



February 2004
Number 457



csma

**West Middlesex Group
Annual Dinner and Awards**

Aurora Garden Hotel
Windsor

Saturday March 6th

7 for 7:30

Black tie



Newsletter of the West Middlesex Group of the **csma**

Contents

Your Editor Speaking.....	2
From the Hot Seat.....	2
The Secret Hairy Bits.....	3
A 'Thank-you' to our Marshals... ..	5
Have you still not got one yet?.....	6
Annual Dinner and Awards Evening.....	7
Motorsport Co-ordinators' Bulletin.....	8
January 12 Car.....	10
Recreational Motoring Faces Its Biggest Threat Ever.....	11
West Middlesex Group Committee Member Contact Addresses.....	14
Central Southern Centre 50 th Anniversary Run.....	15
March Noggin 'n' Natter.....	16

Your Editor Speaking...

Happy New Year to you all!

Blimey - it seems a long time since I gave my keyboard this amount of exercise! Or my fingers - or the rest of me come to that! The Christmas period saw the addition of half a stone to the Boakes waistline - need to get rid of that before the weather gets better or the Westfield will feel very slow

indeed! Could always fit a more powerful engine of course...

The Esprit appears to be behaving itself except for a very slight water leak. Can't bring myself to put it back into the garage though - the thought of commuting to work in the Westie in this weather fills me with dread...

Have fun...

Jez Boakes, Editor

From the Hot Seat

If I haven't seen you yet this year, a very happy 2004!

A lot has happened since our last Sump submission date.

The December Clubnight was a great success. Rhys Edwards once again treated us to some lively competition in the bowling teams. Congratulations to the winners and thank you for the wooden spoon which I was awarded for being the "player with the most potential"! The buffet supper was once again delicious and the evening did a great job of putting us in the party spirit.

For the January Clubnight, the Group was treated to a fascinating insight into the World Cup Rally courtesy of Alan Smith. He regaled those present with anecdotes from rallying in the Sahara and also had a couple of videos from past events.

The following night was the Group's 12-car rally. A huge thank you to everybody who supported the event. That was by far the best turn out of marshals that we've had for

a long time and the event also attracted a full entry. Well done to AG and John Wright for putting on an excellent event.

Looking ahead to the coming few months:

The February Clubnight, on Thursday 12th February, will be the very successful Slot Car Stages. For those who have not yet attended, this is Scalextric with a difference. The "stages" are set out around the room and you compete in pairs (don't worry, you don't need to bring a partner – pairings can be arranged on the night). Back by popular demand, this is always a favourite in the WMx calendar. As usual, the venue is the Liberal Club in Windsor. If you don't have one of the previous maps to hand, please contact one of the committee and we'll be pleased to give you directions. There is good parking nearby and a subsidised bar – what more could you want?

Having honed your skills at Clubnight. You can put them to use upholding Group honours the following week. The Centre President's Slot Car Stages is a similar evening but this time the challenge is inter-

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Group within the North London Centre. I believe that AG has supplied a separate advert with the details.

The February Noggin and Natter will be at our usual venue: the Jolly Woodman pub, Littleworth Common (near Burnham Beeches).

Annual Dinner 2004: We've been talking about it for a few months now but this is the time to be buying your tickets for the Annual Dinner. This is the Group's premier social event. You have a chance to see what your Committee look like all dressed up (and that alone should be worth the ticket price after John Wright's shroud last year).

On Saturday 6th March, we will visit our new venue for the dinner: The Aurora Garden Hotel in Windsor. Tickets are £20 each and you can also book overnight accommodation through AG to receive the greatly discounted price of £60 B&B for a double/twin room or £50 B&B for a single. As well as the Black Tie dinner, we have secured the same entertainer as last year. Rob performed a fascinating display of close-up and cabaret-style magic and this year he has some new illusions for us to enjoy.

Please contact AG as soon as possible to secure a ticket for the evening and if you have any special meal requirements (vegetarian, etc.) please let him know.

The March Clubnight, on Thursday 11th, will be a return of the "Who Wants to be a Millionaire?" quiz night. Will Mike Scott win another million? Will your Chairman get past the £100 question? Come along to the Liberal Club at Windsor to find out.

The regular Noggin and Natter which normally takes place on the last Tuesday of

The Secret Hairy Bits...

Hi and a Happy New Year to you all, it seems a long time ago now that I wrote my last article so there must be loads of news!

Well Perry and I finally managed to compete on one of the ASWMC road rallies. The last event of the year was the Ilfra-

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The Sump February 2004

each month, takes a break in March. Tuesday 30th is the night for the first of a new series of Roadshows, promoted by Motorsports News and supported by **csma**, aimed at introducing motor sport. The Master of Ceremonies for the evening, with his **csma** Captain's cap on is our very own AG and the speaker is Stuart Turner (who you will know of from "Wheels"). So instead of meeting for Noggin at Littleworth Common, we're going to the alternative venue to attend the Stokenchurch Roadshow. AG has submitted more detail elsewhere in the Sump and you can contact him directly for further information.

The **AGM** is set for the April Clubnight date of the 8th. I know that this is Maundy Thursday and some of you may be planning an Easter break but please do spare a couple of hours to come along to this very important meeting in the Club's diary.

The annual reports from the Officers of the Group will be published in the April Sump to give you a chance to read them at leisure before the meeting. Then on the night, the reports are discussed and ratified. We also have to elect the Officers and Committee for the following year so if you've got a burning ambition to see the internal workings of WMx now is your chance.

We have to meet a quorum of 12 members on the night so if you know that you definitely can or can't attend, letting the Committee know in advance would be appreciated so that we can gauge the likely turnout. As usual the venue will be the Liberal Club, Windsor, and the AGM will start at 8:30pm. See you there!

Nikki Wild, Chairman

combe Rally and we were seeded car 41. Desite its name the event started in Barnstaple about 40 minutes drive from Perry's house. The first half went really well and at halfway we were in second place having no fails and having dropped only 2 minutes, only the lead crew was clean at this point. However the second half did not go so well

The Sump February 2004

and although we got round ok we eventually finished in 7th place overall. We thoroughly enjoyed our first Devon event, the roads were excellent and the navigation just right. We were surprised to find that we actually came 3rd in the South West novice championship "which was nice"!

Our Christmas Clubnight was on the 11th and there was a good turnout for an evening of skittles. The food was great the company excellent, thanks to Rhys Edwards for organising, please will you do it again next year ?

The following night was the NEL 12 car, but as I had been struck down with a heavy cold I decided to give it a miss.

From what I understand it was a good event organised by Mike Biss and Cath Woodman, but the first route card gave most crews a bit of a headache. The event was won by Ian Orford/Ian Buxton from WMx/NWL respectively, well done guys.

The 1st January saw the annual New Years Parade take place in Central London. The csma were represented by an open top bus and a parade of 12 classic cars. Despite the weather, it was overcast and drizzly. All those that took part had a good time and it is a good advert for the csma with several hundred thousand people coming out to see it. I'm hoping that next year it will be a little warmer and some sunshine would be nice.

The first 12 car of the New Year was organised by WMx Group, with AG as Clerk of the course and myself as event secretary. What can I say, My Ghast was well and truly flabbered, when on the day we had a full entry of 12 cars and we had every TC and PC manned. I am truly gratefull for all your support and hope that this will set a trend for the rest of the year. From all the reports I have received the event was enjoyed by all and congratulations go to Mike and Cath on their win. It was good to see a lot of first timers out and I already know of one marshal who has caught the bug and has entered the next event. Once again

csma West Middlesex Group

thanks for your support, it makes all the effort put in by the organisers worth it.

Finally some dates for your diary:-

February 12 Car Rally North West London are running the February 12 Car and it starts from the Millbrook Proving Ground. Using both maps 153 and 166, the route will be 50 miles and offers to enter or marshal should be directed to Dave Smith on 01525 404638. Usual £5 entry fee and marked maps for beginners.

President's Slot Car Stages This will be hosted by NEL at a special venue in Hatfield. It will be held on Tuesday 17th February at the Red Lion Hotel - Lower Cranbourne Rooms, 88 Great North Road, Hatfield, Herts AL9 5EU, map reference 166 / 233092. As tried and tested in 2002, the evening will be presented as an Inter Group Competition and will take the form of a Slot-Car rally. With a minimum of rules and a maximum of 'play time', a good fun evening is certain! There will be no charge for **csma** members and the organisers will provide all the slot cars, facilities and equipment to be used for the evening. All members of North East London, North West London, Milton Keynes, Surrey, Southend on Sea, West Middlesex and Wraysbury Groups are invited to attend. The start will be followed by a briefing at 7.30 pm, an early start but lots to get through. Refreshments will be provided – drinks are available from the main bar of the Hotel.

March 12 Car Rally This event will start from the Station Hotel in Knebworth, near Stevenage, and use map 166 for its 45 mile route. contact Dave Rosher now on 01920 830403.

March Noggin 'n' Natter The March Noggin and Natter will now take place at the Kings Arms Stokenchurch on Tuesday 30th March. We are taking advantage of a Motorsport Workshop being run by Motorsport News and The Endurance Rally Association and supported by the csma. The MC is our own Allan Goddard and the guest speaker will be Stuart Turner. The meeting will start

csma West Middlesex Group

at 19.30 pm. food and drink will be available from the bar.

Concorde PCT Don't forget to put the Concorde production car trial in your diaries for April 18th, the week after Easter. We need plenty of marshals to mark the scores by competitors, no previous experience needed, just some enthusiasm to help out. Several courses are laid out on some steep hills and the cars have to traverse the routes without hitting the markers or stopping. The further they get up the

The Sump February 2004

hills, the less penalty points they get. Anyone wishing to help out on the event should give either Mike Biss or Graham McLean (020 8553 4700) a call.

Don't forget to book your tickets for the annual dinner.

Hope to see you there

That's it from me, just remember.....

..... the Beans...

...and the Rhubarb!

BigJ, Secretary

West Middlesex Group January 12-Car Rally

A 'Thank-you' to our Marshals... ..

May we thank, most sincerely, all those that supported our January event.

It was simply the best turn out we've had for many a year on *any* Centre 12 Car Rally. A full entry, half of which were in the Expert class, and no less than 27 marshals signed up for the evening - an amazing effort as 3 days before the event we had just 3 Competitors and 3 Marshals!

Of course this meant that it took a little longer than usual to sort the Results out but the large number of people at the Finish gave us all a Noggin 'n' Natter opportunity and your collective patience was very much appreciated.

Comments made to us at the end seem to indicate we got things about right, a good driving route and 'do-able' navigation, with the result that just one crew 'cleaned' the event (well done Mike & Cath), and the odd minute separated the others. Perfect!

We manned every Time Control plus two 'Give-Ways' and a couple of Passage Checks too. Every Control was problem free and for that credit is due to each one of you. For our part, well, it may have been jolly cold but no-one got wet!

Your support for West Middlesex on these occasions really does make a difference - and it showed!

Thank you all very, very much.

AG
Clerk of the Course

JW
Event Secretary

Have you still not got one yet?

You could have one...
...and you **should** have one!

...in any colour you like (as long as it's dark blue)...



All sizes - from little kids to **big blokes!**

Post & packing is around £1 per item!

AG's the man to talk to for...

The new **West Middlesex Group**
Polo, Rugby and Sweat shirts!

£14.95, £21.95 & £15.95 respectively (kids polos are just £9.55!)

Phone AG on 07785 903000, email agoddard@csma-netlink.co.uk

Or see him at Clubnight, Noggin or **csma** event!

***GO ON - SUPPORT WEST MIDDLESEX GROUP -
YOU KNOW YOU WANT TO!***

Presenting

csma : West Middlesex Group's

Annual Dinner and Awards Evening

Saturday 6th March 2004, 7pm for 7:30

at the

Aurora Garden Hotel, Windsor, Berkshire

A new venue for West Middlesex Group and the promise of a new level of excellence for our taste buds.

On this 'black tie & posh frocks' occasion we'll be presenting our Group Awards for 2003 and have planned a superb menu for your delight.

Of course there'll be some surprises & some magical entertainment as wellno, no, no, I don't mean me! ...and all for just £20 per head.

Hotel accommodation is available at a special rate for us, £60 for a Double or Twin room & £50 for a Single, all to include breakfast – please book ASAP through me as we are limited for room numbers.

Put the date in your diary now, then give me a call (07785 903000) or send me an e-mail (agoddard@csma-netlink.co.uk) to reserve YOUR place – and do it quick 'cos you've just got to be there!

AG

MOTORSPORT Co-ORDINATORS' BULLETIN	FEBRUARY 2004
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Date	Event (Status)	Club	Type of Event	Champ
Feb Sun 1	Red Tape Trial (C)	HQ	Motorcycle Trial	
11/2-10/3	* Cultivator ()	Ipswich	Table Top Rally	
Fri 13	* 12 Car Rally (C)	NWL	Navigational Rally	Centre
Tue 17	* President's Slot Car Stages	NEL	Intergroup Scalextric challenge	Centre
Mar Fri 12	12 Car Rally (C)	NEL	Navigational Rally	Centre
Apr Sun 18	Concorde PCT (Nat B/C)	NEL	Production Car Trial	Centre
Sun 18	Services (Nat B)	HQ	Motorcycle Trial	

Licence required : (I/Nat A/Nat B/Cm) = MSA Licence, (C) = Club Card, () = Nothing, * = Regs available

Past Events

Quadruplex NWL yet again won the team award, but only after a tie decider, from NEL. NWL also won the best individual 'crew' award. The event was a quiz but with some novelty rounds thrown in. Next year it is the turn of NWL to organise the event, so expect something different with plenty of fun added.

1 st Lee Craker / Dee Keane	NWL	10 th Ann & Derrick Holden	WMx
2 nd Bernard & Ruth Ward / Ron Barnett	NEL	11 th Lee & Sarah Marshall	MK
3 rd Dave Rosher / Mick O'Blath / Margaret Hull	NEL	12 th Nikki Wild / Alison Durant	WMx
4 th Alan Thurbon / Dave Smith / Ted Manktelow	NWL	13 th Jez Boakes / Rob Gibbs / John Wright	WMx
5 th Alan & Dave Robins	NWL	14 th Bill & Angela Canning	WMx
6 th Mike Scott / Barbara	WMx	15 th Mary Seager / Bernie Cripps	WMx
7 th Nick & Lesley Palumbo / Christine Wright	WMx	16 th Ian Roberts / Phil Cannon	WMx
8 th Steve White / Denise Nicholson	WMx	17 th Christine Hobson / Chris Dell	WMx
9 th Mike Harrison / Shirley Baldwin	NWL	18 th Eric Crease / John Brown	NWL

Civil Service Rally From all the people I have spoken to there were quite a few problems on the event that made it not so enjoyable for the crews. The organisers have been given feedback on the problems, so hopefully they will be able to address them for next year. Unless there are changes, I don't think any of the crews that went all the way up there this time will do so again.

December 12 Car Rally Seven crews started the event and despite several navigators having problems with the first route card, all made it safely to the finish. Hopefully everyone enjoyed the different route and unfamiliar roads and a big thank you to all the marshals who came out for the evening.

csma West Middlesex Group**The Sump February 2004**

1 st Car 9 Ian Orford / Ian Buxton	WMx/NWL	Exp	0 Fails	6 Mins
2 nd Car 3 Pete Gregory / Dan Austin	NWL	Exp/Nov	0 Fails	8 Mins
3 rd Car 8 Allan Goddard / Martin Saunders	WMx	Exp	0 Fails	15 Mins
4 th Car 6 Bernard Ward / Dave Roshier	NEL	Exp	0 Fails	21 Mins
5 th Car 5 Dave Smith / Mike Harrison	NWL	Exp	1 Fail	21 Mins
6 th Car 7 Ted Manktelow / John Evans	NWL	Exp	2 Fails	17 Mins
7 th Car 4 Alan Thurbon / Lee Craker	NWL	Exp	2 Fails	21 Mins
Car 1 Nigel Nelson / Terri Jacobs	WMx	Nov/Beg	Non-starter	
Car 2 John Wright / Phill Cannon	WMx	Exp/Nov	Non-starter	

January 12 Car Rally West Middlesex ran the first event of the new year and Allan Goddard got his wish of a full 12 car entry. Also he had plenty of marshals out on the night, which was nice to see. The start and finish was from Wycombe Air Park and the event used both maps 165 and 175 for its 60 mile route, using some of the best lanes in the area. A couple of route cards tripped crews up enough to get a result for the organisers after saying at the start that the event was easy navigation that the drivers would enjoy.

1 st Car 5 Mike Biss / Cath Woodman	NEL/NWL	Exp	0 Fails	0 Mins
2 nd Car 1 Ted Manktelow / John Evans	NWL	Exp	0 Fails	1 Min
3 rd Car 3 Pete Gregory / Graeme Presswell	NWL	Exp	0 Fails	1 Min
4 th Car 2 Ian Orford / Ian Buxton	WMx/NWL	Exp	0 Fails	3 Mins
5 th Car 6 Dave Smith / Mike Harrison	NWL	Exp	1 Fail	2 Mins
6 th Car 4 Chris Pratt / Glynn Hayward	Reading	Exp	1 Fail	9 Mins
7 th Car 10 Malcolm Grubb / Caroline Grubb	WMx	Nov	1 Fail	30 Mins
8 th Car 9 Jeff Hills / Paul Bolden	WMx	Nov	1 Fail	30 Mins
9 th Car 11 Toby Mack / Phill Cannon	WMx	Nov	7 Fails	35 Mins
10 th Car 12 Dave Edwards / Dom Jeans	WMx	Nov	10 Fails	27 Mins
1 st Car 15 Rob Gibbs / Paul Chamberlain	WMx	Beg	1 Fail	19 Mins
2 nd Car 14 Chris Foxley / John Bennett	WMx	Beg	2 Fails	21 Mins

Future Events

Cultivator Table Top Rally For the 27th running of this event, by Ipswich group, it will be using map 144 for the plotting. This is a home based event where you work out the routecards, plot the route and then submit your answers. The entry fee is £6 and you have one month to work it all out. You also have a choice as to whether you do the National event or the Beginners section. This would be a good practice for the Hollstar intergroup event later in the year. Entries can be obtained from Bob Thomas (contact details on page 112 of the January M&L)

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tried and tested in 2002, the evening will be presented as an Inter Group Competition and will take the form of a Slot-Car rally. With a minimum of rules and a maximum of 'play time', a good fun evening is certain! There will be no charge for **csma** members and the organisers will provide all the slot cars, facilities and equipment to be used for the evening. All members of North East London, North West London, Milton Keynes, Surrey, Southend on Sea, West Middlesex and Wraysbury Groups are invited to attend. The start will be followed by a briefing at 7.30 pm, an early start but lots to get through. Refreshments will be provided – drinks are available from the main bar of the Hotel.

March 12 Car Rally This event will start from the Station Hotel in Knebworth, near Stevenage, and use map 166 for its 45 mile route. Further details and entry form next month or contact Bernard Ward now on 01992 582323

Concorde PCT Don't forget to put the Concorde production car trial in your diaries for April 18th, the week after Easter. We need plenty of marshals to mark the scores by competitors, no previous experience needed, just some enthusiasm to help out. Several courses are laid out on some steep hills and the cars have to traverse the routes without hitting the markers or stopping. The further they get up the hills, the less penalty points they get. Anyone wishing to help out on the event should give either myself or Graham McLean (020 8553 4700) a call.

Other Items

NLC Championship Results The final results for the North London Centre championship are shown this month elsewhere in the newsletter. If there are any problems with them, please let me know before the 3rd February. With 15 rounds held, the ¾ counting rule means ten events to count. At the moment the award winners are 1st Lee Craker (NWL), 2nd Ted Manktelow (NWL) and 3rd John Wright (WM).

Government Threat to off-road use Yet again the government is trying to solve a small problem with a blanket ban approach. Because there are a small number of people who abuse things like Green Lanes, all non-recorded 'byways open to all traffic' (BOAT) could be banned to motorised traffic as early as next year. See the report elsewhere in the newsletter for the background to this and what is needed to prevent loss of access to events.

Mike Biss - Motorsports Co-Ordinator Home: 01525 720299 Work: 01977 593482

mike.biss@bt.com

January 12 Car

I'd done a couple of 12 cars (as driver) before and fancied doing another. Trouble was, my previous navigator (your Editor- Jez!) has a weak stomach and decided he would rather stand out in the cold marshalling than get in a car I was driving! Then Big John mailed me asking if I needed a navigator. Without much thought (like did I have a car to drive?!) I said yes so my navigator for the night was to be Phil. From what I gather Phil has done a fair bit of map-reading and navigating on foot before but only experienced one 12 car which he had to abort due to motion sickness. Hmm.. I managed to put Jez off for life, how would Phil cope? Anyway, not a real problem I thought, Phil and I were both definitely beginners so at least we would not have any tricky route cards to decipher or plotting to do. Shame then that BigJ decided that it would be much more interesting for us if we were entered as novices!! Of course, with hindsight he was right but I have to say I was a bit doubtful when we signed on....

So, there we were at the start in my trusty old Saab. In this case, "trusty" means no engine mounts, rolls like a whale on corners and a tendency to stall everytime I declutched. On the plus side, a turbo and very good brakes came in pretty useful on the

night! As we set off it was fairly obvious that Phil knew his way round a map pretty well. Our biggest problems were that we had only met 1/2 hour earlier and neither of us had a particularly good grasp of 12 rules. Unfortunately, an early error put us on the wrong road and it was a while before we realised so we dropped about 15 minutes (and two PCs) on the 1st section. From then on, things went slightly better but we were still dropping time on each section due to the need plot and bash - it would have been a bit foolish to try plotting on the move the 1st time out as novices I think! There were a few "not that left, the other left!!) type moments but generally I think we got on pretty well for a 1st try. Unfortunately, dropping 5 minutes or so at each section meant that we were soon very close to going OTL so we discussed cutting to make up time. Even more unfortunately, our lack of experience meant we didn't realise the folly in checking into a TC OTL and we also found we couldn't cut to where we wanted to as it would mean going the wrong way along the route, not a particularly smart idea when there are still cars behind you! In the end we managed 7 fails and 35 minutes. That would have been 5 or less fails and less than 30 minutes if we hadn't stopped at a TC OTL. Where did we come? Well, suffice to say we did not come last in our class!

To be honest, as a first attempt I was pretty impressed we managed to finish at all so, all in all, I think it was a pretty good result and we certainly learnt a lot. I also found it an excellent route with a good mix of roads and certainly enough to tax us beginner/novices at least. A big thank you to AG and BigJ and of course all the marshals who made it such an excellent event!

Lastly I think I need to thank Jez and Nikki. That evening I knew I was a bit short of petrol but I was in a bit of a hurry to get to the start and thought that 150 miles was easily enough range (my Saab has one of those useful "remaining miles" displays). Well, 150 miles range at my usual 25 mpg would be fine but at the 15mpg it returned on the event it turned out to be a bit tight! Half way round I warned Phil that we might have to stop at a petrol station, now that really would have made a big dent in our time! As it was, we did make it back to the finish but only just. That left me at Wycombe air park with vapours in the tank and no petrol stations open for miles as it was after midnight. In the end Jez and Nikki took pity on me and led me to a 24 hour petrol station near Wokingham that Nikki knew of. When I got there I fitted 65.5 litres of petrol into a 66 litre tank. A bit close for comfort I think and without them I would have had a long walk home down the M4!

Toby

Recreational Motoring Faces Its Biggest Threat Ever

LARA (Land Access and Recreation Association) explains:

After 100 years, during which time the highways and byways of England and Wales have been explored and enjoyed by generations of drivers and motorcyclists, a proposal just put out to consultation by DEFRA¹ looks set to change the face of recreational motoring for ever. This change is part of the fallout from the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 – the Act that introduced the 'right to roam' for hikers across thousands of square miles of private land– and is largely driven by a vocal and influential minority that wants motor vehicles out of 'their' countryside – full stop. But motorists are not entirely innocent victims. Over recent years there has been a noticeable upsurge in the levels of illegal use of the countryside – particularly 'cowboy' motorcyclists – and the use of some green roads² in the countryside is exceeding sustainable levels. This illegal, or legal but questionable, motoring is a very real problem in places – but in seeking to combat it effectively, the countryside minister Alun Michael appears to be conflating the bad activities with responsible use of the countryside, and is proposing changes that will

hit the law-abiding, while probably doing little against the cowboy. This is reminiscent of post-Dunblane gun controls – target shooters had their sport destroyed, whilst the rise in gun crime continues at an ever-higher rate.

To understand the proposals you need to understand a little of the arcane and confusing law that regulates our highways. In English law (and this covers Wales too) there are three types of highway: carriageways, bridleways and footpaths. Vehicles have a right of way on carriageways. Apart from roads made in modern times – such as motorways, bypasses and new estate roads – most of our roads originated ‘time out of mind’: their origin is simply lost in history. Old carriage roads originated in the time of horse-drawn vehicles, but as new types of vehicle emerged – steam cars, then pedal cycles, then petrol cars and motorcycles – these were accepted as ‘carriages’ and Parliament made legislation regulating their use on the highway. In 1930 the first proper Road Traffic Act introduced a specific offence of driving a motor on a footpath or bridleway, or on open land, ‘without lawful authority’³. In 1949⁴ a new system was introduced called the ‘definitive map’ and this was intended to record public footpaths and bridleways, and also a curious type called a ‘road used as a public path’, or RUPP. Most people thought a RUPP was intended to be a minor vehicular road mainly used by walkers and riders, but the legislation was so poorly drafted that, in 1968⁵, a new Act introduced a system to ‘reclassify’ all RUPPs as either footpaths, bridleways or ‘byways open to all traffic’ (BOAT); this did not work very well, either.

In 1981 yet another Act⁶ changed the system for reclassifying RUPPs, and also for correcting the status of the many footpaths and bridleways shown on the definitive map that are, in truth, really old vehicular roads. This new process was better, but infernally slow and cumbersome. Few statutory orders were made to get the definitive map correct, and in many instances motorists relied on ‘common law rights’⁷ to drive lawfully on misrecorded footpaths and bridleways. The picture remained confused and uncertain.

The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 was mainly intended to introduce the statutory ‘right to roam’ for hikers. One of the ‘deals’ the government did with the landowners to stop this Act hitting trouble in the House of Lords was to agree to a ‘cap’ of the definitive map – on New Year’s Day 2026, what you see on the definitive map is what legally exists – any ‘slumbering rights’ are extinguished. The notion of the 25-year period was to allow the establishment of a funded project called *Discovering Lost Ways*, which is intended to research the lost routes and get them properly recorded. Another provision – forced on the government by hiker-friendly peers at the very last moment – was known as ‘Section 34A’ – a modification to the Road Traffic Act 1988 that would deny motorists the fundamental human right of defending themselves in court if accused of driving on a footpath or bridleway. The motoring organisations responded to the consultation on s.34A saying that it almost certainly breached Human Rights legislation – and it turns out that the government lawyers think it would, too.

This is where the new consultation comes in. Because s.34A has been shown to be yet more rushed and defective legislation, the government must be seen to be doing something about the ‘vehicle problem’. What they essentially propose is that the ‘window’ to 2026 will not be available to claim BOATs. They say that it is unreasonable to claim rights for mechanically propelled vehicles based on evidence that a road came into being in the age of horses and carts. This is fallacious – almost all motor roads came into being in those days, including the Great North Road, The Mall, and Parliament Square. And footpaths were, of course, originally to allow the peasantry to walk to work and to church – not for hordes of red-socked rambles on their Sunday jaunts. The time period to allow claiming BOATs based on historic evidence is proposed to be one year from when the

'register of applications'⁸ system starts. This might give a total breathing space of two years, but, equally, the minister might yield to pressure and introduce a shorter, or even immediate, cut-off.

Once applications to add BOATs to the definitive map are properly made and lodged with highway authorities, that would (again, unless the 'antis' prevail) stop the cut-off clock on that particular lane. But it will be down to motor organisations and individuals to do all the research and considerable administrative work in making these applications.

The proposals do not affect existing properly recorded BOATs and seem to exclude from the cut-off 'unclassified county roads'⁹, but the wording is such that there is no guarantee for unclassified roads; this looks like yet more defective legislation in the making. The recreational motoring organisations have long pursued a policy of careful, responsible and sustainable use of minor highways and private land sites in the countryside. Innovative and successful schemes like the Lake District 'Hierarchy of Trails'¹⁰ programme, and the issue of 'codes of conduct'¹¹, advising on how to enjoy driving without causing damage or alarm, have been well received by land managers and other types of reasonable countryside users. The government publication *Making the Best of Byways* does not identify major or widespread problems caused by responsible drivers and riders, but confirms that problems tend to be local, mobile, and intermittent. More worryingly, DEFRA has commissioned independent research from Faber Maunsell to identify if there is a problem and currently DEFRA admits that it has no reliable data on vehicle use of unsealed roads from which to work – but irrespective of this the department is pushing ahead with the consultation document to solve a 'problem' that has not yet even been identified or quantified.

In truth, the motoring organisations are in complete agreement with the government that we should achieve a high degree of certainty as to which routes have vehicular rights, and then set about managing these fairly and effectively. There are some vehicular rights of way that cannot take a lot of motor use. The policy of the motor organisations is that a fair and proportionate management regime should be applied to these – perhaps a season access restriction; in some cases a total motor access restriction. But the fact that some green lanes are not robust does not mean that all are likely to be spoiled by the passage of vehicles – far from it. Most 'green lanes' in the sense that people use the term actually have stoned surfaces (even if now under 100 years of mud) and are very resilient if given just a little periodic rough maintenance. This has been proved by the repair programmes carried out by motor enthusiasts on ancient highways across the country – such as 'Dead Man's Hill' in the Yorkshire Dales¹².

The effects of these proposals if put into law as drafted – or made worse by pressure from the 'antis' – will extend beyond just the traditional responsible trail rider or driver, ambling along a public road that just happens never to have been tarmaced. There will be a subtle and inexorable shift towards 'privatisation' of whole networks of minor roads – even roughly tarmaced ones – and classic trials, road rallies, observation trials using roads to link sections, and even recreational drives out into the countryside are in danger.

The motoring organisations do not condone irresponsible and aggressive behaviour in the countryside. Our ancient highways are not scrambles practice tracks, nor a battleground to be conquered. If people want to go fast, or drive into situations where a winch is a necessity, then they should enter competitions held on appropriate terrain. Unfortunately, our planning rules are biased against the provision of such sites, so this does not help in diverting inappropriate highway use to more-appropriate activity sites. The motoring organisations, on behalf of responsible drivers, say it is grossly unfair to propose an ill-thought change in legislation that damages our centuries-old highway law,

places a massive work burden on a relatively few ordinary individuals, takes away the rights of ordinary people enjoying an arcane, but historic, pastime, does little to tackle the root causes of the problems: cowboy drivers and inefficient local councils, and gives yet more exclusive territory to rambles, who already enjoy more access than they can ever possibly want.

Remember: in England and Wales there is around 120,000 miles of footpaths and bridleways where motorists cannot go. There is around 6,000 miles on minor, unsealed vehicular road and, of course, and much of this is also enjoyed by walkers, cyclists and riders. Walkers now have – or will soon have – thousands of square miles of open access countryside as well, plus they can wander at will on urban commons and through Forestry Commission plantations. If a rambler or cyclist does not want to share a minor road with vehicles (most horse riders are far more tolerant – maybe because they are a beleaguered minority too) then they can very easily choose to go somewhere where they will not meet a lawful vehicle. They already have exclusive rights to most of the British countryside: now they want the rest too.

All or part of these proposals will almost certainly come into law. It is up to recreational motorists everywhere to help out, either by labour or cash, with the process of researching and depositing 'byway claims', and in lobbying their Members of Parliament in the New Year to seek a reasonable set of proposals that hit the cowboy, end the uncertainty of which roads are vehicular and which are not, yet do not wipe out responsible recreational motoring.

LARA will be co-ordinating a response to the proposals, and advising club members how to approach their MPs. More to follow on this in early 2004. The closing date for responses is 19 March 2004. Copies of the consultation paper are available on the LARA and DEFRA web sites.

For more details contact the LARA Motor Recreation Development Officer at mrdo@laragb.org.

Notes:

- ¹ *Use of mechanically propelled vehicles on Rights of Way – a Consultation document.* DEFRA ref: PB 8923, issued on 9 December 2003.
- ² 'Green road' is a generic term for an unsealed road. Most a public vehicular roads, but some are only bridleways, or footpaths, or have no public status at all.
- ³ Lawful authority is usually taken to mean permission from the owner or occupier, but emergency vehicles have statutory lawful authority in most cases.
- ⁴ The National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949.
- ⁵ The Countryside Act 1968.
- ⁶ The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.
- ⁷ The principle of 'once a highway, always a highway' – a cornerstone of the law for hikers as much as bikers.
- ⁸ The 'register of applications' is created by provisions in CROWA2000. All highway authorities must make a register of applications for orders to modify the definitive map.
- ⁹ Public roads that are not on the definitive map, but are, or should be, on the councils' 'list of streets'.
- ¹⁰ Further details on the LARA web site: www.laragb.org.
- ¹¹ Follow links from the LARA website to member organisations' web sites to view their own policies.
- ¹² See details of individual cases, and the national 'Green Lane Day', on LARA and LARA member web sites.

csma
central Southern Centre
50th Anniversary Run
Sunday 4th July 2004

Farnborough, Reading, Oxford and Guildford groups are celebrating the 50th Anniversary of their Southern Centre in July and will be organising a Run for Classic and Modern cars and a Ride-Out for motorcycles....(the FROG run?)

The event will Start & Finish at Wellington Country Park, Riseley, off the A33 between Reading and Basingstoke with a BBQ awaiting all participants on their return. I've been asked to co-ordinate the 'bike part of the run which will probably begin at 11am.

It promises to be a great day and we're all invited to help celebrate the occasion.

More info./ entry forms, etc. ... from AG on the usual numbers (see below).

Please note - I think this will be the weekend of the National Motorcycle Rally, aaaaah! Decisions, decisions!

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The deadline for articles for the *March* Sump is February 18th!

Opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the contributors, and not necessarily those of the csma, csma West Middlesex Group Committee or the editor.

IMPORTANT NOTICE !

March Noggin 'n' Natter

Please Note ...

...the West Middlesex Group Noggin 'n' Natter on March 30th will NOT be at the usual Jolly Woodman venue!

Instead (Shock! Horror!) an evening of Motorsport is on offer, but we have to shift our venue to benefit.

csma is supporting and presenting a series of Motorsport evenings at seven different venues around the UK and the first of those will be at the Kings Arms Hotel, Stokenchurch, just five hundred metres from the M40 at Junc.5. The intention is to invite ALL West Middlesex folk to come along for an evening of entertainment guaranteed to please all motorsport fans. The event is being promoted by Motorsports News and will include a couple of brand new short videos, a motorsport celebrity Q and A session, and a Special Guest speaker, Stuart Turner, ex-Ford and BL Rally Team Director, winning co-driver on the RAC Rally with Eric Carrlssen, and voted After-Dinner Speaker of the Year on several occasions.

I shall be the MC at all of these events, but there's always a down-side to everything!

Please consider this a personal invitation – the usual Noggin an' Natter suspects have agreed to come along so you'll not be alone and I'd like to see everyone there. We start at 7.30pm sharp and will finish about 10. The planned publicity is likely to produce a good turnout so don't be late 'cos you wont get a seat!

AG