

The Official Magazine of  
SUTTON & CHEAM MOTOR CLUB

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# Spotlight



TEAM  
TEMPEST



## Chairman's Chatter

### COMPETITION

#### ***Don't keep it a secret***

We are aware that many members have been out and about competing in England, Wales, Scotland, Ireland, Belgium, France and Barbados but, as ever, our Competitor of the Month decisions are highly dependent on knowing what you are doing and what you have achieved. Please just drop Nigel Griffiths an email (the.gs100@gmail.com) after an event letting him know how you have got on.



#### ***Now that wasn't supposed to happen***

Commiserations to one of our newest members, Henry Sunderland, who made his debut as a co-driver in the Mini Challenge at the recent Woodpecker Rally.



Competing with an equally inexperienced driver, they had successfully completed all the stages heading into the final stage. Here unfortunately they went off and somehow managed to park their car partly inverted against a tree – it proved extremely difficult to get out of a car at this angle.

However, worse was to come with the accident taking place at around 11.30 and the car being recovered from the Stage at around 19.30 despite the crew being left in the rain all day – hardly a way to encourage new competitors!

#### ***Breakages are not always covered!***

On the subject of rolling cars (but with an equally important outcome), at a recent Sporting Trial a car rolled and it was subsequently discovered that the passenger had broken his arm. This led to time off work, with him checking the insurance cover available from MS-UK through his competition licence.

These checks revealed that as the holder of a 'base-level' RS Clubman's licence, which had been provided without a fee being payable, no insurance cover was included. MS-UK highlighted earlier in the year that competitors could choose between the '*free*' licence or pay a license fee which would then trigger several benefits including a minimum level of insurance cover.

I know from personal experience from applying for a license last March that the distinction between the '*free*' and '*paid for*' RS Clubman license was not as clear as it could / should be. I understand this distinction has now been improved but please choose carefully if you are applying for an RS Clubman licence in 2026.

#### ***Changing tracks***

News is just coming through that young Kalle Rovannerä (son of Hari) has lost his enthusiasm for rallying and is taking up roundy-roundy motor racing which in my view is a loss to both rallying and the WRC

Recent stalwart of the British Touring Car Championship (BTCC), and the 2024 Champion Jake Hill has recently announced that he is moving on to British GT racing. A move like this

does make you wonder which is now the 'Senior' British non-single-seater championship and has the BTCC been knocked off its perch? However, the reality is that there are probably more (and better paid) factory drives in the European GT Championships than are now available in the dwindling Touring Cars.

### **Formula E Extreme is back... but this time with different packaging.**

No longer are competitors running electric cars but instead the cars are running on Hydrogen.

I'm not clear whether the dangers of contact are such that there is no multi-car racing involved but the event I saw televised was more of a Time Trial with male and female competitors' times being combined to get a result.

### **Trials and Tribulations**

Crosslé cars (if you have heard of them) are the cars to have in Sporting Trials nowadays.



These cars are manufactured in Northern Ireland by the Crosslé Car Company which today is more focused on Formula Ford and other single seater formulae.

A recent enquiry to Crosslé revealed that the price of a new Sporting Trials Car from them would be of the order of £60,000.

When questioned about the price the Crosslé representative advised that the build time/ effort would be the same as

for a Formula Ford which they sell for that sort of figure. I can't fault the logic, but £60k to join the country's most junior single seater formula is maybe a pocket money too far?

### ***A dire warning***

Finally, and on the subject of club level motorsport, we bring to your attention the following **Motorsport UK** Open letter in relation to Road Rallies.

***To: Road Rally Event Organisers / Clubs / Regional Associations / RLO's - 3rd October 2025***

Dear all,

In our last open letter to the Road Rally community on the 19th of March, Motorsport UK spelled out the significant risks facing the discipline if compliance with UK Government legislation, route authorisation, and the National Competition Rules (NCR) was not maintained. The high-profile issues which occurred on two events in the first quarter of 2025 and gave cause for us to write that letter, were extremely concerning.

However, we had hoped that these were isolated incidents, not representative of the attitude of the wider community, and that the requests made in that letter would be heeded. It is alarming, then, that despite our clear warning as to the potential consequences, we have seen further, deeply troubling breaches of the NCR and general poor practice by organisers and competitors alike.

Despite our insistence that driving standards must improve, and the work done by many officials and organisers to promote adherence to the Road Traffic Act, we continue to receive concerns about events on the public highway. The sport cannot exist without the cooperation and support of police authorities and residents. It is a real worry that the police are becoming increasingly concerned about poor driving standards and when necessary, have called clubs and Motorsport UK to meet with them to discuss serious incidents and complaints caused during events.

Residents are also becoming alienated by poor driving standards and sub-standard PR work which has resulted in areas traditionally used in rallies for many years now being turned into blackspots.

We have received a large volume of correspondence regarding the increasing cost, if not outright impossibility in obtaining insurance cover for Road Rallies. It is not a coincidence that the price of insurance has increased, while the number of insurers willing to offer cover for events with competition on the public highway has decreased, as the number of videos of competitors driving in a manner incompatible with general safety has increased.

Further compounding this challenge are events and organisers which fail to discharge even the most basic aspects of their responsibilities. Falsely reporting or failing to report incidents to Motorsport UK severely inhibits our ability to negotiate with insurers, and act to safeguard you as officials, volunteers and competitors. The deterioration in standards that has been witnessed in 2025 has necessitated a number of changes to the sport.

In both the Moonbeam and JJ Brown National Court Inquiries, it was recommended that all Clerks of the Course and Senior Club Officials which manage events running on 'Rallying - Road Timed' permits should be provided with support and training by Motorsport UK. To this end, a licencing scheme for Clerks of the Course of Rallying - Road Timed, Rallying - Road and Rallying - Navigation permitted events will be introduced for 1st of January 2026.

All events running on those permit types must have a licenced Clerk of the Course. Any Deputy Clerks of the Course must also possess the 'Clerk of the Course' licence. Assistant Clerks of the Course must possess the 'Assistant Clerk of the Course licence'.

The scheme will entail an online learning module and assessment specific to the discipline, to ensure all individuals responsible for the safe and compliant running of events with competition on the public highway are fully aware of their legal responsibilities. This online learning module will be available from end of October. Licence holders will be required to keep their knowledge levels topped up by participating in annual seminars.

Individuals who have served as Clerk of the Course, Deputy Clerk of the Course or Assistant Clerk of the Course on events run on those permit types since 1st January 2024 may, at the discretion of Motorsport UK, be invited to apply for their licence.

Motorsport UK will continue to assign Observers to events and will continue to undertake spot checks throughout 2026 to ensure compliance with the Motor Vehicles (Competition and Trials) Regulations (MVCTR) and NCR. Any breaches will be investigated appropriately. For the sake of clarity, we can confirm that Navigational Scatter, 12 Car Navigational, Targa, Road Historic, Economy/Vintage/Veteran and other Exemption of Permit events are not included in this scheme.

However, organisers of these events are reminded that they have the same responsibility to comply with the MVCTR and NCR. Further to the introduction of the Clerk of the Course licencing scheme, the Road Rallies Working Group has considered several changes to the safety, sporting and technical regulations governing Road Rallies.

A consultation document detailing their findings and next steps will be circulated in the coming days. We strongly encourage you to provide constructive responses to this consultation.

Motorsport UK reiterate our commitment to the future of Road Rallying - we wish for the sport to continue for as long as possible, but it cannot be at any cost. Breaches of legislation and regulation, together with continued disregard to driving standards will only serve to damage Road Rallying beyond repair and put all forms of Rallying in the UK at risk. Finding a balance is not always straightforward, but with your support and cooperation, it is entirely possible,

**With Kind Regards**

**Motorsport UK**

## Social

Keith Mainland will be hosting our **Down the Pub** in November although we do not have a host or venue for our event on **9th December**. We would like a location in the Farnham/Guildford area so if you are willing to select a suitable pub, please let me know.

I will start the process of looking for hosts towards the end of November for **Down the Pub** events in 2026 – it would be great if I could have some offers of help before I start twisting arms.

Planning for the 2026 Awards Dinner, reflecting efforts of the club and its members in 2025, will be starting soon. We will be looking at a date in late February / early March. There is an opportunity to shape the 2026 event, so please let me know:

- *What you liked about the 2025 Annual Awards event.*
- *Where we could make improvements; and*
- *If you did not attend, what would have got you along?*

Finally, a bit of a teaser, who said: ***“There are only three sports: bullfighting, motor racing, and mountaineering; all the rest are merely games.”***

***Ian Brooks – Chairman***

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### ***A whisper from the lanes***

*Word is now emerging of an ambitious plan by Farnborough District Motor Club to arrange and organise a new ‘Closed Road’ event, based in the lanes and byways just south of Farnham.*

*Looking towards the latter part of 2026 or even early 2027, the hope is to run a ‘single-stage’ of up to 9-miles in length, repeating it 4 or 6 times during the day.*

*Sutton & Cheam Motor Club have pledged our full support and I am sure the guys and gals at FDMC would welcome any individual offers of help and expertise. There’s still a long way to go but let’s keep our tyres ‘cross-plied’ that it receives a favourable reception from the numerous authorising bodies over*

*the next few months and that they can crack on with this exciting new concept.*



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## **CHALLENGER STAGES**



*A quick scan down the list of those spinning their wheels in Dorset on the Challenger Stages, Bovington highlights no fewer than 8 S & C MC entries including Sean and Colin Quigley (Fiesta Rally 2), John and Sharon Mills (Mini R53), John Peck (Mitsubishi Evo5), Pete Wilkins and Caroline Brampton (BMW M3), Paul and Ben*

*Garraway (Sunbeam Talbot), Tony and Ben Perrett (Ford Fiesta), Scott & Darren Stutchbury (Clio RS3), Richard Seal and David Baylis (Ford Escort). Even if we don’t come away with some proper silverware, we should pick up an award for the most ‘family entries’.*

# FIA SENATE SHENANIGANS UPDATE



Recent FIA Senate news includes the dismissal of Britain's representative, Ben Cussons, by President Mohammed Ben Sulayem and the appointment of Anar Alakbarov as his replacement.

The FIA Senate is responsible for financial oversight and governance, and this move follows a June 2025 reform that gives Ben Sulayem more power to remove senators.

Separately, a challenge to the upcoming FIA presidential election has been filed in court by candidate Anne-Caroline Villars to challenge election rules in court.

A 'quirk' in the FIA's rules is currently barring other candidates from standing in the next presidential election. Villars was one of three potential candidates to voice their intention to stand against Ben Sulayem for the December 12 election. Former Swiss racing driver Laura Villars has launched legal action against motor racing's FIA over the governing body's rules, that bars other candidates from challenging president Mohammed Ben Sulayem in the upcoming election.



Villars was one of three potential candidates to voice their intention to stand against Ben Sulayem for the December 12 election, alongside FIA senior steward Tim Mayer and Belgian journalist Virginie Philpott.

Earlier this month, it was revealed by that Ben Sulayem would stand as the only candidate and therefore preventing other candidates from being eligible to stand. Under FIA rules, candidates are required to submit a list of potential team members featuring 10 names, including the President, President of the Senate, two Deputy Presidents and seven Vice-Presidents from each of the FIA's global regions.

However, there is only one candidate from the World Council list available as a potential vice-president from South America – Brazil's Fabiana Ecclestone, wife of former F1 chief Bernie Ecclestone, who has already backed Ben Sulayem.

With no other South American representatives to choose from, no other candidates are eligible to stand for the election, leaving Ben Sulayem unopposed.

## ***Meanwhile over at Motorsport UK...***

Interesting times ahead as we are led to believe that the Chairmanship of Dave Richards comes to an end on 1<sup>st</sup> December (subject to confirmation) It looks likely that as present no formal replacement candidate has been identified, Mr Richards will serve a further year in office – any suggestion or nominations welcomed?

As the end of the year approaches we urge all members to make sure they are up-to-date with the multitude of rules changes proposed and accepted for introduction to the National Competition Rules on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2026.

Rumours are beginning to circulate as to the possibility of a return of the UK as a round of the World Rally Championship – suspected to be north of the border - there are one or two financial and contractual challenges to be sorted first however.

*(I believe that Ian's quote should be attributed to Ernest Hemingway – Ed)*

# Champions quiz update

The table as at the end of September is provided below. There is a four-way tie on 19-points with only three titles decided (highlighted in green) and no expected change in F1 manufacturers points as McLaren have taken the title and none of our competitors selected anyone but McLaren.

Position finalised	Team A	Team B	Team C	Team D	Team E	Team F	Team G	Team H	Team I
0=outside top3. Blank = no results									
<b>F1 World Champion</b>	Norris	2 Piastri	3 Piastri	3 Piastri	3 Piastri	2 Norris	2 Verstappen	1 Piastri	3 Piastri
<b>F1 Manufacturers</b>	McLaren	3 McLaren	3 McLaren	3 McLaren	3 McLaren	3 McLaren	3 McLaren	3 McLaren	3 McLaren
<b>World Rally Champion</b>	Evans	2 Evans	2 Neuville	0 Roanperera	1 Roanperera	1 Evans	2 Roanperera	1 Ogier	3 Evans
<b>WRC Manufacturers</b>	Toyota	3 Hyundai	2 Hyundai	2 Toyota	3 Toyota	3 Hyundai	2 Toyota	3 Toyota	3 Hyundai
<b>BTCC - Driver</b>	Ingram	3 Ingram	3 Sutton	2 Hill	0 Hill	0 Ingram	0 Turkington	0 Sutton	2 Hill
<b>British GT - Driver</b>	Mitchell	0 Martin/Mitchell	0 Rob Collard	0 Dawson	3 Tse	2 Tillbrook	0 Mitchell	0 Collard	0 Adam
<b>British Rally Champion</b>	Jurgenson	1 Creighton	3 Creighton	3 M Evans	2 O Price	0 Creighton	3 Creighton	3 Jurgenson	1 O Price
<b>BTRDA Sporting Driver</b>	Bricknell	3 Bricknell	3 Bricknell	3 Bricknell	3 Stuart Beare	0 Bricknell	3 Bricknell	3 Josh Veale	0 Bricknell
<b>Nat Hot Rod World Champ</b>	Cooke	0 Maxwell	0 Woods	0 Roots	0 Woods	0 Alexander	0 McDonald	3 McDonald	3 Woods
<b>BRISCA F1 World Champ</b>	Wainman Jnr	0 Wainman Jnr	0 Tom Harris	3 Fairhurst	1 Hines	0 Tom Harris	3 Newsom	0 Fairhurst	1 Tom Harris
		17	19	19	19	11	18	17	19
									16

The F1 drivers title looks as though it should be interesting. Hopefully McLaren winning the manufacturers title so early will leave Piastri and Norris to fight things out as if they were in different teams. This will be exciting for F1 fans but could make it very difficult to reconcile the warring factions before the start of next season.

The World Rally Championship is bubbling up nicely...

Again, it looks as though Toyota will have banked the manufacturers' title early so it can leave Ogier, Evans and Roanperä to go at it. Of the three, Roanperä probably has the least motivation for another title – it would be Evans first and Ogier is trying to tie Loeb's record of titles.

For Hyundai and Ford, it looks as though the later part of the season will be used to try and sort their cars out for next season.



**Tom Ingram celebrating his 2025 championship win**

The BTCC concluded at Brands Hatch on 5th October with Tom Ingram taking his third title.

At the event the Hyundais looked to have a real edge, but a combination of factors (breakdowns, spins etc) meant that Tom had to do most of the fighting alone surrounded by several cars from Ash Sutton's NAPA Ford camp.

Sutton drove well and fairly to just lose out to Ingram. Dan Cammish battled well to take his best BTCC season's result with 3<sup>rd</sup> overall in his Ford.

The British GT championship was an altogether closer affair with several teams in the running coming towards the end of the season.

However, leaders coming into the final event were Charles Dawson and Kiern Dewis who drove a very sound qualifying and race to protect successfully their position in their Mercedes.

Runners up was the Barwell Motorsport Lamborghini of Hugo Cook and our very own Sutton & Cheam MC man Rob Collard.

Sadly, and because Rob did not attend the first event of the season, Hugo Cook was placed second by himself, closely followed by the Mercedes pairing of Kevin Tse (Hong Kong) and Maximilian Götz (Germany).

The British Rally Championship was concluded at the Cambrian Stages in North Wales with William Creighton and Liam Regan claiming the spoils. Romet Jürgenson to the runners-up slot with Merion Evans settling for 3rd. Our own Declan Dear registered a 9<sup>th</sup> place finish alongside his regular driver Matthew Hurst.

The BTRDA Sporting Trials Championship being an autumn / winter series has about 8 rounds left to run – results for events in September have yet to be added to the table – so there would be plenty of scope for change if Thomas Bricknell had not won every event he has entered this year bar one, where he came second.

However, with quite a few events taking place at the end of October and in early November, and Thomas running a fireworks business, his (likely) non-availability may cause the points situation to close up a bit. The drivers in second and third have driven well and put the miles in to build up their scores but may yet be caught by others who have been more selective about their events.

The National Hot Rod World Championship at the beginning of July was, by all accounts, a cracker with rain during the race resulting in several incidents and re-starts. Whilst Rob McDonald won again and comfortably on the track, he had to survive two incident-related investigations before his title was confirmed. Behind him there was an intense battle between Chis Dew and Jason Kew for the other podium placings. Behind them were a few drivers who had worked their way through from the back of the grid including local man, Worcester Park's Chris Roots, who finished 10<sup>th</sup>.

Finally, the BRISCA F1 Stockcar Championship took place at Kings Lynn, Norfolk on 13th September.



This was an epic meeting run over three days, providing the opportunity for a variety of overseas drivers to join the mainland British drivers (who qualified through a range of events over the season) on the grid.

Whilst Tom Harris won his sixth (and third consecutive) titles, there was strong support for the Dutchman, Jelle Tesselaar, who finished second.

BRISCA F1 is a big affair in Holland, and they brought 50+ drivers across to try to qualify for the final. Lee Fairhurst took the third spot on the podium.



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*The article below was written by Robert Reid, former World Championship co-driver and FIA Deputy Vice President for Sport on 11<sup>th</sup> September 2025 and made available on 'Substack' <https://robertreidwrc.substack.com/>*

## Jumping into the Future - Rallying's Leadership Test

The FIA's announcement of a tender for a new World Rally Championship promoter has raised as many questions about leadership as it has about the future of the sport.

For months the current promoter had been exploring a sale, supported by a large financial organisation, with valuations inevitably influenced by Liberty Media's acquisition of MotoGP - That deal set a benchmark which many had hoped rallying could follow.

At the same time, criticism grew that the WRC was not being promoted effectively, although when pressed, few could agree on what promotion means.



Ask ten stakeholders, and you will hear ten different answers. ***“Social media engagement, Spectacle of events, Global expansion, Commercial growth”***. The only common thread is dissatisfaction, with no clear articulation of what success should look like. There was no shortage of interest. Wealthy individuals and major funds reportedly examined the opportunity. But every conversation ran into the same wall: **TIME**.

With only seven years left on the existing agreement, the value was capped. Investors do not build strategies on horizons that close before momentum can gather. The runway was simply too short. Attempts were made to solve this. The promoter sought an extension, hoping to unlock longer-term value. Yet that request came with conditions, with the FIA understood to have asked for significant financial consideration in return. Whether that was fair or opportunistic hardly mattered in the end, negotiations stalled. Frustration built, and eventually one of the sport's most visible backers even withdrew from its WRC and WRX programmes altogether.

Then came the FIA's announcement: A new tender, a new promoter, and a timetable so rapid it bordered on theatrical: submissions due in November, a decision before the December General Assembly, and a new contract in place by January. The speed was striking. So too the proximity to the Presidential elections. To some, this looked less like a strategic process and more like a display of control in a politically useful moment.

The announcement's phrasing only deepened uncertainty, raising doubts whether this was about renewal, or stagecraft. This is where the line between leadership and interference becomes central. Leadership is about setting direction, building partnerships, inspiring trust. Interference is about proving who is in charge.

The difference can seem slight, but in practice it decides whether stakeholders lean in with confidence or retreat with suspicion. When governance becomes theatre, energy goes into staging the act rather than designing the system. The applause may swell or silence might follow, but neither brings real progress.

The governance shadows extend deeper. As a not-for-profit entity, the FIA cannot distribute commercial surpluses directly to its clubs, only through grants and programmes. How any proceeds are allocated will heavily influence perceptions of fairness, especially if the process appears tied to political expedience rather than strategic clarity. And while conflicts of interest may not be declared, they are rarely invisible. When leadership is too close to the mechanics of the process, impartiality is questioned. The sport deserves governance that rises above such doubt.

Until now, however, all of this noise has risked obscuring the real issue. The question is not who holds the contract, but what rallying wants to be over the next 25 years?

This is more than another contractual cycle and, in the years ahead, the sport will face technological revolutions. Today's teenage audience will be tomorrow's decision-makers. Environmental and societal scrutiny will intensify, and the very notion of mobility will shift. Only a deal anchored in a clear vision of rallying's future, rather than short-term gains, has true value.

So, what might rallying look like in 2050? Will cars be electric, hydrogen-fuelled, hybrid; or powered by something not yet imagined?

How can it welcome new markets without losing the identity that has always defined it? Where lies the equilibrium between spectacle and sustainability, heritage and innovation? Fans of the future will demand experiences that are immersive, interactive, and responsible. If rallying cannot chart that journey itself, others will define it. The contrast with Formula 1 is instructive. Its regulator, also the FIA, has been widely criticised for poor governance and a lack of stability; floating ideas of V10s, then V8s, and now further tweaks to the not-yet-introduced 2026 powertrain regulations before recently doing a U-turn when they couldn't get the support from the power unit manufacturers.

Constantly shifting the goalposts creates uncertainty and fuels the sense that short-term attention-seeking has taken precedence over long-term planning.

In contrast, the promoter, through F1's CEO, has been engaging directly with fans to understand what the next generation of audiences want. In recent comments, he noted that younger viewers increasingly prefer highlights to full races, and that the sport must be open to adapting formats, such as sprints or even shorter Grands Prix, to remain relevant.

That is not theatre, it is strategy: transparent, data-driven, and focused on designing systems that will carry the sport into the future. History suggests that commercial models follow vision, not the other way around. When a sport knows what it stands for, opportunity aligns. When the vision is vague, no level of promotion can disguise the cracks. The criticism that rallying is insufficiently promoted is a symptom, not the disease. The deeper problem is that nobody has clearly defined what "promotion" should achieve. Until that is resolved, every future promoter will struggle, judged by expectations that shift with the wind. The European Rally Championship offers a lesson in contrast. Its entry lists are strong, top categories are well populated, and the competition is close. Yet media visibility remains modest. Participation alone doesn't guarantee attention, and attention alone doesn't sustain engagement. Rallying's value lies in its drama, unpredictability, and the human stories unfolding across unforgiving terrain. Connecting that essence with modern audiences will require more than tweaks; it demands a system calibrated to carry the sport into the future.

So, the current tender becomes more than a transaction, it is symbolic. Is it a step toward renewal, or a piece of political theatre? If no viable bidder emerges, will the FIA take the championship in-house as it has with other series? That would provoke tough questions about competition, transparency, and whether lessons from the past have been learned. These are not footnotes. They speak to whether decisions are being made to safeguard rallying's future or merely to enforce authority.

Rallying deserves more than gestures, it deserves leadership that is transparent, principled, strategic, treating promoters as partners, not adversaries and committed to designing systems that endure. The effort should not be about proving who is in charge, it should be about defining what the next 25 years of the sport must become. Without that clarity, no promoter, no matter how capable, will succeed.

Because rallying has always thrived on courage, precision, and trust in the system to carry a crew through unseen stages. Governance requires no less.

The real question is whether those steering the sport today are willing to commit to a future with the same conviction. The choice is between repeating the past or designing a future worthy of rallying's spirit. If leaders choose the latter, the next 25 years could yet be the sport's most compelling stage.

## L2B From the outside

As dawn broke over autumnal London, 384 pioneering veteran cars, their intrepid drivers and passengers, and crowds of early-rising

well-wishers gathered in Hyde Park this morning (Sunday, 2 November). Despite pre-dawn rain, spirits remained high as everyone eagerly awaited sunrise to signal the start of the 2025 RM Sotheby's London to Brighton Veteran Car Run – the latest staging of the world's longest-running motoring event.

This magical annual institution is the largest and most remarkable gathering of veteran vehicles on Earth. It's also a true celebration of the life-changing benefits that accompanied the birth of motorised transport at the end of the 19th century.

It is now 129 years since the original Emancipation Run of 1896, which celebrated the passing of the Locomotives on Highways Act. That landmark legislation raised the speed limit for "light locomotives" from 4 to 14 mph and abolished the requirement for a man to walk ahead waving a red flag.

Evoking that freedom, today's much-loved homage began, as always, with the symbolic tearing-up of the red flag – a pre-dawn ritual that this year also marked the 125th anniversary of the game-changing 1000 Mile Trial of 1900. That audacious 22-day journey introduced the new-fangled motor car to communities across the nation.

To honour this milestone, the red flag was torn up by racing driver and broadcaster Alex Brundle and presenter Charlotte Vowden, who had the privilege of leading the field away from Hyde Park driving a very special 1899 Wolseley 3.5hp Voiturette.

Affectionately known as OWL (after its registration plate), this Wolseley belongs to the British Motor Museum collection in Gaydon. It is the only working survivor from the original 1000 Mile Trial.

As daylight arrived on an unseasonably warm – if wet – morning, the Run's curtain-raiser featured a group of pre-1905 motor and pedal cycles, also bound for Brighton. Notably the brave penny-farthing riders drew admiration as they set out for the Sussex seaside resort's Madeira Drive.

Precisely at 7:00am, with the sun rising, the first batch of pre-1905 'horseless carriages' was flagged away by Duncan Wiltshire, Chairman of the Royal Automobile Club, which has lovingly curated the Run since 1930. A comfy seat for the journey!

The oldest Victorian 'light locomotives' led the cavalcade as an extraordinary variety of ancient cars chuffed and wheezed their way through Wellington Arch and down Constitution Hill, past Buckingham Palace, through Admiralty Arch, and into Whitehall.



Then it was edging Parliament Square and across Westminster Bridge beneath the gaze of Big Ben. Here, the 60-mile route divided in two to ease traffic flow in south London.

Half of the participants followed the traditional A23 route via Kennington, Brixton and Streatham Common, while the other half travelled across Lambeth Bridge, through Vauxhall, Clapham Common and Tooting. With the weather improving, the two routes merged again on the A236 north of Croydon, reuniting the cavalcade as it headed towards the South Downs in Surrey and West Sussex.

As ever, vehicles set off in age order, with the earliest starting first in OWL's wheel tracks, allowing the first pioneers the most time to reach Brighton.

*The madman of the VCR, Duncan Pittaway shovels half-a-ton of coal on the 57-mile journey*



Among the early starters was the much-loved Salvesen Steam Car – effectively a steam locomotive for the road, complete with a stoker shovelling coal into its fiery furnace. It was joined by numerous motorised tricycles, many with riders and passengers dressed in charming period attire.

Mercedes-Benz Heritage previewed a key anniversary. In 2026, it will be 100 years since Daimler-Motoren-Gesellschaft and Benz & Cie merged to form Daimler-Benz AG, creating the Mercedes-Benz brand. Anticipating this centenary, the company entered a 1901 Benz Spider and a 1904 Mercedes-Simplex. Although the Simplex was unable to start, the Spider successfully completed the course.

Thereafter followed a staggering variety of antique machinery dating back to motoring's earliest days – some with steering wheels, others with naval-inspired tillers; some powered by petrol, others by steam, and even a few by early electric batteries.

This diversity reflected the pioneering spirit of innovation as different propulsion systems competed to define the future of transport – a dilemma echoed in today's automotive industry.

Reflecting the modern shift toward sustainability, several veteran cars ran on SUSTAIN's e-fuels, while the Salvesen operated on eCoal, made from a blend of olives, coffee and molasses.

While the Run looked ahead to a greener future, it also honoured a bygone age when motoring technology was in its infancy – long before roofs, windscreens, heaters, radios or satnavs became standard.

As always, the event's eccentric charm and deep heritage drew huge crowds along the route. Tens of thousands of spectators lined the pavements and verges to cheer on participants throughout the journey.

The Run attracted entrants from across the globe, including cars from Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, the Czech Republic, France, Germany, Holland, Hong Kong, Ireland, Italy, Monaco, Sweden and Switzerland, along with a 26-car contingent from the United States.

In total, more than 100 marques were represented – from Adler, Albion and Argyll to Waverley, Winton and Wolseley. A handful of names, such as Cadillac, Ford, Renault, Vauxhall and Mercedes-Benz still thrive today, though most are long defunct. Among these, De Dion Bouton had the largest showing, with over 50 entries.



Taking advantage of bright Sussex sunshine, no fewer than 340 starters completed the celebrated journey to Brighton before the 4:30pm deadline, proudly collecting their coveted finisher's medals.

Many hailed the 2025 Run as one of the 'best ever', praising the ever-improving directional route signposting, the 280 plus enthusiastic volunteer marshals, and the fervent support from well-wishers along the way.

The first car to reach the Sussex seafront was the No 46 Renaux tricycle, winner of the 1900 Paris-St Malo road race, completing the journey in just under four hours to be greeted by the mayor.

Having flagged away the early starters, Duncan Wiltshire enjoyed an untroubled run to Brighton aboard a 1901 Mors owned by the Royal Automobile Club.

*"What a fantastic RM Sotheby's London to Brighton Veteran Car Run it has been today,"* said a delighted Wiltshire. *"The turnout from spectators was mighty impressive, with some of the biggest crowds I've ever seen lining the route once the sun came out. You also have to marvel at the organisation. This is an incredibly complex event, seamlessly overseen by hundreds of wonderful volunteer marshals who ensure the smooth and safe progress of these extraordinary vehicles".*

*"This has been a fabulous way to celebrate the 125th anniversary of the 1000 Mile Trial. Our 60-mile journey from London to Brighton on modern roads felt heroic, so it's hard to overestimate the enormous challenge faced by those spirited early motorists on their nationwide adventure back in 1900 – a feat well worth saluting in this milestone year."*

Having led the field away from Hyde Park, Alex Brundle was equally thrilled to reach Brighton after completing his first Veteran Car Run.

*“It was such a joy and an incredible experience – my sincere thanks to the British Motor Museum,”* he said. *“Shamefully, I didn’t know much about the event before, but now I’ve completely fallen in love with it! To have the honour of tearing up the red flag and leaving Hyde Park first, driving OWL in such a milestone year for the car, was amazing. Being in one of the older cars was a real challenge, which only added to the fun... as did seeing so many people lining the roads. I was blown away by the crowds.”*

The RM Sotheby’s Veteran Car Run provided a fitting climax to the Royal Automobile Club’s busy London Motor Week, which featured a host of events. The penultimate highlight was the free-to-view St James’s Motoring Spectacle on Pall Mall – the perfect curtain-raiser to today’s grand finale.

**Footnote:**

*Those that are directly involved in the London to Brighton might echo, the Sunday Veteran Car Run is made more difficult by the stupendously successful St James’s Motoring Spectacle and Concours held on a ‘closed for the day’ Pall Mall. Taking place on the Saturday, it has turned into a monster success in only its second year.*



*The hundred or so additional staff, tens of thousands of spectators and the huge access difficulty to ‘L2B HQ’ can make one wish it was back in Regent Street, where it resided until quite recently!*

*To be fair, the whole event is free of charge, something of a rarity nowadays. It is likely that it can lay claim to the world’s largest gathering of motor vehicles across such a wide range and age!*

## Getting into Motorsport – A Newbie’s View

*The text below is provided by Jacob Gasgoine-Becker, someone who joined the Club earlier in the year. Previously Jacob had done some track days, but he was looking to take his first steps in motorsport under the auspices of Motorsport UK. The article also shows the sort of simple contribution that will really make this magazine work!*

It was a really enjoyable first year or so of sprinting. I was a bit daunted at first, more so because I think there is quite a high barrier to entry from a regulations and organisation perspective than from anything related to competing.

With lots of support and thanks to both Ian Brooks and Dave Whyman, I am now a confident entrant.

Motorsport rewards those who seek out advice from people directly, but I do think Motorsport UK could do beginners a favour with a guide on the various Championships, Regional Associations and events.



I was very happy with my results this season.

Apparently, I am a perfectly average competitor, finishing middle of my class at every event I've entered.

I was pleased to knock five seconds or so off my time around Goodwood between the Regis Sprint in April and the Eagle Sprint in August.

More than the results, I've really enjoyed meeting fellow competitors and spectating at events, with an interesting and eclectic mix of competing cars.

I would recommend sprinting and autosolo as great affordable (relatively) entry points to motor sport, with each offering very different driving experiences and plenty of opportunity for petrolheads to nerd out.

My Clio is off the road for winter now, with some weight-saving, performance and safety upgrades planned to hopefully give me an edge at some more events next year.

Jacob Gasgoine-Becker.

*(Please keep us updated with progress and results Jacob – Ed)*

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### Sporting Trials Progress Update *(A Chairman's Passion)*

The Sporting Trials season takes a break from end May to early September because conditions are too dry and hills would have to be made dangerously steep to distinguish between competitors' performance.

The first event back in harness was therefore the 750 Motor Club training day at Tulley's Farm near Gatwick.

Attendance by competitors was surprisingly skinny with just two cars, albeit double driven, supported by two of the top competitors in 750 Motor Club Sporting Trials.



*The challenges of Tulley's Farm on an earlier event*

The result was that Matt Sunderland and I had a massive amount of time in the car which gave us time to think, follow advice and even try the odd experiment. Whilst there were definite improvements over the day, it became increasingly evident that the carbs (carburettors) were not performing correctly and there was a significant amount of over fuelling going on.

As soon as I got back from the 'Training Day', I took the carbs off the car and sent them, together with a service kit (purchased from Portugal – the wonders of the internet and recommendations) to a 'friend-of-a friend' who knows Keihin carbs well from his days with motorbikes. He turned them round in two weeks and returned them looking pristine although he warned that there was wear in the left-hand carburettor. He commented that the piston was only moving as smoothly as he could make it, albeit inferior to the right-hand carburettor. We mounted the carburettor but could not understand the concerns over the left-hand carburettor which was clearly moving freely as required.

However, on further reflection we realised that with the engine being installed at 90 degrees to its position in a road car, rights and lefts could have become confused!

In the meantime, I decided that:

- (a) *The Sporting Trials bug had really bitten.*
- (b) *I could learn a lot of driving skills as a passenger.*
- (c) *If I wanted to do BTRDA events next year, I could learn a lot about the venues as a passenger on the plethora of events at the back end of the season.*

I therefore posted on Facebook my willingness to passenger and the events I could do and within hours I had a WhatsApp message from Stuart Beare, Chairman of BTRDA Sporting Trials, Stuart was owner of Tulley's Farm and a top-level driver in a very sophisticated bit of kit. He advised that he did not have a regular passenger and would be happy to show me the ropes. Our first event together would be the BTRDA Peter Fear Sporting Trial at a venue just east of Ross on Wye on 21<sup>st</sup> September.



Just over 30 competitors attended the event – no mean feat when the previous two weekends had seen a double header in Cornwall and a round in the Lake District.



Despite rain on the Saturday, the warm blustery conditions meant that the venue was surprisingly dry and dried out further during the day. We headed out to the hills on a tyre pressure of 3psi with high anticipation of what was to come.

Six hours and 24 hills of motor sport passed by in a blur.

Stuart proved to be a very competent and accommodating driver and we cleaned most hills with a scattering on 1s, 2s and 3s on our scorecard. We lost 3 points on one hill we cleaned because Stuart got distracted by a debate about the route taken by the preceding competitor, clipping the three-gate whilst he tried to prove a point. We lost 4 points on the first hill of our final round where a new climb route had been introduced, and we were the

first to attempt it on virgin grass. Our attempt removed the grass and left more exposed soil and a more grippy base which aided subsequent competitors.

Overall, we finished on 18 points, 10 points behind recurrent winner Thomas Bricknell. We were positioned 12<sup>th</sup> overall at the head of two other competitors tied on 18 points.

At least Stuart had the pride of seeing his son finish third on 11 points. This was a highly credible performance given that Sam drives a live axle car and all the other top competitors use cars with independent rear suspension.

This set up tends to ensure that more rear tyre tread is on the ground at any given point on a Hill. The closeness of the points emphasises the challenge for organisers of distinguishing between competitors in dry conditions.



With my newly installed carbs, my next event as a driver was a 750 Motor Club event near Horsmonden on 5<sup>th</sup> October. This was looking like a double header weekend for me with a sailing event on the Saturday and the Trial on Sunday.

In practice however the sailing was blown off thanks to Storm Amy and so a decision was communicated on 1<sup>st</sup> October, and I even offered to help set up the Trial.

The venue was the hedgerows of a privately owned field. Hedgerows provide varied, challenging conditions with some long, steep climbs and plenty of options. I set out 3 hills and was confident that they could not be cleaned.

12 cars gathered on Sunday morning - a mixture of 750 Experts and 5 Novices including myself and Matt. Tyre pressures were set at 7psi reflecting the dryness of conditions.

The event started disastrously for me because I stalled a car's length off the start line, not even getting to the #12 Gate. I restarted and carried on (for the experience) only to stall at the #8 Gate. I restarted and eventually cleaned the Hill.

Returning to the start to swap with Matt, I asked what score I was being given and was told a 'clean'. I reflected on this aware that Novice competitors in the other group may not be aware of or benefit from this generosity - I therefore scored myself a 12.

At this point we realised that the engine was not running cleanly under any sort of load, and we needed to keep engine revs up to stop the car from stalling - more on that later.

On the next hill we had to drive along a cross camber before turning down a step to set ourselves up for the final, massive climb. I was so focused on not slipping down the cross-camber that I clipped the upper side of the #7 Gate - so 19 points down after two Hills. With Matt having scored only four points so far things did not look very good.

The rest of the day flew by. The dry conditions meant that cleans were the order of the day and even raising tyre pressures to 12 psi in the afternoon did not impact the flow of zeros. At the end of the day, I finished last on 25 points - if I'd accepted the zero for the first hill I would have won the Novice class.

The event was won by a competitor on 0 points - i.e. he had cleaned every hill. I like to think that because he was starting immediately behind me it was my example / fear of losing to me which had inspired this result.

On getting home I had help to investigate the carburettor problem. After basic checks on the electrics, just to be sure it was a carburettor problem and not spark related, we realised that the piston in the right-hand carburettor was not moving up and down smoothly which

was limiting the range of movement. Despite lubricating the bore of the carburettor with suitable oil, we could not resolve this problem and could only conclude that it was caused by wear – something that can probably only be resolved with new carburettors as the forty-year-old originals are no longer available.

Regardless of these challenges, I signed up to the BTRDA's Taster/ Training Day the following Saturday in advance of a proper BTRDA event at Long Compton.

The journey to the event was made extremely difficult by the challenges of getting across to the A34. Local paper articles had indicated that the M27 was closed west bound just above Southsea although it later transpired the closure was in fact east bound!

I therefore had decided to use the A272, crossing from Petersfield to Winchester until about 5-miles up the A272 the 'Road Closed' signs appeared with no apparent diversion being offered – presumably because the only route round was on 'whites' which would not be suitable for most vehicles. As a result, my journey to Long Compton proved quite stressful taking some 50 minutes longer than planned or expected.

There were some 16 people on the Taster Day with 3 of us being coached separately in our own cars. Coaching came from 2 top drivers - Richard Sharp who finished 3<sup>rd</sup> overall and Peter Fenson who won the Blue



*Peter Fenson looking for flat ground*

Independent' Class the next day).

Both were experienced in so many ways and we soon learnt:

- How to come off the throttle as a hill gets steeper to maintain traction.
- Peter's definition of flat where you should be looking to build up speed (about 15 degrees or less).
- How to evaluate a hill before attempting it, identifying areas which would offer and threaten traction and areas and where to be looking to build speed.

Unfortunately, during these exercises my car demonstrated that it was not very happy, consistently playing up when I attempted to climb hills. I did get to have a go in Richard's car, and everything suddenly seemed very easy – something to aspire to!

Having seen the hills and become increasingly aware of my car's weaknesses, I decided not to drag my nephew down from his house renovations in Manchester and, instead, to offer myself as a passenger or marshal the following day. As a result, I spent the day watching all competitors attempt Hill 6 at least three times each, albeit with minor modifications in layout for each climb.

Overall, Thomas Bricknell won on 24-points with some 11 drivers scoring 44-points or less, emphasising the closeness of the competition despite the extreme challenge offered by several of the Hills – no one got through the #2 Gate all day on our Hill.



*Richard Sharp in action*

Back to sorting out my car for the Tulley's Farm Sporting Trial on 2<sup>nd</sup> November, my challenge is to sift through the advice offered by Sporting Trials experts to determine what might work for me and my car.

**Date for diaries:** Plum Pudding Trial near Petersfield (GU31 5SN) – 28<sup>th</sup> December.

Previous events have seen around 60 historic trials cars and 30 'modern' cars taking part in separate events on one site.

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## The Passing of Ford's medium-sized family saloon

### Part 1 - The Cortina



Now, I know I am a self-confessed Ford-Nut, having owned some form of blue oval since (and possibly before) the day I could legally drive. I remember 'borrowing' my elder brother's Ford Prefect whilst he was on a package holiday in Spain whilst I have a vague recollection of a 15-year-old commuting the 10 miles to work and back in a Ford Anglia 100e with a suspiciously altered MoT. In those days, the Mot certificate was a voluntary thing only required on cars over 10 years of age!



Even in the dark days of company car ownership, where poor business management forced the use of a Morris Marina 1300 and Citroen BX19 diesel estate, my Fords were kept waiting in the garage.

These ranged from my first legitimate purchase, a 1965 Anglia 105e in Sea Foam Blue to the Jeff Uren built 3.4 Litre Savage Cortina Mk2, which was truly a monster hidden in a square box. I have owned 12 different models of Ford, my last being the American produced Ford Edge which is one of my favourites.

I suspect many have similar backgrounds and I know of one or two club crazies who spout similar passions for those of an Austin or British Leyland pedigree, but they can write their own accounts. For me and this magazine, you will just have to put up with my tribute (partially nicked from 'The Grand Tour') to the birth of a legend... The Ford Cortina.

Just what were they thinking back in 2022, pulling the plug on the Mondeo and ending over 60 years of innovation in the mass car market - losing the Mondeo was a bit like losing the better bits of the Royal Family leaving us with just the Ginger lad and his somewhat peculiar wife!

In what may turn into a 3-phase article, we will probably end with the disappearance of the Ford Mondeo but no good story begins at the end and so we need to look way, way back when the world was black and white, and the revolution began with this - the Ford Cortina.

***This is Genesis, the first chapter in easily the most important story in British motoring history.***

Originally project-named The Archbishop and designed mainly by Roy Brown Junior, an American designer of the Edsel who had been banished to Dagenham following its disastrous failure in the US, the Cortina came along in 1962 and apart from the CND rear lights, it was nothing special.



It wasn't revolutionary like the Mini, launched in 1959, it was just an ordinary family saloon. Renamed for release in 1962 as the Consul Cortina, this was shortened to simply Cortina 2 years later. A 1,500cc engine joined the 1,200 models in 1963, extending the options on the Standard, Deluxe, Super, and GT trims although not all models were available in the 2 and 4 door saloon varieties whilst Estates were all Super Cortinas, some with simulated wood side trim. Options included a heater and a column gearchange which in turn afforded the popular bench seat arrangement.

After a lukewarm reception, Ford were disappointed and decided that to put the Cortina on the map, they'd mount an assault on the world's racetracks. This meant creating a high-performance version and gave birth to the world's first ever 'Fast Ford' and in order to eliminate this article becoming a lengthy and boring story, we concentrate on what they came up with – The Lotus Cortina!

With its revolutionary twin-cam 1.6 litre engine which sounded like the mass-murder of 1000's of mad bees, the Lotus Cortina revved like hell, all the way to 8,000 RPM and produced 105 horsepower, something unheard of in a mass-produced family saloon. The result was some spectacular performances with the road cars capable of doing 108 mph. And in race trim that shot up to 145mph. That was the stuff of spaceships back then and best of all... if you were really on it, it would lift the front wheel in the corners.

On the downside however, it didn't stop properly... and there was very little in the way of grip, so it was an over-steer mentalist. It was also astonishingly brittle. Autocar magazine were said to have ran one for a year, recording 29,000 miles. And in that time, it needed six rear axles, twelve tyres, three sets of rear suspension and probably a whole load of new half-shafts because they were made from chocolate.



But it didn't matter because the Lotus Cortina wasn't designed to last a lifetime. It was designed to last about 40 minutes because that is how long a race lasted. Back in the early '60s, saloon-car racing in Britain was just about the most exciting motor sport the world had ever seen, and the massive American Fords would roar down the straights and then in the corners, an army of Minis would be right back at them. It was beautiful, snarling chaos until the dust settled and astonishingly it was the Lotus Cortina that was doing the winning.

It won the Championship in 1964... and it didn't only shine on the tracks because in 1966 it won the RAC Rally of Britain. They even drove one down the bobsleigh run in the Italian resort after which the Cortina had been named – a legend was born!

At this point in history, rationing had only just given way to The Rolling Stones - hemlines were going up and all kinds of groovy stuff was going down, and the glamorous Cortina caught the mood of the moment perfectly. It was exciting. The first car ever that made the ordinary family man feel special. Like he wasn't just a downtrodden cog.

Ford had changed the face of Joe Ordinary's motoring forever as it was the same story with the Mk1 and Mk2 Cortina as well, albeit without the magnificent Lotus racing glory touch.

**FORD CORTINA WINS AGAIN!**  
**OUTRIGHT WINNER OF TOURING CAR CATEGORY IN ALPINE RALLY**



**WHAT THIS SUCCESS MEANS TO YOU**

**You can buy the same Cortina**  
International Rally regulations allow only cars taken from normal production lines to compete. This means your Ford Cortina has the same built-in reserves as the car which was successful in this gruelling Alpine event.

**The same winning, all-round performance**  
Storming to success in the Alpine rally, Cortina proved the effortless high-speed cruising, surging acceleration and road-hugging safety that are built-in features of all Cortinas.

**The same absolute dependability**  
The same parts that stood up so successfully to the enormous strains and stresses of this car-testing rally are the parts that are in your Cortina.

**The same long-distance comfort**  
In the Alpine rally, the smooth ride, ample stretching space, well-designed seats and low noise-level beat the problem of driver fatigue magnificently. These same qualities ensure that you arrive refreshed at the end of the longest journey in your Cortina.

**The same he-car toughness**  
Victories in countless tough rallies like the Alpine prove the vast reserves of strength in every part of the Cortina. This is the sort of toughness that ensures thousands of extra miles of trouble-free driving for you—however you treat your Cortina.

**PROOF YET AGAIN THAT ALL FORDS ARE MADE TO WIN — AND LAST!**



How can one make this claim? Simple as one car in every three sold in the UK was a Ford. And one in every ten was a Cortina. Everyone I've spoken to while I've been preparing this article has said the same thing. "Oh, yeah, my dad used to have one of those" and this lovefest even continues today when I drag my 1989 Sierra out of hiding every summer.

Let's get back to the plot... Hands up those who have either owned or had a Cortina in their past? Look at that, it's everyone! That is apart from the posher parts of Sutton obviously, where those with a double-barrelled name live as their dad had a Range Rover of course. The point is that at the time Cortina was the best-selling car Britain had ever seen... by miles.

Of course, it wasn't all rampant sexism and hilarious handling that Ford used to make a name for its family saloon. There was some important business stuff too.

Back in late-1960s Britain, if you earned £3,000 a year the government would take 41% of it away in tax.

So, to get around this problem a lot of companies paid their staff a bit less money, but then to make up for the difference they gave them a car and of course that wasn't subject to any tax at all.

Ford soon cottoned on to all this class / status

malarkey and with the introduction of the M Cortina in 1966, they came up with a variety of trim levels to suit the typical management structure of British Industry. There was a base model for the Sales Rep and the 'L' for the Sales Manager. Then you had the 'XL', slightly posher with a cheap clock and a locking glove compartment, ideal for the Sales Director. And at the top of the price list was the high performance 'GT' for the all-powerful Managing Director.

Ford's badging policy quite literally changed the class system in Britain. We used to judge people on how they held their knife and fork, or whether they said toilet or lavatory.



But after the Cortina came along, it was all based on what it said on your boot lid and our dads understood what these badges meant and boy, oh, boy, so did we!

**Picture the black and white scene as Clarkson turns to the camera...**



*You join me in Doncaster outside my old school. And I remember very clearly coming out of that door one afternoon in 1969, skipping along and coming around this gatepost. I noticed to my amazement that parked over there was a 1600E - an E in amber gold with a black vinyl roof, one of the only cars that dare have such a feature! And inside it... was my dad. That was impossible as the E was the absolute King of the Hill.*

*It had four dials set into its wooden dash. It had a leather and an aluminium steering wheel. And on the outside, there were Rostyle wheels and front fog lamps. It was beautiful and wondrous and exciting beyond words - I can still remember now, vividly, how I felt. My knees buckled.*

*I mean... The hairs on the back of my neck are rising now in the same way as they did on that autumn day 50 years ago. I can also remember the enormity of the hug I gave my dad cos I was just so proud of him. I mean, he had an E and the E stood for Executive. MY DAD HAD A 1600E, I screamed and I mean screamed - that meant he was better than the Duke of Edinburgh.*

**Switch the picture if you will to a few years later in South Wales when another young boy called James May went through the exact same thing.**

*I was at my mate Andrew Jones's house, just up the road from ours, when his dad came in and said that my dad had just arrived home and that he had a new car. So, I went outside... and there parked next to the kerb was a brand-new Cortina GXL. I thought, that can't be my dad's new car - But it was.*



*This was the all-new Mk3 Cortina. And, because it was the GXL model, it had chrome strips on the grille, and a vinyl roof. Inside there were four auxiliary dials that were angled towards the driver. In amongst them there was a revolution - It also had something called a rev counter and I'd never seen one of those before and when I looked at it, I suddenly became aware that my body could produce semen”.*

Unfortunately, not all children in Britain were as fortunate as Jeremy and James because some of them were born in Birmingham. And you couldn't really have a Ford in Birmingham because this was the home of British Leyland.

**A diminutive (Oliver Twist like figure) appears in the form of Richard Hammond:**

*“I grew up here on this street, and I remember the day my dad came home with our new car. I prayed it would be a Cortina. Literally prayed. But it wasn't.*



*What it was... was a shoulder-sagging bag of disappointment called the Austin Allegro Estate. It doesn't even have four doors. What was my father thinking and why did he do this to us?*

*I fell to my childish knees, threw my head back and I howled at the sky. Birds across Birmingham took off in fright and startled deer across Stratford-upon-Avon looked up in anguish - Such was my horror.*

*This was the summit. This was it.... the best that we, the Hammonds, could do. We lived in suburbia and people drove past all the time. They clearly saw your car, and they judged you, smiling if you had a wishing well or a gate - we had this on our drive, where people could see it! Because my dad had the 'GXL', he boasted that he got the brake servo and the alternator as standard. I'm sorry to keep banging on about this GXL thing but my mate Lonnie, his dad only had an XL so in the Midlands and according to my dad he was scum.*

*I chose to walk home from school. That wasn't cos I wanted the exercise. It was because I would rather walk, hop or even crawl 30 miles than be seen getting into the flying pig! It's cars like this, they're secrets, dark secrets like this lurking in people's past that create serial killers and psychopaths you know and it's a bloody miracle I'm not one.*

*It's not being short that makes me an angry man, or being born in Birmingham, it's the ugly All-Aggro and its square steering wheel and rear windscreen that popped out if you jacked it up! I could have been great, I could have had dignity, social standing. I could have mattered but you came into my life...*

Outside of Birmingham everyone young and old was in love with Ford's four-door saloon and in 1970 they introduced the Mk1II or Taunus-Cortina, based around a determined move towards European manufacturing.

The thought of dropping the Cortina name was very short lived although the Taunus TC was marketed in limited numbers in Germany, it was a subtly different in bodyline and was strangely restricted to single headlights (bookworm or what!).



The 3<sup>rd</sup> incarnation of the Cortina introduced the now famous 2000cc Pinto engine with Rostyle wheels and luxury interior accessories that massaged the ego-mad fleet car market. Despite an 8-week strike at the Dagenham engine plant creating shortages, the Cortina Mk1II was the biggest selling car in 1972.

The motorsport performance mantle had now fallen to a dedicated team based at Boreham who concentrated almost solely on the Escort. The Cortina settled squarely into the Company and Family car bracket securing the number one best-selling car for the next 6 years.

The final full body change in the Cortina Dynasty was the V as although it was succeeded by a Mk5, this was merely an uplift from the rather boxy shape introduced in 1979.

It really was the end of a love story as all the imagination simply disappeared in a lack of style and charisma. The basic technology of the predecessor remained and so there was little to brag about performance-wise and whilst they did market a 2000E variant, it was introduced very late in proceedings. In another sad measure of how far the Cortina had fallen in public affection, the Mk5 actually featured as a rather comical character in the feature film 'The Spy Who Loved Me', giving a pointless and exhaustive chase to James Bond's widely mocked Lotus Esprit. The only real claim to fame for the marque was the first introduction of the 'Ghia' designation although it was almost ignored in the fleet market who decided it to be far too expensive for very little gain. For me, as a lowly Sales Rep on the road, I lost all faith in Cortina, especially when I was saddled with a Mk5 (see the picture right of my worst ever car) with a horrible 1300cc engine of just 70hp!



However, by the end of this love affair, Ford had sold a Cortina somewhere in Britain every 47 seconds. After 20 years the end was finally announced. By then, Cortina had claimed its place in UK motoring history by selling more than 2.6 million cars at home, and a mighty 4.3 million worldwide. By comparison, British Leyland took twice as long as that to sell half as many of their beloved Minis - Austin, sold just 57,000 Allegro Estates.

Cortina had become a part of the fabric of Britain and although being the nitrogen of our existence, sadly on 22nd July 1982, Ford pulled the plug and that was the end of that.

So sad is the story of the Cortina - yes it really is.

But it's a great story and it doesn't end there so keep an eye open for the next magazine where we will look at the next Ford 'Revolution' to get everybody to fall in love with its new mid-sized family saloon. It's something they've done before – could they make a fast version of the Ford Jelly-Mold?



*Coming in the next Spotlight*  
***The Age of the Sierra***



The historic and well-respected motor racing title, Motorsport News has recently entered a new era under the stewardship of Jonathan Palmer's MotorSport Vision (MSV).

Established over more than seven decades ago it grew as the definitive place for news, updates and analysis of British motorsport.

MN's previous owner Kelsey Media commented "Motorsport News is such a well-respected publication and with MSV's fresh investment, we're confident this iconic brand can live on for many more years to come".

MSV promise each issue will include detailed reports, previews, results and features from the heart of the sport, keeping fans, competitors, and industry insiders up to date.

Each week it will cover the full scene, including, circuit racing, rallying, historic, hillclimbs and much, much more.

# British Sprint Championship - Anglesey

## With Martin Pickles and the 'Meanie' (MK1 Jedi)

If you could pick a destination during a storm, they would seldom include the Ty Croes Circuit on Anglesey. Perched atop a cliff and adjacent to the uninterrupted passage of wind crossing the Irish sea; it is arguably one of the most exposed and vulnerable locations.

Nevertheless, the British Sprint Championship was scheduled as one of their penultimate rounds at this venue. Having completed repairs to the Jedi, it offered an ideal time to shakedown the car and to make sure everything was pointing in the right direction.

*A windswept and rather wet Ty Croes circuit*



In all, the repairs took nearly 3 months with bespoke parts having to be remanufactured from scratch (rear upright specifically), front suspension, which is not a factory part, being copied from the undamaged side and then flipped and repeated for the left-hand side.

Further damage inevitably revealed itself as the car was dismantled, the most serious being the extent of the chassis damage. A two-phase repair strategy was devised with Jedi, the first phase addressing obvious damaged or missing sections. The second phase which has now commenced at the season conclusion involves a comprehensive rear-end strip down and a jig-based review of the chassis (a list of repairs has already been constructed including engine mounts which have marginally been displaced during the accident).

More of that later.

*A selection from the rogue's gallery of the Mallory damage*



Returning to the challenging rain and 65mph wind because I was about to use those two factors to increase the laugh factor. Practice was announced and although I questioned with the organisers their sanity, they told me to 'shut-up whining and go and get a bit wet' - liquid sunshine etc. Despite the conditions and standing water on the circuit, they were insistent that the event would go ahead.

The car was in the paddock with only the trailer as protection from the wind and rain so getting in and out was performed on the lee side of the trailer. Once strapped in and the engine approaching temperature, I tried to engage 1<sup>st</sup> gear and failed. In fact, all gears

failed and the clutch was on the floor, so I turned off the engine, removed myself from the car and stripped off the body panels to investigate.

It sounds simple, but removing body panels and grappling with them to the safety of the trailer made for great viewing, only bettered by the reverse process and having to lay on the panels whilst trying to secure them. A simple failure point was found and the clutch cable reinstated to the pedal. Now soaked, I got strapped back into the cockpit and joined the queue for the start line. Being a shakedown lap, it comprised of checking brakes, ensuring the car was tracking in a straight line and reviewing the grip levels. After hitting a very large puddle the water bizarrely went sideways and not over my head which made a pleasant change!



*The adjacent angry coastline of Ty Croes*

The car was all okay and despite the brakes lacking any real bite in the water and the tyres totally lacking in any grip, all was as good as could be.

As the day progressed the weather improved and the rain disappeared for the weekend. Times gradually improved for the

field and after each run I found something to tweak to improve the general handling. I was chasing nothing in the class as the 3 others present were in Force TA, carbon fibre tubbed, extreme engine versions that require a hatful of money more than I am allowed to spend.

The second item on test at Anglesey for me was the recently acquired camper van. I purchased the van back in February and had it converted by a local company although there was a hideous delay in waiting for some critical components - such as the roof! This was my first opportunity to wallow in the glorious depths of luxury compared to the trailer in which I normally eat, sleep and live during race weekends.



The camper passed with flying colours and to be able to sit in a heated environment, make tea, lounge on a comfortable seat and watch my rain-soaked competitors endure their 'opportunity' of on track action was indeed a real pleasure, one that is required to ensure I continue with this sport at each end of the calendar - I like the sun and warmth! With final runs complete it was time for a beer and a chill, but not too much of one.

Sunday dawned in contrast to the sea foam blown paddock of the previous day, the wind was now a strong breeze with the sun occasionally revealing itself to Northwest Wales.

The circuit was lovely and relatively dry, so the slicks were reinstated. Despite a first corner misdemeanour on a 'power exit' involving just a smidge of grass and a manoeuvre to regain the tarmac, all was well. My confidence in the car grew, so much in fact that by close of play I had equalled the PB for the circuit that I had set some 7 years previously and that was in the summer! The time would also have placed me close to FTD for the National Championship, so all was good in my world. I was relieved and happy to pack the car away with only a few minor adjustments and a bit of cleaning required before the next event.

Having been doused in salt-laden liquid all weekend, the car required a lot of WD40, wet and dry and some ferocious scrubbing to bring back the finish of many of the components along with bringing the alloy wheels back to their former glory

## Javelin Sprint Championship – Snetterton

The car had been through a complete set-up check since Anglesey as I had noticed an unusual oversteer characteristic. Several adjustments were made but clearly the car was not sitting correctly on the ground. A phone call to Jedi booked it in for mid-November for a chassis alignment check. This means the engine must come out, along with all the suspension and decoration within the engine bay. The shopping list includes additional cockpit structure to improve torsional rigidity of the chassis and to complement all of this, a moulded seat to assist with safety and my delicate rib cage should I ever decide to visit the Armco.

Javelin is another championship I have managed to start and finish but omitted a substantial number of the rounds between the two – this meant that the Snetterton event was just for a bit of fun.

The real reason for attending however was that the event was being run on the full circuit, including the uber long straight, under the bridge into the Bomb Hole section of the track. I hadn't been on that layout for 16-years, when I last raced at the circuit in a Formula Ford – it was epic then, so the real draw of the day was to have another go.



Generally, my playmates and I are a competitive bunch but all of them had attended the preceding track day and the gulf in learning was evident - after first practice there was a 7-second canyon between them and me. The remaining non-prepped drivers in the class were all within a second! By the 3<sup>rd</sup> Timed Run the overall gap was down to 2-seconds and my opposition were only nicking tenths off their times

The infield section is familiar to me, so it was more a case of linking that knowledge with the remainder for which I had successfully picked out such as the braking-point at the end of the main straight, more of a heavy dab into Brundle and a harder application for Nelson. At 140mph, the self-preservation instincts are difficult to overcome and I identified where I was being a 'little-nancy' on the brakes and throttle, and I was convinced of being able to find the missing time and a bit more.

The 4<sup>th</sup> timed Run approached as did some rather grey clouds and just 2 cars from the line the inevitable spots of rain appeared on my visor. I dismissed them until I launched, corrected a rather lurid oversteer, corrected another in the opposing direction before regaining some semblance of directional stability to avoid the Armco. Undeterred I continued to push into the first right-hander until the rear let go without warning and I careered across the grass. The track was now a uniform gloss so once I had regained to the tarmac it didn't take long to decide I should just return to the paddock with the car in one piece and start on the winter work.

***Season over, onward to 2026!***

***Martin Pickles***



## L2B From the inside

To so many people, the RM Sotheby's London to Brighton Veteran Car Run appears to be simple.... 400 cars driving from London to Brighton on a cold day in November...

**Oh, I wish it was that simple!**

Firstly, let's look at the opening bit... 400 cars driving from London to Brighton.

If the 'cars' were latest model Audi's or even BMWs, then it would be easy but the L2B doesn't feature such machines. It boasts up to 100 manufacturers of which maybe 5 remain in existence. The rest are a mishmash of ludicrous engineering with drip feed lubrication, leather belt transmissions and 100-year-old solid wooden wheels. The vast majority have travelled maybe 10 miles since last year's event, and a number have drivers who neither have knowledge or talent in how to drive them. Temperamental would be a kind description as invariably they are overweight, underpowered and ill designed for the modern British Roads.



It takes an army of nearly 300 people to make the event happen and to be honest one of the biggest hurdles to overcome is the experience of those who have been 'doing it for years' those who refuse to do it our way as 'we don't know what we are doing!'.

Pre-event is 6 months of 'negotiating' with local authorities of routes, local and County Emergency agencies (Police, Ambulance, Fire etc) to gain acceptance of safety planning and resources. By

August most of the route is set and ready for the 20-page Route Book to be started. Signage contractors are engaged, and the 30 layout plans are started to identify the size, design and location of the 415 large yellow road signage.

Whilst all this is going on careful negotiations are underway with the 3 fixed venues at Hyde Park, The Hawth Theatre, Crawley and of course Madeira Drive, Brighton. Each year is a battle as except for the Hawth, nobody wants you at these iconic locations, predominantly because it's all a lot of hard work. 2025 was a year of change as Royal Parks appeared to be digging their heels in and decreed that the Serpentine Road could no longer be used (after 32 years) as the vehicle movements during the Saturday build-phase was no longer safe as there were 1,000's of pedestrians in the same location. They failed to recognise that last year there were 3 major incidents (1 requiring hospitalisation due to cyclists hitting pedestrians. It really was a 12<sup>th</sup> hour approval when we managed to secure use of South Carriage Drive.

The issues at Madeira Drive are probably going to be more difficult in the years to come as the explosion in pointless and unused facilities for cycling has already put paid to the Brighton Speed Trials! What was a 3 car-wide promenade road is now just 1 lane wide, decimated by fixed bollards and shiny paint.



The main Organising Team is 12-strong, including 3 Venue Managers, 2 Safety Advisors, a PR and Press Officer, a Social Media and IT Manager, a Marshals Manager, 2 Administrators, an Event Manager and of course the all-powerful Motoring Group Secretary.

In turn, we all report and are accountable to the London to Brighton VCR Steering Group made up of 10 stalwarts of the RAC itself, 2 of which are based in the USA. Within their number they feature representatives with responsibility for 'Female' participants, the Younger Generation, the Vintage Car Club and 3 members of the RAC Board.

On the day itself, we utilise the specialist services of many of our motor sport colleagues in 6 Course Cars (Openers, Closers and Incident Cars) plus 8 separate Area Commanders for the difficult hills and traffic lights. These are supported by 50 Traffic Officers, 40 Security personnel and 35 RAC Patrol vehicles. In event control we have 3 main controllers, a police representative sitting alongside managers from the Ops People (Catering and facilities) Geo Tracks (Vehicle monitoring), Chevron TM (Road Signage) and Tracsis (Event Support Staff).

All in all, this is just a brief look behind the scenes of the oldest motoring event in the world, now celebrating its 129<sup>th</sup> year.



I am pleased to report that the 2025 R.M. Sotheby's London to Brighton Veteran Car Run took place with only a smattering of incidents, none of which resulted in injury. We started 384 cars in a damp London at daybreak and subsequently recorded 340 cars into the finish in Brighton before darkness fell.



I am not sure how you identify 'success' but in my view to record those statistics and round them off with 'and nobody got hurt' means that 2025 was a success as far as I am concerned.

## **MOTORSPORT CAN BE DANGEROUS (and expensive) – especially to organisers**

The organiser of a motorsport event in Stafford that had to be evacuated after people fell ill from carbon monoxide poisoning has been told to pay more than £60,000 following an investigation by the Borough Council. Sentencing Motorsport with Attitude Limited (MWA) today (Fri 4 July) Judge Kevin Grego said the company had been either ‘cavalier’ in its approach to safety or ‘naïve in the extreme.’

The court was told that Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service were called to the County Showground after complaints about spectators feeling unwell - and recorded high levels of carbon monoxide inside the main arena. The Showground was evacuated and the indoor live action car event cancelled - although the company wanted to continue the show in a ‘modified format.’

Seventeen people required hospital treatment for carbon monoxide poisoning - and the court was told it nearly tipped the hospital into a major incident. The Borough Council investigated the incident and charged the motorsport business with offences under the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974.

Lucy Taylor-Grime, prosecuting for the Borough Council, said MWA had a duty to inform the local authority prior to the car show taking place - but the first the council was informed was when the emergency services called them that afternoon. She said the company had ignored advice in an email marked ‘Urgent Information’ on the eve of the event that said the arrangements for the extraction of fumes required urgent attention as the air quality was well below the acceptable levels.

She continued: “Seventeen people presented at hospital and were released after treatment for carbon monoxide poisoning. This could have been much worse - although if the council had been informed prior to the event this situation could have been avoided.”

The court in Cannock heard that in an interview with Environmental Health Officers the company’s director, David Rennie, said an event marshal who had fallen ill looked as if he was ‘putting it on’ - describing the man’s appearance as like ‘an eight-year-old who doesn’t want to go to school.’

The carbon monoxide readings were said to be ‘far beyond’ the safety level. Fans used by the company were inadequate and flags and obstacles were in the way of the carbon monoxide monitoring equipment.

Mr Rennie pleaded guilty to five charges on behalf of Motorsport with Attitude Ltd relating to the incident in February 2024 for failing to:

- *Have a valid risk assessment*
- *Ensure the provision and maintenance of plant and systems of work were adequate to deal with carbon monoxide build-up.*
- *Ensure the provision and maintenance of a working environment for your employees*
- *Prepare and revise a written statement of his general policy with respect to the health and safety at work*
- *Make a suitable and sufficient assessment of the risks to the health and safety of persons not in your employment*

They were fined and ordered to pay costs totalling £61,645.78.

Lucy Wright, representing the company, said there would be no attempt made by them to mitigate or diminish the suffering to those involved and they had fallen short in their duties. She added the company expressed remorse for what had happened and described them as having been ‘woefully unprepared’ in discharging their duties regarding safety.

District Judge Grego said “There was no proper risk assessment. Flags and obstacles were placed to prevent the carbon monoxide monitors working effectively. Seventeen people were taken to hospital suffering the effects associated with carbon monoxide poisoning. The hospital coped more by good fortune. Normally that many people suddenly presenting to A&E would cause a major incident to be declared.

“The company was either cavalier in its approach to the issue of ensuring the safety of its staff, customers and others. If not cavalier then it was naïve in the extreme. It is clear the company was on notice as to the problems over ventilation and emissions – it was an event involving vehicles with powerful engines with the obvious exhaust emissions in an enclosed space. The only reason there were not very serious cases of poisoning or worse is that the emergency services insisted the event be stopped. The company through Mr Rennie were content to continue. Thankfully that view was not allowed to prevail.”

After the case, Gill McMullin, Senior Environmental Health officer at the Borough Council, said: “We want organisers to run fantastic events in our borough that bring people to the area and provide a boost to the local economy. People going to this type of motorsport event must be confident that the organisers have all the checks and balances in place for it to run safely. The safety of our community is a priority, and we will not hesitate to prosecute any business that does not follow the proper procedures to keep the public safe. We are pleased that, after our thorough investigation, the company admitted it failed to have all those correct safety procedures in place.”

# In the rearview mirror

## **A quick look back at who has been doing what?**

There's been a lot happening since the start of the new year and several members have been very active. Whilst we attempt to give EVERYONE a mention, we are not clairvoyants and cannot know

everything so drop an email to Nigel Griffiths to help him in his research, especially for the Competitor of the Month Awards. Please note that this report is very rally based as most other disciplines do not get underway until April.



## **COMPETITOR OF THE MONTH**

### **MAY - Oliver Hucklebridge**



A number of club members had good results this month, but Oliver Hucklebridge was selected by the committee for COTM in May for 10th Overall, 3rd in class on the Compbrake Stages at Three Sisters.

Oliver has only just moved across to the driver's seat from the other side of the car and was trusted with his Dad's Escort for this event, so I'm sure there was relief when it was returned in one piece.

### **JUNE - Darrell Taylor**



A busy month for Darrell, with events on 3 consecutive weekends. Starting with 2<sup>nd</sup> in class at Abingdon Car-nival Sprint. He then followed that by winning the Car-nival Stages, with fellow Sutton & Cheamer Steve McNulty alongside. The following weekend in Anglesey at the Menai Stages he claimed 3rd Overall before heading north for the Argyll Stages, finishing a disappointing 9<sup>th</sup> Overall.

### **AUGUST- Mark Fisher & Peter Spalding**



Mark & Peter's luck finally changed after a series of non-finishes. Mark & Peter are regular visitors to Bala Motor Club's Gareth Hall Memorial Rally at the Trawsfynydd Ranges in the Snowdonia National Park. Those who know the venue will know it's not for the faint hearted, so their 27th o/all 6th in class was a great result. Well done both.

### **SEPTEMBER - Declan Dear**



Declan, together with his driver Matthew Hirst repeated last year's victory on the Trackrod Rally in their Skoda R5 taking the win by 16 seconds. The route took in some classic Yorkshire forest stages including Dalby & Cropton. Can they make it 3 in a row next year?

**Please let Nigel Griffiths know your results ([the.gs100@gmail.com](mailto:the.gs100@gmail.com))**

**so the Committee can consider you for the Competitor of the Month award.**



**We need hosts for Down the Pub in 2026.**

**It's not onerous – you just need to nominate a nice pub with good beer and easy parking. If you can get some member friends along to join us so much the better.**

Down the Pubs are generally held on the second Tuesday of every month.

**PLEASE CONTACT IAN BROOKS**

Email: [rs8001146@gmail.com](mailto:rs8001146@gmail.com))

or 07801 038160

## MEMBERSHIP CORNER

Membership of Sutton & Cheam Motor Club offers a huge number of benefits to both competitors, marshals, officials and enthusiasts alike.

In addition to the experience and support offered by TEAM TEMPEST, competitive members can enjoy the ability to enter most events held South of Manchester (including Wales) as the Club is affiliated to the following Associations:

ACSMC (Central Southern), ASEMC (South East – Kent), AEMC (East Anglia), ASWMC (Southwest), AWMCM (West Midlands) and WAMC (Wales)

This makes Sutton & Cheam Motor Club truly a 'One-Stop Club' that eliminates the need for multiple-club memberships to be able to compete outside of the region.

In addition to the events, membership also provides you a voice in motor sport through representation at the Motorsport UK, as well as via the various Specialist Committees.

Club members also enjoy discounted services (see member services) from other club members, as well as monthly social updates and our digital quarterly newsletter (Spotlight). For those who prefer, a hard copy via post is available at a small cost.

The club arranges special visits to places of interest, as well as Marshalling and Spectating Tours throughout the UK and Europe.

### TYPES OF MEMBERSHIPS AND FEES

- \* *Full Membership with all benefits (£25 per year / £60 3 years)*
- \* *Associate Membership (Additional £10 per year - See below)*
- \* *Student Membership - Student Card / ID Required (£15)*
  - + *Hard Copy Magazine (£10 per year)*

**MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS ARE DUE ON 1<sup>ST</sup> JANUARY – TO RENEW YOURS NOW PLEASE PAY BY BANK TRANSFER TO**

**Sutton & Cheam Motor Club  
Sort Code 40-47-19  
Account No: 71188003**

**PLEASE CHECK THAT YOU DO NOT HAVE A STANDING ORDER IN PLACE.**

## Associate Membership Requirements

Any current member may extend their membership to include one person as an Associate Member who may compete as a member of Sutton & Cheam Motor Club in respect of motorsport competition where an entry is shared by the fully paid-up member only.

Associate Membership is ONLY VALID for competition when competing with said first nominated member and does not extend to competing either with non-members or as an individual at competitive events such as Race, Speed, Kart, AutoSolo etc., where full membership will be required. Associate Members will receive all other membership benefits and voting entitlements although these will cease should the first nominated membership expire.

Membership Fee payments should be made via bank transfer to:

Sutton & Cheam Motor Club Sort Code: 40-47-19 Account No: 71188003



# Sutton & Cheam Motor Club

*Established 1959*

## 2024/25 Management & Committee

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*Officers and Committee members are nominated and elected at the Annual General Meeting each year.*

*They convene on the first Tuesday of each month (Usually via Zoom) and volunteers can be co-opted at any time*