

**Gloucestershire
Group**

**Autumn 2008
Newsletter**

Future Events Roundup

| Date | Time | Event | See page |
|----------|----------|----------------------|----------|
| 25/9/08 | All day | Active in Older Life | page 6 |
| 28/9/08 | 9:00 am | Ride-out | page 21 |
| 5/10/08 | All day | Bike Safe | page 7 |
| 19/10/08 | All day | Slow Riding | page 7 |
| 26/10/08 | 9:00 am | Ride-out | page 21 |
| 27/10/09 | 7:30 pm | Commentary Training | page 7 |
| 16/11/08 | 10:00 am | Ride-out | page 21 |
| 30/11/08 | 12:30 pm | Festive Meal | page 7 |

Contents

| | |
|--|----|
| Future Events Roundup | 2 |
| Welcome & Congratulations | 4 |
| Chair's Report | 5 |
| Treasurer's Report | 5 |
| Welcome to your new committee. | 5 |
| Your New-Look Newsletter | 5 |
| Car Training Notes | 6 |
| Motorcycle Notes | 6 |
| Future events other than rideouts: | 6 |
| Newsletter Formats | 8 |
| May 2008 - Motorcycle Examiners Manual. | 9 |
| RoADAR v SAM Skittles Report | 9 |
| Less Soot Means More Problems | 10 |
| A Bit of a Mystery | 11 |
| Who's this then? | 12 |
| Llyn Brianne | 12 |
| Twelve Months from CBT to India | 13 |
| Motorcycling – Facts & Figures | 17 |
| A Triumph in Asturias. | 18 |
| Lulworth Cove Ride | 20 |
| Forthcoming Rides | 21 |
| New Traffic Information Sign | 22 |
| A Plea for Ride Leaders | 24 |
| Items for Sale/Wanted | 24 |
| Helpful Hints | 24 |
| Small Object of Desire? | 26 |
| More on fuels.... .. | 26 |
| My Helmet's Flat! | 27 |
| Micro Highway Code Quiz Answers | 29 |
| The Committee: | 30 |



Welcome & Congratulations

Cars

New Car Associates:

- Craig Redman - Lydney
- Bobby Walton - Gloucester
- Gail Moss - Long Newton
- John Woodland - Gotherington
- Tam Jenkins - Cheltenham
- Corinne Maltby - Slad
- Andrew Price - Cheltenham

Car Test/Retest Passes

- Derek Spooner
tutored by Janty Jones
- Martin Leighton
tutored by Jane Quilliam

Motorcycles

New M/C Associates:

- Ruddy Lacchin - Longford
- Paul Courtney - Northway
- Michael Robbins - Upton St. Leonards

M/C Test/Retest Passes

- Norman Dadd
tutored by Simon Whitelock
- Nigel Hitchings
tutored by Tim Hutt
- Gary Cook
tutored by Tim Hutt
- Craig Bywaters
tutored by Geoff Brown

Chair's Report

by Lorraine Williams

Well, we've seen another AGM come and go but this time with a few changes on the committee. A big welcome to all the new faces who've stepped up to help, and a big thank you to those who've remained to offer some guidance on how it all should work, and those who stepped down to give the rest of us a chance. We're now a couple of months into the new committee and there are some great ideas in the planning, most notably on the training front where Andy Curtis is working on events that everyone should benefit from. All you need to do is attend. On that note, if you haven't paid up your subs, now's the time to send off that cheque for £10 to the new Treasurer. And how about drumming up some support for the club by encouraging family and friends to think about advanced driving or biking.

It's always good for new drivers and a great refresher for those with a bit more experience who may have slipped into a few bad habits over the years. Anyway, enough from me. Hope you enjoy the newsletter and look forward to seeing some of your faces at future events. 🌟

Treasurer's Report

by Lawrence Moss

The Treasurer's report is a one-page summary of the full set of accounts and both were discussed and approved at the 12 August 2008 committee meeting.

The group is in a healthy cash flow positive position. There were 97 renewal subscriptions received up to the 28th August 2008. Members who have not renewed should please send a cheque for £10.00 payable to "Glos. RoADAR" to:

The Treasurer, Glos. RoADAR,
Conifers, Long Newnton,
Tetbury, GL8 8RH. 🌟

Welcome to your new committee.



by Charles Lyne

There was a sort of reluctant bloodless coup at the group's AGM on the 17th June 2008 at Cheltenham's Civil Service Sports Club, with the majority of posts being resigned from and up for grabs. Not that there was much grabbing, more a case of "Please volunteer so that we can all go home!"

Lorraine cleverly managed to volunteer for the Chair without even being present, but if her performance at the July committee meeting was anything to go by, the group is in very good hands and will go from strength to strength. And thanks for the excellent, and very readable, newsletters you've produced during the last two (?) years Lorraine.

Thanks also to the many other members of the previous committee who have also done a sterling job, and many of whom are still on the committee in a backup/advisory/support/whipping capacity. 🌟

Your New-Look Newsletter

by Charles Lyne

Inevitably, a new editor will have different ideas on how things should be done, but I hope that this is more evolutionary than revolutionary and will continue to be as interesting, readable and enjoyable as it has been in the past.

If you have any comments (positive or not so), please feel free to contact me or any other member of the committee (details on the back page).

And while on the subject of contacting me, this is a group newsletter, i.e. your newsletter. I'm only the editor, the person who puts the articles together to make the newsletter. You're the people who (I hope) will be writing (as well as reading) most of our future arti-



cles, not just me or the other committee members. We have two excellent biking holiday reports in this issue, more like these would be great.

So if there's something you've been wanting say about driving, riding, our roads, public transport, the price of fuel or just motoring in general, put it down in a legible format and send it to me. No guarantees that it will get published immediately if everyone in the group takes me up on this, but I'd rather have too much material than too little.

Details are on the back page about how to submit articles, but don't let it put you off if you haven't got a computer or a digital camera; hand/typewritten copy and photos (transparencies or prints) by post are acceptable as well.

On some pages you'll find an 'MHCQ'^a. This is a Micro Highway Code Quiz; it's just for fun. Try to answer them without opening your Highway Code! Answers on page 29. 🌟

Car Training Notes

by Janty Jones

Summer (!) is the quiet season with many going on holiday, so it's possibly a good time to get in a few extra tutored sessions (tutor availability permitting of course) while we have the longer daylight hours before the clocks go back. 🌟

Motorcycle Notes

by Philip Baker

Please will all members who have passed their RoSPA Advanced Motorcycle Test (or retest) kindly let me know within a week or so of you taking your test. Please include your tutor's name and also the result.

a. Nothing to do with GCHQ.

Events since the last Newsletter other than rideouts:

RoADAR A.G.M. - A little bit of a change around to the committee members but business as usual. A very big thank you to Dave Brazener for everything he has done with the motorcycle section over the past seven years. Don't worry though, he's still keeping a tight reign on us all 😊.

BBQ Tuesday 1st July - A very well attended evening at the Cleeve Hill Golf Club on 1st July. The food was to a very good standard and every body seemed to have a good time. The weather was merciful while the food was being devoured, all be it overcast. Then the heavens opened just before the motorcyclists departed. Rupert braved the weather to travel down from Worcester on his Bandit and Chris on the BMW from Stonehouse.

RoADAR v. SAM Advanced Skittles Match, Tuesday 8th July - Full report: "RoADAR v SAM Skittles Report" on page 9. 🌟

Future events other than rideouts:

Active in Older Life Event

Thursday 25th September 2008
Gloucester Rugby Club

Our group is represented at this event by Janty Jones and Andy Curtis where they'll be adjacent to the SAGE (Safer Driving with Age) stall.

Aimed at the older (retired?) members of society, there would seem to be quite a few interesting and useful things to see here. 🌟

Bike Safe, Kingswood, Bristol

Sunday 5th October 2008 9.00am - 4.00pm

A bikesafe event is being held by the Avon & Somerset Constabulary at the Civic Centre, High Street, Kingswood, Bristol (there is parking in front of the building - right next to the A420).

The day will include workshops and common causes of motorcycle accidents and hazard perception and a chance to have your riding abilities assessed by some of the best police motorcyclists in the country. The event is only £10. This goes towards the cost of the venue and teas/coffees etc. Any surplus is given to charity. If you are interested then an application form can be e-mailed to you or in hard copy, contact Philip Baker. ☆

Slow Riding Exercises

Sunday 19th October 2008 (planning stage)

This is an event for everyone. It will be a first come, first served basis and places are going fast. The venue is being planned to take place on 19th October at British Energy. The event will consist of a number of coned sections of different shapes and sizes. Help and advice will be on hand if required. At the moment we are looking to have a morning and afternoon booking, with it being your choice to do the AM or PM slot. The cost will be £5, this is towards light refreshments.

I (Phil) will be sending out further information closer to the date. ☆

Developing your commentary skills and Night Driving

Wednesday 27th October 2008
7.30pm start

Cheltenham Area Civil Service Social Club



'We commentate to concentrate' It makes our thinking more explicit for the examiner, it helps the tutor understand how the associate is processing the task and it helps the tutor enhance the learning process for the associate.

The evening will deconstruct commentary, providing clear guidelines as to how it can be developed. It will enable attendees to break down the process and focus on its discrete components so that they can build up to a comprehensive and possibly impressive level.

It is hoped that the evening will provide opportunities for discussion, clarification and some practice using set scenarios and, if we can, video footage. There will be demonstrations given both in the room and using video footage.

If you are a car Associate or Tutor, please make efforts to attend as part of your ongoing training. Even if you are between retests, you will benefit from this event. As the nights will be closing in, we will also be looking at the finer points of night driving if time allows. ☆

Festive Meal

Sunday 30th November 2008

Last year was an absolutely brilliant meal and very well attended. The menu looks equally as good this year. It will be held at: The Apple Tree, Stockwell Lane, Woodmancote, Cheltenham, GL52 9QG. This is for everyone,

including family.

- (v) Suitable for vegetarians
- (f) May contain fishbones
- (g) May contain gunpowder!





Starters:

- Tomato & rocket soup, thick-cut bread & Somerset butter (v) (g).
- King prawn cocktail, multigrain bread & Somerset butter (f).
- Goat's cheese, red onion & walnut tart, salad leaves & ruby beetroot glaze (v).
- Chicken liver parfait, balsamic onion confit, organic baguette & Somerset butter.

Main Courses:

All main courses served with root vegetables, broccoli & roasted potatoes.

- Hand-carved roast turkey, sage & onion stuffing, pigs in blankets, cranberry sauce & gravy.
- Beef brisket in port, cranberry & mushroom sauce with seasoned mashed potatoes.
- Wild Alaskan salmon fillet, Champagne & chive velouté (f).
- Barbary duck breast with Morello cherry sauce.
- Creamy mushrooms, Stilton & brazil nut crumble (v).

Desserts:

- Cherry & white chocolate torte with double cream & chocolate sauce.
- Christmas pudding & brandy sauce.
- Vanilla cream profiteroles with dark Belgian chocolate sauce.
- Warm lemon polenta cake with double cream.
- Truffles & Coffee

Choose either 2, 3 or 4 course option per person.

- 2 Courses £12.95
 - 3 Courses £14.95
 - 4 Courses £17.95
- (all prices per person).

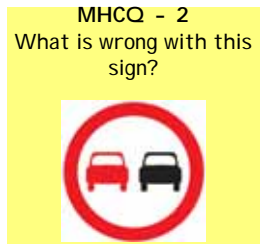
To reserve your seat(s), please contact Dave Brazener. 📞

Newsletter Formats

by Charles Lyne

Until now, the RoADAR Gloucestershire Group's newsletter has been exclusively produced as a (monochrome) printed edition and distributed by post (snail mail to use a rather derogatory term for the fine job that the Royal Mail do). But compared to more modern methods of distribution, post is comparatively slow and expensive.

So, to help reduce costs to the group, this and subsequent editions of the newsletter will be produced in three formats:



- a. The current monochrome printed newsletter which will be posted to all members who don't have email/internet facilities. Note that this version will not have photos as they don't reproduce sufficiently well.
2. A new colour PDF^a format, downloadable from the group's website (see back page) with limited resolution photos, suitable for members with speed/bandwidth limited internet connections.
3. Colour PDF^a format, downloadable from the group's website (see back page) with high resolution photos, suitable for members with broadband internet connections.

The PDF versions also have a number of other advantages:

- a. references within the newsletter to other pages will usually be hyperlinks, so for instance, just clicking on an entry in the 'Contents' page will take you straight to that article.
- b. references to URLs (www links) will usually be hyperlinks as well and will open

a. The free Adobe reader for PDF documents is available at www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep2.html

up the relevant page in your default browser window.

- c. references to committee names are also hyperlinks that will open up a new email to the relevant person.

Rather than email the newsletter directly, members will be informed by a short text-only email when the new newsletter is available, and can then choose to download whichever version is preferred. This will not only save the group some valuable funds, but will also distribute the newsletter significantly more quickly to most members. 🌟

May 2008 - Motorcycle Examiners Manual.

from Nigel Murray

Motorcycle Examiners have received a 'new' Marking Manual for test reports etc. I have 'edited' the attached documents in line with the new guidance received etc.

A number of aspects have been removed (or incorporated in another heading) and although the actual test report form I use will contain a 'box' for all areas (as it is also a car examiners report form) I will only use those sections as per the Notes for Tutors.doc.

The Senior Motorcycle Examiner has forwarded the below as a clarification exercise (of some areas):

One of the reasons for having a suggested briefing for candidates is to ensure as much as possible that any troublesome areas are discussed before the actual test.

Some of the more recent subjects have been:

Brake light shown before entering a lower speed limit?

Whether one is given will depend on the circumstances. Demanding that one is given, or that one is not given is equally wrong.

Which foot down?

Depends on circumstances. Both feet down may be applicable in some circumstances. If you wish the candidate to show they have come to a halt (STOP sign) by putting a foot down, then you must make that clear before the test begins (I will require that a rider on test at a 'STOP' will be confirmed by a foot down. Nigel M.)

Indicate for the examiner?

Generally no. The examiner is not treated as following traffic (otherwise the candidate will not demonstrate they can decide whether a signal is required.)

Speed?

We cannot condone deliberate speeding for any set of circumstances, including a posted speed limit. When overtaking it is important to get the manoeuvre over with as safely as possible and that means not riding and looking at the speedometer only (I certainly will not be looking at mine, but will use my judgement.) Remember - appropriate (Nige M.)

Straightening bends?


If the bends are open bends, you can see the exit from the entry, it is permissible to straighten on your own side of the road. We cannot condone a breach of the Highway Code rules 127 & 160 (2007 edition). 🌟

RoADAR v SAM Skittles Report


by Ray Brooks

Once again on a balmy July evening there was a gathering at Walls Club, Gloucester for the annual RoADAR/SAM skittles match. We gathered together and were jovially hosted by our good friends from SAM who plied us with sausage and chips before the tournament 'down the alley'. Was it going to be a repeat of last year when SAM won the evening or was it going to be RoADAR's turn again.





The balls started to roll and looked fairly evenly matched until one of our members had a fluke shot and had a spare - it certainly was a fluke because on the next hand he had a three. The raffle went very well: it seemed that RoADAR members bought quite a lot of tickets because quite a few prizes came our way. The evening concluded with RoADAR being the winners. A very enjoyable evening was had by all and we gave grateful thanks to our genial hosts.



as catalytic converters are on petrol cars. The European Union aims to reduce diesel particulate emissions by 80 per cent, but, as with so much of the new technology, certain unforeseen problems have arisen due to traffic congestion and the way the cars are driven.

Diesel particulate filters (DPF) catch bits of soot in the exhaust, and the trapped soot is removed by a process called regeneration. In effect this means that the soot is burnt off at a high exhaust temperature to leave only a tiny ash deposit. Regeneration can be either passive or active. Passive regeneration takes place automatically on motorway runs when the exhaust temperature is high. Since many cars do not get this sort of use, manufacturers have had to introduce active regeneration where the engine management system makes an adjustment to the fuel injection system to increase the exhaust temperature to start regeneration when the soot in the filter reaches 45 per cent.

Less Soot Means More Problems

Particulate filters lead to breakdowns from the Thames Valley Newsletter

Next year the new car emissions legislation enacted by the European Commission takes effect. From 2009 Euro 5 standards will make particulate filters as commonplace on diesels



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If your driving includes a lot of stop-start journeys, the regeneration may not be completed and a warning light will illuminate to show that the DPF is partially blocked. By driving for at least 10 minutes at a speed above 40 mph it should be possible to start a complete regeneration and to clear the warning light. If you are stuck in traffic and this is impossible, then the soot loading will build up until at about 75 per cent other warning lights will start to glow. At this point the car should be stopped, your breakdown service summoned, and the car taken by a recovery vehicle to the dealer for a DPF regeneration.

Should you ignore the warning lights and continue driving, your car will need expensive repairs and a new DPF unit costing around £1,000. The most common DPF features an integrated oxidising catalytic converter and is located very close to the engine, where the exhaust gases are hottest and passive regeneration is possible. If there is not sufficient space in the engine bay, some manufacturers use a different type of DPF which relies on a fuel additive to lower the combustion temperature of the soot, so that the DPF can be moved further from the engine. The additive is stored in a separate tank and automatically mixed in very tiny amounts with the diesel whenever you fill up. A litre of additive is enough to treat 2,800 litres of diesel and enough to cover a minimum of 25,000 miles at 40 mpg. This 'tank' type of DPF regeneration, initiated by the car's computer (the ECU), takes place every 300 miles or so and lasts about five minutes. The Breakdown companies, such as the AA, have noticed that DPF systems are failing to regenerate as the manufacturers intended. The problem appears to be that on cars with a very high sixth gear the engine revs are too low to generate sufficient exhaust temperature. Occasional harder driving in lower gears, when the engine has reached its working temperature, is sufficient to remedy the situation. In any case, fifth is often much better than sixth for instant response on a busy motorway. The

wise alternative, if you do mainly commuting and stop-start driving, is to choose a petrol-engine car.



If your car has a DPF fitted, or you buy a new car in the next few months, it is important to read the handbook, so that you know exactly what to do if the warning light comes on. Also if you are driving a diesel, you might need to think about your driving style and how it needs to be adjusted to ensure maximum efficiency of the DPF and the life of your engine. Although diesels will 'pull' well from low revs relative to a petrol engine, the occasional burst of acceleration to 3,500 to 4,000 rpm when the engine has thoroughly warmed is beneficial. 🌟


A Bit of a Mystery

Rideout Report Sun. 19th June 2008

by Keren Rosser

On a fine June day about ten riders met at Seven Springs to be led by Ray Brooks on a mystery tour. We set off towards Cirencester, turning off at Perrots Brook up through a single track road. Winding our way to Fairford across a small bridge with beautiful mill house and weir and on towards Lechlade. Passing RAF Fairford, more bendy back lanes towards Highworth. Then on down to the Valley of Race Horses at Lambourne (my personal favourite bit), viewing all the amazing training yards, mares with their foals, the fields and budding future racing stars. But I digress; we then travelled along Ermine Street which is a long fast straight road running parallel with the M4 winding up at the Malmesbury Garden Centre for Coffee and snacks.

Suitably refreshed we then made our way towards the back of Cirencester to the "Whiteway", more long straights to whiz down, finally turning up a single track lane, which was fairly sparse in its make up and I was able to test the off road ability of my new adventure bike! Don't know if that was the intention but it was much appreciated by me

 at least. We then came out onto the Andoversford to Seven Springs road and pulled into the lay-by for chats and farewells. A good time had by all. Thanks to Ray and to the sweeper, Chris for an enjoyable rideout. 🌟

Who's this then?

Simon Ross giving a 'little guy' some training at Skellerns Open Day.



Llyn Brianne

Rideout Report Sun. 6th July 2008

by Philip Baker

We all met at the Longford Inn car park for a 9:00am start. The weather was heavy rain and stayed that way until Abergavenny. Terry Allen was the ride leader, sweeper was Chris Lees. A total of four bikes, not bad considering the forecast. Rupert rode down from

Worcester to be there from the start. A very strange looking pit girl (JA) turned up before the start to keep the ride leader dry with a brolly while he did the ride brief. Stop to stretch our legs at Abergavenny. Only about four other bikes at the bus station/café.

Depart Abergavenny at about 10:30. Had approximately 100 push bikes join the ride for a short distance. Petrol at Crickhowell 115.9p, 119.9p at Sainsbury's Glos. 'B' road from Crickhowell following canal to Talybont-On-Usk. Part of the canal had been drained so that repair work could be carried out due to flooding last year. Very nice section to ride.

Onto A40, had to avoid dead sheep carcass on main carriageway. Llandovery Garden Centre at 11:30 for full English (large) breakfast and super it was. Lucky stop, for the heavens opened as we were munching away. Pleasant ride to reservoir. Photo shoot of large water spout at the dam. No ice cream van at the top car park (complaint to Welsh tourist board).

Technical ride from Llyn Brianne reservoir to Beulah, small tight twisty roads with shingle in places. Near collision with two hitch hiking sheep, viewed two Red Kites on the way. Fuel at Beulah. Blue skies to Builth Wells. Detour over the River Wye using rickety bridge just over a mile from Erwood (one day those planks are going to give way). Onward to Hay on Wye, now very hot and lots of blue sky. No bikes in bike park at Hay's main parking area. Stop for tea, cakes and ice cream.

On to Ross on Wye via pleasant twisty 'B' roads. Home by five luckily, just in time for the main downpour at six o'clock. A very pleasant day even though it poured at the start. Thank you to Terry and Chris for a lovely days riding. 🌟

Twelve Months from CBT to India

(contd. from May issue)

by Andy Curtis

To experience a developing country for the first time, away from the tourist trail and on a form of transport relatively new to me was different, life changing even. Ride and tour leader Dave (sounds familiar, but he was 6' 5" with a pony-tail) gathered the 17 strangers at the airport, bundled us into three mini buses for the hour long journey to base camp. We had left Gatwick at 35 °F and landed in Goa at 35 °C. Apart from the huge contrast in temperature, I was immediately struck by the colours, the vibrancy, the smells, and the very real poverty. No travel programme could have prepared my senses for this. My first travel-weary reactions to the roads as seen from the mini bus was "We're all going to die!", it looked like death and carnage waiting to happen, but this was India, live each day as if it were your last "For it is written".

Base camp in Old Goa was a crumbling colonial building with decaying brickwork and an incomplete roof. Dogs, cats and a tame

monkey or two were enjoying the shade under trees in the dusty compound. To the right, a palm covered structure which was the workshop, to the left, a herd of 20 shiny Enfields.



Over a much needed cup of spiced tea 'chai' we were briefed on the rules. There would be zero tolerance of irresponsible behaviour. Likewise, no consumption of alcohol during the day. Episodes of either would result in expulsion from the tour.

Drive on the left, assume the vehicle in front will stop without warning and that vehicles either side of the road will pull out in front of you...because they usually will. When gaining on vehicles ahead or nearing any other moving objects, sound your horn. When intending to overtake, sound your horn. When you are about to be overtaken, sound your horn.

Keep your eyes open and use mirrors/shoulder checks all the time, the unexpected happens as a matter of course. Any waiting for a suitable gap with the exception of certain death will result in very few miles being covered. Use plenty of signals, consider arm signals too.





Unlikely they will be heeded or noticed, but you never know. Safety clothing to be worn at all times, especially helmets as these are mandatory. We were told that this tends to be enforced only with tourists. Indeed the three police motorcyclists we saw were not wearing helmets, gloves, or jackets nor, in one case, footwear.

Time for introductions to our Enfield Bullets before resting up in preparation for the 04:30 hrs start in the morning.

What fabulous machines, a design essentially unchanged since the fifties. A mass of gleaming black paint, shining chrome and polished metal. Our steeds were four years old and covered about 20,000 miles per year, it didn't show.

Having gone through the controls and kick-starting procedure, we were taken on a twenty minute ride around the plantation. Wow! Here we were, in the dust and the heat on machines that were going to take us through a very humbling experience.

An early start saw us riding through a country coming to life, the sunrise casting its hues over the rich verdant landscape. We had to cross the river to leave Old Goa, the sight of people washing at the waters edge reinforced the contrasts that were to follow.

Junctions and roundabouts laid out as clear as day with painted kerbstones. Traffic lights though sometimes present, not operational. It was suggested that at any given point where someone needs to give way the philosophy is "I have priority".

What rapidly became apparent was the existence of a 'third lane'. No matter that there was no room, people were still overtaking. Blind bends, hair pins, busy town centres, no problem. I don't know what the fatalities are like but it seems to work.

The quality of roads varied enormously, from European standard to rough track. Having marvelled at the agility of Messrs Boorman and McGregor on their BMW GS, I had to smile at the abuse these Bullets took in their stride. Potholes, mud, sand, rocks and boulders, all negotiated with reassuring ease.

To be said, the predominant 125s and mopeds were doing pretty much the same thing except usually two up and with boxes strapped on any which way! Puts our biking 'needs' in perspective.



The first week of travel took us East from Goa to the ancient city of Hampi then South to Ooty via Mysore. During the overnight stay in Mysore we decided to stretch our legs and have a wander. We needed to cross at a large roundabout, somewhat larger than the Arle Court roundabout but with a smaller island and more lanes. In addition to motor vehicles add cyclists, pedestrians and cattle.

With a disregard to priorities it looked like mayhem, yet vehicles kept moving and pedestrians just stepped off the kerb, me included. A surreal experience which was highly energising to be part of.

Heading North West toward the coastal city of Mangalore took us through the Western Ghats where the hairpins seemed endless. We were certainly shaken about as the road surface was at best graded dirt. Tackling some of the gradients whilst negotiating loose rocks, hairpins and sheer drops took some concentration. Regular chai stops gave us time to settle jangled arms.

Our early morning start through mist covered vegetation concentrated the now unmistakable perfume of rural India, a heady mix of the varied plantlife, spices, hardwood trees and even the soil. With the descent from Madikeri came the heat again.

Heading to Mangalore saw a motorway, large slabs of tarmac, dust and traffic. The motorway was under construction however. We might expect sections to peel off up slip roads until subsequent sections are completed. Not so!



MHCQ - 3
If you turned right here, where would you be going?

When the tarmac runs out, traffic bounces onto whatever surface is there, possibly graded stone possibly just bed rock cleared ready for construction. Imagine M6 density traffic bouncing onto bedrock: clouds of dust, no lane markings, almost zero visibility.

But, possibly because 'It is written', traffic flow doesn't slow down. If it wasn't so extraordinary I think it would have been terrifying.

Following the coast back up to Old Goa, now on mostly tarmac roads was a relief. Everyone was openly expressing a sense of exhaustion. We had a couple of beachside nightstops, Udupi and Gokarna.

"We were warned that an angry elephant can manage 0 - 30mph somewhat faster than our Bullets!"





Just a blanket on the sand and the stars above. Bathing in the Arabian Sea, watching the sunset whilst slurping a cold drink was very welcome.

An early morning walk along the beach reminded us that we were very fortunate. Our accommodation whilst beachside at least gave us privacy when at our business. Local fisherman living in beachside huts had no such option. In case you wonder, they had quite literally been and gone by the time we made our discovery.

The last leg back into Old Goa was at rush hour. The density of traffic, the heat, the more urban smell of sewers and the noise was a potent reminder of what we had left behind. We said farewell to our trusty bikes and were taken to a hotel (flushing toilets) where we had a further two nights before the trip home. Our guides took us to a very European Al Fresco restaurant that evening. European food and European Prices.

All very sumptuous but somehow sterile and devoid of character compared to what we had become used to.

What I experienced made me very much more aware of what I have and the opportunities open to me. It makes me fearful of how the developed world is going and the risks it runs with some of its values. It makes me uncomfortable to think of the inequalities and exploitation which undoubtedly I contribute to as a consumer. Maybe that's no bad thing.

In terms of experiencing Indian roads, for all the mayhem, it keeps moving and apparently road rage is a concept yet to be discovered. For self preservation whilst riding in a country with very different attitudes, it served as a lesson in careful observation early anticipation and attempted planning.

The Bullet is a cracking bike with a low centre of gravity and remarkable agile. It's highly robust, reliable and seemingly indestructible. Although, for anyone thinking of a bike as used by Messrs Boorman and McGregor, you may be surprised by what a good moped can manage! 🌟



Motorcycling - Facts & Figures

Some facts and figures culled from the MCI A National Motorcycle Week press notice in July.

From Nigel Murray

Industry and Economy.

- Since about 2001 expenditure on motorcycling^a has been around £0.75 per household per week (£0.15 on purchases and loans, £0.60 on accessories, spares, etc.) which suggests a total for the UK at more than £1 billion.
- The Motor Cycle Industry Association (MCI) estimates that the total UK motorcycle industry turns over in the region of £3 billion per year and directly employs approximately 15,000 people.

Motorcycle Activity

- In the UK, there are approximately 3.5 million people who have motorcycle entitlement on their licence.
- There are around 1.5 million active riders and 15 per cent of them are women.
- The average motorcyclist rides 90 miles per week.
- About 60 per cent of motorcycle trips are for work/business/education.
- Five motorcycles can park in a space occupied by one car.
- Scooters cut journey times in the capital by an average of 48 per cent compared to all other forms of transport.

a. Compendium of Motorcycle Statistics DfT
June 2006

- Approximately 100,000 Londoners own a bike, of which half are mopeds or scooters.



Gender and Motorcycling

- 28 per cent of women used a motorcycle as their main form of transport.
- 27 per cent used a moped.
- 63 per cent said they were all-year riders.
- 37 per cent didn't generally ride in winter.
- 40 per cent used their bike every day compared to 33 per cent men.
- 38 per cent used a bike mainly for general transport compared to 23 per cent men.
- 42 per cent used a bike mainly for pleasure compared to 51 per cent men.

Age and Motorcycling

The number of young people aged 17– 21 years, who took their motorcycle test increased from 2003/04 to 2004/05 by 12 per cent.

An industry survey of riders in the 35-45 age-groups indicates:

- Three quarters are married.
- Around half are skilled, managerial or professional workers.
- On average, they started riding 20 years ago.
- Many gave-up in the mid 1980s.
- Around 60 per cent have come back to biking after a break of 9 years on average.
- Around 1 in 4 belong to a bike club of some sort. 🌟



A Triumph in Asturias.

by Neil Richings

In May of this year my wife and I travelled to Northern Spain for a six day break with a company called Bike-Astur (www.Bike-Astur.com) and we thoroughly enjoyed the experience too: -

We left home at around 06:30 on a clear and bright Wednesday morning and headed for the port at Plymouth. With a couple of stops en route, we arrived at the dock at around 10:00 and were able to board Brittany Ferries' flagship the MV Pont Aven with little delay. Within minutes of riding down to the bike deck a large foam cushion was placed over the bike's seat and it was expertly secured to the deck by one of the crew.

Just after 12:00, and with all our riding done for the day, we were sipping a nice cool beer whilst watching Plymouth Hoe slip past the port side. The accommodation for the overnight crossing was in compact but clean and comfortable cabins (bunk beds and en-suite). A decently priced and very varied selection of food and drink could be purchased from several places on board, during the voyage.

The following morning, and after a good night's sleep and a hearty breakfast, we arrived in Santander. On leaving the ship and clearing the (chaotic) passport check area, we rode out of the port. Just outside the gates we were met by Phil Butler who owns and runs Bike-Astur. Phil is without doubt one of the nicest guys you will ever come across. A man who has a genuine passion and knowledge about everything he does.

"The roads were smooth and of the highest quality."



With the initial introductions done, our small group of bikes was led out through the streets of Santander and out onto the highways of Cantabria. After a stop for fuel and lunch along the way, we entered into Asturias and got to our hotel near the small town of Llanes at around mid afternoon. This was to be our base for the duration of the tour. We found the hotel to be comfortable and of a very high standard, it also provides secure bike parking in the owner's very large garage.

All of the tours are on a bed and breakfast basis only. This is actually a good thing, as each evening it gave us a chance to explore the town's many bars and restaurants and sample the superb range of food and drink that they provide. We certainly did not go hungry!

After a leisurely buffet style breakfast, each day of the tour started with Phil arriving at the hotel at about 10:00, a brief chat to discuss the day's plans, and then a day long game of "follow my leader" through some of the most enjoyable roads and spectacular scenery that I think one could possibly find in any of Europe. Built in to each of the day's rides were plenty of stops for photographs, coffee, food, etc.

During the ride outs the emphasis was very much on relaxing and enjoying the scenery (and both of these we certainly did); this of course dictated the pace of the rides, which I would describe as "easy going", but considering the type of roads being ridden, very appropriate (this is certainly not a "high speed blast through the scenery" type holiday so "Power Rangers" probably need not apply!).

"We even got to ride through a cave!"





The menu is traditional Spanish, and must rank as some of the best available in the area. And with a taxi provided each way, we enjoyed the night to the full!

The roads that we were riding each day varied from coastal and sweeping to mountainous and twisty. The highest point we reached was over 1,100 metres and we even got to ride through a cave. Wherever we went though, all of the roads were smooth and of the highest quality.

An evening meal that is included in the holiday, and is certainly worthy of note, is the excellent "end of tour" meal at one of Phil's favorite local restaurants. The evening is a real treat for anyone who appreciates fine food and drink.

Sadly, after our breakfast on Tuesday morning, we had come to the end of the tour and it was time to make our way back to Santander. As usual, Phil was on hand to guide us back to the port, and after a stop for lunch and a last farewell, we joined the ferry for our return to Plymouth.

After four days of riding in the biking paradise that is Northern Spain, our return to the overcrowded, over regulated and poorly surfaced roads of Britain turned out to be quite a shock to the system. So with this in mind, and having enjoyed the holiday so much, we (along with a couple that we met on this tour) are already planning to go back next year and do it all again... But for longer!

I would certainly recommend this holiday to anyone who is looking for a relaxing and interesting break in what is a very beautiful part of Spain: The "Blackpool with sun" type resorts of the southern Costas, that often seem overpopulated with football shirt wearing Brit's, it certainly is not! This is the real Spain, a place in which English is rarely spoken and where the lifestyle, customs and food on offer are traditional and simply wonderful.

The Road to Cuevas village (near Ribadesella).



With every single aspect of the trip so well planned and organized by Phil, all you have to do is turn up and ride the bike...easy! 🍷

Lulworth Cove Ride

Rideout Report Sun. 3rd August 2008

by Ray Brooks

Once again the jet stream has brought the 'good old British summer' to an end. The weather forecast was rain, rain and more rain. Four intrepid 'motorcycle riders' meet at Seven Springs in time for a 0900hrs start. The ride leaders' comments were "well there might be some rain featuring in this ride; it will blow through in batches". We set off towards Cirencester with the possibility of a further bike joining us at Chippenham. The day at this point is grey but fine, with the early Sunday morning traffic being quite light we made good progress and with only four riders there was no need for any drop offs.

True to form we were met by the other intrepid rider and his good lady in the layby at Chippenham and continued on to the breakfast stop at Compton Abbas air strip. All was well until we were approaching the infamous (but exhilarating) Zig Zag Hill at this point it had started raining, did I say "raining"? It was bucketing down; my visor started misting, at least I thought it was my visor (turned out to be my glasses) and the steep bends on Zig

Zag were a torrent verging on a flash flood which made cornering interesting (rules of cornering from the 'Blue Book'?).

Once successfully negotiated the said hill, out across the top of the escarpment the flashing beacon of the airfield came into sight and 'FULL ENGLISH BREAKFAST' was in sight.

The squall passed through and we continued on, passing such locations as Tolpuddle of the marching fame and Shaftsbury also visiting the spot where a famous rider is believed to have fallen off, he was better at riding camels, viz: Lawrence of Arabia. The ride continued past the Tank Museum at Bovington Camp. By this time the weather had cleared up and I think there was just a little chink of blue sky which lasted until the lunch stop at Lulworth.

A brisk walk up to the top of the cliffs gave us the bracing views of the waves thundering through the rocky arches of the Lulworth Crumple, also the white horses out to sea and the boats moored up in the safe haven of the inner cove.

Off once again having recharged our batteries, to the stunning views across the top of the Purbec Hills and the army firing ranges, (thankfully they were closed and we didn't have to duck).

The ride leader turned into a car park where we partook of the view of a rather proud man at Cerne Abbas (I must say he was looking rather green and not quite so prominent as he normally looks). Onwards and northwards through some beautiful riding/driving 'B' class roads through Castle Cary, Shepton Mallet to the Little Chef at Farrington Gurney (for a coffee fix – getting a bit tired now) where our fifth motorcycle left us to return to Yate and we returned to Gloucestershire via Chris's little snicket around the western side of Bath up to the A46 and home.

Why is it whenever I go through Nailsworth it rains because that was the second dousing of the day, so much for the forecast of heavy rain in the South of England!

We had a very interesting and varied ride through some fantastic scenery and wonderful riding roads. Thanks again to Chris Lees for leading this ride. 🌟

Forthcoming Rides

by Chris Lees

These rides are open to all and I would particularly like to see more associates (and their tutors) supporting the efforts of the Ride Leaders. 🌟

| Date | Meet Time | Meet Place | Details |
|------------|-----------------------|---------------|---|
| 28/09/2008 | 09:00 am | Seven Springs | Guess where we are going? 150 miles/6 hours. |
| 26/10/2008 | 09:00 am <u>GMT</u> * | Longford Inn | Foraging in the Forest. 80 miles/4 hours. |
| 16/11/2008 | 10:00 am | Seven Springs | Last Chance Ride. 100 miles/5 hours. |

*. Please note: British Summer Time ends at 2:00am on this morning. The clocks will go back one hour, so make sure you set them correctly. No excuse for being late!

New Traffic Information Sign

Driver Location Signs; What is a driver location sign?

A sign by the side of a motorway or all-purpose trunk road that tells you:

| | |
|--|---|
| | <p>The motorway route number or A road route number that you are travelling on.</p> |
| | <p>This letter tells the emergency services or the Highways Agency which direction you are travelling in.</p> |
| | <p>The distance in kilometres from the start of the motorway.</p> |

What do I use the sign for? If you witness an incident such as a road traffic collision or debris on the road, tell the emergency services or Highways Agency what is written on the nearest sign to you (remember, it is illegal to use a mobile phone when driving, use a hands free kit, or ask a passenger to use a mobile). This will help the emergency services to get to the correct location quickly.

To Report:

- Road Traffic Incidents / Collisions - dial 999 or 112
- Debris - call Highways Agency Information Line 08457 50 40 30

New signs are now being installed on priority routes across the country that will let you know where you are if you want to report a problem on the motorway:

| Area | Routes Covered | Installation Complete |
|------------|----------------|-----------------------|
| South West | M5 J15 - J31 | Completed |
| | M49 | Completed |
| | M4 Jct 15-22 | Completed |
| | M48 | Completed |
| | M5 - J9 to J15 | 2008/2009 |
| | M32 J1 to J3 | 2008/2009 |



| Area | Routes Covered | Installation Complete |
|-----------------------|--|-----------------------|
| London and South East | M27 J5-J12 and M271 from M27 J3 to Southampton | Completed |
| | M4 J5 - J12 | 2008/2009 |
| | M4 J13 - J15 | 2008/2009 |
| | M3 J3 - J14 | 2008/2009 |
| | M4 J1- J5 | 2008/2009 |
| | M3 J1 – MP37/4 (Between Jcts 2-3) | 2008/2009 |
| | M26 J3 / M25 J3 – M20 | 2008/2009 |
| | M11 J4 - J7 | Spring 2008 |
| South East | A404 (M) | 2008/2009 |
| East | M11 J7 - J14 | Completed |
| | M1 - J10 to J19 | 2008/2009 |
| | M1 - J24 to 25 | 2008/2009 |
| | M1 - J28 to 30 | 2008/2009 |
| Midlands | M6 J4 - J8 | Spring 2008 |
| | M6 J8 - J12 | Spring 2008 |
| | M6 J0 - J4 | Completed |
| | M6 J12 - J16 | Completed |
| | M42 | Completed |
| | M5 - M6 J8 to J9 | 2008/2009 |
| | M40 - J15 to M42 3A | 2008/2009 |
| | M1 - J19 to 24 | 2008/2009 |
| North West | M62 J18 - A1 | Completed |
| | M62 J6 - J12 | Completed |
| | M56 J9 – A5103 | Completed |
| | M56 J9 - J16 | Completed |
| North East | M62 J18 - A1 | Completed |
| | M62 J18 - A1 | Completed |
| | M1 - J42 to 48 | 2008/2009 |
| | A1 (M) - J56 to J65 | 2008/2009 |
| South East, Midlands | M40 J1 - J15 | Completed |



A Plea for Ride Leaders

Chris Lees
(Chris_Lees@Compuserve.com)

We are looking to recruit (pressgang) a number of new ride leaders. The reasons for this are that we need some new faces in front of the group instead of the old wrinklies always having to do them.

The other reason is that I am sure there are a number of you motorcyclist chaps that have some brilliant locations you would like to share with the rest of us?

The main thing that stops most of us from leading a ride is the possibility of getting lost, group fragmentation, pique(!) etc, but so what? Who cares, it is a ride on our bikes in good company and we are all human ---?

Some of the chaps who are now accomplished ride leaders would like to pass on their knowledge to others and are very willing to do some very informal training with you on a one to one basis; can't be bad, can it?

For those of you who have some ideas for ride destinations and choose not to do a lead, then we can arrange for you and one of the wrinklies to have a rideout so that a recce of the route can be done.

The duration and distance of the ride is not important, so if it's 50 miles or 300 miles, 2 hours or 10 hours, let's give it a try.

Please do not forget that all rideouts are intended to improve our riding skills and for us to practise the art of Roadcraft in the company of other like minded motorcyclist.

Please contact me (or Phil Baker) with ideas or thoughts on this. ☆

Items for Sale/Wanted

Free advertising for group members

Here's one to start with:

MHCQ - 4
What does this sign designate?



- One piece Pro-Sports white/blue/black one-piece quality leathers by Hein Gericke. Good condition, never been in an accident. Hiptotec-2 armour and back protector. Velcro for knee sliders, size 52 (a bit too long for my 5' 4" son modelling). Clean inside & out (slight discolouration of the white leather). Realistic offers to the newsletter editor please. ☆



Helpful Hints

by anyone?

Any offers for content here would be welcome. Have you got a useful motoring tip for your fellow members? If so, please send it to the editor in time for the next issue. ☆

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Small Object of Desire?

by Charles Lyne

What's the most valuable small object in your house:

- a mobile phone with multi-mega-pixel camera and GPS?
- a personal organiser?
- a diamond necklace?

Probably it's none of these, most likely it's the key(s) to your car, quite possibly worth maybe £20,000 or more? And yet most of us take little special care of such a valuable item. However, much car theft, especially of more valuable cars, is nowadays effected by stealing the car's key first, usually by means of a burglary.

Moral: think "this key is worth £20,000" (or whatever) and keep it somewhere safe. 🌟

More on fuels....

from the Thames Valley Newsletter

Can your car run on 'greener' fuel?

The Government claims that it would like motorists to drive cars which emitted less CO₂. More than a third of cars in Britain already run on diesel, mainly because it offers much better fuel consumption, and using less fuel cuts the CO₂ emissions. Yet diesel in Britain is heavily taxed and costs more than in any other country in Europe except Norway. Adding to the confusion over using a greener fuel, drivers are being promised the introduction of biodiesel, but without any cost advantage to the motorist.

Biodiesel is manufactured from palm oil, oil seed rape and waste cooking oil. The secret of a modern diesel's economy is the way the fuel is pumped at very high pressure in tiny amounts into the cylinders. The efficiency of the pump depends on the oiliness of the fuel itself for lubrication. In this respect biodiesel is an excellent lubricant. However there is a snag. The viscosity of the fuel is vital for the

pump to operate effectively, and many pumps, especially those fitted to the latest 'common rail' engines will not run for long on pure biodiesel, which has a higher water content than conventional diesel. So the engine oil and filters need more frequent changing to avoid corrosion. The energy produced by biodiesel is also lower than conventional diesel, and fuel consumption is increased.

Biodiesel comes in three main blends, B5 with a 5% mix with conventional diesel, B30 a 30% mix, and B100, which is pure biodiesel. B5 is already on sale. So do take a close look at the pump and be aware that your car may get fewer miles to a gallon. B30 is still not widely available. All biodiesel can be identified at the pumps by the British Standards code BS14214. Some engines will run happily on biodiesel, but before you use this fuel do read the car's handbook or check with the manufacturer.

At the moment fuel companies can choose to add 5% biodiesel (2.5% is at present compulsory) to conventional diesel, but by 2010 it will be a legal requirement, although Brussels is currently having second thoughts on bio fuels. A mix at this level will not damage your engine, nor require any adjustment which cannot be handled by the engine management system, but it will lead to a slight increase in fuel consumption. Some manufacturers such Renault and Peugeot-Citroen have cars on sale which can use B30.

The situation is similar with bioethanol^a, which is being test marketed in various parts of Britain, particularly in Norfolk, by Morrisons supermarkets. In Somerset it is also being tested by the county council and the local police force. E5 is the 5% blend and E85^b contains 15% ethanol and 85% petrol.

a. Editorial note: added to petrol.
 b. Editorial note: this is wrong, E15 contains 15% ethanol, see Wikipedia.

Bioethanol, which is currently imported, will soon be produced from British-grown grain and sugar beet. Saab, Ford, Peugeot-Citroen, Renault and Volvo are already producing cars capable of running on E85. These vehicles have had their fuel systems treated to resist the corrosive effects of bioethanol and their electronic control units programmed to take advantage of the higher octane rating.

Again, as with diesel, fuel companies are currently permitted to mix 5% ethanol with 95% petrol and to claim the benefits of its higher octane rating. By 2010 the E5 mix will be compulsory. But do be aware again that, as with the biodiesel, you will get fewer miles per gallon for a more expensive product. 🌱

My Helmet's Flat!

by Charles Lyne

Since I started riding a powered bike (Lambretta scooter to be exact) in the 60's, I've always considered a crash helmet to be a fairly passive collection of plastic and soft material that might keep my head intact should I get separated from the bike, and stops flies and other airborne objects from getting up my nose.

But now I have to remember to plug my helmet in to charge it up from time to time.

What is this sophisticated device that needs power:

- A screen wiper to clear rain from the visor?
 - A fan to circulate air to keep me cool?
-





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No it's much more sophisticated than either of those, it's:  **Bluetooth**

I daresay that if you're reading the colour PDF version of this newsletter, you're probably familiar with Bluetooth, and even if you're reading the printed version, you may well also know what it is, but for the uninitiated, Bluetooth is a short-range^a digital radio transmission protocol, allowing two devices to communicate with each other.

Sophisticated is a bit of an understatement really. For less than £10, you can now buy a Bluetooth earpiece that takes in your speech from a tiny microphone and digitises it (converts it to '1's & '0's) then splits all the data up into neat little packets and transmits them all on dozens of different radio frequencies, while at the same time doing the same in reverse for audio coming through your mobile phone from someone else.

To give an analogy as to what it's doing, imagine a military commander in the trenches during WW1 wants to send a long message back to HQ and has ten homing pigeons. He could just split the message up into ten sections, put each one on a pigeon and release the pigeons in one place hoping that the little flock won't get spotted as they fly over the enemy lines. If one pigeon gets shot down, a crucial part of the message may be lost, and the enemy may even get to read that crucial section.

So he rewrites the message putting the 1st, 11th, 21st, etc words in message one, the 2nd, 12th, 22nd, etc words in the second message, and so on, and then releases the pigeons from different places so that they all take different routes to the HQ. Then if one lone pigeon is unlucky enough to get shot down, HQ gets a message with every tenth word missing, which they can almost certainly still make sense of, and the enemy,

having captured the message from the dead pigeon, only gets every tenth word which makes little sense to them.

Your little Bluetooth earpiece does all this, and much more, and it does it millions of times each second - wow! The most familiar use is with mobile phones, which invariably use Bluetooth to communicate with other devices such as a hands-free earpiece or headset, or even a computer.

But Bluetooth is a great deal more versatile than just connecting your mobile phone to an earpiece. It can connect almost any digital device to almost any other:

- computer to keyboard
- camera-phone to colour printer, etc.

Bluetooth helmets and headsets come in a variety of flavours: for riders who go out in small groups, it's possible to get a headset that allows groups of three to communicate with each other without having to involve any mobile phones; or there is the simpler type that just connects to a single device such as a phone.

But beware, having only a single pushbutton for all its functionality means that these basic Bluetooth devices have a fixed 'pairing^b code'. So when buying Bluetooth devices that need to link to each other, make sure that they have the same code (phones allow you to put in a code using the keypad).

I don't have a need to distract my attention while riding by making/receiving phone calls (though the helmet makes it very easy and relatively safe to do so) but what it is useful for is listening to my GPS. It's all but impossible to see the screen in sunlight, or hear the instructions with earplugs in, but the Bluetooth helmet is loud enough to hear even through my earplug. All in all, a useful addition to my biking gear.

a. range nominally 1, 10 or 100 metres.

b. the security code that two devices both need to agree on to establish a private link between them.

Micro Highway Code Quiz Answers

- MHCQ - 4 A "Home Zone".
- MHCQ - 3 The zoo.
- MHCQ - 2 The sign is mirrored (no under-taking?).
- MHCQ - 1 A school bus.

The Committee:

(Click on underlined names to send e-mail)

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The committee members work on behalf of the whole group. They are always pleased to receive your comments and ideas on any subject. Please give your views (complimentary or otherwise) to any committee member and they will be relayed to, and discussed by, the relevant people.

The newsletter editor is always pleased to consider any articles for publication, which may be of interest to the group. Most document formats can be handled, and email is usually the easiest and quickest way of sending text (and photos). If using a document editing program such as Microsoft Word, please do not embed digital photos, but send them separately, preferably as an exact copy of the camera original without any reduction in resolution (as sometimes offered by email programs). Closing dates for items for publication are the end of the month prior to publication, i.e. end of February, May, August & November.

The views and opinions expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of the editor, the committee, the RoADAR Gloucestershire Group, or RoSPA. Neither the editor, the group or RoSPA accept any legal responsibility for any of the contents published.

Group website: www.glos-roadar.org.uk