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Foot and Mouth continues to devastate motorsport and recreation

The national organisations maintain an 'ultra cautious' approach to resuming events

With the better news in early May that the worst of the foot and mouth outbreak may now be over, there has been a lot of debate about how soon motorsport and recreation can resume. The leading national organisations have met again to discuss allowing some events in some places, under very rigorous conditions. On the best available advice from MAFF, the national organisations will now issue permits for events where local conditions indicate this will be safe. Strict precautions against infection will be imposed, and the situation will be kept under constant review.

Motorsport organisations have won the thanks of the National Farmers' Union for the self-restraint shown by the sport in shutting down early in the crisis and maintaining a virtual blanket ban, even though some other sports have gone ahead with events in the face of widespread criticism. Foot and mouth will end, but motorsport will continue, and it depends on the goodwill of the countryside community now and into the future. All clubs and site operators are asked please to check with any of the national motorsport organisations if in any doubt as to advice on getting clearance and disinfectant measures.

Meanwhile, byways and unclassified roads remain closed in many places. Please be patient; LARA is liaising with national and local government to ensure that access is reopened as soon as it is safe.



End of an era!

LARA's honorary chairman for the past several years, Christopher Belton, stood down at the annual general meeting of the Association on 18th April 2001. Christopher was LARA's first chairman back in 1986, when he worked for the Motor Sports Association, and was instrumental in founding LARA and getting it through its formative period. The LARA Steering Committee presented Christopher with a cut-glass vase in recognition of his immense contribution over the years. ACU chief executive Geoff Wilson was elected as Chairman for 2001 - 2002.

Green Lane Day is rescheduled for the autumn

Following its postponement at the beginning of the foot and mouth disease outbreak, *Green Lane Day* has been rescheduled for Sunday 21st October 2001. This date is well after the nesting season, and far enough into the autumn that the summer's growth will have started to die-back.

The national co-ordinator for *Green Lane Day* is Mick Dyer at 2 Poplar Avenue, Windlesham, Surrey, GU20 6PL. Please remember LARA's advice about getting properly insured before undertaking any clearance work.

Please follow the code: local variation can confuse

LARA has for some time now had a 'standard code of conduct' for recreational driving in the countryside. This was developed over a number of years and through a lot of discussion and debate. The code centres on the "four Ws":

Weight - Width - Weather - Winches

and also has advice on numbers of vehicles in a party and encountering other trail users.

In recent months there have been issued various 'local codes', developed by and for particular parts of the country. LARA has always welcomed and encouraged local initiatives, but is concerned that some recent local codes are significantly different in wording from the LARA code.

The LARA Steering Committee has expressed concern that this fragmentation into quite widely varying codes reduces the impact of all - users will soon become confused as to the varying advice in different parts of the country. Any local government organisation, forum, or club, currently making or contemplating the publication of a local code of conduct for countryside driving, is urged to take the LARA code as a template and alter only those clauses that are definitely inappropriate to the local situation - and explain why this is so in their own publication. The LARA code is available on request from PO Box 20, Market Drayton, or from our web site at laragb.org.

Back To Our Routes gets underway



Facing the camera, from the left:

Tim Stevens, LARA

Charlie Morriss, TRF

John Hall, British Horse Society

Richard Marshall, TRF

Alan Kind, LARA

Tim Hart, Nottinghamshire County Council

The foot and mouth-delayed programme of training seminars got underway in Derby on 28th April 2001, organised by the local group of the Trail Riders' Fellowship, with attendance by trail riders, 4x4 drivers and equestrians. The next dates are: 16th June (Derbyshire); 1st July (Kent);

15th July (Sutton Bank, Yorkshire). Each seminar is organised by a local group, with LARA providing speakers and materials. If you have not been contacted locally, find out more from the LARA central office. You can organise your own local seminar too! Ask LARA for advice.

LARA's web site comes to life!

LARA is now on-line! You can find or contact us at www.laragb.org. The web pages have up-to-date news, contact details, back copies of *LARA News* and other publications, 'frequently asked questions', a glossary of terms, and much more. Please make laragb.org your first port of call with a query, and if you have any news or technical item you think might interest other people, please send it to a LARA officer so that it can be posted-up. We want laragb.org to be interactive, receiving news from you as much as us giving it out. Your comments and ideas are very welcome.

Get on our electronic mailing list

Would you like to receive *LARA News* and other news items via e-mail? LARA HQ is building an e-mail address list of people and organisations who would like an automatic mailshot of LARA materials as these become available. This will not

cost you anything, and will make our life easier, so please send us your name and e-mail address to LARA HQ. We will not pass your details to any other organisation, nor send you any non-LARA 'spam'.

New Planning Policy Guidance is 'very disappointing'

The Department of Environment has now issued the draft version of the revised *Planning Policy Guidance 17* for consultation. This is the Government's non-mandatory advice to planning authorities on how to plan for sport and recreation when drafting and implementing their land use planning policies. The current PPG 17, which has been in force for many years now, has long been criticised for not adequately addressing the needs of many sports and recreations - motorsport among them. But the new version is even worse!

LARA's planning officer, Alan Kind, describes the draft as "... very disappointing... The PPG seems to overlook almost totally that many sports and types of recreation depend almost entirely on using land on a temporary and

occasional basis, and development plans are just not geared up to recognise and safeguard these legitimate land uses. When you read the PPG 17 draft it seems that the Government thinks that all sport takes place in permanent stadia, and that 'recreation' involves nothing more rigorous than a stroll around public open space."

LARA had a major input to the DETR's round of consultations on changing PPG17 a couple of years ago; this seems to have fallen on deaf ears, but we are not alone in voicing extreme concern: the Central Council of Physical Recreation represents the common interests of most outdoor sports, and it is now taking up the cudgels with the DETR. We will keep you informed.

Traffic regulation order survey - your help is needed

Some years ago LARA built up a database of current traffic regulation orders to gain an overview of where and how these are being applied, and the effect they have. This listing has now gone badly out of date, and the LARA Steering Committee has decided that it would be very useful in our discussions with national and local government, and other access organisations, to set about getting as good a picture as possible in 2001, then keeping it up to date. Once made this

database will be available to all LARA member organisations.

Can you please complete the form overleaf, one page per TRO, so photocopy as necessary, and post or fax to the LARA HQ. Alternatively go www.laragb.org and complete a form on-line. You do not have to give your contact details, but these would be useful in case of any questions or local follow-ups. Your details will not be passed to any third party without your prior approval.

LARA TRAFFIC REGULATION ORDER SURVEY FORM 2001

1. **Highway Authority:**
2. **Nearest town or village:**
3. **Name and council number of road** (if any):
4. **Type of road** (e.g. BOAT, UCR):
5. **Grid ref for north'most limit** of TRO:
6. **Grid ref for south'most limit** of TRO:
7. **Class of traffic prohibited** (tick as app'te):
 - 7.1 All vehicles
 - 7.2 All vehicles except for access
 - 7.3 All motor vehicles
 - 7.4 All motors with more than 3 wheels
 - 7.5 All motor vehicles except motorcycles with or without sidecars
 - 7.6 All motor vehicles except motorcycles
 - 7.7 Other (please describe)
8. **Exemptions** (tick as appropriate):
 - 8.1 For access
 - 8.2 Pedal cycles
 - 8.3 Certain widths (specify)
 - 8.4 Below certain weights (specify)
 - 8.5 Other (specify)
9. **Barriers** (tick as appropriate):
 - 9.1 Locked gate
 - 9.2 Locked barrier
 - 9.3 Equestrian side gate or gap
 - 9.4 Height barrier
 - 9.5 Width barriers
 - 9.6 Bollards
 - 9.7 'Kent Carriage Gap'
10. **Signage** (tick as appropriate):
 - 10.1 Round plain white disc with red border
 - 10.2 Round disc with car and 'flying motorcycle'
 - 10.3 Round disc with car only
 - 10.4 Other (please specify)
11. **Type of TRO** (tick as appropriate):
 - 11.1 Permanent
 - 11.2 Temporary (for how long?)
 - 11.3 Seasonal (please give details)
 - 11.4 Experimental (for how long?)
12. **Date TRO was imposed:**
13. **Nature of 'alleged probem' TRO was intended to resolve:**
14. **Has the TRO been successful in resolving the problem:**
15. **Has the TRO adversely affected any users who were not a problem at the time:**
16. **Any other comments:**
17. **Name:**
18. **Contact details:**

Address line one:
Address line two:
Town:
County:
Postcode:
Phone: Fax:
E-mail:
19. **Are you a member of a club affiliated to LARA?, if so which club:**
20. **Please tick the LARA organisation to which your club is affiliated:** ACU, AMCA, ARC, AWDC, BMF, BSMA, csm, GLASS, MCIA, MSA, NASA, TRF
21. **Notes and sketches.** Please use this space for any additional notes, or sketches of signs or barriers (if necessary to explain the purpose and implementation of the TRO). Photographs of the signs and barriers are useful, but we cannot take responsibility for their safety. If you cannot answer all the questions please send in what information you know, or can find out - it all helps!