



Suffolk Riders



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Chairman's Update:



August has seen a heatwave, heavy rain and some stormy winds in the mix. I would rather be riding in wet or windy weather than extreme heat.... maybe, I just don't have the right gear for 33C. Hence I didn't get out much on two wheels in the extreme heat other than mid-late evenings. I

managed a couple of days out with Rach and a fish and chip run. I have had my R1250GS a year in a week's time and only managed 6.5k miles after averaging 12.k miles the last 5 years, so this Covid-19 has certainly had an impact on my mileage.... Still, at least the GS has retained more of it's purchase price this year...

The Events group have continued with organising the small group fish and chip rides which continue to be well supported. I am also aware tests have been taken and tutoring is getting back to close to normal which is excellent. Recent Facebook posts have had record engagement too and we hope to gain new members through this channel.

While we're on good news, who saw the Austrian GP? Clearly it's not good news that anyone comes to grief but a racing incident between Morbidelli & Zarco saw 2 riderless bikes crossing the track with millisecond precision – I had to watch it several times, unbelievable! If you didn't see it, [google it](#). Don't worry, nobody was badly hurt, miraculously!

I am saddened however, to announce that there will be no slow manoeuvring session this year as we are unable to secure a venue for it, but Sealey Tools hope to welcome us back next year. I'm sure you had already guessed, we are unable to run the BBQ this year. The topic of the AGM will crop up in the next few committee meetings – and it is likely we will be looking to host this virtually this year. My works have a staff meeting hosted via Microsoft Teams whereby speakers pass the presenting to each other, while the powerpoint remains in same location. This works very well, the audience is muted, but can send questions via text. I need to find out if this could work for us. It might even work for January group night Quiz. I hope you manage to get out on the bike and socially distance in September and still look forward to seeing you all face to face in the not too distant future and thank you for your continued support.

Stay safe! Jon

August Activities

3 Café Run — Lincolnshire Wolds 15th August.

God's teeth, Keith G. starts early from Bury St. Edmunds: 8:00 and from Felixstowe I had to scoot along, arriving last, just as he was leaving (he gives 5 minutes for laggards like me). My fellow riders were Neville G., Mike A., Chris A., and Brian C. Neville set a cracking pace while I brought up the rear after Keith. To my mind, one of the benefits of travelling with these gents is to see how well

they ride, and hoping a bit of their skill will rub off, as well as first class company of course. NB it never ceases to amaze me that newer members of the group don't participate on these outings. Perhaps one might explain why? Our first café stop was the [March Hare @ The Pantry, Corby Glen](#), paddle parking amongst the cars around the village monument, then threading our way through the myriad of cyclists, all decked in lycra and tap dancing in their cleated shoes. A 'small breakfast' was good value at about £8.

On up past Grantham and Lincoln, turning right at Market Rasen to our next café stop at the [Biker's Meeting Place](#) in Willingham Woods. Loads of bikes, including a few historical varieties. While we were sipping coffee a Ducati XDiavel came in & I wondered if ever I could ride one, that was not in my imagination. Heading back south with the wolds (a range of hills in modern English) on our left to our final stop the Bubblecar Museum, with its fascinating display of 3-wheelers from [Bond](#), [Isetta](#), [Reliant](#), [Frisky](#) and [Bamby](#) to name but a few. Around the walls, they've created rooms from the 40s and 50s that I can remember quite vividly, especially from my grandparent's home. For £4 a pleasant experience: coffee and cake was nice as well.

So, to the last leg home. Chris wanted to avoid the A17, and Neville needed fuel (only BP mind you). I heard talk of a garage on a roundabout which would have been at 9 o'clock to our direction. With the volume of traffic, often I was not in view of the riders in front. After a while I realised that I was, in fact, on my own. So I followed the satnav down the A17.





The jam at the Crosskeys Bridge over the River Nene must have been in excess of 5 miles, so happy not to be sitting in a car. Later, I discovered that I'd missed them at the said garage.

252 miles from Bury St. Edmunds, add 90 miles to and from Felixstowe, and I've covered 340 miles. My backside was sore (I have an idea: next trip), cramp in my thigh and arthritis in both hands. Still, good practice for Northumberland (the New Dolomites). Many thanks to Keith for organising, most enjoyable.

Ed.

Social Ride to Rumbles Fish Bar East Harling 18/8/20 - Phil Sayer

I looked out of the study window at 4 o'clock in the afternoon of the ride. The rain was lashing down and beating against the window. Not an auspicious start, I thought, perhaps nobody will turn up?

By 5.30 the Sun was out. As I rode to Beacon Hill the roads were drying out nicely, let's hope it stays that way I thought! Shortly after I arrived, so did all my fellow riders – John Kerry, on his first ride since lockdown and shielding, on his BMW R1200 RT, Chris Patten on his 1200 GS, Clare Hinsley on her new (to her) BMW 700 GS, and a guest and friend of mine, Karl Grimwade on his Honda VFR1200X Crosstourer.

After a quick chat and a check that everybody had the route, we set off. John, Chris and I have identical BMW/Garmin Navigator VI sat navs. We had followed exactly the same process to download the route from MyRoute-app. However John's route consisted of straight lines across the fields. OK John, stick close to the rider in front! Can anybody sort this out for him? Suggestions on a post-card (well email would be better) please.

I was leading. I'd just joined the A14 and accelerated briskly up to 70-and-a-bit, when Clare came storming past, gesticulating wildly at my topbox. Crazy woman, I thought, what's up? Then a thought occurred to me. Patted the pocket I keep my keys in. No keys. Must be hanging out of the lock of my top box. Now I know what BMW mean by 'keyless ride'! It means it's very easy to lose your keys... Stopped in the next lay-by. Removed keys from lock, put in pocket. I was lucky this time. I bet a new BMW key costs a fortune.

You'd have thought they'd have waited, wouldn't you? No such luck, by the time six lorries had gone past and I had managed to rejoin the traffic, there was no sign of them. I set off in hot pursuit, hoping Chris's sat nav and mine were in agreement on the route. Chris had taken over the lead from me and was riding 'progressively', with John hanging on his tail to avoid getting lost. Nice riding John, after 6 months hibernation! Eventually I caught sight of them in the distance and managed to catch up. It was nice not to lead for a change, but I'd forgotten that the rider at the back has to work twice as hard to keep up. We went up the B113 to Bacton and Walsham le Willows, and turned right in Euston to ride through the woods on the Euston Estate. The sun was fairly low and we were riding north-west, but that didn't slow Chris down at all. At least we wouldn't be riding west on the way home, with the sun in our eyes like last time on the way home from Aldeburgh.

Arrived at East Harling. I got my revenge as they all shot past and missed the fish shop, while I pulled up outside onto the pavement. Rumbles does very good fish and chips, worth the detour. Give them a try some time. What the website and flyer don't tell you is they only take cash. "Phil, can you lend me a tenner?", says Chris. No problem, thanks for leading, Chris. Kind of you to wait for me!

We all made our way back home without incident. A





Rumbles fish & chip run
East Harling 18/8/20

pleasant evening was had by all, nice ride and very good fish and chips. What's not to like? Memo to self. Check keys are in pocket next time before starting off. Memo to BMW. What's so wrong with putting the ignition key in the lock? At least you know where it is then...



Rumbles
Fish & Chip Run
East Harling
18/8/20

Fish and Chip Social: 18th August to Bungay – 'Local lad makes good!' – Stephen W.

We met at Woodbridge railway station. We being Terry Beales, Frank Barrett and Sharon, Derek Bailey, Stephen Worrall and Geoff Bones who came on his super moto because his one year old Tiger had been stolen on the 10th August, *after* he had requested to be on the run. Simple enough; but there is also a railway station in Melton, which 'melds' into the town of Woodbridge, and I had to double check my brain to ensure I didn't happily pull into the wrong station! The next challenge was to park in the station car park. Simple enough; but there is a very small, difficult to access, designated motorcycle parking bay at the station. When I saw there was already one bike in there I chickened out and parked in a car



Mermaid Fish Bar
Bungay

space. 'Hats off' to Derek for parking correctly in the designated space, unfortunately he was left all alone as all the other riders followed my bad example and parked together in car spaces! By now you will have realised what appears to be simple is not always so; we waited...and waited, for Terry our ride leader. We called him on his mobile, but no answer. Eventually he arrived and duly parked by us. Apparently he had been there all the time, just at the other end of the car park, out of sight of the station!

After some chatting, and ribbing, we set off. Terry had provided some very clear route instructions, and most of us had it loaded on our GPS (thanks to Colin South for circulating it). We followed in a line behind Terry. Simple enough; but in Badingham Terry carried straight on missing the turning off the A1120 which would take us into the heart of Suffolk. Each rider looked at the junction as they rode past it, and each thought Terry probably knew something we didn't, road closed perhaps, wrong sort of leaves, unfriendly locals!

The rest of the ride proved straightforward, if not on exactly the route we had in our GPS. It was a lovely evening, the roads were quiet, the group stayed together, and everyone was clearly enjoying the ride and the company. A contingency to cut short the route if we were running late was not needed, so we took the long way to Bungay from Halesworth, going via Beccles.

We arrived in Bungay on time and parked in-front of the Post Office directly opposite the chippy, perfect! Bungay is very quiet. There were no queues outside The Mermaid Fish and Chip Bar, so we

were served immediately and returned to our bikes to eat. Portions were large! Personally I thought the F&Cs in Southwold last ride out were superior. Having said that, around the time the chippy should have closed there was a sudden rush in Bungay as several people and vehicles arrived to place last minute orders!

We were reluctant to leave. The light was fading, and the banter flowing. Terry confessed to having grown up in Bungay: well done Terry, 'local lad makes good' masterminding a most enjoyable evening.



FISH & CHIPS - SIBLE HEDINGHAM 18th August- Steve Valentine

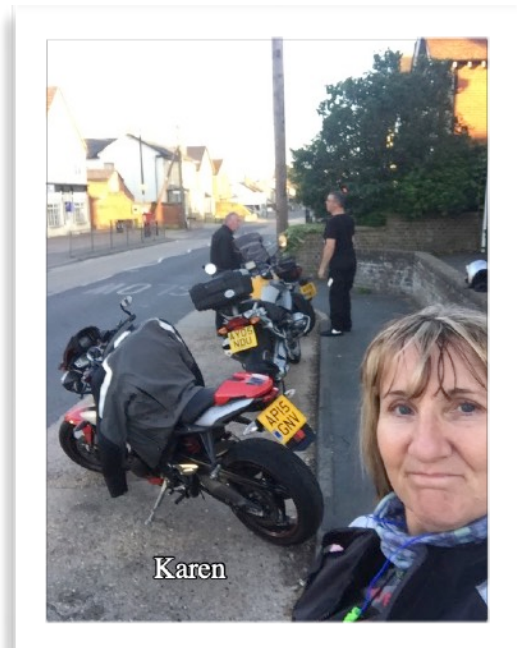
Five of us arrived at Tesco, Stowmarket in good time for an 18:00 departure. The sixth expected attendee had apparently forgotten all about it!

Whilst I gallantly chaperoned the ladies, Karen & Catherine, Mike & Martin rode as a pair.

Pleasant evening weather accompanied us along a varied route through Combs, Wattisham, Bildeston, Lavenham, Long Melford, Cavendish, Yeldham, & finally, Sible Hedingham.

The roads were mostly dry but there was quite a lot of gravel and sand from recent heavy rainfall.

All of our bikes lined up neatly outside Hedingham Chippy, as we sat on the conveniently located wall to consume our tasty supper.



The ride home in the dark was a nice change, as I couldn't remember the last time that I had ridden at night. Martin obviously hadn't ridden in the dark for quite a while as he had stop on the side of the road to work out where his dipped headlight switch was located!!.

These small group outings work rather well, but it will be good to get back to

larger gatherings when conditions allow.

RIDERS

Steve Valentine - Triumph Street Triple

Catherine Valentine - Yamaha MT-07

Karen Peters - Kawasaki ER-6F

Mike Anthony - BMW R1200GS

Martin Drury - Kawasaki H2 SX



Carter Tours: 18th August Fish & Chip Run to Long Stratton – James Myers

The 40 mile route to Long Stratton saw us depart from Tesco's Bury St Edmunds at 6pm. In attendance for the evening's festivities were Brian, as the ride coordinator, Neville with Carol riding pillion, James & Steve. It was nice to have Steve along for the ride, as a relatively new Associate Member, it is encouraging to see a take-up of group social rides by more than just the usual faces!

Having set out from Tesco Bury St Edmunds, we took a short journey down the A134 towards Thetford. Just before Ingham were a large collection of glass buildings off to the left-hand-side, which Carol later informed me was an eco-friendly tomato growing development project, which cost £120m to set up, with the glasshouses spanning a size larger than the O2 Arena in London. Continuing on towards Thetford, we turned off through Barham to wave to the Duke of Grafton as we passed Euston Hall, before following the road past East Harling and on through Banham. Turning onto some lovely B roads, East on Banham, namely the B1077 and B1134, we were greeted by a number of other bikers passing us on their way to the Old Buckenham Two Wheeled Tuesday bike meet. Eventually emerging into Long Stratton via the A140, we parked up around the back of the Chip Inn. Briefly considering the other delectable culinary offerings available, we quickly agreed that the fish & chips was the preferred option, with none of us tempted by the allure of a nearby kebab & pizza shop.

The return leg saw us stick to the A140 until Scole, and then the A134 back to Bury. The only slight diversion being at the BP roundabout just past Scole, as some roadworks took us off the main road, before directing us onto the A134. But a pleasant evening & good fish & chips enjoyed by all.



22nd August Long Itch Diner – James Myers

A slightly longer trip on the 22nd courtesy of Carter Tours, with my odometer ticking over 260 miles for the day when I returned home. Once again we set off from Tesco Bury St Edmunds, and another new face joined us, that being Frank! In addition, the familiar faces of Colin, Brian, Neville and James. Unfortunately Tim was unable to join the ride.



The beginning of the route saw us set off down the A14 until we were past Cambridge, joining the A603 and B1042, passing the outskirts of Bedford and Milton Keynes on our way to the Super Sausage Cafe at Towcester. Unfortunately, the [Super Sausage](#) was busier than expected, with a queue snaking out of the door and into the carpark. We therefore only stopped for a brief loo-break, and bladders relieved for our elderly riding companions, we set off down the road to the local BP garage to grab a coffee there instead. After a 15 min break, we set off once more to continue on our route.

Unfortunately it was at this point we lost Neville!

So we stopped once more at the side of the road just outside the village of Blakesley, whilst Brian turned back to see if he could find him. A quick phone call



later, it was agreed that we would meet Neville at the lunch stop at the [Blue Lias](#) pub. The roads from here were brilliant, with some lovely Northamptonshire villages, rolling hills & countryside to gaze upon as we enjoyed some B roads towards Banbury. On our way we stopped at the viewpoint in the

[Burton Dassett Hills Country Park](#) to

admire the views across Warwickshire, before continuing onto the lunch stop where we were reunited with Neville. To make up for his poor navigation, Neville kindly offered to pay for everyone's drinks at lunch, and we sat in a nice beer garden adjacent to the canal that ran alongside the pub. A number of canal boats drifted lazily past as we huddled under the table umbrella to avoid the rain. Fortunately we all remained dry, and the rain passed swiftly



on.

After lunch, the route back took us through Northampton and we stopped again for a refreshment in St Neots. We located a pleasant coffee shop, but arrived only 10 mins before it closed. So a swift coffee before the final leg back home.

A big thanks to Brian as always for planning the route.



NB My satnav jumped out of its cradle, bounced into the verge then onto the road!!! So pleased Neville was riding behind, saw it, stopped and retrieved. A few scratches on the case, £400 saved. Lesson learnt, lock it in place. Many thanks Neville, Ed.

September Activities

Group Training Ride 13th September Tesco Martlesham to Buckenham *"Times to be allocated."*

We are pleased to confirm the date for our first 2020 COVID-19 GTR: 13th September 2020, Tesco Martlesham to Old Buckenham. Please use the following link to register your interest with the [Training Team](#).

In a previous email, we outlined the process we are trialing. Places will be limited; as with the social rides it will be 'first-come, first-served'. Tutored groups of 3 riders + 1 tutor will meet and run at least 30 mins apart, to ensure adequate separation, and to remain below the maximum of six in any single gathering. The usual COVID safety and social distancing rules will apply.

We can accommodate up to six members or associates, forming two separate riding groups, lead by a tutor. If there is more registered interest, it will depend upon the availability of additional tutors as to how many additional riding groups we can organise.

Two weeks before the GTR we will close registration, and allocate riders to the number of tutors we have available, notifying anyone we cannot accommodate. Riders will be notified of their start time and tutor, together with an updated GPX route and instructions. The routes posted on the Group website will not be used for these GTRs.

We look forward to getting back to helping you improve and maintain your advanced riding!

'The Two Steves'

Member's Forum

MEMBER PROFILE – STEVE LAST

Steve is a Suffolk boy from Bury St Edmunds. He joined the Royal Navy as an Apprentice in 1967 for 14 years service and rose to the position of Marine Engineer Artificer (Propulsion), one of four engineers on board frigates.

While based at HMS Caledonia in Scotland Steve met Diana, a teacher from Kincardin at Dumfries and has been married for 47 years with a son, daughter and grandchildren.

Now living at Great Green, Steve's love of engineering can be seen in the restoration of his classic car, a 1952 vintage Bristol 401. Acquired in 2002 it was lovingly restored and ready to show at 'Bardwell Cars on the Green' in 2018. Also in Steve's stable is an [S8 Sunbeam](#), which he had swapped for an L.E. Velocette and his Triumph T100.



Q & A

Q: What brought you to Suffolk Riders?

A: I was introduced by Paul Rowe, a long time friend in October 2019.

Q: What do you think you have gained from RoSPA?

A: Confidence in my riding, experience passed on from my tutor, Ian Anderson and I now I get more pleasure from my riding.

Q: What's your favourite bike?

A: My Suzuki DL650 V. Strom.

Q: What's your favourite ride?

A: I'm still waiting for the opportunity to go riding in Wales.

Q: Favourite food/drink?

A: Indian, I have to say that as my wife Diana is from India, and real ale from the [Nethergate Brewery](#).

Q: Favourite Music?



A: 60s heavy rock.

Q: Must do?

A: See more of UK, in particular, Wales. NB I travelled the world with the Royal Navy.

Thanks Steve

Keith Gilbert

Bristol 401 1952 – OZ6941 - Steve Last

I wasn't looking for a classic car, in fact I was searching for a rear offside door for my neighbour's 1934 Austin and came across an ad for the [Bristol](#). This was in late 2002 and after a quick call my wife and I went to inspect. After haggling I still ended up paying the asking price! Two weeks later we trailered the car home. The engine was seized, all the chassis outriggers, rear chassis forming the boot floor and spare wheel support were rusted. She was also painted white, the upholstery leather was very fragile, door cards loose, carpets worn and rotted in places, so much to do! The engine was removed and stripped, inspection found a broken ring on No 6 piston otherwise apart from the cylinder head requiring weld repair the engine could be rebuilt. The chassis outriggers and rear chassis were re-fabricated and welded into place. The aluminium skin only needed minor repairs where the body was attached to the steel frame. During the next 10 years all of the car's components were renovated and repaired. The drum brakes were relined, new cylinders fitted along with all of the brake pipe, hoses and master cylinder. The engine block spent a week in a hot caustic tank coming out during lunch breaks for pressure washing to remove years of scale deposits. The block had new liners fitted at B&E Randall, they also renewed the valve guides and seats in the cylinder head. I rebuilt the engine with standard pistons, shell bearings and seals. The electrical harness was poor, a made to order one was acquired



from Autosparks. The new harness was installed with extra wiring for flashing indicators. I had a modern core fitted to the radiator, a good decision last summer, and installed a 60A alternator in place of the dynamo to cope with extra loads of indicators, heated rear screen, radio and phone charger. In 2016 I accepted that a lot of money needed to be spent to complete the car. The car went to Bennick Motors where they kindly let me remove all existing paint and filler to bare metal. This required removal of all the windows. On dismantling the doors the lower steel frames and aluminium skin needed

replacement. Over the next six months I repaired the doors, the body filled and profiled and colour chosen. Originally, according to records at the Bristol Owners Club, she left the factory Heather Grey,

but when the headlamp shells and bumpers were removed all we found was dark red. The decision was made, paint her red. The closest to the original is Mercedes Middle Red. Paul Moore Trimmers did the upholstery, carpets and trim. A quality beige leather was chosen which matched the existing headlining along with a darker trim. Some of the chrome needed repairing and a problem arose with the overriders, they were rusty and despite repairs the finish was poor. I found Keith Ardley had acquired casting patterns from Brian May Bristols and he cast a set of four in bronze finished with chrome. He also re-silvered the fog lights and rebuilt the rusty rear light units.

The painted car was delivered home in May 2017 and I set to work reinstalling the windows renewing all the rubber seals and refitting all the lights, [trafficators](#), etc. The car then went to Aylsham for Paul to complete the interior. This took the best part of the summer and eventually in September I drove her for the first time. The car left the factory and was first registered in April 1952 in Northern Ireland hence the OZ registration. She returned to England in 1963 and lived in Northampton, Driffield, Nottingham and eventually Clacton until 1989. So after 28 years of storage and renovation the car is back in use and her first show was Bardwell last year. This winter I have fitted an overdrive, which was standard in later Bristol models, a reconditioned engine damper along with a new type diaphragm clutch. The excellent overdrive kit was supplied by Mike Robinson Engineering. This has added about 8mph for the same RPM making the car more suitable for motorways. Work still to do.... I would like to refit the rear window blind and install a brake servo.



Bargain Basement

All the following items belonged to a dear friend Paul Siddaway who sadly passed away in March. There is no price but a reasonable donation is expected which will go to Cancer Research.

If you are interested please reply to me by email or text. Can be seen and collected from me.

[Keith Gilbert](#) 07546 301458



1. HEIN GERICK JACKET - LEATHER AND FABRIC - SIZE 50 (fits me)



2. TRIUMPH SUMMER JACKET - GREY WITH BODY ARMOUR BUT NO LINER
- 46/56





3. HOOD MOTORCYCLE JEANS
KEVLAR WITH KNEE AND HIP
PROTECTORS - BLUE - 36 (fits me)



4. TRIUMPH LEATHER JACKET
WITH LINING AND BODY ARMOUR
- VENTED. AS NEW. LARGE





5. HALVARSSONS OUTLAST TROUSERS WITH LINING AND VENTS (fits me, I'm a 34" waist)



6. GERBING HEATED JACKET - LARGE. WORKS BUT NO HEAT CONTROLLER WHICH CAN BE BOUGHT FROM GERBING AT £39.99. POWER LEAD INCLUDED.



7. DAYTONA ROADSTAR GTX BOOTS SIZE 43. SCUFFED BUT GOOD SOLES AND WATERPROOF.



Bike for sale:

R 1250 RS Executive

2019 1st Reg November

Miles : 6226

6000 Service completed.

Tyres: Bridgestone T31's

Manufacturers warranty: 2 yrs

Private Sale offers around
£12250



Are you interested then contact :

Neville Goodchild

Email : neville.goodchild@yahoo.com

Message: 07979757189



Technical Corner

Suit you sir - Vini

Damn you Mr. Covid.

There I was eagerly awaiting a tour with some Suffolk Riders buddies to the Alps and Dolomites. Just weeks to go and firstly Luxembourg, followed rapidly by Belgium and the fatal blow of France being put on the coronavirus naughty step meant there was no option but to put the trip on hold for a year. Only 'Le Shuttle' had actually been paid for and a simple, quick, phone call put the tunnel return trips on stay of execution for another twelve months.

Right, so now I had a little piggy bank with some holiday spend that was not immediately needed. I'd been telling myself for a while that my faithful old Held biker suit was somewhat past its prime. It's done me proud, ten years now, and so soft and crumpled that it just seemed to mould itself around me rather than me actually putting it on. That was the trouble though - bent, folded, creased for how many thousand miles. Being a beige, adventure style suit it looked extremely grubby. I'd religiously washed and re-proofed it with Nik Wax but the beige gradually turned to grey. The bright orange safety panels on the jacket sides had faded to a dull pink. There's worse to come though, water leaks! This suit was fitted with removable waterproof liners for both jacket and trousers. These had also had the same loving care and Nik Wax as the outers. The treated outers could be classed as showerproof in their own right, up to a very defined limit. How many times had I pressed on through a light shower only for it to graduate to monsoon conditions, with that cold, damp sensation creeping in. Latterly, even with the liners fitted, this became a more frequent experience. In a heavy downpour the outer shell eventually becomes porous and soaks up like a sponge. I can recall many a club run where a lake has formed at the eatery under the clothes hooks with many jackets slowly releasing their acquired liquid load. Whilst being a truly excellent summer suit with around ten - I think - zipped vents, they each appeared to have lost their sealing abilities. I bought this suit after devotion to leathers subsided when the middle section inexplicably shrank. Arms and legs still fitted OK it was just the midriff that was a struggle for the zip to climb over. Time for one of these new-fangled textile suits that wasn't waxed cotton.

Now, for those that cannot immediately place me, I'm not one of life's giants. Whenever I change my bike the first requirement is for the suspension to be tweaked for my height and weight. It gives me so much more confidence when I can actually touch the ground, preferably with both feet at the same time, even just tiptoes - feet being flat on the floor will never happen.

All these seemingly unconnected details lead to the required specifications of my new suit.

Most important of these is that a short leg option **MUST** be available on the trousers. Simply getting the missus to chop a couple of inches off or turning them up will not be good enough. To keep the knee protectors in the correct position would require total deconstruction and reconstruction. This is not economically viable to have done professionally.

Magazine write-ups praise the qualities of Gore-Tex Pro laminate. This is where the breathable, waterproof element is incorporated into the outer shell of the garment. The water simply beads off the outside and drops off whilst maintaining total breathability and temperature control.

I'd originally chosen a light colour suit on the basis that if I was ever lying in a crumpled heap on black tarmac then I wanted to stand out. Now the constant grubbiness has changed my view, it's back to black.

I'm not totally destitute yet, but being a pensioner means I have to be mindful of expense. Ten years ago, my £500 seemed reasonable on a mid-range suit so I thought to double that for a higher grade today. Mrs Vini even agreed saying that this one would see me out. Concerned I was, did she mean that I would no longer want to ride when this one wore out, or was she expecting me to peg out before then?

Now to the process of choosing, along with the help of my pal Google.

It seemed that there were only three of the popular brands that offered short leg length trousers as stock items.

Held, which I was happy with in the most part. An instant fit.

Rukka, a favourite amongst many of you, although I wondered if the cost premium truly reflected the perceived level of quality.

Dane, a relative newcomer as far as I was concerned, but good write-ups.

Of course, I had a leaning to Held. Their sizing was as good as 'made to measure' for my build. The only laminate version – The Atacama – was out of my price range at over £1700, even at discounters like SportsBikeShop. So, kick that one into touch.

Rukka, a brand which can't be ignored. The specification that I had set as a desirable standard was that the impact areas needed to be protected with tough, abrasion resistant panels of Kevlar mix coming under a trade name of Armacor. A couple in the range were of interest, the Navigatorr, which seemed to be a special for the Infinity dealers and the Arma T. However, both were a little (but still



too much for me) over my price limit.

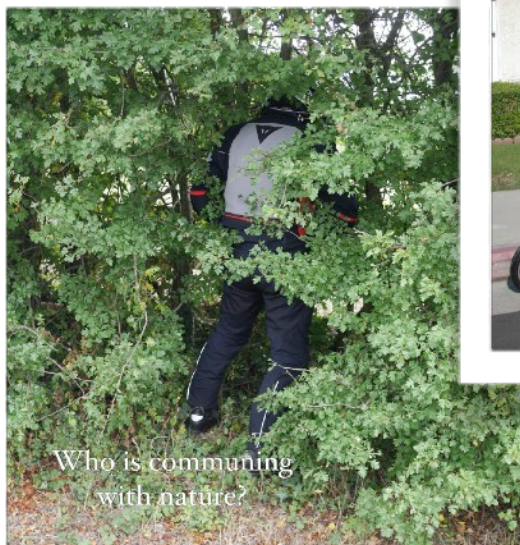
Scouring the 'Ride magazine' reviews had sparked an interest with Dane. Simon Weir, who has given us a couple of talks at Group Nights, is an advocate. Checking Danes own website revealed that they were selling off some end of the range models, [Sealander](#) and [Torben 2](#), at incredible reductions. I phoned up on a Monday morning to enquire about availability and they confirmed that they had a Sealander in my size for £499. This, combined with a pair of [Jelling trousers](#) at £399 and some integrated braces at £35 made for a complete outfit at £933. Sounded right for me, so I confirmed that I would be down at their premises in Tunbridge Wells on the Thursday. A12, M25 and A21 – what a drudge. I entered the rather small frontage of an industrial unit to be greeted with 'Ah, you're the chap. We didn't get your phone number so we couldn't call you back'. Ominous, I thought. It transpired that there were no more black Sealanders available in my size in black. They could get a white one from Holland. No!!! A Torben 2 was found in my size and it was duly tried on. Weeeell, it was alright I suppose. Some trousers were also tried but my enthusiasm had waned. They must have taken pity on my forlorn and dejected demeanour. 'Tell you what, I'll do you an upgrade to the new [Ribe jacket](#) and [Lyngby Air trousers](#) and

throw in a pair of braces for *****' I was sworn never to reveal the amount. Needless to say, it was too good to refuse. The jacket was wrapped and squeezed into my top-box. The trousers were posted on and were received on the Saturday. So how does it feel? Well, a laminate outfit is a lot stiffer anyway and the newness doesn't help. When I walk it sounds like someone is scrunching up some of that very tough, brown wrapping paper. I'll have to get out and do a lot of miles to soften it up and I'll let you know in ten years or so if it ever gets as soft and comfy as my old Held.



The Last Laugh Word

My thanks to this month's contributors, the regulars and the new. As editor, obviously, I read everything and enjoy most. I was talking to one of our members who downloads the newsletter and asked him how he used our monthly epistle (OK I know it's not literary work, but it is a collection letters). His response set me thinking: "I read the contents and if I think it is interesting I'll read the article." Mentioning this to Mrs. S, who is a very social animal and, amongst other activities, is in [NAFAS](#), told me that she does exactly the same with their (printed) newsletter, which is reproduced quarterly. However, they also have a [FaceBook Page](#), which she really enjoys. Articles are timely, come in dribs and drabs, informative, catering to a range of techniques, easily referred back to, available to people outside the club, etc. Personally, I've not been a fan of FaceBook, as I think Mr Zuckerberg (and Mr. Bezos – Google) know too much about me already. I do use it to keep up with my immediate family and I subscribe to [the club's page](#). NB I've been known to respond to some of the adverts that both platforms have sent me. So my question this month is – would the club's activities be more digestible in a bite-size format, e.g.



FaceBook (Jon has mentioned Instagram. I know almost nothing about the platform, but both my children think it is wonderful), rather than collected in a single – and lengthy – publication.

It's very lonely sitting here so any response would be most welcome. [Colin](#)