again, Rights of Road has been very active this month as local authorities continue to challenge us on access as they prepare for life after lockdown and the inevitable rise of DMMO applications in the run up to 2026. As ever the TRF is in a position to work with local authorities to provide working solutions and challenge robustly where appropriate. In an effort to take a more proactive approach TRF has for some time been working to gain access to national lawmakers and to that end this week saw the launch, albeit online, of the National Motorcyclists Council. This is a lobbying organisation formed by 6 motorcycle organisations. Further details can be seen on [uknmc.org](http://uknmc.org). Despite being an online launch, it had 62 guests attend which included three MPs one of whom Steve Barker, a TRF member, Ian Paisley MP (yes, he is a very keen biker and supporter, and active parliamentarian), and that well known adventure rider and actor Charlie Boorman! He spoke for a few minutes and committed to help bring attention to motorcycle issues which include right of road and access. He even hinted he could bring his more famous friends!

## Compulsary Reading!

Thank you to all of our new members this quarter and a very warm welcome. Do make sure to connect with your local groups and it won't be long before we are able to hold our group nights and ride outs again. I would also like to give a big shout out and an extra warm welcome to new member Steph Jeavons. Steph has just recently finished her round the world motorcycle adventure trip and written an excellent account of it called Home by Seven, see excerpt page XX. I can thoroughly

recommend the read and it had me on the edge of my seat as she recalled tales of desert and arctic adventures and the numerous friendships made. Available from that well known online bookstore – get it now and when you're at it make sure to click on "Lois on the Loose" by Lois Pryce. (Any volunteers to do a book review in Summer edition?)



## Team TRF

And finally. If all goes well with the end of lockdown measures then the Adventure Bike Rally is go. Garret is well underway with plans for that and it looks like it is a sell-out crowd too. I can see several groups starting to fill the events calendar and hopefully by the time you read this we will be able to take our first group ride outs for some time. As soon as I can I will be visiting my favourite spot on Deadmans Hill for a Mars bar and a coffee and to appreciate the efforts of the numerous members of Team TRF and other motoring organisations who have work together over the years to maintain access. "Conserving Green Roads".

Happy Trails

*Doug*



## Road-book Enduro Tours in France

### DATES FOR 2021

7/8/9 April  
21/22/23 April  
9/10/11 June  
23/24/25 June  
1/2/3 September  
22/23/24 September  
20/21/22 October  
3/4/5 November  
17/18/19 November

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# Directors' REPORTS

Technical Director **John Vannuffel**, [john.v@trf.org.uk](mailto:john.v@trf.org.uk), brings us up to speed with progress on the TRF's core activities despite the slow-down effect of Covid on council offices



## Green Roads Map

I am grateful to members for their overwhelming support for the GRM, via TRF Groups and Officers. The process thus far has secured a substantial amount of evidence, particularly Lists of Streets and other official highways records, to protect access in the future.

We are now fast approaching the advanced stage of testing and development, where we may be able to have a time-limited release to members shortly before we go live to the public and members with a beta version.

The GRM has been delayed by the impacts of Covid. The closure of records offices and home-working by council staff have restricted our ability to confirm that green roads meet the criteria for inclusion on the GRM.

Furthermore, sometimes we need to go out and ride a route to check it, which is not always possible during a lockdown. We are cautiously optimistic, however, that the GRM will be available this summer.

## 2026 and applications to downgrade green roads

DON'T PANIC. On rare occasions I receive enquiries expressing concerns about the 2026 cut-off and applications made to under-record green roads as Path/Restricted Byway or otherwise downgrade them to BOAT. It is exceedingly rare for such applications to be made, let alone succeed in preventing access.

The definitive map legislation allows any person to make an application to record any kind of way on the definitive map. Somewhat absurdly, it is possible to make an application to record the M25 as a bridlepath. But the M25 isn't going to disappear in 2026 and neither are Unclassified County Roads (UCRs). Once an application is made, it then sits in a long queue awaiting determination by the surveying authority (the council). That queue can be years' long and it can take decades for an application to be processed. For the most part, applications to downgrade a UCR to Path/Restricted Byway are very rarely successful.

'2026' refers to legislation that extinguishes



unrecorded paths in that year. The extinguishment does not extend to carriageway rights on roads that are not recorded on the definitive map, i.e. it does not affect the ordinary road network. The ordinary road network is comprised of tarmac roads and green roads, commonly known as UCRs.

'2026' does not bite on motorcycle rights, unless they are already under-recorded on the definitive map as Path/Restricted Byway. With rare exceptions, routes currently recorded as Path/Restricted Byway have already lost their motorcycle rights to the NERC Act of 2006.

Whilst applications to record UCRs as Path/Restricted Byway /BOAT will often place an unhelpful and unnecessary burden on the public purse, they are not necessarily made with sinister motives to ban trail riding. Quite often they are made with good intention by well-meaning amateur RoR enthusiasts – even some TRF members made the mistake of making BOAT applications on UCRs in the distant past.

Members should contact their Group Officers about applications in the first instance. The matter can then be escalated to me via [john.v@trf.org.uk](mailto:john.v@trf.org.uk) as required.

## Covid roadmap

Lockdown regulations in England were eased as of 8 March 2021. Persons can leave the place where they live for reasons of 'open air recreation', trail riding included. This can now take place (preferably in an area local to your home) solo, in pairs, or with members of one's household or support bubble. Different rules will apply in Scotland and Wales. Travel to Europe will be subject to restrictions on international travel.

## Consultations

The government regularly holds consultations on new legislation and policy. TRF responds to these as a means of advancing trail riding interests. The Future of Transport: Rural Strategy is a recent example that the TRF engaged with. The strategy concerns all forms of rural transport and the TRF seeks to ensure that trail riding is protected and promoted.

## Traffic Management

A series of temporary closures to the Stonehenge byways appears to be ending soon. Wiltshire County Council has informed the TRF that it intends to revoke existing temporary restrictions with a view to



facilitating motorcycle access from the end of March.

The Council reports that there have been significant problems with protestors on the byways. We ask that trail riders remain vigilant and report unlawful activity to the authorities.

Surrey County Council is consulting on the possibility of making a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) to restrict access to Woolvens Lane, which runs between Wotton and Coldharbour. The TRF is engaging with the consultation exercise.

Erewash Borough Council has decided to impose a full ban on trail riding Moor Lane/Brackley Gate, which runs between Little Eaton and the hamlet of Brackley Gate in Derbyshire. The TRF awaits the order to be made and will consider challenging the closure in the courts. Derbyshire County Council proposes to place a TRO on a black road that has a ford. The road is useful to trail riders and the TRF has objected to the closure.

A Public Space Protection Order is being considered in Leicestershire. The TRF is working with local authorities to protect trail riding and ensure the restrictions are targeted at illegal, rather than lawful, users.

The TRF continues its dialogue with Monmouthshire County Council regarding the Glynwood Road (St Arvans) TRO. The TRO was not adequately advertised, and the



# Directors' REPORTS

placing of TRO signs was delayed for many months after the TRO was made. All of which was very irregular. There is a flaw in the legislation that allows TROs to stand even where they have been improperly brought into force. This means that the TRF has to go down ever more complex avenues to secure just treatment for the public.

## Ordinary roads in Hertfordshire

Hertfordshire is blessed with a good network of ordinary roads that do not have a tarmac surface. Unfortunately, the County Council is also inconvenienced with a substantial number of applications to downgrade these ordinary roads to restricted byways. The TRF

has successfully prevented many of these downgrades, taking court action on occasions.

The outcomes in Hertfordshire have the potential to benefit the rest of the country. For example, the outcome of the Oakridge Lane (Radlett) case has saved access across England and Wales.

In most cases, the TRF will oppose a downgrade to BOAT. Most UCRs are best managed as ordinary roads and there is nothing useful to be gained from recording them as BOATs. There are some rare and exceptional cases where recording a UCR as a BOAT can be beneficial to the public interests. On such occasions, the TRF will support BOAT status. ■

## North Yorkshire County Council, Countryside Access Service - Path Keeper Scheme

**The TRF is** a fully accredited member of the NYCC CAS Path Keeper Scheme, which allows our volunteer members to legally carry out minor maintenance tasks on Public Rights of Way.

Since November 2019, T&NY TRF members have carried out some 205 hours of voluntary work on over 21 byways! These works have not only saved the Council considerable time, effort and money, but also directly benefited all users groups, as well as clearly demonstrating our commitment to the sustainable and responsible use of the byways. When the general public, local residents and landowners see our members working on the lanes, it does our pastime an immense service, and puts us in a far better light. It also gives us an opportunity to directly engage with the public, and identify issues and discuss options and solutions.

Members are strongly encouraged to

get involved in maintenance tasks, not only as volunteers on a particular project, but also to identify and carry out their own works. If you see a problem that you think you can easily solve, simply get in touch with the Committee, (or Dick Brew), and discuss what you wish to achieve. Advice and as you can see, some hand tools are readily available.



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# THE *Comber* COLUMN

**Sean Comber**, Emeritus Chair of Devon TRF and current Professor of Environmental Chemistry at the University of Plymouth is in reflective mood as he ponders the pandemic's effect having lost not one, but two trail mates

**O**ver 100,000 people have now died of Covid19. Here in the Southwest Covid was not really on the radar mid to late 2020. We worried about 'grockles' bringing it down, but in reality they stayed in holiday homes and only came for the beaches anyway. Covid was a thing rife in the Shire Counties or factories of the Midlands and North. However, as time went on it has crept steadily west and south. We lost Devon trail rider 'Bouncing' Bob Lewis to Covid. He was 'getting on a bit' and had packed up serious trail riding a couple of years back, but I'd enjoyed some lovely days out with him.



At the end of the day your life could well be judged against a combination of the anecdotes you leave behind and possibly the wider imprint you leave on the world. Most of us will pass through largely unnoticed by all but our close family and a few friends. Remembered by our immediate progeny and slowly fade away. I think most of us are modest folk and hope that we've 'trodden lightly' on this planet, if we are lucky, have given more than we've received. If we are lucky, then we get things said about us when we are gone like "they'd do anything for

anyone", "always saw the positive side of things" and "no one ever had a bad word to say against them". You'd think this would include most people, but actually, I'm not sure that is the case in reality. But at least from a trail riding acquaintance point of view, to me Bob fell into that category.

I started trail riding just over a decade ago in the Thames Valley with the Loddon Vale posse and met some proper Salt of the Earth trail riders, a number located around the West Berkshire area of, Bucklebury, Mortimer, Brimpton and Thatcham; Simon, Eddie, Pete and Ernie respectively. Along with Stuart, an incomer from Gerrards Cross way and a number of other folk like Chris from Wycombe and a few others we rode the Berkshire, Wiltshire, Hampshire lanes including iconic ancient highways such as the Ridgeway. When I moved to Devon, in a blasé kind of way I said, "you must come and ride in Devon". And the buggers held me to it. So since then, twice a year (typically March and September) they've trekked down to Devon and we've filled our house with sweaty, hairy biker for a long weekend. They'd arrive on Friday for a bacon butty lunch and we'd ride a local route. I'd cook a paella or my long suffering wife Gaynor would stuff them full of meatballs or chilli and cake. Saturday would be an epic ride to Lynmouth, Chesil Beach, East Devon beauty spots or North Devon

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HAVE RECEIVED**



stony climbs. We fell off, we laughed, we ate even more cake and drank ever more coffee at lovely cafes as time went on. Sunday we'd have a massive fry up courtesy of Stuart and have a wind down ride to say Budleigh or Sidmouth. We'd arrive back here for lunch, yet more cake and the bikes would be loaded and we'd wave them off until next time.

Tragically for Ernie there will not be a 'next time'. He succumbed to Covid recently and it has devastated us all. The last WhatsApp message typical of Ernie said, he'd caught Covid and did not recommend it, but reckoned he be out and about "on Wednesday". The chat from him went quiet then Pete broke the terrible news. Now I do not profess to have known Ernie that well. It's a weird hobby thing, you can spend a lot of time with folk without ever really 'knowing' them. But here is what I know about Ernie. He was a consummate trail rider, one of the best I've had the privilege to ride with.

Photos: Stuart Metcalfe



His lifelong experience of riding trials and motocross meant he only ever rode on the pegs. One of my first memories of him was riding up towards Sugar Hill in Wiltshire and there was a horrible 4x4 wallow in a chalky/clay field just off the M4, all of us diverted into the stubble field to avoid it, only to see Ernie ride past us on our left on his Honda CRF250X feet up in sump deep ruts through the worst of the gunk. I knew there and then we were in the presence of a master. In Devon I learnt so much from Ernie, about picking lines, throttle control, mostly through lying in the lane up to Brayford after I'd bailed on my DR350 only to see his boots and Scorpa wheels pass by on a drier line with far better grip as I lay face down in the lane. Although that Scorpa was a complete nightmare – classic French, they take a perfectly reliable Yamaha WR250 engine and turn it into a hot-headed, moody, Gallic-oriented motorcycle that only runs on Brie and baguettes (over heating seemed to be a *modus operandi*) but its trials bike vibe suited Ernie perfectly. Just like Bouncing Bob, Ernie was quintessentially a nice bloke, a short, cuddly, hairy biker that you'd want to spend time with.

That's why we are members of the TRF. We've got each other's back, we mostly laugh, but sometimes we cry, but most importantly we are mates. As a backdrop to the last 12 month's turmoils, trail bike riding provides an opportunity for reflection, it is a release, a form of exercise. And we are in our bubble and as I ventured out on my newly MoT'd CRM250 on Thursday, the first dry day in what felt like weeks, I thought of Bob and Ernie, good times. I passed snow drops, freshly blooming daffodils and spied lambs gambolling in the water meadows besides the Culm. Life springs eternal. God speed Ernie and Bob, heaven has gained a couple of great trail riders. ■

*Sean*

Watch Ernie in action at:  
<https://youtu.be/wx8jlvYQHQ4>



# TRF RAFFLE

## And the winner is...

### Piers Covill from Wiltshire TRF

**“**I am absolutely delighted.” Commented Piers. “And very excited to be able to take it out when we are permitted to do so. It’s a really wonderful prize to have won and I am looking forward to many happy hours falling off as I learn how to ride the trails.”

The Covid-affected draw, apart from being late, meant that Piers was the lucky recipient of one of the first 2021 models in the UK. It was delivered personally by the UK importer Clements Moto’s proprietor Dean Clements



who updated us on the new model.

The 2021 model is now called the XEF 250 Enduro Trail. The model name falls in line with the new race models XE125, XEF 250 Enduro Race etc, whilst MX models have the prefix XX. I think the thought process is X (Cross country) E (Enduro) or X (MX), F (4T) then engine size and then discipline XEF250 Enduro Race - XEF 250 Enduro Trail.

The 2021 takes its styling from the race bikes’ updated plastics, seat and headlight mask. In addition to 2020 spec they have a few internal motor and mapping updates. The UK bikes still have a specific build spec, taking advantage of UK Trial and Enduro Exemption from Euro-5 regulations. It means we can run a different exhaust and mapping giving about 3bhp more than EU models, but importantly with a more free-revving motor.

UK Pricing is £5099. The UK website has been up dated and we have just been waiting for a new global platform to be de-bugged. You can take a look yourself at [www.fantic.com](http://www.fantic.com) I’m just waiting for UK-specific model pages to be inserted as our XEF250 Enduro Race and XEF 250 Enduro Trail are not Euro 5. We also do not use the LED headlamp on the UK spec as I have battled to control the pricing and keep us in the neighbourhood of the Honda CRF250/300L. ■



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# Roll OF HONOUR

The TRF would like to take this opportunity to congratulate and thank the following members for their 25-50 years of continuous membership of the TRF. They have stuck with the Fellowship through many changes and have been a part of the growth of an organisation that began with a few founding members to today's membership of nearly 6,000

Name	TRF Local Group	Years Since Joining
Colin Patient	Loddon Vale	50 YEARS
Colin Webb	Sussex	50 YEARS
Paul Liversidge	East Midlands	46 YEARS
Norris Bomford	Worcestershire	45 YEARS
Tony Pegler	South London And Surrey	45 YEARS
Michael J May	Southern	45 YEARS
Greg Williams	West Midlands	44 YEARS
John W Boothroyd	Manchester	44 YEARS
Peter Wildsmith	Southern	44 YEARS
Don Burt	East Yorkshire	44 YEARS
Peter James	Sussex	44 YEARS
David Knight	West Anglia	43 YEARS
Roger Harris	Cumbria	43 YEARS
Tony Rose	West Anglia	43 YEARS
Graham Chinnery	East Midlands	42 YEARS
Keith Westley	Lancashire	42 YEARS
Alf V Harrison	Derbyshire and South Yorkshire	42 YEARS
Bevis M Billingham	Sussex	42 YEARS
David Giles	East Midlands	42 YEARS
Keith Cockrell	Dorset	42 YEARS
Peter Hiley	Derbyshire and South Yorkshire	42 YEARS
Steve Pighills	Cumbria	42 YEARS
Jim H Carr	Wiltshire	41 YEARS
Roger E Higgins	East Midlands	41 YEARS
David I Light	Teesside And North Yorks	40 YEARS
David Porteous	Teesside And North Yorks	40 YEARS
John A Brooker	Cambridge	40 YEARS
Kevin Parker	Teesside And North Yorks	40 YEARS
Rupert Thornton	West Yorkshire	40 YEARS
Steve Neville	Kent	40 YEARS
Robert McConnell	West Yorkshire	40 YEARS
Alan Kind	Northumbria	39 YEARS
David A Vaughan	Northumbria	39 YEARS
Peter W Gates	Hertfordshire	39 YEARS
Michael A Cowling	East Yorkshire	38 YEARS
John Hartley	High Peak And Potteries	38 YEARS
Colin R Card	Essex	37 YEARS
David E Crone	Teesside And North Yorks	37 YEARS
Penny Page	Southern	37 YEARS
David Clegg		37 YEARS
Malcolm Andrew Crisp	Hertfordshire	37 YEARS
Ray Morse	West Yorkshire	37 YEARS
Brian Read	South London And Surrey	36 YEARS
Alan Hodson	Lancashire	36 YEARS
Robert Wilson	Cumbria	36 YEARS

<b>John Mills</b>	North Wales	35 YEARS
<b>Paul Leafe</b>	Lincolnshire	35 YEARS
<b>Dave King</b>	Loddon Vale	35 YEARS
<b>Geoff W Wilkie</b>	Gloucester	35 YEARS
<b>John Rose</b>	West Anglia	35 YEARS
<b>Ken Saunders</b>	Wiltshire	35 YEARS
<b>Mark Gregory</b>	Isle Of Wight	35 YEARS
<b>Mick Hulbert</b>	Oxfordshire	35 YEARS
<b>Rob Richards</b>	Isle Of Wight	35 YEARS
<b>Gill M Myers</b>	West Yorkshire	35 YEARS
<b>Alan G Ryder</b>	Wiltshire	34 YEARS
<b>Martin Cooper</b>	Devon	34 YEARS
<b>Robert E Balderson</b>	East Midlands	34 YEARS
<b>Sean Harrop</b>	High Peak And Potteries	34 YEARS
<b>Shaun Merrick</b>	Manchester	34 YEARS
<b>Stuart Purves</b>	Wiltshire	34 YEARS
<b>Adam Fletcher</b>	Gloucester	34 YEARS
<b>Charlie Morriss</b>	Gloucester	34 YEARS
<b>Christopher Hurworth</b>	Loddon Vale	34 YEARS
<b>David Tweed</b>	Teesside And North Yorks	34 YEARS
<b>Sandy Robertson</b>	Kent	34 YEARS
<b>Tim Gooderson</b>	Kent	34 YEARS
<b>Adrian Winzer</b>	Devon	33 YEARS
<b>David Greenslade</b>	Dorset	33 YEARS
<b>Garry Moss</b>	Southern	33 YEARS
<b>Geoff Groom</b>	West Anglia	33 YEARS
<b>David Oickle</b>	Dorset	33 YEARS
<b>Howard Millichap</b>	Sussex	33 YEARS
<b>Simon Mizen</b>	South London And Surrey	33 YEARS
<b>Vic Lodge</b>	Gloucester	33 YEARS
<b>Leo Crone</b>	Teesside And North Yorks	32 YEARS
<b>Stephen G Say</b>	Bristol	32 YEARS
<b>Vic Price</b>	Wiltshire	32 YEARS
<b>Chris Wagstaffe</b>	Cumbria	32 YEARS
<b>Dave Tilbury</b>	Southern	32 YEARS
<b>David Chamberlain</b>	West Midlands	32 YEARS
<b>Ian A Baillie</b>	High Peak And Potteries	32 YEARS
<b>Ian Thompson</b>	Cornwall	32 YEARS
<b>John Gardner</b>	Lancashire	32 YEARS
<b>Leslie Lodge</b>	Devon	32 YEARS
<b>Martyn Holdway</b>	Southern	32 YEARS
<b>Neville V Crisp</b>	Southern	32 YEARS
<b>Philip James</b>	Kent	32 YEARS
<b>Richard May</b>	Suffolk	32 YEARS
<b>Tim Stevens</b>	Mid Wales	32 YEARS
<b>Tony Stuart</b>	Cornwall	32 YEARS
<b>Trevor M Walker</b>	Southern	32 YEARS
<b>Andy Sharp</b>	Somerset	31 YEARS
<b>David Wilkinson</b>	Derbyshire and South Yorkshire	31 YEARS
<b>Fred Ellison</b>	Ribble Valley	31 YEARS
<b>Gordon Croft</b>	High Peak And Potteries	31 YEARS
<b>Jon R Hodges</b>	Mid Wales	31 YEARS
<b>Patrick Wallace</b>	Sussex	31 YEARS
<b>Richard Collins</b>	Wiltshire	30 YEARS
<b>Andy Peers</b>	West Midlands	30 YEARS
<b>Andy R Skelding</b>	West Midlands	30 YEARS
<b>David Vatcher</b>	Dorset	30 YEARS
<b>Geoff Hamilton</b>	North Wales	30 YEARS



# Roll OF HONOUR

Giles Greenaway  
 Jeffrey Ward  
 John H Pascoe  
 Keith A Johnston  
 Mark Holland  
 Robert Yarnold  
 Roger M Fowler  
 Russell Tyner  
 Stephen John Marston  
 Terry Harris  
 William Fisher  
 Ian Firmin  
 James Aukland  
 John Grew  
 Keith Geenens  
 Liz Millett  
 Neil R Hennion  
 Andrew J Rigg  
 Damon Northeast  
 Jeff Hewitt  
 John C Pritchard  
 Kevin R Smith  
 Richard Sweeting  
 Russell Pearman  
 Stephen Lowe  
 Alan Ranger  
 Andrew R Care  
 Edward Meryon  
 Jamie Orchard  
 Matthew Towill  
 Paul R Tinsley  
 Raymond Smith  
 Shaun Stillwell  
 Stephen J Cook  
 Allan Angold  
 Andrew Brocklehurst  
 Godfrey Bennett  
 John Lane  
 Mark Howden  
 Nicholas Knibbs  
 Roger R Preston  
 William D Richards  
 Bernard Garbe  
 Christopher Blomfield  
 David Ryall  
 Gary Tate  
 John H Anderson  
 Jon Miles  
 Jonathan P Willis  
 Lynda Studley  
 Michael Clarke  
 Paul Studley  
 Steve Sharp  
 Steven Dillon  
 Stuart Alford  
 Tony King  
 Trevor D Gibb  
 Walter C Scrivener

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 Derbyshire and South Yorkshire  
 Ribble Valley  
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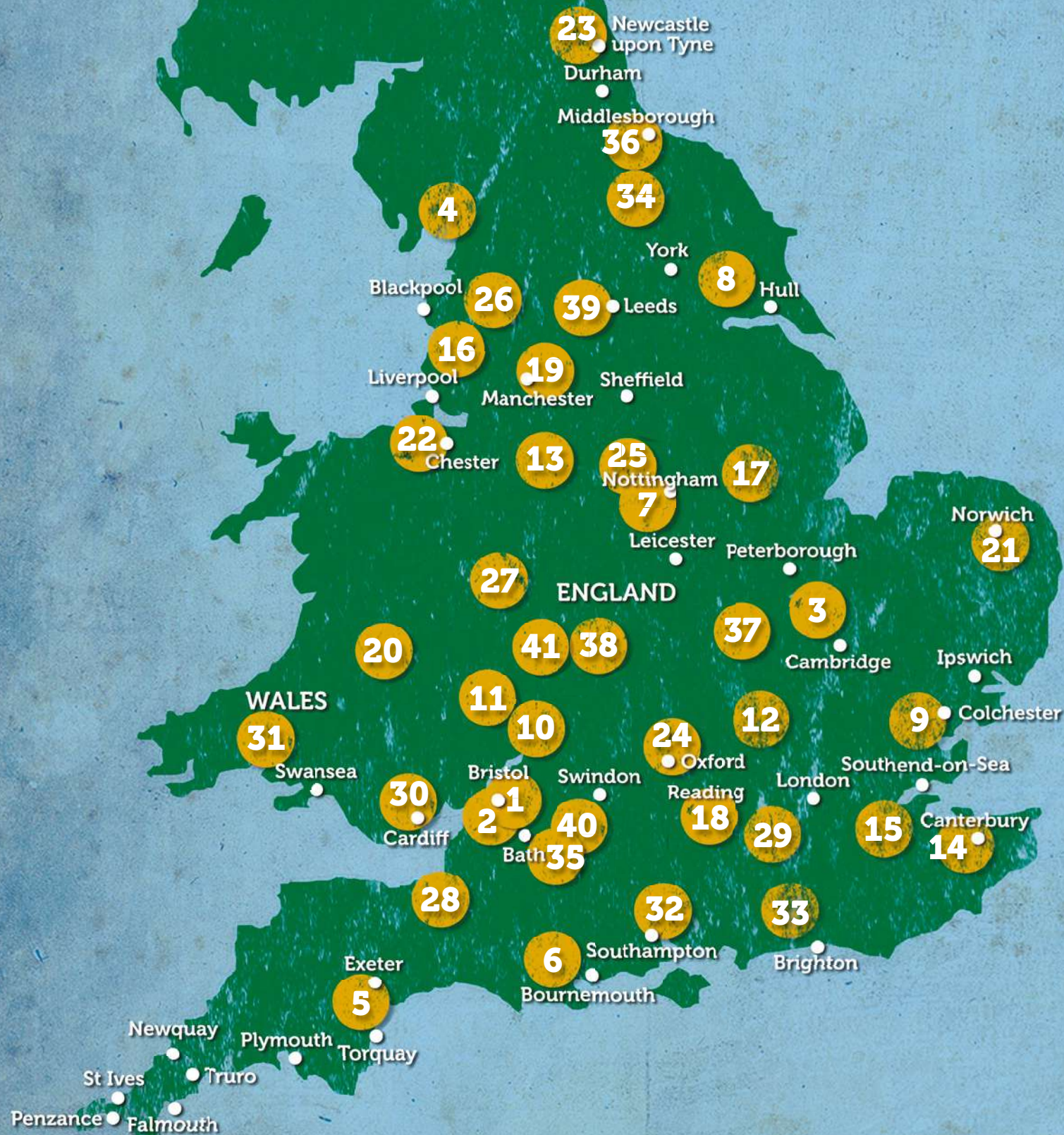
# TRF

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Save Lives.**

[www.trf.org.uk/COVID](http://www.trf.org.uk/COVID)



# TRF Groups LIST

- |    |                                      |    |                            |
|----|--------------------------------------|----|----------------------------|
| 1  | Bristol                              | 22 | North Wales                |
| 2  | Bristol (Central)                    | 23 | Northumbria                |
| 3  | Cambridgeshire                       | 24 | Oxfordshire                |
| 4  | Cumbria & Craven                     | 25 | Peak District              |
| 5  | Devon                                | 26 | Ribble Valley              |
| 6  | Dorset                               | 27 | Shropshire                 |
| 7  | East Midlands                        | 28 | Somerset                   |
| 8  | East Yorkshire                       | 29 | South London & Surrey      |
| 9  | Essex                                | 30 | South Wales                |
| 10 | Gloucestershire                      | 31 | South West Wales           |
| 11 | Herefordshire                        | 32 | Southern                   |
| 12 | Hertfordshire                        | 33 | Sussex                     |
| 13 | High Peak & Potteries                | 34 | Teesside & North Yorkshire |
| 14 | Kent (East Kent)                     | 35 | TRF Enduro Club            |
| 15 | Kent (West Kent & South East London) | 36 | Tynewear Teesdale          |
| 16 | Lancashire                           | 37 | West Anglia                |
| 17 | Lincolnshire                         | 38 | West Midlands              |
| 18 | Loddon Vale                          | 39 | West Yorkshire             |
| 19 | Manchester                           | 40 | Wiltshire                  |
| 20 | Mid-Wales                            | 41 | Worcestershire             |
| 21 | Norfolk                              |    |                            |



# ELECTRIC Avenues



Following **Mike Wain's** article about trail riding on a pedelec in the last issue and reports from dealers that sales of electrically-powered bicycles have 'gone through the roof' during lockdown, **Paul 'Blez' Blezard** looks back on 30 years of e-bike development, and the key changes in the law, and ponders the future for unlicensed electric vehicles of all kinds

In August 1983 a whole new world of licence-free mechanical vehicular assistance opened up, thanks to the advent of a new set of Electrically Assisted Pedal Cycle (EAPC) regulations. It came about, reportedly, due to lobbying from manufacturers such as Raleigh, who wanted to sell electric bicycles. From then on, two- and three-wheeled cycles could be fitted with electric motors so long as they weighed no more than 40kg (60kg for trikes) and the motors gave no more than 200 watts of continuous power (250 watts for trikes) and didn't propel you beyond 15mph. And you didn't even have to be 16 to ride one. The minimum age was (and remains) 14. No licence, insurance, registration or helmet required.

#### The Pioneering Yamaha PAS

Yamaha experimented with fitting a 25cc petrol engine to a bicycle in 1973 but by the late 1980s had switched to electricity and designed their Power Assist System (hence PAS), launched on the market in 1993. Unlike most early electric bikes (and many still produced today), the motor was not in the rear wheel hub, but in the middle of the frame, driving the front sprocket or 'mid-drive' as it's called. It was first fitted with a nickel-

cadmium (NiCad) battery but Yamaha soon moved on to nickel-metal hydride (NiMH) batteries, as used by General Motors in their famous EV1 electric car.

By 2008 Yamaha had sold a million (yes, a million) PAS-equipped pedelecs in Japan and the range had grown to five models, although ►



First launched in 1993, the PAS was a million-seller in Japan alone by 2008!

**MANY OF THE MAINSTREAM CAR AND  
MOTORCYCLE MANUFACTURERS ARE  
NOW MARKETING THEIR OWN PEDELECS**

Fantic Motor have their own range of off-road biased e-bikes

Main picture: Fantic Motor UK





the Brace PAS-L, with lithium-ion (Li-ion) battery, didn't arrive until 2010. To date, Yamaha have sold more than two million pedelecs in Japan alone, and four million PAS motors worldwide.

### The Power and the Glory

I first visited an electric bicycle shop on an industrial estate in Guildford in 2006. There were several lithium-batteried machines available – men's, ladies', a small-wheel folder, but no mountain bikes, or 'eMTBs' as they are now known. By the end of 2008 I'd become seriously interested in anything with an electric motor and two wheels and made a pilgrimage to the first electric TT in June 2009, where I discovered a great collection of weird machines and wonderful characters.

A couple of weeks after that 2009 TT I got the chance to ride an old-style lead-batteried Powabyke around the city of Bath. The Powabyke company was based in Bath and had already been selling pedelecs for several years. The traditional old step-thru machine worked okay but was really heavy and the contrast with their latest model was striking – it looked and felt like a conventional road pushbike, and its lithium battery was the size and shape of a cyclist's drinks bottle. I was also amazed to discover that in 2008 the



Chinese had built and sold 21 million electric bikes (mostly with lead acid batteries) just for their home market, and had exported 580,000 more.

In the summer of 2010 there were two big electric vehicle events in central London. At the first, the EcoCar event in Kensington Gardens, I encountered my first GoCycle pedelec. A brand new and futuristic small-wheeled and lightweight machine, it was designed by former McLaren Cars engineer Richard Thorpe. It was the first injection-moulded magnesium alloy bicycle in history and could be quickly dismantled (rather than folded) and put into a bag or special suitcase. The first ones proved a bit fragile, but 10 years on the GoCycle



brand has matured into a reliable and trendy £4,000 top-seller, now with quick-folding, carbon fibre and many other options. It also has a smidge of suspension at both ends and I'd love to try one on some trails.

There was also a hydrogen-powered bicycle at the EcoCar event, the only one I've ever seen, let alone ridden. The other memorable powered but unregistered machine on view was a big electric trike 'pick-up' called a Cycles Maximus, which had been used in many of the non-road sections of Eddie Izzard's multi-marathon Comic Relief fund-raising adventure

the year before. I can't remember exactly how powerful the hub motor was but it was a lot more than 250 watts!

In October 2010 I went to my first bicycle show, at Earl's Court, where there were several makes of pedelec on display, from tiny folders to massive cargo e-bikes, and an indoor track to try them on. That was where I first met several pedelec-selling members of the British Electric Bicycle Association (BEBA), newly formed in response to the fact that the rather conservative Bicycle Association had given them 'the bum's rush'. Sue Coulson of Batribike recently recalled that by 2009 only their cheapest model still had a lead-acid battery – everything else was lithium-based. Batribike was also one of several pedelec importers that had a stand at the (motorcycle) Trade Expo in early 2011, where I helped to run the show's first Electric Zone, complete with a small riding area.

### On the Roads

I started riding pedelecs regularly in the spring of 2010, starting with a Wisper folder that was kindly lent to me for long-term testing by Wisper MD David Miall, another BEBA member. I rode it all over my local territory of southwest London, in Richmond and Bushy Parks and along the Thameside cycle/foot-





Adam Wolfe of Wisper puts the new Wisper eMTB through its paces at the 2017 Cycle Show



The JuicyBike Compact Click well-laden after a shopping expedition to Aldi in Feltham



A visitor to the show tries an electric mountain bike on the Bosch sponsored indoor track



Paul Blezard on the A2B Metro near Teddington Lock



The way to the pub is on the right. Left, a FWD & foldable Wisper and a Juicybike Peak on a Surrey bridleway near Hascombe



An ancient full-suspension electric bicycle on Lanzarote, with a very heavy lead-acid battery and very short range! Simply The Worst!



The £50,000, 100kph capable Black Trail on the pedelec test track at Zolder

paths. I also rode it on the 25-mile journey to my then-girlfriend Elspeth's place in Godalming, Surrey, which included 10 miles on the cycle path that runs alongside the A3 from the M25 to Guildford. Twenty-five miles of mostly flat-ish going was about the limit for the Wisper's small battery, however, so when I took a longer and more scenic route home through the Surrey Hills I had to stop for a battery top-up at a café just off the A3.

Hills are where electric bikes really come into their own. Elspeth had a perfectly good pushbike and her office was only a mile and a half from her amazing water tower home. However, as she pointed out, while it was downhill all the way there, that meant it was one hell of a sweaty slog back up at the end of the day. With the Wisper it was a different matter, no sweating required.

When I got a JuicyBike Sport on test I took both pedelecs down to Godalming, so we were able to ride the local Surrey back roads and bridleways together. The Wisper's electric motor was in its front wheel, which meant that it was actually two-wheel drive. However, this was a mixed blessing on a muddy bridleway with smooth road tyres, and so required caution, as Elspeth discovered! Apart from the wheel sizes, there was another significant difference between the two machines: the

JuicyBike had a motorcycle-style but half-length twistgrip throttle that could be turned on and off with a button, in addition to the crank sensor. The Wisper just had the crank sensor, in the European style, of which more anon.

In the spring of 2011 I returned to 'Clean Week', a green vehicle event at the Zolder circuit in Belgium, which I'd been to the year before, to ride the Mavizen electric racebike. The big difference in 2011 was that the organisers had set out a spacious pedelec test track, complete with a small artificial 'hill'

on which anyone could try an amazing selection of electric bicycles. There was everything from long, low cruisers to a new electric version of the old French Velosolex moped, with a fake engine over the front wheel. There was also a carbon-framed machine called a 'Black Trail', which, if switched to de-restricted mode, was supposed to be capable of 100kph. It also cost £50,000! Ten years later, it's still by far the most expensive device with pedals I've ever ridden. And ironically, bearing in mind its name, it had no suspension whatsoever, front or rear.

The first pedelec with both front and rear suspension which I rode any distance was an A2B Metro, which was a quirky German beast, to say the least and nothing like a mountain bike. Originally designed as a hub-drive 28mph moped, it was downgraded to pedelec status by the addition of pedals and chain, plus a restrictor. At 40kg it was right on the pedelec weight limit and I nearly gave myself a hernia carrying it down a flight of railway station steps. (Remember, folks, pedelecs – like bicycles – travel for free on trains!) It was noticeably more powerful than both the Wisper and the JuicyBike, which was great when going uphill, but the restrictor made it frustrating to ride on the flat. It would cruise easily at 15mph, but if you wanted to go any faster by pedalling harder, it felt as if it was fighting against you, that wasn't the case with the Wisper or JuicyBike.

However, after more than a year riding it in standard trim, I got it de-restricted, which made the bike much better all-round. It still only went up to about 24mph, but the 'fighting against you' sensation was gone. Of course, going faster meant it got through the 'juice' quicker, and, combined with a misleading battery gauge, I once found myself with a completely flat battery eight miles from home. However, I could actually still pedal along at ►





Ducati's new TK-01RR e-enduro, a snip at £7,290!



an indicated 12mph, so it wasn't the end of the world, which is one big advantage pedelecs will always have over stand-up electric scooters and any other pedal-free mode of transport.

#### Pedelecs A-Gogo and Serious eMTBs

The dramatic change in the popularity of pedelecs in general and the development of electric mountain bikes in particular can be gauged by my experiences of going to the NEC Cycle Show five times in a row, from 2013 to 2017. In 2013, there was a good (tarmac) outdoor test track, complete with artificial 'hill' for free test rides of pedelecs, but no electric bikes were allowed on the much more entertaining mile-long mountain bike course through the woods. There was also one forlorn chap still selling Thompson pedelecs limited to the old UK EAPC power limit of 200 watts, complete with a big sign declaring '250w electric bicycles are ILLEGAL in UK'.

Unfortunately for him, there were more than a dozen other stands all selling pedelecs with 250 watts of continuous power and a maximum assisted speed of 25kph(15.5mph), which were the EU pedelec limits. Strictly speaking, he had a point, but in the real world, the relevant British powers-that-be had made



Top, the 30k M55 Terminus and below, the 15k Riviera



The KTM Macina Race hardtail, part of a now extensive range of KTM eMTBs and roadbikes

it clear that no one would be prosecuted for selling pedelecs that complied with the EU regs. (In reality, I've never heard of anyone being prosecuted for selling a pedelec that doesn't comply with EU regs ... nor of anyone being prosecuted for riding one either!) BMW launched its own £2,500 pedelec at that 2013 show too, although it wouldn't surprise me if you'd never heard of it.

On the Haibike stand, alongside the full-suspension X-duro electric mountain bike, the Accell-owned company had put a 45kph speed-pedelec class, drop-handlebar road machine on display, complete with small



This pic: Haibike's £13,000 Full Carbon Ultimate at the 2015 Cycle Show.



These Stealth bikes look amazing, but sadly the specifications displayed on the wall of the stand put them firmly in the illegal for road use territory

number plate and single mirror as required by Netherlandish and German regs for the class, which does not exist anywhere else in the EU!

On the KTM stand, only two of the 20-odd machines on display were pedelecs, both road-oriented, and I had to look in the catalogue to see the Austrian company's full-suspension eMTB.

By 2015 things had moved on a bit. This time there were more than 20 different electric-only stands at the NEC show and more electric KTMs than you could shake a stick at, including at least half a dozen different KTM eMTBs. Haibike had a full-carbon electric mountain bike on display, priced at £13,000, and a Yamaha-powered S-Duro eMTB with really chunky fat tyres. I was also delighted to be able to have a ride on a ridiculously cheap Chinese-built Xionying folding mountain bike because I've always fancied a really robust full-suspension but folding eMTB – but probably not that one.

By 2016 you could tell that electric mountain bikes were really taking off. The NEC show organisers built a serious indoor track solely for people to try out eMTBs. It had a properly steep climb and descent and some serious 'wall of death' wooden berms for those bold enough to ride them. There were also two stands – ARCC and Cytronex –





offering sophisticated front wheel drive conversion kits for bog-standard pushbikes. I've tried ARCC conversions on both a Brompton folder and a Moulton, and preferred the latter. The full-size ARCC Cinelli Mystic only weighs 11kg.

A motorcycling friend and his wife both have Cytronex conversions to 25-year-old pushbikes, and love them.

Finally, at the 2017 NEC show it was possible to take an electric mountain bike around the woodland outdoor course as well as on the indoor track, now sponsored by Bosch. I tried several eMTBs in the woods, including the new full carbon Wisper and a Diamondback Ranger, and several more on the indoor track where there were half a dozen makes to choose from.

In the real world, I think you're extremely unlikely to be prosecuted for riding a de-restricted 250 watt pedelec, or an 'illegal' one rated at 350 or even 500 watts, provided you keep a low profile on both road and trail,



and ride with sensible consideration for others. Personally, I'd be nervous about riding a full-power 40mph Bultaco Brinco without number plate or registration even on a tarmac road or BOAT, let alone a bridleway. But I know people who do, and I'm told that the price of second-hand Brincos is now actually higher than the new price before their production ceased

It's worth remembering the unfortunate story of the bicyclist who killed a jaywalking pedestrian in London, and was severely prosecuted for riding his 'fixie' with no front brake. No motors involved at all. I wouldn't want to be the person who ran down a kamikaze rambler with a Brinco on a bridleway, let alone a footpath. As for a 50mph Stealth or a 60mph BlackTrail ... forget it!

When it comes to more mildly illegal e-bikes, I guess, to distort the words of Clint Eastwood as Dirty Harry, you have to ask yourself one question, e-peddaller, "Do you feel lucky?" ■

## Trail Riding Pedelec Owners

### Jules

The first serious motorcyclist I knew who actually bought a pedelec was my friend Jules – he lives in Hertfordshire and he's also got pushbikes, maxiscooters and sports motorcycles. I still have the email he sent me about it, back in 2010, and it's instructive:

"I bought the Alien Aurora, illegal e-bike; 350 watts, £950. It's a hoot! It's also classically flawed due to Chinese lack of quality control. All sorts of minor niggles needed fixing from out-of-round wheels to loose bottom brackets to joke pedals. Even the battery had one unsupported module that broke its connection. I've done a few rides on footpaths, bridleways, BOATs and RUPPs around here. The one big problem is the weight. Kissing gates are OK as long as you can get through them on the back wheel but stiles and gates are seriously difficult. The other thing to remember is that this is emphatically not an enduro bike. Popping a wheelie over tree roots is out. And trying to find a good compromise between rolling resistance road tyres (at high PSI) and grippy off-road tyres is difficult. The 36V 10ah battery is giving me 20 to 40 miles of range depending on how much assist I use, how fast I want to go and how much pedal effort I add. It's got a 3-position mode switch, which is actually more like a minimum speed cruise control. Low=11mph, Med=16mph, High=21mph. In Low, no matter how hard the hill, it will power up it at 10mph or so. In Med, I can keep up 15mph on the road indefinitely, regardless of normal gradients. So really it's done exactly what I wanted. It's added 5–10 miles to how far I can explore from home on a Sunday afternoon.

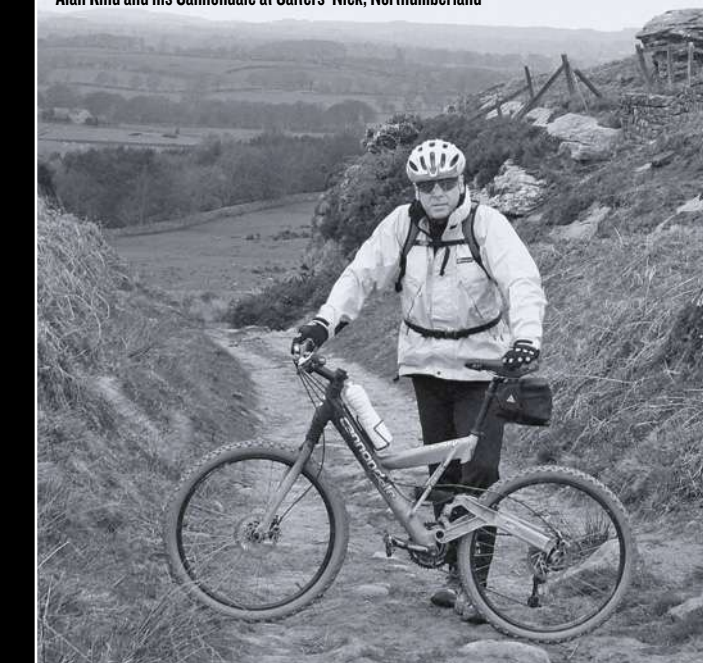


I can get up hills that were a serious struggle before. And I get home feeling tired rather than exhausted."

I had a good ride on the Alien a couple of months later, and really enjoyed it. It was great to have the extra five or six mph above the legal 15mph of the Wisper and I certainly didn't feel like a criminal for using it.

Ten years on, Jules still has the Aurora. He's had to replace the original lithium battery (£200 from Hong Kong) and admits that the whole bike is pretty much worn out but it still works. Meanwhile, to put his 'illegal behaviour' in perspective, he tells me that a local lad has been ripping around his Hertfordshire town for months on a completely illegal, unregistered Sur-Ron electric trail bike with no number plate and no helmet – and apparently, no interest from the rozzers! (I have it on good authority that no fewer than 450 Sur-Rons were sold in January 2021 alone, most of them of the non-homologated variety 'for off-road use only'.)

Alan Kind and his Cannondale at Salters' Nick, Northumberland



### Alan Kind

Alan Kind has been motorcycle trail riding in the north-east since the 1970s and been a tireless campaigner for vehicular rights of way for over 40 years. He was actually the first person I had ever heard of who went trail riding on a traditional leg-only-powered mountain bike, way back in the 1980s, but he's a relatively recent convert to the joys of electric assistance.

Alan told me, "We – the local TRF of my generation – have been doing quite serious eMTB trail riding for a couple of years now; ►



## ELECTRIC AVENUES



Ken Canham for a bit longer than me. I started with a Bosch-powered Cannondale Neo that cost £2,400 (discounted from £3K), but it suffered two motor failures in 650 miles. In the end I got my money back via the VISA card. It had 29in wheels, and a very stable platform, but was not exactly flickable.

"By the time I knew I was getting my money back we were into lockdown, but I happened on a Decathlon 'Rock Rider', 27.5in rims, Brose motor, and very well-specced for £1,750. I have no hesitation in recommending it (so far!). It's standard and road-legal. The first thing I did on getting the Cannondale was to buy a hefty Giro helmet. You could have a big accident, tangled up in 50lbs of e-bike, and it is not the out-and-out speed, but the relentless progress that you have to watch. Second thing required was to get decent third party insurance.

"Fun? Superb. Proper trail bike? Well, they do things like overgrown and rutted bridleways brilliantly. On that terrain they are what pushbike MTBs claimed to be, but never were, really. Hills? There's hardly anything you cannot climb, as long as you're prepared to burn the amps. I bought a proper e-bike car rack and we tend to go to places where we can do a reasonably compact zig-zag circuit.

"However, they are not yet mature technologically. The motors/systems are very vulnerable to water. Ken Canham has learned the skills of fitting new bearings quite regularly to Scott/Bosch (which I reckon came out of the

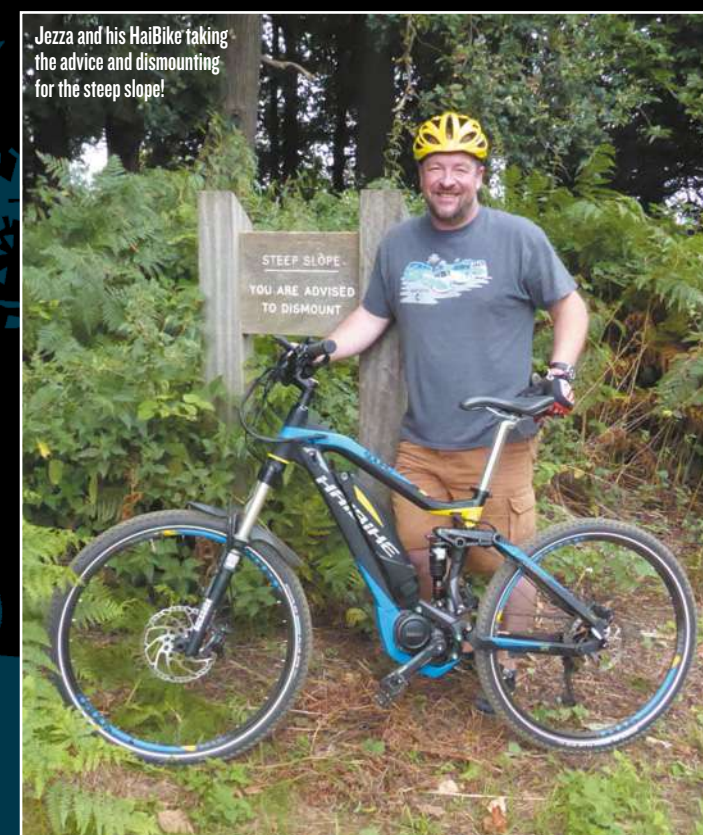
same factory as the Cannondale) and the ordinary maintenance regime is hard. Chains, cleaning brakes ... In our core group I think every bike has had motor/controller issues that require a trip to the (frequently crap) dealer. There's a world of difference between the north-east and poncing about on warm chalk downlands. I would like to try the Ridgeway, say Streatley westwards, either carrying a charger or with a car parked at the other end.

"I also find the thing ideal for local fun and exercise. I ride it with just enough assistance to stop the heart rate spiking to 300, and the knees disintegrating. I reckon you could do 60 miles, with rigour about switching the power down. My 'gravel' pushbike has hardly been out for the last year, not least because the muscle groups used seem to be different. A chum in Lancashire got the same Decathlon eMTB before me and says he can do an 80-miler on mixed going.

"In terms of access, the eMTB is now my 'datum of sufficient repair' on a trail. Can I get along reasonably? We have dreadful 4x4 damage issues up here now (and motorcycles are not totally innocent)."

### 'Jezza' – The Cotswolds

My friend Jezza is a professional photographer and IT guru-turned-university lecturer. He was the first person I knew who splashed the cash on a full-suspension electric mountain bike, back in 2015. He plumped for a Yamaha-pow-



Jezza and his Haibike taking the advice and dismounting for the steep slope!



Jezza's Haibike fits comfortably in the back of his VW Estate

ered, mid-drive Haibike SDuro AllMTN 6 rather than the alternative Bosch-motored model. The Yamaha option was £500 cheaper, torquier, and (whisper it quietly) easier to de-restrict. The RRP was £3,200 but he got his for £2,800 as part of a deal that also involved getting his then-girlfriend her own eMTB. He was based in Taunton at the time and what he loved about it was that he didn't need to use his car to get out into the Quantocks. "I could just ride the Haibike up into the hills, ride around, and then ride back to Taunton. It got me off the sofa and got me fit, too."

However, he did get abuse from sweating, purist mountain bikers as he passed them going uphill. "They used to call me a cheat, and worse! I think that's changed now as so many of them have actually tried an electric bike and realise how much fun it is." The most unsatisfactory aspect of his Haibike was the 15mph cut-out. Just like my own experience with the standard A2B Metro, he recalled that "It was like hitting a wall of wind". That was one of the main reasons he bought a 'dongle' for £150 to de-restrict it. The other thing he changed was the standard tyres, on which he didn't feel safe when hurtling downhill on tarmac.

I had a good ride on Jezza's Haibike when he brought it to London (in his estate car – no rack required, he just took the quick-release front wheel out and chucked it in the back of his VW). We did a lap of the Richmond Park perimeter track together, with him riding my humble but practical (and completely legal) JuicyBike folder, which is so old it still has a twistgrip throttle. I really liked the Haibike and the full suspension felt luxurious. As with Jules's 'illegal Alien', riding the de-restricted Haibike didn't make me feel like a criminal. As it turned out, Jezza sold the machine when his Somerset relationship ended and he moved to the Cotswolds – but he removed the dongle before parting with it.

### John Rushworth, Isle of Bute, Scotland

Some Trail readers may remember John Rushworth from the days when he used to write articles for Trail Bike & Enduro magazine. He had an HRC XR400, which he used to ride and write about in both supermoto and trail guise. He still rides motorcycles today and now has a Honda CB500X.

I take some responsibility for 'turning him on' to the joys of electric vehicles about seven years ago; being the practical person he is, John's first electric project was to replace the diesel engine in his 26ft sailing boat with a Lynch electric motor. John is even older than me and the last time I saw him 'in the flesh', back in 2015, his knee was giving him so much 'gyp' he was struggling to walk. An operation improved matters and as part of his recuperation JR bought himself a Scott E-Aspect 720 hardtail eMTB for 'about £2,000'. However, when riding out with the local serious mountain bikers he was getting shaken about so much he decided that he had to have full suspension, so in 2017 he traded in the Scott for a second-hand 2015 Moustache Samedi 27/9 FS (full suspension).

Last summer John got a bit carried away and bought an ex-demo 2019 Cube Stereo Hybrid 160 Actionteam 500 27.5 with Fox suspension. He describes it as 'comfortable and forgiving, but not a downhill bike', by which he means 'not suitable for racing downhill like a lunatic'. However, upon retirement last autumn he realised that he only needed one trail-capable electric bike, and so decided to keep the Moustache and sold the £5K Cube to a dealer. John's partner Cait has a hardtail Moustache Samedi 27 Xroad with a suspension seat, which the manufacturers modestly describe as 'the bike that can do it all – it combines the capabilities of an urban bike and an MTB'.



John Rushworth's first eMTB was a Scott E-Aspect hardtail, but the harsh ride prompted him to go full-suspension

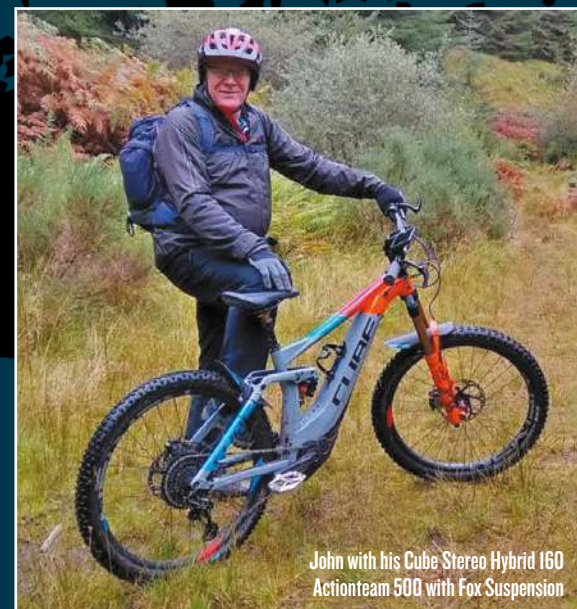


## ELECTRIC AVENUES

John found the full-suspension Moustache Samedi 27/9 FS a far comfier option than the hardtail Scott E-Aspect



John and Cait regularly ride around the scenic island of Bute, but also take their eMTBs to the mainland for a bit of variety. As mentioned in Carla McKenzie's JOGLE tale in the Winter 2020 issue, rights of way for motor vehicles don't exist in Scotland in the same way that they do in England and Wales – byways legally open to all traffic are very few and far between. In contrast, the situation for pedestrians and cyclists – including EAPC riders – is actually much better in Scotland and, as John says, "I can ride pretty much anywhere I like, within reason". He admits that in an ideal world it would be nice to be able to do 20mph but he's happy to keep his Moustache strictly EAPC-legal at a maximum of 250 watts and 15.5mph. Besides, it's been therapeutic: "My knee was very painful after the cartilage operation and I could barely walk but in time the electric bike helped to heal it, by altering the assistance level to match my recovery. Had it been a normal pushbike I might have done more damage."



John with his Cube Stereo Hybrid 160 Actionteam 500 with Fox Suspension

### James Higgs, Wiltshire

As a TRF stalwart James Higgs, or 'Jimmy Kawasaki' to use his Facebook moniker, should need no introduction to readers of Trail. James has already appeared in these pages riding his KLR 650, his CRF 250L and his Serow but he is now the proud owner of not one but two Kalkhoff Agattu pedelecs as well. He bought the first one, an ancient 2010

James Higgs selfie with his Kalkhoff



model, for the princely sum of £360 from Facebook Marketplace last summer. He told me, "The range on the old, OEM 10ah battery was only 20 miles on low assist or 12 on full assist, so I replaced it with a £450 24ah battery, which gives me 70 miles on low assist or 35 on full. I geared it up for optimum speed on the flat, and when it was warm I was commuting 19 miles every day plus one or two longer leisure rides – nothing too structured, but I was doing 150-200 miles per week. I lost two stone and feel fitter as a result. I ride back roads, cycle tracks and gravel/firm dirt ways."

Last November James bought the second Agattu for £450 from eBay, with two batteries (one 10ah, one 18ah). He says, "It's a newer 2014 model but has the same 26v Panasonic motor, and has clearly had much less use." He is attempting to make it suitable for more gnarly terrain. "It's a work in progress, but I have geared it down, removed its rear rack/road kit and fitted dirt tyres. I cut and welded two sprockets together in order to make a rear sprocket larger than what was commercially available – to hell with gear



James has bought himself a second Agattu to adapt for more serious off-road use

ratios!" Note the price of that big battery – a hundred quid more than the whole second-hand bike. For a standard-sized 10 or 12ah lithium replacement battery, £300 is normal, while the cheapest Chinese pedelecs can be bought for £5-600 brand new, complete with a new battery – but you wouldn't want to ride a taxing trail on one! ■

## Legal Summary

**August 1983:** Electrically Assisted Pedal Cycle (EAPC) class created in Great Britain (but not in Northern Ireland). Minimum age: 14; maximum assisted speed: 15mph; max power: 200 watts continuous.

**January 2016:** UK pedelec regulations officially align with those of the EU: 250 watts of continuous power and maximum assisted speed of 15.5mph (25kph). The only downside is that moped-style twistgrip throttles are no longer allowed to be sold on a new machine. A 4mph 'walk alongside' button is allowed though. And owners are still allowed to fit a throttle post-purchase if they want to. (A twistgrip throttle definitely helps take-off on a steep, slippery bridleway slope, rather than having to crank a pedal round to activate the sensor.)

**June 2016:** UK citizens narrowly vote in favour of Brexit. In theory, we could now change our regulations to anything we like!

**May 2020:** Northern Ireland finally falls in line with the rest of the UK (and Eire) and no longer considers a pedelec to be a moped requiring registration, licence and insurance, and a motorcycle crash helmet to be worn. It's only taken 37 years.

### The e-scooters are coming. Legally. Sort-of!

**December 2020:** UK government allows trials of stand-up electric scooters in a few areas. They can only be hired, and users must have a full car licence to do so. Use of personal stand-up electric scooters, e-skateboards, Segways, e-unicycles and anything else lacking pedals by which it can be propelled, remains strictly illegal. However, anyone with eyes to see knows that the citizens of the UK have ignored the law in their hundreds of thousands and ride personal electric scooters willy-nilly wherever they flipping-well like. Some have been confiscated by police in a few areas but they only represent a tiny

Blez in action on an electric scooter. Any users should technically have a full driving licence to be legal



fraction of the proportion in regular use.

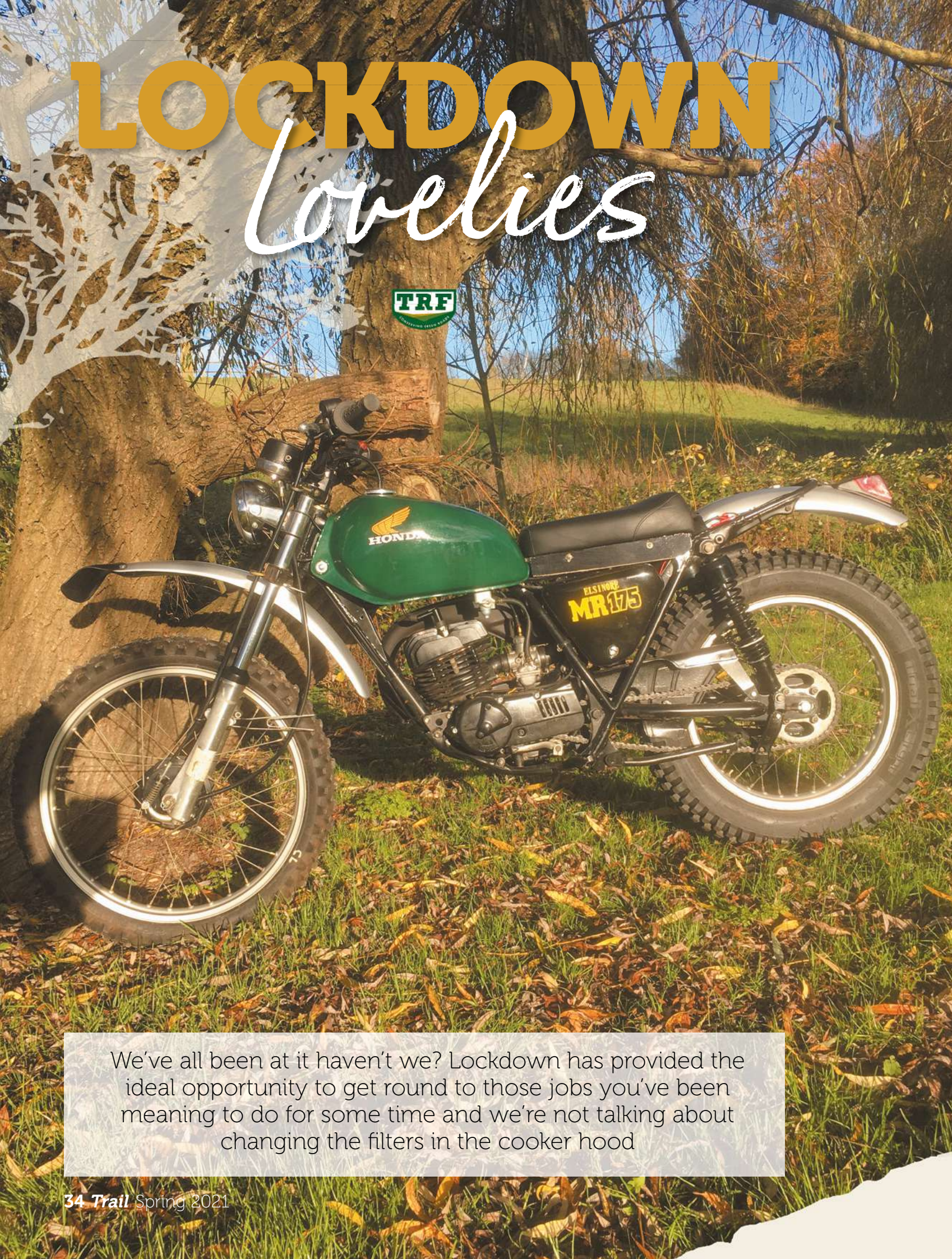
**A cautionary tale:** last December, a 20-year-old woman was banned from driving (all motor vehicles) for two years after being caught riding a hired, 12.5mph Beryl electric scooter in Newport, Isle of Wight, while three times over the drink-drive limit. She was also given a community order of 12 months and ordered to carry out 40 hours of unpaid work. To quote the BBC South website, "Magistrates said the e-scooter was classed as a 'motor vehicle', the same as a moped, the

same as a bus."

Meanwhile, there are rumours that the powers-that-be are considering allowing the return of the twistgrip throttle to new UK pedelecs for the benefit of those too old and/or decrepit to pedal comfortably.



# LOCKDOWN *Lovelines*



We've all been at it haven't we? Lockdown has provided the ideal opportunity to get round to those jobs you've been meaning to do for some time and we're not talking about changing the filters in the cooker hood



## Charles Lovell – Honda MR175

**B**y the start of the year my motorcycling diary for 2020 was in decent shape. Aside from several single days, there were a few weekends away, two four-day trips and an excursion to Austria to watch the Erzberg Rodeo, believing that if we left it any longer we might not have the chance to see the great Graham Jarvis before his retirement.

The first weekend away – trail riding in Monmouth – happened, but the rest did not. My bikes sat in the shed long after restrictions were eased because the countryside was teaming with people and pretty much none of them were able to distinguish a byway from a footpath.

A few brave souls started to venture out. For me, though, the prospect of riding past so many people who, already cross because their preferred pastimes, such as shopping, had been denied them, would get angry when confronted with a motorcycle on a 'footpath', simply did not appeal.

Then one day I saw a Facebook post from a fellow trail rider saying he had been out on his

'Grumph' (a Triumph-powered Greeves) and what a difference the classic machine made. That re-kindled a long-held desire for something classic in my own garage, something to take out on a summer's evening and link up the pitifully few (and short) still legal lanes near home, or longer full-day outings on summer days when the walkers are out. The problem was which bike and how much?

I figured I could justify spending the money I was saving from not being able to ride or go away, so I started looking. It did not take long for the budget to be increased, but even then I was finding it hard because I did not really know what I wanted.

Top of the list was the look of the bike; the whole point was I wanted something that looked classic like a smaller British scrambler. The problem was that most of the British bikes that appealed were expensive. I also wanted a bike capable of being ridden on single track dirt roads, something lightweight, reliable, nippy without being highly strung – an easy ride, more akin to a wife than a mistress [Ahem! Ed].

I was now turning against the idea of a British bike, especially when I considered the perpetual oil leak on the floor, the poor reliability and – the real clincher – I wanted the brake on the right-hand side, not the gear ►



## LOCKDOWN LOVELIES



lever. The list grew again when I learned that if 40 years old or over it would be MOT and tax exempt, and eligible for a black and silver number plate. Many European bikes were also now being excluded but whilst I kept returning to Japanese manufacturers, I wanted a bit more than a relatively heavy, street-orientated bike with chunky tyres, yet neither did I want a screaming banshee. I love two-strokes but I wasn't looking for an out and out race bike.

One bike I had always regretted selling was a little Honda 125. It was a South African import with a light blue stripe down the middle of a silver tank and light blue mudguards. It looked like a TL but it was actually an XL and with the single seat I made for it the bike looked fabulous, so I kept getting drawn to Hondas in the hope I might see something

similar, albeit a larger capacity, reconciling myself to a four-stroke.

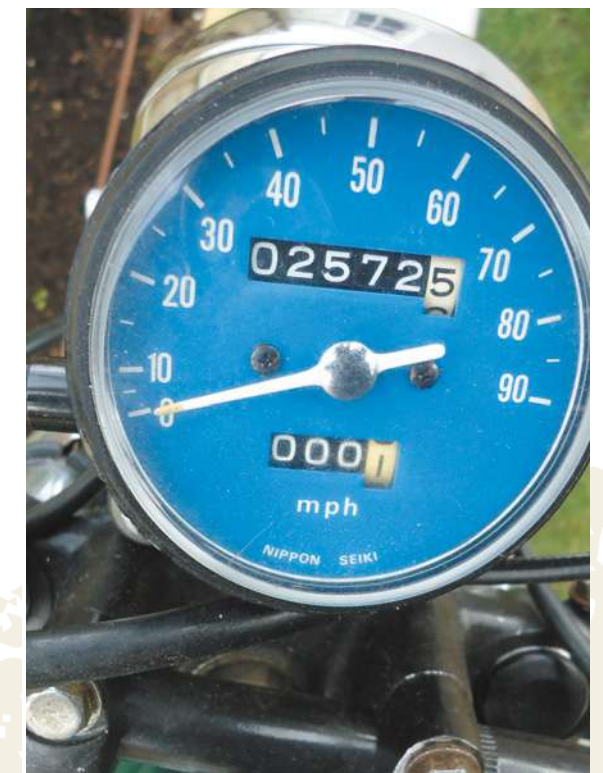
Then one day up popped an ad showing a bike I liked the look of (although for some reason somebody had painted the tank green) and the headline stated it was 'not an XL'. It also said that it was an MR175 Elsinore. I had never even heard of one, let alone seen one before, so I had to read the details that told me the bike was manufactured in 1975 and it was a two-stroke – boxes were starting to be ticked.

Using the power of the interweb I learned how the CR250 and then the CR125 Elsinores were launched in 1973 and '74 respectively, having been developed by Honda engineers somewhat secretly, as Mr Honda didn't like two-strokes. The bikes were named after a famous Californian track with the 125cc becoming one of the best-selling motocrossers of all time, sporting silver tanks with a green stripe down the middle.

Then in 1975 the MR175 and 250 were launched in the US only, as trail or 'Enduro' bikes as that class of 'dirt bike with lights' was becoming known. The MR was manufactured for only three years with only the '75 model having a green tank with silver-painted mudguards. The '76 bike has a cherry-red tank and white mudguards while the '77 bike has a Honda-red tank and red mudguards.

So, the colour of this bike I had seen was correct. The engine was de-tuned to make it a more everyday ride but the light weight of the 175 and the CR frame geometry apparently made it very versatile on the trails, and to me even the wheels were the correct size – 21in front and 18in rear. One flaw I noted in a period magazine article reviewing the new bike was the gap between third and fourth gear. The bike can be ridden 'on the pipe' in first, second and third gear, it said, but the revs were lost changing to fourth and fifth. Yet for me a high top two gears seemed agreeable for tarmac roads, which make up a significant proportion of any of my rides. This bike was starting to become attractive; my problem was I was looking at an un-registered non-runner and I could not find another one, let alone one that ran and even better was also registered.

The dealer claimed that all it needed to get it running was new points, which he had. Clearly that was not true, or he would have put them on and charged more. His lack of a website, just relying on an eBay and Facebook presence, was also putting me off enormously, so I discounted it, but I kept getting pulled back when I could not find another one. After all, the bike looked pretty together, in fact it looked like an 80% complete restoration. I started looking at the availability of



spares: nothing much in the UK but a fair few in the US. I decided to go and take a look with the view that if I could see myself getting it all sorted with an extra £500 put into it I would go for it.

After a three-hour drive the bike I'd come to see looked just as I expected it to: a tidy part-restoration and, in my eyes, very pretty (even more so with a single seat I later made for it). The rear shocks had had it and the hose from the airbox to the carb was missing but, overall, it was quite clean with shiny shiny bits and it kicked over. So I decided to take the plunge and pay the man.

I am fortunate that I know a fantastic person called Jimmy. Jimmy is now in his mid-seventies but all his working life he has been a motorcycle mechanic and now he is good





enough to help the likes of me at mate's rates, so that was my next stop, and surprisingly Jimmy had never seen one of these MRs either.

"Do you want the good news first or the bad news?", he asked. "I'll take the good news please, Jimmy", I replied. "It is all fixable, I have put in the new points and it runs, but the engine makes a hell of a racket. Bad news is it needs pulling apart, all new bearings and seals. These I can get but I need a complete set of gaskets." "I will order them today, Jimmy, but they might take a couple of weeks to arrive from the US."

As it happened it took a month. It took the seller a week to post them and then the silly sod hadn't included the copper head gasket, so we waited another two weeks for that to arrive (at least it wasn't snagged by customs). Jimmy worked his magic and the bike was running sweetly and ready for an MOT.

It appeared an MOT isn't essential, but the advice sheet the dealer supplied strongly recommended getting one. It also strongly recommended joining and getting a dating certificate from the Vintage Japanese Motorcycle Club (VJMC). This was a fantastic find, full of useful contacts, a great little club magazine but astonishingly their cut-off age for bikes is a mere 15 years!

I have never registered a vehicle before, so my newly acquired dating certificate, MOT certificate, photos of the bike, a copy of the bill of sale, a cheque for £55 and a completed DVLA V55 form (I watched a YouTube tutorial instructing how to fill it out) were carefully gathered and placed in an envelope along with a covering letter. My letter explained that the dealer had told me the bike had been imported a couple of years ago and all NOVA taxes had been paid (stupidly I had nothing other than his word) and, with the envelope safely sealed, I posted it by registered mail.

Four weeks later it all came back to me with a note advising me that my application had been rejected because I hadn't included I.D. Fortunately the nice man at DVLA had included a pre-addressed return envelope with his name on, so I sent it all back to him – this time with my I.D.

Another four weeks passed and to my delight I received my V5, shortly before Christmas. With my number plate fitted, I now look forward to spring 2021, an easing of the latest lockdown and some warmer/drier weather so I can get out and ride it.

For those winter months when it is wet and gloopy on the trails, for group rides, or for rides a bit further afield where the terrain is more technical, my 300 EXC will remain my weapon of choice. It is such a fabulous bike, I love riding it and have no plans to change it. But for when it is dry and sunny, without anything too demanding, my hope is that my little Honda will be great fun to take out.

## Martin Jarvis – RWR-C19

RWR stands for Red Wine Racing which you might recall from the Summer 2020 issue

Despite all the Covid goings on, a job I had applied for months before it all began was offered to me and I gladly accepted, starting mid-June 2020 as a manufacturing engineer. So needless to say the finishing-off of my RWR-C19 took a little longer than I had hoped.

The petrol tank was a nightmare to make – it was a really complicated shape as the engine would sit up inside the base. I really did not know where to start with the top or the shape and tried all sorts of mock-ups using wood and cardboard. I got there in the end, though, but once welded and pressure-tested I was not (and am still not) entirely happy with it, so I might have a go at making another at some point. But for now it will have to do.

The full-on lockdown was easing off and I managed to get the seat covered locally and



took the wheels to my local bike-friendly tyre fitters to be fitted with TCK 80 tyres.

I finally got the bike assembled, running and ready for an MOT. As winter was fast approaching, I decided not to paint it until I had got it an MOT, so I could give it a good test ride and make sure there were no surprises with the way it handled, nor any problems with the chassis in general. Happily it flew through the MOT.

All the mechanics at the MOT station were extremely complimentary about my workmanship and tried to convince me not to paint it as it looked just fine the way it was. But for me all I could see were the not-so-perfect welds, the not-perfectly-symmetrical shape of the tank etc. Once through its MOT, and now taxed and insured, I took it for a short test ride and visited a friend/fellow bike builder to get his opinion. He, too, said leave it as it is. So the idea was beginning to grow on me. And I was contemplating getting a clear powder coat on the chassis and leaving the tank bare. I even thought about letting it rust a bit and clear coating over that.

The bike handled extremely well on the road and was also pretty good on gravel tracks. I went out for a ride with my partner – her on her little 125 scrambler – and had a great time around Salisbury Plain.

Instead of me disappearing off into the distance on my KTM 500 and waiting for her for long periods of time at each turn, I had a





much more enjoyable ride with her almost keeping up with me. And on the perimeter road, where there are two parallel tracks (one gravel and the other gnarly and more technical), Marcia was on the gravel track while I was on the gnarly track, and she actually got ahead of me.

I also took it out for a full-on mud fest with Mike Mackenzie and Michael Ridley on their Triumph scramblers and Nick Brown on his DR400. I had an absolute blast. On some of the lanes I struggled just to stay upright, as the fat TCK 80 tyres would just float on the mud. The bike would go wherever it wanted to and you simply had to go with it. The bars were too low, making it very difficult to stand up when necessary, and the front brake with its six pot caliper was way over the top. It was exhausting but great fun and reminded me that you really do not need a full-on enduro bike to enjoy the lanes – if anything it was more entertaining and definitely more challenging.

I did have to make a few changes but nothing major. The gear change was my biggest issue. Originally I was lazy and just turned the gear lever around, so that it was in the right place but gave me a one up and four down (race shift). When I was racing I used to convert all my road bikes to race shift wherever possible. If you suddenly go the wrong way through the box, it can become confusing and quite dangerous on the track. I have not raced for a good few years now and once or twice I would go down instead of up, or up instead of down. So I made up a linkage to reverse the gear change to normal, 1 down 4 up. The bars were also too low, so I raised them 2.5in by adding some spacers between the yokes and risers. A few people have suggest fitting different wheels but that

would defeat the object for me, as when I want to ride fast I have the KTM and when I want to ride slow I have the RWR-C19.

As the new job didn't work for me and after six months the company finally accepted my resignation, I am now looking for another project, but will either have to sell a bike to make some room or build another shed. Actually, that could be my next project and rather than buy a shed I could make one...

## David Blackhurst – Yamaha WR250F

He decides that there's 'Life In The Old Girl Yet'

"Yes, it's an ex-police bike, complete with a detailed police service record..."

As soon as I heard that, and the rest of the back story, I paid the deposit and bought the bike for £2700 – sight unseen!

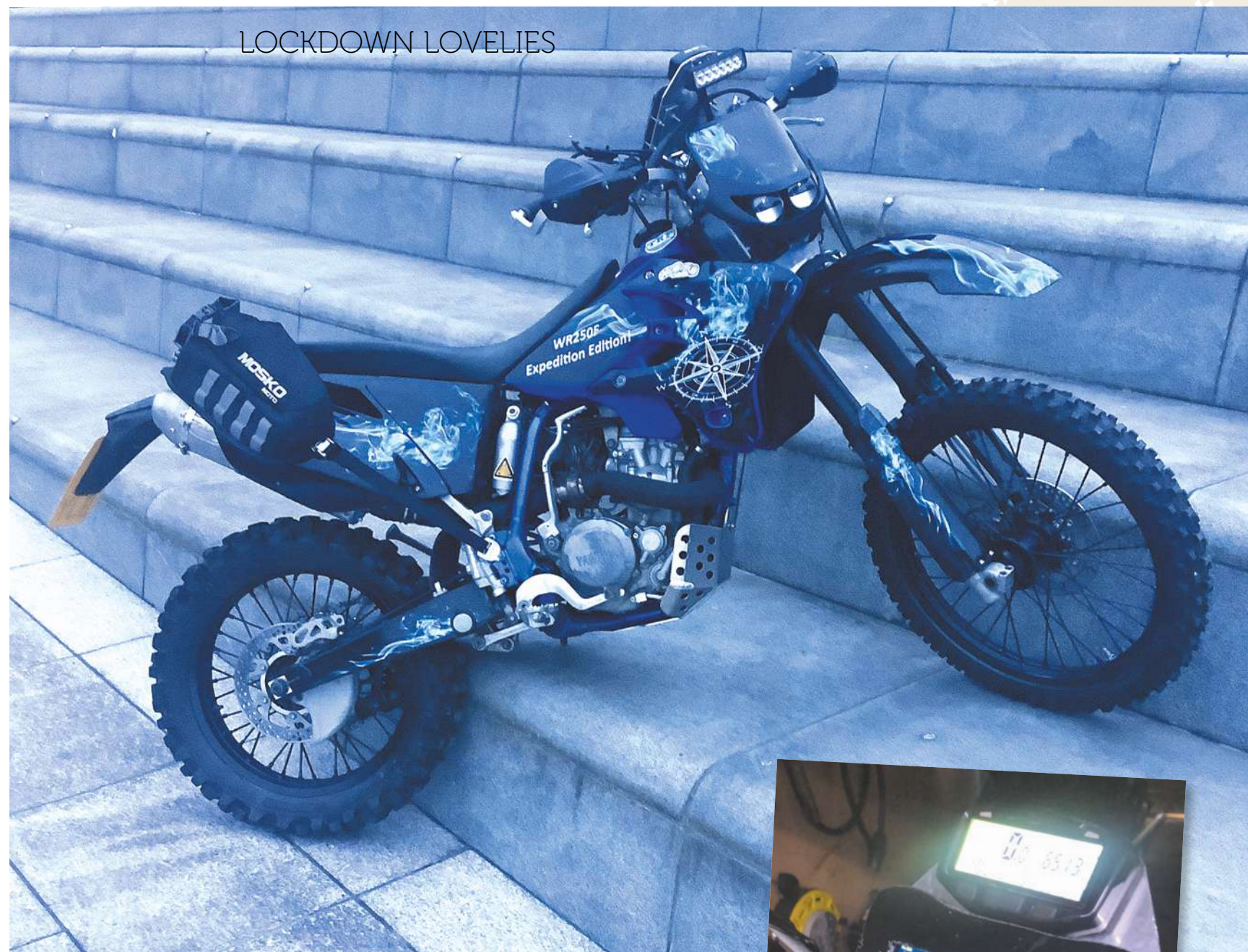
After a few years spent travelling through work I was bike-less and so started looking for a replacement for my old Yamaha TTR250, which I'd ridden in my twenties (until it was stolen by some unknown scumbag). Much as I might have liked to treat myself to a shiny brand new bike, it just wasn't affordable at the time.

After a bit of research I decided that I wanted a Yamaha WR250F. I'd been watching the classifieds for a while and was holding out for one of the alloy-framed bikes at the right price. Then, a little before Christmas 2016, an ad popped up on eBay...

I was curious to know more, so I rang the owner to hear the full story. It turned out that this WR was originally purchased back in 2004 by the Forestry Commission and gifted to Gwent Police in return for their agreement to police the forestry trails for illegal 4x4 use. When the deal was done, my bike, and its seven 'stablemates', were delivered to the police by Yamaha, who advised them that these bikes needed meticulous maintenance. So that's what happened. My new bike came with a detailed police service record that shows such meticulous maintenance, weekly safety inspections and, in some instances, less than 200 miles between services!

I soon realised that I was unlikely to find a (then) twelve-year-old bike that had been so well cared for. It had only had two previous owners: Gwent Police and the retired police officer I bought it from. He had bought it from the police when it was taken out of active service, before he himself retired.

The timing and logistics were totally impractical as I was working in Surrey, hundreds of miles away from my home in Cheshire, and the seller was located in South



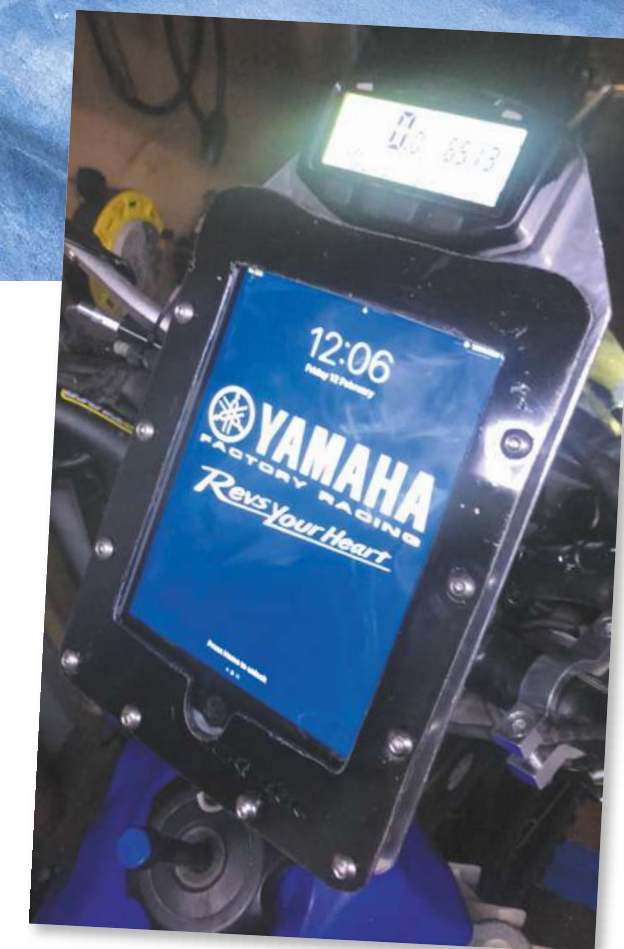
## LOCKDOWN LOVELIES

Wales. Fortunately, the chap selling the bike had family in Surrey and he agreed to drop the bike off the following week when he was visiting them over Christmas.

Remember I said "totally impractical"? Well, not only had I bought a bike (too good to miss) without a trailer, or even a tow bar, fitted to the car at the time, but I also had nowhere to keep it (until I finished the job a few months later and moved back home). What to do? By happy coincidence my tiny little box room ('staff accommodation') was an old converted stable on the ground floor, so in she came!

It was so good to get back out on the trails again. It's a great bike and, to this day, a far more capable machine than I am a rider (80:20 rule: 80% rider + 20% bike).

Fast-forward a bit, and after three more







LOCKDOWN LOVELIES

years of riding she was looking a bit tired, especially when parked in the garage next to my recently finished Transalp 'resurrection' project (see: [www.whatadifferenceaDAVE-makes.com](http://www.whatadifferenceaDAVE-makes.com) for video diaries).

So, with the country plunged into another lockdown, and riding for exercise/mental health frowned upon to say the least, I decided it was time to give the old girl some TLC. I suppose the ongoing thought since I bought the bike has been how to soften it and mould it into a better trail bike for me.

That led to me asking: what would my ideal 'explorer' trail bike look like? It would need decent lights (we've all been caught out by crappy OEM lighting at least once, right?); good protection, comfy seat, new plastics, with some funky graphics etc; some sort of luggage solution and a tablet for navigating with ViewRanger.

New plastics, bash protection and graphics etc is all pretty straightforward but some of the other tweaks took a bit more thinking

juice (aka Malbec). The luggage problem was solved (and then some) when I discovered the little Reckless 10, made by MoskoMoto – it's a great solution for getting all-day riding kit off your back and onto the bike instead.

I found an old Acerbis DHH headlight shell for £10 on eBay and set about using that as a starting point for the new headlight. The headlights themselves are 3in LED projectors with an electromagnetic shutter inside to facilitate dipped beam. As you can see, they throw out plenty of light, even on dipped beam. The only problem was that they drew so much power I had to rethink the wiring!

The factory loom could not supply enough current, so instead I took a direct feed from the battery and wired it through a relay; problem solved? Yes and no. They no longer flickered but when both were on they drained more power than the standard stator can produce, and so flattened the battery in about an hour. I couldn't justify the £180 price for an upgraded stator that I found online, so instead

# ENDURO CHAMPIONS RIDE KENDA



**AMA NATIONAL ENDURO CHAMPIONS, 2020.**  
Official tyre partner of **FactoryONE Sherco**, including riders **Cody Webb** and **Louise Forsley**, and **Beta Racing**, including **Joe Wasson** and **Morgan Tanke Colòn**

K777F & K778



Available in standard ENDURO compound and supersoft KNARLY version for extreme enduros

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swinging arm. Special thanks to Noel at Classic Custom ([www.classic-custom.com](http://www.classic-custom.com)) for his superb job vapour-blasting and powder-coating various bits for me in super-quick time. Also to my very patient friend Paul Birleson of Vital Signs ([www.vitalsign-scheshire.co.uk](http://www.vitalsign-scheshire.co.uk)) for printing and fitting the custom graphics I designed.

A word on preventative maintenance for anybody who's running a bike of similar age: I'd highly recommend removing and greasing the swinging-arm bolt next time you come to service your bike. Mine was a right pain to get out, and nearly involved some swearing...

I chose a darker theme, mostly just to do something a bit different. I'm really pleased with the results, apart from the fact that anything not brand new or freshly powder-coated looks scruffier than it did before. That said, however, this was not a complete rebuild, more a refresh/reimagining to create an 'expedition-edition' trail bike.

A big thank you to Brian Eland ([www.facebook.com/BrianElandMotorcycles](http://www.facebook.com/BrianElandMotorcycles)) for finding the elusive black rad-scoops (soon to arrive from Germany, but sadly not in time for this article, due to Brexit red tape). Thanks also to Carlo from Cocomoto ([www.cocomotosupply.com](http://www.cocomotosupply.com)) for sourcing the rest of the bits I needed and staying open late (on more than one occasion) to help get it all finished in time for this article. Last, but not least, thank you to my brother for 'borrowing' my workshop manual a week before I started this project [insert facepalm emoji here].

I'm sure I'm not the only one who's been tinkering over lockdown. I hope you've enjoyed reading this; I'm grateful for the opportunity to share what I've been up to and I look forward to reading about other people's projects. ■

I replaced the OEM headlight switch for one with OFF-DIP-MAIN functions and wired in some LED daytime running lights to the ignition. Then it all worked perfectly – daytime running lights plus one lamp for dipped beam, both for full beam.

The next head-scratcher was navigation. I'd been using a plus-sized iPhone with ViewRanger for years. But trying to read a digital OS map on the fly can be a challenge. On many occasions I have made my brother laugh when I've overshot the entrance to a lane trying to split my attention safely between riding and navigating. I'd come to the conclusion that a tablet would make a much better sat-nav tool for OS maps. I like Apple products, so I decided to purchase an old iPad Mini on eBay (£70 delivered) and fabricate a secure mounting solution myself.

I'm really pleased with the finished result and it certainly does make a huge difference having the larger screen. The iPad Mini 2 (UHD screen), inside a waterproof case, is sandwiched between two aluminium plates. The bottom plate is secured to the handlebars with two aluminium brackets to create a better viewing angle and the top plate bolts to the bottom plate for security; it also adds extra protection in the event of a spill.

Some more finishing touches have been added such as TrailTech Speedo unit, Corbin Seat, PivotPegz, DoubleTake Trail mirrors and an alloy bash plate; new handguards and plastics have been fitted to complement the freshly powder-coated wheels, forks and

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# Conserving GREEN ROADS

These projects are never straight forward and therefore require detailed planning. In many ways, this work is at the heart of what the TRF is about – keeping green roads and legal rights of way open and in reasonable repair for all users. This is the final report from January 2021



awthwaite (U5077) is an Unclassified County Road in the southern part of the Lake District National Park. It is approximately 1.6km of unsealed road that runs south to north from the hamlet of Gawthwaite, running over the eastern edge of Combs Fell (264m) and into Subberthwaite Common.

The road rests in the parish of Blawith and Subberthwaite and responsibility for its management and maintenance lies with the South Lakeland Highways team of Cumbria County Council (CCC). The landowner for the area resides at Ashlack Hall and the final key stakeholder is the Lake District National Park Authority (LDNPA), as the road lies just inside their boundary.

The surface of this road is made up of broken tarmac and crushed stone, generally flat in its southern section, crossing farmland before dropping steeply down to a tarmac road (U5078) over the last 600 metres. The route is part of the Hierarchy of Trails management scheme, which is administered by the Rights of Way team under Cumbria County Council. Details of the route can be found on the CCC website under the Barrow ►

## GAWTHWAITE *Good to Go*



Considerable erosion had taken place requiring extensive repairs



The 'before' picture. Arrows and lines showing the main areas requiring repairs



# Conserving GREEN ROADS

## GAWTHWAITE GOOD TO GO



Aggregate being delivered prior to work commencing

in Furness and South Lakeland (OS96) section. A map image can be found on the A4 96 North East sheet. The Cumbria Way runs along its southern end for approximately one kilometre.

U5077 Gawthwaite was badly affected by Storm Desmond in 2015. The extremely heavy rains, coupled with years of little to no maintenance, caused the existing drainage to overflow water onto the road surface, which was subsequently washed away. This left a large trench down the road surface.

In 2018, U5077 was identified by Cumbria Trail Riders Fellowship (CTRF) as needing intervention. In 2020, that intervention was put into place after the road received a donation of a pile of boulders from an unknown source on one side of the road surface. Comments were made by 4x4 users as to the difficulty of passing these boulders, possibly creating further damage to the surrounding area.

CTRF have worked for over 40 years across Cumbria conserving and helping CCC and the LDNPA to manage the green road network. In 2019, CCC launched their 'Working Together' scheme and CTRF became one of the first volunteer groups operating under that scheme. The appearance of the boulders on the route set in motion a sequence of events that morphed into this repair project.

Permissions for any planned works were



New culvert being installed



New culvert installed



Bedrock was exposed in many places along the road

gained from the landowner at Ashlack Hall, Cumbria Highways and the Lake District National Park Authority. CCC agreed to provide the stone required and transport of the materials to site and CTRF would provide the manpower and machinery. The project was managed by CTRF on the ground using hired contractors.

Requests went out to the user group for funds and the Green Lane Association (GLASS), the Northern Auto Cycle Union (ACU) and CTRF all agreed to fund the project to varying degrees. See Finances on page 8 for details.

Several quotes were sought from contractors and Gary Gowan Construction was given the project.

During the period of gaining permissions and sorting logistics, a condition survey of the relevant part of the road was completed to establish the issues and guide decisions about the quantity of materials required. This was ably supported by the CCC team, Gary Gowan and the user group.

Stakeholders, including the local user groups and local contractors, completed the project in five days under some tight budgetary constraints.

The team from Gary Gowan Construction did a great job and the effects of their expertise and hard work should be seen for years to come and will also benefit all user groups.

### DAY 2: Repair Details

Work started on 14 December 2020 with the team assembled on site for 8.00am. As the days are short and the weather unpredictable at this time of year, drainage was prioritised from the start.

The first jobs involved installing two twin-wall culvert pipes, one to allow water from a small beck at GR SD 268 864 to flow into the main beck at GR SD 269 864. The water line



Mick Waplington, drainage line building



had been previously altered by the farmer as he was having difficulties accessing his stock on the fell. At the time a short length of blue plastic pipe was installed with an access point at surface level for his vehicles to access the upper fell.

We removed the short length of pipe and installed a longer length of pipe and deepened the existing water channel, thus creating a bank between the road and the water. ►



At all points during the repairs the local quality control was on hand to oversee works...



# Conserving GREEN ROADS



We then moved onto the main beck, which runs over the road surface as an unsealed ford. Here, we installed twin-wall piping to allow the water to flow under the road surface. The facing of both the entrance and exit has been finished with stone cappings to protect the culvert from the water flow rates,

which can be significant. The road surface was re-instated using the material supplied.

The rest of the day was spent moving material to the upper sections and bedding in the large boulders that had been installed by the farmer as a foundation material.

The start of the climb up the hillside was the area of the most damage. The first priority was to stop the water flow down the road surface, so cuts were made in the edges of the road at the top and small temporary dams were made to divert the water off the road line. At this point it was decided to use the in situ gully, running along the upper section of the road, as a drainage line, thus saving time, effort and encroachment onto the moorland above.

## DAY 3

With this in mind, the road surface laid down on the uphill climb was minimal in the early stages, just to facilitate the transfer of material to the upper sections. However, the softness of the ground soon showed that a deeper line of material was required and



Top picture shows the original surface facing up the hill, this picture shows the new surface facing down towards the main road

## GAWTHWAITE GOOD TO GO

The picture, far left shows the 'before' comparison with this picture looking uphill after repairs



works at the top of the lane were moved to the latter part of the project, so as to install the main route up the hillside. This area used the bulk of the material supplied.

The drainage line that was installed here to move water from the open fell side to the lower beck was installed at this point; the water flow rate from the moment of installation was pretty high and remained constant for the rest of our time on the project.

Once the uphill section was laid, we returned to the highest sections, where the road has an S bend, both sections of which received surface drains and a deeper base of material.

The upper section had a bund created to move water off the road surface into a drainage line; this was joined to the section of track that was deeply rutted and thus formed a complete drainage channel for water running off the hillside above. A section of bedrock at this point caused some issues and still restricts some of the flow, so some hand tool remedial work was needed to chip away certain protruding parts. Once complete, this helped immensely with the water flow. The run-off point for this lined up with the lower drainage line, so as to provide a continuous drainage point to the beck below.

## DAY 4

The rest of the road line was laid using the existing line and about one metre of the grass edge to create a flat road surface. Surface drainage cuts were installed at sporadic points to allow water flow to drain.

Whilst at the top, we had been told we could use the field-picked stone piled at the top of the hill to fill in the ruts. This stone provided roughly 60–70 tons of material and saved a lot of time and fuel for the project.

It was laid into the road surface and then the 6f capping material was laid on top to form a uniform layer. The highest section of the road, where it accesses the managed farmland, has a small part that was left untouched and thus continues to have ruts (GR SD 273 857 to GR SD 273 855).

Once the upper section had been completed, we returned to the uphill section and re-laid in more material where any 'soft' areas had appeared and tidied up the edges.

## DAY 5

We then moved back to the bottom and installed an open drainage line for the spring that runs onto the road near the beck. The water flow from this spring is constant and was pointed out as a concern by the farmer. We installed a small culvert to move the water



# Conserving GREEN ROADS

under the road and then laid in material to firm up the area.

The final culvert installed was to provide access to the fell for the farmer with his vehicles. This was in the main drainage line, using the existing pipe previously installed by the farmer. We also capped the inlet and outlet with a stone dressing to give a visible point to the edge of the surface in most weathers and to protect the side walls of the pipe areas from water flow.

The final parts of the project, using machinery, involved resurfacing the road to its junction with U5078, installing a small turning point on the opposite side of U5078 road edge to prevent tyre damage to the verges, and clearing out drainage lines on U5078 above U5077. We also left one trailer load of material with the farmer at Burney End Farm, so that the farmer can patch up any soft areas as needed, as he had asked for that.

## DAY 6

The works after the machinery had left included reinstating the wooden sign for both Gawthwaite Lane (U5077) and Raisthwaite Lane (U5079), which had both been found lying on the ground (possibly due to the wet ground rotting out the bases). We also plan to install signage stating that the area is a Site of



Scientific Special Interest (SSSi) across all of the open fell. This is to make sure that all users are aware of the fragility and special status of this fell side. This will happen once the printer re-opens. We also stone-faced the newly installed culverts and, as a thank you, rebuilt a small section of stone wall for the farmer.

This completed the repair phase. ■

## Post Repair Surveys/Works

Once the works were completed, the site was revisited three times between Christmas and mid-January. On each of these visits, the drainage was found to have been blocked (in one case, a small divert had been cut into the road edge to bring water back onto the road surface at a critical point, grassy material blocked flow in several places and some poor tractor driving had dislodged a culvert capping).

On the first visit this was deemed to be due to settling of materials, but after the second visit, this was deemed to be deliberate. On each visit, the blockages were cleared and the divert blocked up; however, the road will require continual monitoring to see if this behaviour continues.



With regard to the SSSI status of the surrounding open fell, this appears not to be widely known. To help to inform people, some signage is to be installed early in 2021 on the two gates that allow access to the open fell: one at Raisthwaite Lane and one at the top of the rise on Gawthwaite Lane. ■

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# MOTORCYCLE TRAIL *Adventures*



The company was started by previous TRF director **Stewart Bosworth**, who spent 30 years in the police force and is now an independent Police Trainer and has managed the often tricky transition from passion to profession

**'B**oz', as he is more commonly known, was coming up for retirement and had the option of continuing to run the learning programme for police officers and staff on dual-purpose motorcycles. The College of Policing only offered two sorts of police motorcycle training, on-road or off-road. The concept of

trail riding wasn't really on the agenda. Boz, however, fancied a lifestyle change that would allow him to indulge his love of trail riding as well as teaching others, hopefully, to enjoy it too.

This meant setting up a business – not really a problem as Boz has way more qualifications than you can shake a stick at. Thanks to his police career, these include teaching, risk assessment and quality assurance practice, the law and public access, and he is also a member of the Driver Instructors Association.

As rural crime is quite a hot topic at the moment, Boz's talents are in demand with police forces nationwide whether it's a case of illegal riding, which comprises illegal bikes (usually MXers and pit bikes) on legal byways, or legal bikes being ridden illegally, or any

combination of the two. Also, legal trail riders are often in the right place to observe and report illegal activity, such as fly tipping, hare coursing, dog attacks on sheep, poaching or anything else that doesn't look quite right. Boz is keen to stress, however, that the police courses are more to do with personal development and observational skills rather than off-road pursuit of offenders. Police forces that use trail bikes tend to use them for getting from A to B, where the black-top roads are a little scarce, and they have been particularly useful in searching for missing persons. In South Yorkshire they've helped save at least two people's lives.

Apart from his specific courses for the police, his company Motorcycle Trail Adventures has been set up to offer courses in Beginners Training,





## MOTORCYCLE TRAIL ADVENTURES

adapted from the police course, and One-Day Tours at Levels 1 and 2. Level 3 tours comprise two or three-day bespoke tours of Devon, Wales, Yorkshire and the Lake District.

What Boz is keen to point out is that Motorcycle Trail Adventures is not just another guided tour company. It's also a learning opportunity for all the participants. Sure, you learn about bike control and trail riding technique, that's a given, but there's more to it including, for the beginners, learning the legal aspects of where to ride, route planning and how to behave responsibly and safely on the green road network. It's also one of the few courses endorsed by the TRF.

Lee Jordan, current Chair of East Midlands TRF, is also involved in Motorcycle Trail Adventures. Lee has over 30 years' experience as a trail rider and, as Chair of the East Midlands Group, has done a lot to encourage and help new



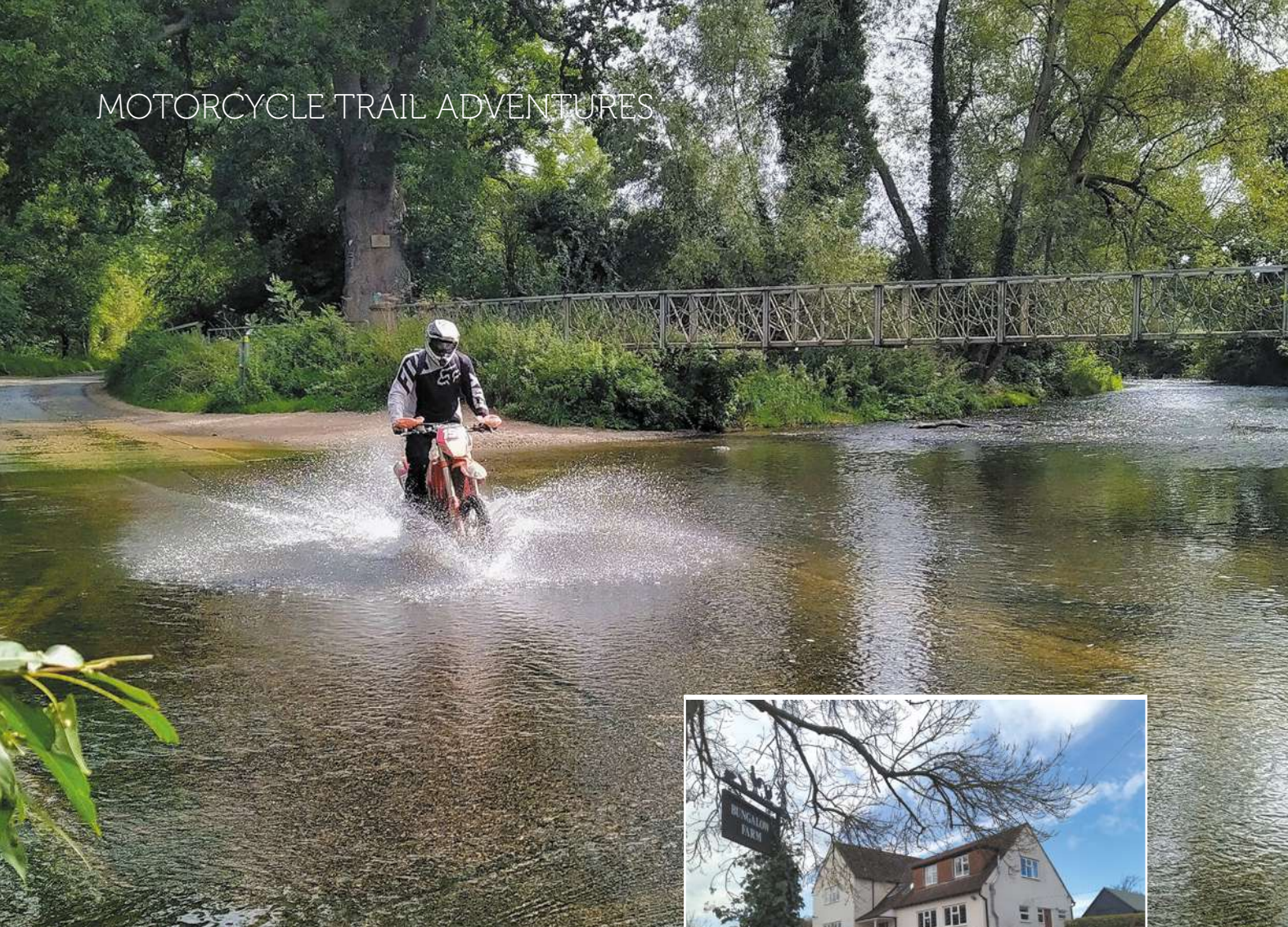
riders, which includes access to a 10-acre training site. Both men share similar views on trail riding and green road conservation, and have experience of different terrain in England and Wales. So starting a business together seemed like a good idea. Additionally, Lee has relatives who live in the Alps and Corfu and he has ridden in both places. Perhaps something for the future.

Motorcycle Trail Adventures' unique selling point is training novices, and this includes L-plate riders as well as much more experienced road riders. The four-day course will kick off with some theory covering needs, concerns and expectations, a bit of OS map reading and a discussion about other countryside user groups. Typically this will be followed by some hands-on bike inspection and maintenance. Personal safety is also covered, which includes topics such as dehydration and fatigue and how to recognise when your body is telling you it's time to call it a day.

By day three, most people on the course will be trail riding and having a few gentle 'offs'. Riding briefings and debriefings are all part of ►



## MOTORCYCLE TRAIL ADVENTURES



the course, with specific obstacles like tree roots or an angled log placed across the track. At the end of the four-day course, a total trail newbie should have the ability and, more importantly, the confidence to take to the trails where they live.

The four-day beginners' course is based in south Warwickshire, near Leamington Spa, where there is an affiliated B&B with five guest rooms and a pub just a short distance away. Boz central, with its workshop, secure bike parking and outbuildings for the the learning programme is also close at hand. From there a 150-mile loop leads towards Silverstone, where riders can explore the practical side of momentum, traction, gear ratios and balance.

Lee is based in adjacent Leicestershire, which amazingly has some 500 miles of green roads at riders' disposal and this is where the Level 1 and 2 tours mainly take place. The Level 3 tours, which can be two or three days in length, cover Wales, Devon, Yorkshire and the Lake District.

Motorcycle Trail Adventures can organise group tours pretty much anywhere in England and Wales. Naturally you'll have to give them a bit of notice but that shouldn't be a problem as we won't be going anywhere in a hurry. ■

### Contact:

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## South West Wales TRF



Following on from the positive reactions to the article that told the stories of some of our 'Lady Riders' in the December issue of Trail, Group Secretary **Mo Rapley** feels it's only right and proper to shine the spotlight on the members that have taken on Officer roles for 2021

**M**y first article for Trail in the Spring of 2018 introduced our newly set up Regional Group and with the help and support of Mario and the team at TRF HQ we quickly grew to a band of 12, our own 'dirty dozen'. Within the first year we had acquired 50 members and we have, despite Covid-19 in 2020 almost wiping-out trail riding here in Wales for most of that lovely summer, grown to approx. 90 members on my circulation list.

We decided in October 2020 that the increased size of the SWW Group meant we needed assistance in the management of the group to meet the expectations of our members. Rob has remained in the Chairman's role and I have retained the role of Group and membership Secretary.

Our development coincided with some of the IT changes taking place within TRF head office and with the introduction of 'Microsoft Teams' the admin side of running the group

was made so much easier. We are able to ensure we comply with basic GDPR regulations by utilising this facility to the full. No need to store anything on our personal PCs and access to all the Group Officers to individual areas controlled by the 'Annual Return' submissions. This is going to provide a library of information and records for current and all future group officers.

In no particular order these are our SWW group officers 'in their own words' with a little bit of additional information explaining how our group is developing.

**Ben Morris**  
Green Road Map Co-ordinator  
Email: [b.d.morris@outlook.com](mailto:b.d.morris@outlook.com)

"I am a recent road bike to green-road convert. Smiles per mile! I am a keen route planner since my days as a mountain leader,

**Ben Morris**



instructing orienteering. I have always loved exploring the outdoors, but it is even better whilst on two wheels! I am happy to lead, tail or get lost somewhere in the middle!

I will be the point of contact for anyone with queries about

the legality of local green roads, I shall be working closely with TRF HQ and other regional groups to remain up to date on the status of the amazing green roads South West Wales has to offer."

Ben has taken on our input into the 'GRM' TRF project. Until 2020 we did not have the resource in place to take part in the development of the Green Road Map idea.

And although we are late into the arena, Ben has been able to support the GRM lead Graeme Collins in compiling the information required for Carmarthenshire, Cardiganshire and Pembrokeshire. This project has moved forward enormously during lockdown. Ben has been assisted by Steve Leonard and Richard Pugh from our group and with some networking with the Carmarthenshire LAF (Local Access Forum) Chairman Mark Hadley we have, I believe, made a significant contribution. Mark is also a TRF member with a B&B and 'map room' for the trail riding enthusiast and is located just outside Llandovery.

Along with the purchase of GPSs and online training' sessions from Adam Hayes from the South Wales Group there will be a huge choice of 'GPX files' available with routes to suit all abilities across South and South West Wales.

With Stephen Barratt taking on the role of Road Conservation Officer there will be a lot more activity in 2021 and going forward.

**Dan Oliver**  
Social Media Officer  
Email: [dan.theneon@gmail.com](mailto:dan.theneon@gmail.com)

"I joined SWWTRF back in early 2019 shortly after I learned to ride and passed my test. Bikes have been an obsession for me ever since. I ride out often, happy to travel and make new "bike mates" everywhere I go. I am passionate about the TRF and my aim is to ensure that everyone in the club has the same amazing experience as I have had since joining.



# Group PROFILE

"I will be responsible for social media, marketing and publicity to ensure that our activity is accessible, well communicated and inclusive to all"

Dan's natural up-beat and enthusiastic approach to everything he does means he was the obvious choice for this role. He has been able to take over the lead in maintaining and developing the Facebook communications within the group. We had not used the 'events' function much before 2020. This has become a busy 'forum' and is our main form of communication with our members.

We do send out a monthly newsletter too. This is to ensure that the small number of our members who do not have a Facebook presence are included in any developments. Dan also set up a 'Survey Monkey' questionnaire to gain an idea of what our members wanted our new team to focus on. We may not be able to fulfil the whole wish list but we are committed to working towards providing a range of activities that engages as many members of our group as we can.

And at the end of 2020 when we were all looking forward to spending the week between Christmas and New Year out on the trails another 'Tier-4 lockdown' put the brakes on all plans from the 19th December. Not to wallow in despair Dan instigated a SWWTRF Calendar, copies made available from our Facebook page and by emailing Dan direct.

The picture submissions started in December and the print run was finalised in January utilising at least one picture from every person that took part. We had some of our provisional dates for events and meetings included in it to reflect the optimistic outlook of our group.

The take-up of the 50 x A3 calendars was so positive that we had almost sold them all within the first week of posting their availability.

Thanks go to Dan and Richard for all their hard work in producing a quality calendar, another first for our group. And thank you everyone who bought one, let's hope we will use these more than the one we had for 2020!



**Dan Oliver**

## Huw Reed

### New Members and TRF Code of Conduct/Bylaws.

Email: [huwreed@googlemail.com](mailto:huwreed@googlemail.com)

"After over 30 years in rallying I took to trail riding and joined the TRF in the spring of 2019. I'm based in Bridgend and try and ride every weekend. Although very much a beginner still I'm always keen to get out and learn. I have found the advice and experience of the fellow South West Wales TRF members invaluable. With regular ride outs, monthly meetings and new events it's a great way to get out and about.

"I've recently made the move to the 'New Members Officer' position within our TRF Group. In this role I'll be helping to arrange beginner rides, be a

main point of contact for new members, help with TRF Code of Conduct/Bylaws and help explain opportunities within the TRF to explore other areas of the country. Looking forward to the challenges ahead

Speech bubble vibe from Huw. "Most communication and ride out information is on our Facebook page, join us at South West Wales TRF, it's a private page so have your membership number ready, get in touch with me if you don't use Facebook I will add you to call/email list"

Huw will be welcoming new members to our group on receipt of the updated membership list that is kindly provided by Andrew



**Huw Reed**



**Richard Pugh**

Byatt from TRF HQ. He is also the officer that manages the Facebook registration and acceptance of TRF members with current valid subscriptions.

## Richard Pugh

### Group Officer

Email: [richardthomaspugh@gmail.com](mailto:richardthomaspugh@gmail.com)

"I have been riding for 17 years, road, trials and enduro and most recently, trails. As well as enjoying the more technical aspects of the trails, I also like to support others with the set-up of their bike to enhance their riding experience and share some of the tips I have picked up from other riders in trials and enduro over the years."

Richard's words sum him up perfectly. He is able to give assistance and support to new members and with the many bike changes over the years (ask Sarah his wife and one of our lady riders), has a wealth of knowledge to draw on.

Richard will be there to help and support our novice riders at our events. When we are able to meet up and do workshops, a bit of bike maintenance and set-up that has been requested via our questionnaire (mentioned previously), is a role that Richard will be able to undertake.

## Stephen Barratt

### Local Road Conservation Officer

Email: [Barrett sbar832@aol.com](mailto:Barrett sbar832@aol.com)

"I have been riding bikes since I passed my test 40 years ago and for the last 30 years have been a motorcycle instructor. I have done a lot of touring mainly abroad and road racing when I was younger. Only started green lane riding about three years ago and have been in the TRF for the last two years.

"I will coach anyone who is new or nervous about riding off road, covering the basics through to a standard whereby they | confidently ride with the group. In my role as the SWWTRF Local Road Conservation Officer

I oversee the local Green Roads and advise on access and condition to the County Road Conservation Officers and maintain good links with local equestrian groups, clubs and societies, offering our services to help with the running of events"

Stephen is able to provide training and support during the week as well as weekends so is a great resource within our Group for our members.

Taking on the Road Conservation baton means that we now have the ability to work on the networking already established as members of the Carmarthenshire LAF. The local authority's commitment to 'access for all' and the involvement of volunteer groups to clear and maintain some public rights of way is something we will actively pursue over the coming months.



**Stephen Barratt**

We have also put plans in place to ensure we have a presence on the Pembrokeshire and Cardiganshire LAFs. This is an area that will give our group a chance to build some networks with many organisations and authorities that have an equal interest in ensuring 'access to all' in the countryside. This would not have been possible without the support of our members and their enthusiasm to ensure our group continues to grow. We are a new group to the TRF with long term plans.

## Iwan Davies

### Treasurer and Events Co-ordinator.

Email: [iwandavies@live.com](mailto:iwandavies@live.com)

"I joined the TRF in 2019. I have been riding road bikes since I was 16 years old and after retiring from rugby and squash in my mid-for-►



# Group **PROFILE**



**Iwan Davies**

ties, I bought my first enduro bike. I enjoyed competing in a few enduro and rally events for a couple of years.

"I took a break from off-roading for a while and took it up again about five years ago in 2015 to ride with my son. I enjoy organising events and offering advice to new members. I am an experienced TEC (tail end Charlie) and currently learning various routes with the intention of becoming a ride leader for the club."

Iwan put in a lot of work making our first 'Dolgoch Fun Day' a success and we are looking to him for our 2021 event planned for 30th May, the bank holiday weekend. Camping facilities are hopefully going to be additional this year, and a training area to compliment the trail riding loops made to accommodate all levels of riding.

## **Steve Leonard**

### **Group Rep**

**Email: h59elmer@aol.com**

"I am Steve, my history is short. I stopped road riding when I was 20 and in 2015 at age 54 I purchased a Husky TE310 and rode around a field and marshalled at the odd enduro or rally event with not much success.

"I joined the TRF in Nov 2016 and got an invite from Marianne Walford of Trail Rides Wales for a ride, I was hooked. I started riding the green roads with Mid Wales TRF.

Since Rob and Mo started this amazing Group (South West Wales TRF) in the spring of 2018 we have not looked back.

"As Group rep general dogs body, I enjoy planning new routes, leading, tailing and also riding in the middle. I am mechanically minded and reasonable on maps and Garmin base camp use. Willing to assist with any anyone's queries on any matter. Look forward

to meeting you all out on the rides."

Steve has undersold his role within the development of our Group. We were able to benefit from his membership of the Mid Wales TRF where he had been able to develop his map reading and ride-leader skills.

Steve and Rob between them organised and led all the rides in 2018 and 2019. 2020 has been challenging to say the least, but I know 2021 will see Steve organising and leading trail rides locally and further afield. One of the few positives of the Covid restrictions and Steve's broken collarbone in mid-2020 is the many additional routes discovered while pouring over the OS maps.

Steve has also put together a 'Treasure hunt' for SWW TRF members planned for April 2021, so keep an eye out for the entry forms nearer the date.



**Steve Leonard**

If you have joined the TRF in 2020 and have nominated the SWW region as your main Group, you may not have had the opportunity to meet our officers with the Covid-19 pandemic causing havoc to our riding and non-riding calendars.

Here's hoping 2021 will be a better year with a full calendar of events, ride outs and Group meetings.

Everyone has taken on their new roles with blank canvasses, therefore, 2021 will be a year to develop the officer roles and the Group direction within this new team.

All our officers are on Facebook so feel free to send any questions you may have direct to them via messenger. If you have any suggestions for the group or would like to assist in any way we are happy to listen.

If you only do email then please use the contact emails above. ■

# THE MOTOR CYCLING CLUB



## **Motor cycling adventures in 2021/22**

The Motor Cycling Club has been organising long distance car and motorcycle trials as a test of reliability and endurance for over 100 years.

The MCC is pleased to extend an invitation to TRF members to enter our trials as 'Associate Members'. All you need is a sense of adventure, a suitable motorcycle or sidecar outfit and an ACU licence.

Our 2021/2022 calendar reads;  
[subject to COVID19 restrictions]

**The Edinburgh Trial**  
1st/2nd October 2021

**The Exeter Trial**  
7th/8th January 2022

**The Lands End Trial**  
15th/16th April 2022

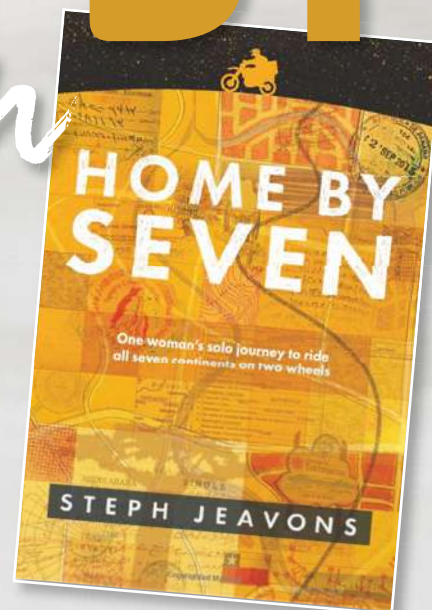
[www.themotorcyclingclub.org.uk](http://www.themotorcyclingclub.org.uk)





# Membership OFFER

# HOME BY Seven



A taste of **Steph Jeavons'** book *Home By Seven*. The title refers to the solo round-the-world trip that took her to all seven continents. The journey lasted very nearly four years, during which time she logged 53 countries and over 74,000 miles on a Honda CRF250

## Arriving in Namibia...

“There is one tarmac road that cuts through the middle of Namibia – the rest are dirt – and for now I was on it, chasing the newly-painted white lines and allowing myself to believe in the mirage that lay before me: any minute now I would be splashing through the magical river that had engulfed the empty road ahead. Once again, while away from it, I had forgotten the power of the desert in playing with our minds and reigniting our imagination. The space and lack of people always gave me a sense of freedom; the beautiful simplicity in this unprejudiced, levelling landscape that still brought with it a certain comfort.

I turned off the black stuff and headed east towards a campsite near Fish River Canyon, which is an awesome and humungous 'groove' in the earth's surface, like southern Africa's answer to the USA's Grand Canyon. It wasn't long before I suffered a puncture en route, thanks to the sharp rocks that protruded from the sand, and spent the

following hour fixing it, with the desert sun burning down on me.

As I was wrestling with the final, and most annoying stage of getting the rear tyre back on, a local guy turned up and placed his truck in a position where it threw its shadow over me. Then he gave me an orange and an extra pair of hands to hold the weight of the tyre, while I ensured that the spacers, brake pads

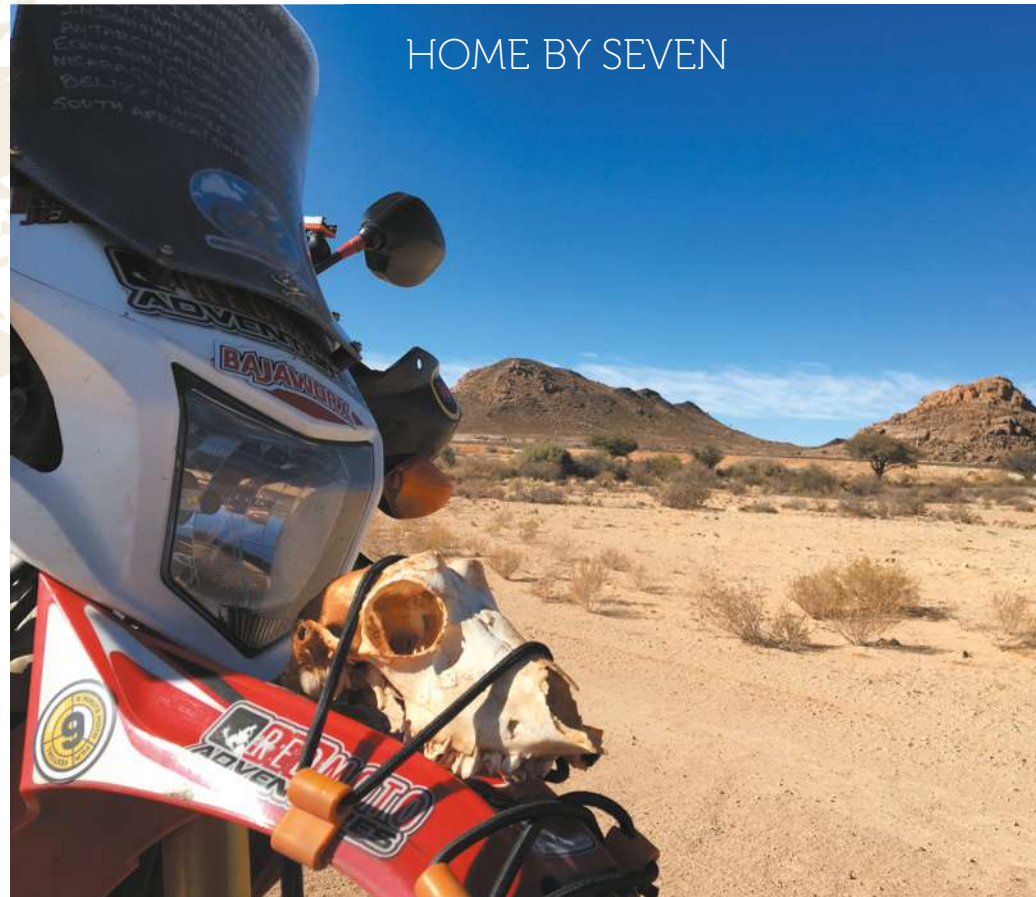




# Membership OFFER



## HOME BY SEVEN



and chain were all aligned. I've never understood why we haven't come up with a simpler solution to roadside tyre changes – preferably one that didn't ideally need six sets of hands!

Anyway, it was done, and I was happily on my way again, although I had now used up my spare inner tube (the punctured one was not repairable) and would need to source a new one before I could safely have another incident! Not an easy task in the middle of the Namib Desert. I decided to call Billy Ward as soon as I got to camp and asked him to bring one over the border for me. Sorted! It was nice to have a back-up buddy.

Waking up in my tent the next morning, I jumped out of my sleeping bag, made the coffee, and shared an energy bar with the exotically yellow birds that had come to prey on my good mood. I sat watching the sun move across the adjacent hill, slowly working its way towards me. My departure time was all down to how quickly its rays could reach me and dry the dew from my tent. I smiled and savoured the moment, completely submissive to the control nature had over my day.

The pace of life slowed down on the road. I didn't really feel part of society any more. Moving all the time brought with it a certain detachment from society's restraints and going back to basics felt good. The journey had evolved over time into something far more beautiful than the challenge. So slowly that I hadn't even realised until the transformation was almost complete. Far from feeling as if I didn't belong anywhere, I felt as if I belonged everywhere. The world was now just one big neighbourhood; my neighbourhood, and I was free to roam it as I pleased. I had not taken the journey. The journey had taken me.

I grabbed my toothbrush and stood idly in my own little world, enjoying the peace, when suddenly an angry-looking baboon ran into the camp and tore me from my daydreaming. He was big and I was not going to challenge him, instead choosing to shuffle behind Rhonda the Honda, using her as my shield as I continued to brush my teeth and just watch as he frantically ripped through my neighbouring camper's belongings. I guessed he was looking for food. I also briefly mused that I should try to do something. Instead, I watched and I brushed, and I considered myself quite fortunate to have finished my energy bar in good time; his big yellow fangs

convincing me that toothpaste wasn't his thing. As I watched the oversized primate race away from the scene of the crime, complete with what looked like a bag of cheese and onion crisps, I suddenly remembered that I was due to meet Charley [Boorman] and Billy today. It had gone clean out of my mind. The universe had prompted me with a reminder in the form of a big hairy ape!

I got to the hotel earlier than the gang and decided to chance my luck on a cheap room at this establishment in the heart of the Namib Desert. Dumping Rhonda at the front step, I dusted myself off and walked in through the grand entrance, immediately sensing myself out of place.

'Can I help you?' asked the smartly dressed lady at reception.

'Ah yes, hello' I replied in my best Queen's English, 'I am riding ahead of the Charley Boorman group. I'm one of their guides. I believe you have special rooms for guides. I forgot to book ahead. Do you have any free?' (Hotels in Africa often have basic rooms at a fraction of the cost for guides.)

'I'm afraid we don't, Madam, but we do have a couple of standard rooms empty. Let me speak with the manager and see if we can get you into one of those at the same price. You look like you could do with a shower.' She wasn't wrong! That night I had a proper shower, followed by dinner with the gang, and of course, the obligatory after-ride beer, before falling asleep in a four-poster bed on a beautifully soft mattress. It was terrible behaviour on my part, but I had zero regrets in the morning.

If that's whetted your wonder-lust appetite and you fancy another helping, you can get hold of your own copy of *Home By Seven* with a special TRF discount of 20% at [stephjeavons.com](http://stephjeavons.com) by entering the discount code TRF20.

Steph has also launched a business – Moto Junkies, [motojunkies.co.uk](http://motojunkies.co.uk) – in partnership with 'Welsh Legend' Tony Williams, which offers guided tours on trail and tarmac in the wonderful Welsh countryside. Tony, Extreme Enduro enthusiast, has worked as an off-road instructor for several major manufacturers. The third member of the team is Gary Northeast, the principle tarmac teaser, who knows the Welsh back roads like, well, the back of his hand. See 'Friends of the TRF', page 80, for 10% discount. ■



# Membership OFFER



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TRF Members' Price: £60 inc. VAT per unit with Free Delivery

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#### Personal Tracker

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This low cost solution is a very versatile device, it can be hidden away and installed in covert locations due to its size. This tracker is also IP67 rated, meaning it can withstand water immersion up to 1 meter! This is great for plant machinery which undergoes heavy usage, allowing the tracker to continue doing its job without interruption.

The tracker requires a simple installation to a live 12-24v feed. There are no additional cables other than the positive and negative wires, we like to keep it simple.

**SPECIFICATIONS**  
• Up to 3-4 hours battery backup\*  
• Weight: 63 grams  
• Size: 93 x 58 x 14mm  
\*dependent on usage i.e. frequency of reporting



**Ti-100**



**Ti-Prime Lite**



**Monthly Tracking Fee for Live Tracking:** £8.00 inc. VAT (normally £10 inc. VAT) per month per tracker. The website will show a tracking fee of £10 inc. VAT, the discount will be applied after the initial sale. As a further gesture, Trackit247 will refund the first month's tracking fee. [www.trackit247.com](http://www.trackit247.com)  
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**Expiry:** 30 November 2021

**Excludes:** Sale items. Cannot be used in conjunction with other coupons.



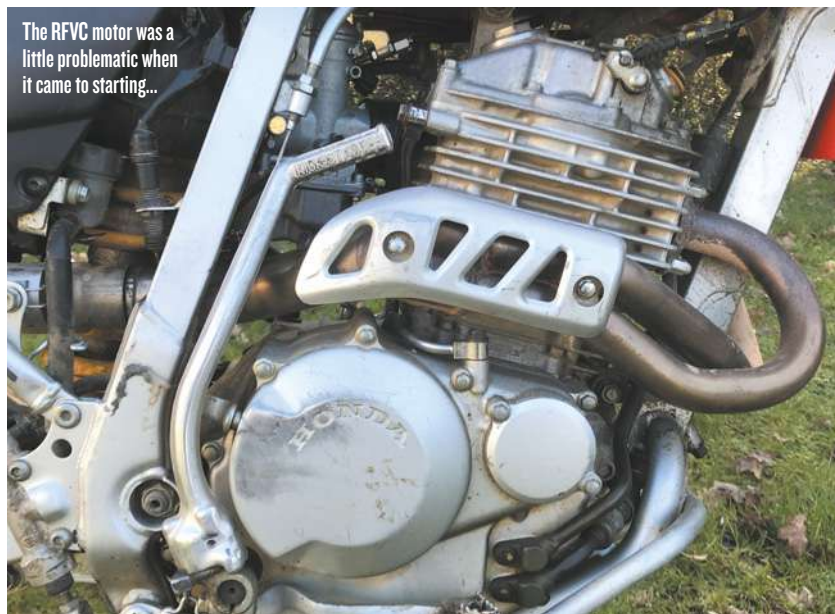
# HONDA XR250R and KAWASAKI KDX220R



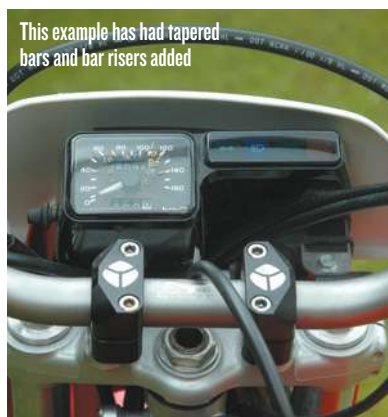
Can yesterday's Enduro mounts make a handy trail bike for today?

**H**onda introduced the XR 250R as long ago as 1979 and it ran on until 2004, which is a pretty respectable model life for a competition machine, given that it didn't really change much during that time. It always had a four-valve cylinder head, which gave it its characteristic 2-into-1 exhaust layout. Power output was around 20hp, which varied slightly depending on which market it was destined for, and a dry weight of 240lbs (110kg) made it a brisk performer.

Our particular example is a 2000 model and by this time the XR250 was fitted with the Radial Four Valve Combustion (RFVC) head. Producing nearer 25hp, the suspension travel was a respectable 10.5in and it had also shed a couple of pounds. Despite improvements over the years one problem still afflicts these models – cold starting. The seat height is 36in, and if your inside leg measurement is less than that – and let's face it, that means most of us – there'll be a knack to



The RFVC motor was a little problematic when it came to starting...



This example has had tapered bars and bar risers added

straddling the seat. Holding the front brake on and leaning the bike towards you is the standard way. What happens after that depends on whether you've got a handbook with the bike.

Honda acknowledged that some owners were finding the bike difficult to start, so for the 1996 model year it lightened the flywheel and revised the decompressor system for

easier starting. The handbook for our 2000 example recommends that you use the handlebar-mounted decompressor lever and kick the engine over a couple of times to prime it. Then you should release the decompressor lever and use the kickstart lever but you must allow it to return to the top of its stroke – you then get an audible 'click' of the automatic decompressor engaging. From there, an almost gentle prod and no throttle should bring the motor to life. Jumping on the kickstart in the time-honoured fashion will achieve precisely nothing. There is one more part to the equation and that's the choke, the initial amount of which is, as ever, dependant on the

ambient weather.

Once you've got the hang of the starting procedure, perfecting it will become intuitive. Regard it as an extra anti-theft device. Keeping the air filter clean is also a must as that can

influence the mixture and is a simple enough task. The XR, like most older carbureted bikes, doesn't react well to having fuel containing ethanol left in the carb for any length of time. This will result in the carb



A Talon lowering link kit helps with the lofty 36in seat height



The XR250R ran from 1979 till 2004. Secondhand prices are still strong for pretty much all models



# USED & ABUSED

With a very respectable 37hp at 8,000rpm the KDX is not for the faint-hearted!



needing to be stripped and the jets cleaned. Then there's the float level. It's all a pain in the butt and best avoided, otherwise you'll end up not riding the bike. A manual is strongly recommended, and available online, as apart from the previously mentioned items, changing the oil and topping up to the right level isn't straightforward either due to the oil-in-frame design.

There were two electric start models: the XR250L, discontinued in 1996, which was not an Enduro model, and the XR250Y, the last roll of the dice, made for the Australian market. The latter also came with USD forks and was produced in 2005–6. Production of the XR250R ended in 2004.

This particular machine had been lowered on the rear suspension with a Talon kit, which keeps the original Kayaba remote-reservoir single shock and instead alters the

linkage geometry. Other modifications included bar risers and tapered bars.

Our other Used & Abused contender is Kawasaki's KDX220R. This is not a common bike but happens to

be owned by Team Trail member Charlie Harris and is quite an interesting mount – it couldn't be more different to the XR.

First off, it wasn't officially imported into the UK, though Kawasaki Motors UK brought in ▶



The original owner added an aftermarket exhaust system and a heavier flywheel

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# USED & ABUSED

a handful from the States. It's a development of the KDX 200, which was Kawasaki's default Enduro offering and it had a reasonable production life on the basis of 'if it ain't broke don't fix it'.

Your Editor had a KDX 200 for a while and it was the bike that bit him the hardest over the years. On a practice session at a track in Dartford, Kent, the throttle stuck open coming off a jump, which resulted in several days' stay in hospital having an anterior cruciate ligament (ACL) repaired, not to mention months of physiotherapy. However, this was no reflection on the bike.

The 220 variant has another 19cc and the liquid-cooled reed valve motor bangs out a very respectable 37hp at 8,000rpm. Add to that the fact that the dry weight is a mere 222.5lbs (101kg) and you can deduce that the performance is rather frisky.

The chassis is able to contain the engine's performance, thanks to sound frame design, Kawasaki's excellent Uni-Trak mono-shock rear suspension and 43mm cartridge fork allowing it to 'fly level' over some quite rough terrain.

At this point we can handover to Charlie. "There is a bit of a story behind this bike. A few years ago a friend of mine wanted a serious Enduro machine, and had been led to believe that Kawasaki UK had sold the entire year's allocation of Enduro machines. He then discovered that there was a consignment of five, which had been ordered by Kawasaki GB, and all but one has been sold. So he put his hand up and bought the last one.

"Little did he know the last batch had been fitted with the slightly larger, variable-port motor, which produced more

This bike is definitely a one-off. However the closest UK model would be the KDX200 which can be modified to a similar level



Aftermarket bars and speedo complete the set-up



power. The original owner then had the bike fitted with an aftermarket expansion pipe, a heavier flywheel plus other cosmetic 'improvements'. This was perfect for MX, but not for UK Enduro events. The bike was incredibly fast, which made it less suitable for trail riding allowing me to buy the

bike off him. I was about to return to France, where I had been living for two weeks of each month, and took the bike with me, which enabled me to ride the mountain trails for which the bike is still very suitable."

Both the Honda and the Kawasaki are very capable trail bikes. The Honda is a softer, more forgiving machine, better suited to the novice and older rider alike. The Kawasaki is a one-off example and would definitely be better in the hands of an expert. A KDX 200 has many of the same attributes minus the 'turbo effect' and would therefore have wider appeal. ■

## 2000 HONDA XR250R

<b>Engine</b>	Air-cooled, single-cylinder, SOHC, 4-valves
<b>Displacement</b>	249cc
<b>Bore x Stroke</b>	73mm x 59.5mm
<b>Carburetor</b>	Keihin 30mm
<b>Max Power</b>	19.6hp @ 8,600rpm
<b>Gearbox</b>	6-speed
<b>Fuel Capacity</b>	9-litres
<b>Wheelbase</b>	1400mm (55.1in)
<b>Seat Height</b>	915mm (36in)
<b>Dry Weight</b>	104kg (229.28lb)
<b>Prices</b>	£3000 - £4,500

## 2003 KAWASAKI KDX 220R

<b>Engine</b>	Single-cylinder, reed valve, 2-stroke
<b>Displacement</b>	216cc
<b>Bore x Stroke</b>	69mm x 58mm
<b>Carburetor</b>	Yes
<b>Max Power</b>	37hp @ 8,000rpm
<b>Gearbox</b>	6-speed
<b>Fuel Capacity</b>	11-litres
<b>Wheelbase</b>	1435mm (56.5in)
<b>Seat Height</b>	919mm (36.2in)
<b>Dry Weight</b>	101kg (222.6lb)
<b>Prices</b>	£1500 - £3,000

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Quote code TRF15

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