



Suffolk Riders



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Chairman's Update



As we move into the 5th month of Covid-19 derived restrictions, I find myself no less busy with work and my social life in tatters. The full impact of the virus is so much broader than the health and wellbeing of those who have suffered or died from the virus or the pain and suffering of those who

love them. The economic, social, travel and communication impact will not be realised for years and will probably not get back to any sense of normality for a decade. Our new 'norms' are somewhat more insular and include much smaller groups and bubbles than we're used to. But until we have a vaccine or a robust remedy for the virus, these new norms are how it must be.

We must therefore learn to be more creative while accepting that health is the most important concern.

So our first social event in a long while was well supported. Groups of no more than 6 set off from different meeting points to different destinations - all cafés or fish and chip shops. The weather was kind and the members keen. Based on the success of this event, we will be organising more of the same and similar as well as looking at other ideas for small group rideouts.

Thanks to the events sub-group for organising this event. Unfortunately I was unable to attend but I did ride to Southwold for fish n chips on Thursday. Lovely evening and the low sun in my eyes all the way home.

Keep yourself and your loved ones safe! *Jon*

July Activities

Fish and Chip Run to Horncastle – Saturday 4th July - Chris Austin

(aka, A Comedy of Sat-Nav Errors)

Is it coincidence that our first Group ride-out event was on Independence Day? Ah, it was good to be out on the open road with a set of like-minded riders, and Keith had set a great route. The outward journey to Horncastle took us via Kentford, Ely, March, Spalding and loads of tiny Fen towns that you've passed through before you've figured their names. I know we stopped for tea at Swineshead ...

I hadn't realised how far you could travel in only two dimensions, meaning that the land was flat for miles and miles: the gold version of MyRouteApp shows that we didn't get higher than 25ft above sea level for nearly 80 miles, and I swear that the steepest hill was the ramp from Stowmarket's Tesco onto the A14! Still, the roads had their interesting bits where they did two quick right angled turns as they crossed dykes.

Horncastle changed all that, and the road back was a real cracker, with some long stretches of fast bends with good road surfaces. The slight drizzle we encountered from time to time was welcome as there was not enough to cause road spray, but just enough to cool the warm humid conditions. I liked it so much that I have documented it for future use.

At our first tea stop, the conversation rapidly turned to sat-navs, and at one stage one of us commented that he had never been on a trip where the riders' sat-navs all gave the same route despite all having the same data. But this trip was to be special.

- First, one of us had fallen into the trap of copying the route to his device using GPX v1.1 which works, but only sort of. The problem is that although the device lists the waypoints you can't access them in order to skip one which is OK if you can guarantee not to get lost.
- Second, one of the devices refused to calculate the route properly, and showed only straight lines no matter what routines the owner was advised to make.
- Third, our honourable leader's device initially wouldn't charge, and when it did it refused to calculate the route at all (now an ongoing support problem with Garmin) so we were being led blind: mostly, this was OK but he got lost on one occasion and by the time we rejoined the route at a T-junction we had missed a way point.
- Our sat-navs wanted to take us left for 500 yards or so, do a U-turn and then proceed which obviously was stupid so we turned right instead. One fancy new Garmin had an auto-skip function when it becomes obvious you're going to miss a waypoint, and that has to be a must-have feature for my next device. The rest of us could manually skip the waypoint, except for "he-with-version-1.1" because he couldn't access the waypoints in order either to cancel the missed one or to restart from a known future one. In effect his sat-nav had been reduced to a confused and confusing heap of junk as it kept trying to return to the missed point. We lost

him at Horncastle when we all turned right and he went straight on ... hopefully he isn't still going round in circles following pointless purple tracks!

Concerning food, the chippy on the Market Square at Horncastle does really excellent cod, and in Kirkby Green there is the nicest little café with a small enclosed garden with really friendly owners.

Lastly, thank you Keith for arranging a super day out: the 275 miles were great fun.



Fish & Chip Run to Melton Mowbray - Saturday 4th July – Brian Carter

A week or so ago the Committee asked the events sub committee to organise some ride-outs for Saturdays, there had to be a fish and chip shop plus toilets close by just in case someone of the opposite sex decided to come along. These were to coincide with the easing of the lockdown rules on July the 4th. So I volunteered, a week earlier, Neville and his wife had accompanied me on a ride to Melton Mowbray, why Melton Mowbray? I don't know really just a random choice, it probably has the largest pet food factory in the country and is also famous for pork pies, and there are quite a few alternative routes to get there. We found free parking for motorcycles and nearby toilets which were somewhat expensive – 30p a pee, there was also a choice of fish and chip shops and a pork pie shop that I found later thanks to Mr Google. There was also a nice park where we had our picnic.

The new ruling was that a maximum of six persons were allowed to congregate in one group which meant five riders could join me, frankly I didn't expect any more than two or three, as it happens within two hours of it going out in a group email, I had five riders and had to decline at least three more.

Neville kindly plotted the route on myRoutApp and sent out the gpx file.

All the riders were at Tesco Bury St Edmunds before nine o'clock champing at the bit to find the fish & chips. The riders were Tim on a Triumph Tiger 800, Neville on his BMW R1250 RS, James on an 800 BMW ST and our esteemed editor Colin on his BMW 800GT, I was riding my seventeen

year old well used Honda ST1300 Pan European and last but not least Martin on his Kawasaki H2 ground to air missile. Neville volunteered to lead two riders leaving me with two, making it much easier than having to lead six.

We travelled via Mildenhall, Littleport, Wisbech, Bourne, Colsterworth, Melton Mowbray, there was a comfort break just before Bourne for the more elderly in the group. The pork pie shop was the first port of call and we duly queued as directed. I am not a fan of pork pies but did buy a box of the mini ones, I didn't think they were any nicer than those you can buy from Tescos.

We found a chippy and also a coffee shop and probably spent one and a half hours in Melton Mowbray. Time to leave which way are we going? I told the group my choice of return route and everyone decided they would follow, my route went to Market Harborough via a B road and onto Oundle via Corby. Tim suggested cutting across from Oundle to Abbots Ripon, I led to the Waddenhoe roundabout on the A605 and then Tim took the lead. I think I arrived at Tescos Bury St Edmunds around 5pm a wee bit damp as we had ridden through a few showers. I think we all had a nice day and a decent ride after the weeks of lockdown, so if a boring old fart like me can organise a ride, from the hundred plus members of the group there has to be at least six run leaders waiting with baited breath, all you need is a map and a bit of imagination.

(Thanks for organising Brian, most enjoyable. As this was my first long ride on my 'touring bike', I learned to tolerate a sore backside, cramp in my thighs a crick in the neck and arthritis in my hands - oh for the comforts of a cruiser. Ed)



Suffolk Riders Social Ride to Southwold 28th July 2020

We were the full six! David Loney, Micheal Anthony, Neil Burly, Stephen Russell, Vini and myself. So a good turn out. Some exotica...two Ducatis, one 'classic' and one bang up to date! Both red!

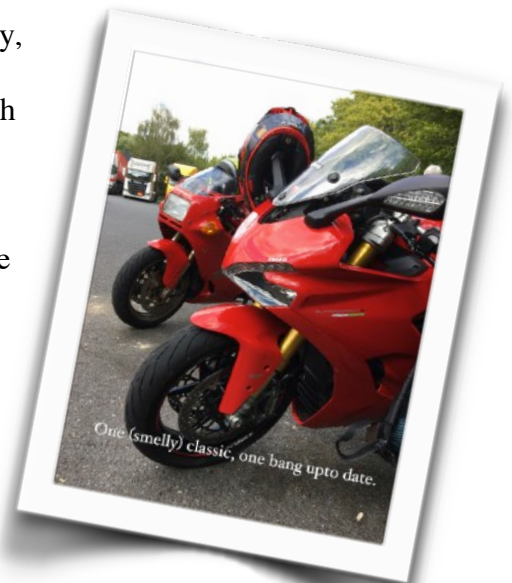
A smart pace was set by Vini, as we left Beacon Hill Services a little after 1800hrs. This slight delay was necessary as one of the other groups heading for Aldeburgh, led by Phil, was meeting up just around the corner, so as to maintain social distancing! (And we felt the other group might need a head start!)

The route was most enjoyable. Some stunning countryside through mid-Suffolk, a good mix of roads, mostly fast and sweeping but some rural villages and characterful towns. That said this was not a sight seeing trip. I really must ride these roads one day and take the time to stop and enjoy the scenery!

David had said at Beacon Hills that he would ride last, as his engine is a little 'fumey' at times, but somehow it all went wrong and I ended up following his classic Ducati, and indeed at times I did enjoy some Italian smoke on overrun! His bike sounds very throaty in a north Italian 'Bolognian' sort of way, making it difficult for me to hear my own bike at times; a very strange experience! So the last two bikes kept a little more distance from the pack.

Difficult to pick the best part of the route, but the road through Heveningham takes a bit of beating. The estate is landscaping the area in the classic style, with wide sweeping vistas, lakes and carefully positioned trees. This section of road runs right through the middle and is bounded by iron railings on both sides. In my mind this created a sort of cross between the IoM and a small race circuit effect, the road sweeping and dipping between the railings and the bikes forming a line, leaning and snaking (*cough cough Italian fumes!*) through the circuit. We all have our fantasies.

Arrival in Southwold was timely, because there was quite a queue at The Little Fish and Chip Shop.



(Probably not as long as the queue in Aldeburgh!) The pavements are even labelled 'one way', clearly expecting hoards of visitors to the lovely seaside town. We parked right next to the seafront on top of the cliff, with benches and a great view. The fish and chips were excellent, the fish so freshly fried that I had to let it cool before tucking in!

So a very enjoyable social ride, congratulations to Vini and the Social Committee for making it happen. We lingered a little longer after our supper, enjoying the conversations, coastline and company. Needless to say when we returned to our bikes the Ducatis had drawn a 'crowd'; it must be that certain shade of red paint?

Stephen W
(cough!)

Fish 'n Chips at Fair Green 28/7/20

A very pleasant run up to Fair Green, just



outside Diss, for fish and chips. Off in groups of 3, Steve leading the 1st group and David the 2nd. Then we hit a 'Road Closed' and, unless you are on the ball, SatNavs fall apart. At some point later the groups parted company, but met again at Fair Green, with David arriving first! While waiting for our fish to fry we spied a Zero passing, looked good. Catch up on the green then Steve led the way home. Most enjoyable, thank you to David for organising.

August Activities

Following the success of July's fish and chip runs, the 'Events Sub-group' will meet early in August to plan one or two ride-outs. Details will be emailed following their deliberations, and added to the club diary. Since the government rules will certainly still be in operation, it is essential to get a reply back to the organisers asap, if you want to participate.

October Activities

Highland Fling 2020 - John Morgan

Dear riding buddies - what a strange year this has been! It has been great to be able to ride in small groups again, and now we can pick up arrangements for our annual assault on the glorious Scottish Highlands in October.



When do we go?

This year's tour again runs over 9 days, from 6 to 14 October.

We take two days each way, with a long weekend (3 full days) to tour and explore the Highlands.

Well-researched routes provide lots of interest, and with detailed instructions and sat-nav plots they make the distances manageable.

What you should do?

- | | | |
|--|---|---------------------|
| -A- Register your intent with me | - | by Friday 7 August |
| -B- Transfer deposit of £80 /room | - | by Friday 28 August |
| Note that deposits become non-refundable | - | on 7 September. |

John Morgan 07969 158998 jp10.morgan@gmail.com

Calendar note – We go in October because it is immediately after the close of the official tourist season, meaning light traffic; and usually gives us fine, midge-free days to ride stunning roads and to explore the wild beauty of the mountains and islands.

- Outward Thursday 8th crossing the border to stay at Moffat
- Friday we will cross the beautiful Cairngorms to arrive Grantown (near Inverness) before dusk
- Three days Saturday, Sunday & Monday for touring
- We begin our ride back on Tuesday, stopping overnight at Northallerton
- And get home early on the evening of Wednesday 14th.

Where do we go?

Each day we have a wide choice of riding, usually making choices based on which direction offers the best weather and views.

We stay at the fabulous Kinross House guest house, where all seven rooms (most en-suite) are booked out for Suffolk Riders.

Our hosts turn out a truly legendary breakfast, and we tend not to eat much through the day. Grantown has a number of cafes, pubs and restaurants where we can eat in the evenings.

Some years we take advantage of being literally on the [Speyside Whisky Trail](#), and visit whisky distilleries; and in others we take a few hours out to walk the woods and hills and to better appreciate the gorgeous scenery.

Often a group will head out for a longer rides, for instance to see the isle of Skye, or the first leg of the NC500 route.

Of course some restrictions affect how we must operate:

- #1. Riding groups must not be larger than 6 including pillion; and we should not cross between groups
- #2. If we exceed room capacity at Kinross House, we can obtain more close by - but only if booked early
- #3. We can book evening meals at our overnight stops and through Kinross House - although this year we are will not be able to eat in one large group

If you have concerns over riding longer distances, how we meet Covid rules or navigation, ring me in the evenings on 07969 158998.



Member's Forum

Memories: Terry Beales.

I am sure that we all have memories of past motorcycling experiences in one form or another. During "Lockdown" I happened to come across details of a trip organised by BMW in 2006.

For some time I had the urge to visit the Ardeche in France. Although riding a Honda Pan European

ST1300 at the time I contacted [World of BMW](#)

and made a booking plus ferry tickets: details and itinerary duly arrived. Early August, ten days, suited us fine – my wife (pillion) and I duly arrived at Portsmouth for a 23.15 sailing. We were the last on dockside and found ourselves amid 12 BMWs plus the tour leader (on a brand new, factory supplied RT1200). After quite a bit of good humoured leg pulling about [Honda](#), introductions were made to all the riders and their pillion passengers. A cabin and a meal made for a good crossing to Caen, arriving at about 7.30a.m. Coffee and fuel stops etc., took us toward

Honda Pan European ST1300



the Loire and first night's stop at a lovely Chateau in Montlucon. A good meal and sound sleep and we were ready for the day ahead. 13 bikes left the car park, one couple, on a brand new K1200S tried to ride off with their disc lock still in place - yes, some of us have done it, the result a lot of nasty scratches, especially on the huge fairing! After exiting the Chateau grounds we sought petrol for the day's ride and, at the same filling station, were two of the couples in our group that we had eaten with the previous evening. We politely asked if we could tag along and they readily agreed. I must mention that Tom, riding an RT1150 was a "sat nav" fanatic. Put the route into the device from a map and that was that, NO MORE MAPS! Harry was happy to go along as were we, so off we go.

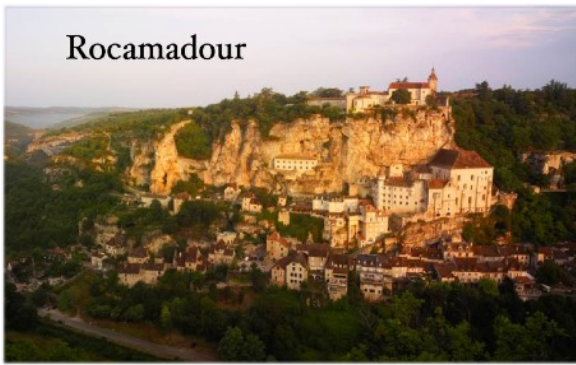
Heading south toward [Aurillac](#) and our next hotel, somehow the "sat nav" took us into a very forested area in the hills. Higher and higher we rode. Tom realising that we were wrong did a "U" turn on a sharp bend with a high bank to our left and steep drop (covered by bracken) on our right. Harry had to stop and putting his right foot down realised too late that it was NOT solid and over went the "GS1200", *two up*, virtually upside down! We all rushed down the bank fearing the worse but Harry just stood up, shook himself as did his wife, and the GS only suffered a broken indicator. We dragged the bike back up onto the lane and retraced our route to a main road. After a while we entered a very small village with a local café/pub. Needing energy we headed for the bar but were quickly directed into the restaurant (not to mix with the hill billies). After a nice lunch and full recovery we were ready to go again. I can't remember now what the village was called but it was very welcome. Eventually we arrived at Aurillac.

The next day we continued south through beautiful countryside toward [Rodez](#), then across to visit the fabulous “Millau Bridge” and “Gorges du Tarn”. Heading north east to a three night stay in [Vals-les-Bains](#), a lovely village with a tumbling stream running through the centre.

Finally, the [Ardèche](#), and still in the company of Tom, Harry and wives, we decided to explore by canoe. Terrific, three canoes hired and off we go. Tom, being the elder, found the experience of guiding the craft between huge rocks in fast flowing water a bit too much and tipped out several times, what a laugh ! It's a good job the hotel was relaxing .



Rocamadour



Heading west again we spent a pleasant afternoon in [Rocamadour](#) (well worth a visit) and our next hotel (smelling of moth balls) in the very small village of [Loubressac](#). The next day, our last full day, to [Saumur](#). Somehow on the way Tom and his trusty “sat nav” led us off route once again. A “D” road led us into a lane then a farm track and then a dead end. With no option but to paddle our way round (another “U”turn) in ankle deep cow s--- without managing to slip over we retraced our route to civilisation.

Our last night was in Saumur and next day into Caen for a 17.00 sailing. We still keep in contact with Tom and Harry and recall, with laughter our excursion down cow s--- lane . *Memories !*



Migration to a new bike. Simon Beard

One of the many joys of owning a motorcycle is opening the garage door to see your beautiful machine – after all we paid hard earned cash for our bike so we wouldn't buy something ugly would we! I have always been eager to open up and see my gleaming Yamaha Thundercat, VFR800 (VTEC) or VFR1200 over the years but now I'm afraid it is something I no longer look forward to having had to move from Sport and Sport Tourers to a pig ugly Adventure bike! Why?

I gained ROSPA gold in September 2018, awarded by Mick Jones who is the examiner for North Essex. His wise words were that we are never too good to learn and he advised me to sign up for [Essex Firebike Training](#) – especially as it was free! I know others in the group have done this training which consists of 3 elements run on separate days – Classroom discussion and short ride out with an observer, a day practicing Advanced Machine Control at an old airfield and finally a full day riding with an observer.

My problems started on the Advanced Control day. I turned up on my beautiful VFR1200 eager to learn and was impressed to find out that the day was being led by motorcyclist instructors from Hopp Rider Training. These guys were very professional and soon had us taking on some interesting challenges to improve our bike control. One activity was a slalom course set through a straight line of about 20 cones quite close together to be taken at about 20 miles an hour, the technique being to keep the revs high and stamp on the back brake to help effect the turn, releasing for the engine speed to bring the bike back up again. Now the VFR1200 has linked brakes which meant my front brake also engaged making the challenge a bit harder but not impossible – Needless to say I struggled a bit so Mel, one of the instructors, asked me if I'd like him to show me how to do it. I obviously said yes so he got onto my bike – I stood back ready to watch. "Get on then" said Mel! What? Was he going to show me how to do the exercise with me as pillion.....on a bike he'd never ridden, with linked brakes? Yep!

Now I don't do pillion well – probably due to my 'contol freak' tendencies (ask Paul Newman) but I got on and soon we were bobbing in and out of these cones at what seemed a rather 'progressive' speed with the bike leaning at all angles and the engine screaming (as much as a silky smooth Honda V4 can). "Mmmm, I don't like those linked brakes" said Mel as he got off the bike having completed a perfect pass. Mel's control was incredible but It showed me how 'aggressive' you can be on the bike and how it responds...when he said stamp on the brake he meant STAMP....HARD. When he said keep the revs high he meant HIGH. I'd learnt a lot from that few second run through the cones.

The next exercise looked a lot easier – 10 cones on the left and right side of the 'road' and quite a distance between them – just slalom around them. Easy I thought, get a nice speed then lean right, lean left, lean right, etc. I got around but thought to myself 'glad they weren't any closer together! Along comes Mel again "Lets make the turns a bit tighter shall we" and off he goes to move the cones a few inches closer together meaning a tighter turning circle. I got through again but it wasn't comfortable or smooth and I felt a bit of advice was on the way as Mel wandered over. "Why do you sit on your tank" said Mel? I obviously looked bemused and he repeated the question. "Go do it again and sit 6 inches further back" was his advice. What a revelation! The bike turned sweetly and confidently, and I had clearance on all the turns, Once again the cones got moved closer and still no problem as long as I sat back that little bit extra. How Mel could spot that my riding position was impacting my turning ability was amazing.....but that was the beginning of the end of beautiful bikes for me!

After 10 minutes riding in the new position I felt like my right hand was going to fall off. I have always had a problem with my wrist having broken my scaphoid as a teenager and perhaps not being as mindful as I should have been during the 14 weeks I was in plaster! We reckoned this was the reason I had been 'sitting on the tank'. Unwittingly I was moving forward to protect my wrist, trying to get it more and more upright to relieve pressure. It then dawned on me how dangerous this could be – I either keep my current position but then can't turn the bike as much as I may need to or I change position and deal with the pain.

It just so happened that I was going to Bath the next day for my daughter's graduation so I thought I'd take the bike (scenic route) and the rest of the family can suffer the M25 in the car. Did I really have a problem with position? Was it just a one off? A good long day of riding will prove it one way or the other. It did and confirmed the problem – It was probably one of the most enjoyable rides in terms of

how the bike turned and performed but I just couldn't deal with the pain so had to ride in short stretches and then have a stop to get some life back into my throttle/brake hand.

So how do you choose a bike that you don't really want? I can't go to an adventure bike, they're just pig ugly! What about a full on tourer? FJR1300? BMW RT1200? I tried both of them and I'll happily admit they are both fantastic bits of machinery but if that's motorcycling I'll go and get an Mazda MX5. Don't ask me why but both machines just left me cold and uninspired, even though they performed flawlessly and gave me very little pain in the wrist. Tracer 900? Not really my cup of tea and long trips 2 up needs something with a bit more grunt. Oh dear, how many magazines and reviews can you read? I had already ridden a GS1200 when I'd bike swapped with a friend coming through Lincolnshire earlier in the year and knew I wasn't going down that route.

Ducati had just brought out the 900cc Multistrada (I'd never ridden a Ducati but had toured with a friend who had one – I won't be getting one of those noisy old things I thought. As we were passing Seastar on the way to Norwich one week I said to my wife "I'll take one of them out - why not". Well I didn't because I couldn't get on it! The rear end is so high I don't understand how anyone can get on it. The salesman agreed and said that most people who come to try the 900 end up taking the 1260 out because its lower – and more fun. Well I'm here why not?

To this day I'm not sure what ticked my boxes but something did! The noise? The weird characteristics of the L twin? The gloriously comfortable seat position? The TFT display? (I'm a sucker for toys and buttons). I went home with a lot to think about. What an experience. It certainly wasn't smooth like the VFR but it didn't leave me cold like other bikes had...far from it, the thing was bonkers! How would you ride something like that all day? What could you do with all that engine braking? How well did that thing turn! But what an ugly bike!

To cut to the chase I ended up buying a 2016 Ducati 1200S. I don't regret it at all and it is undoubtedly the best bike I have ever had and does everything and more I ask of it but she 'aint pretty and however much Ducati red lipstick you put on it the bike is still pig ugly....but when I'm on it who cares! I'll forgo the pleasure of opening those garage doors and having 'a moment' as the heart flutters for the miles and miles of pain free fun this bike has bought me.

And finally, thanks to Mel at Hopp Rider Training who has made me a far safer rider now, I have a bike I can turn to its potential. I'm still amazed at his skills on a bike and how he spotted my riding position weakness. I'd thoroughly recommend any training from HRT but hope you don't get the dent in bank balance that came with mine!



Simon on his 'pig-ugly'
Ducati Multistrada
1200S

NOT QUITE WALES – Keith Gilbert

The A44 is one of THE roads to Wales. Starting in Oxford it will take you to [Rhayader](#). I would normally join the A44 at Chipping Norton. It can be a bit busy through the Cotswolds but not normally a problem if on a motorcycle. It is a road full of real bends that go round and round until you think you will disappear up your bum.

There was a time when Steve Shortis and myself would ride to Rhayader then through the [Elan Valley](#) and back to our homes in Essex. 30 odd years on I now prefer a more relaxed ride and on our last trip we came across an ideal place for an overnight stop.

On the A44 not quite into Wales you come to the village of [Lyonshall](#), just before the town of [Kington](#). *(I can recommend the Swan Inn in Kington - Ed)* We came across Lyonshall Lodge which comprises of two log cabins set in the grounds across from the owner's house. Each cabin is self contained with a zip and link double bed which can be made into twin beds, en suite and with table and chairs where Isobel will bring your breakfast, which is ordered the night before and at your requested time. We had the full English with orange, toast and also a large pot of tea. Very good and all for £75. Outside is a verandah facing west with furniture to sit and enjoy the sun set with a drink. Bring your own wine or beer, glasses will be supplied. Also if you wish to get a takeaway from Kington 2 miles away plates and cutlery will be provided for your evening meal.

There is a long term plan currently under construction to create a BBQ area for guests and BBQ packs from the local Herefordshire Meat Company just down the road.

Under the conditions we are all living with get out and enjoy what's on our doorstep.

Note for JJ: Wales is 6 miles past Kington. It's time to buy a proper map – Philips Navigator Britain 1½ miles to 1 inch.

There is a website for [Lyonshall Lodge](#) with details of availability.

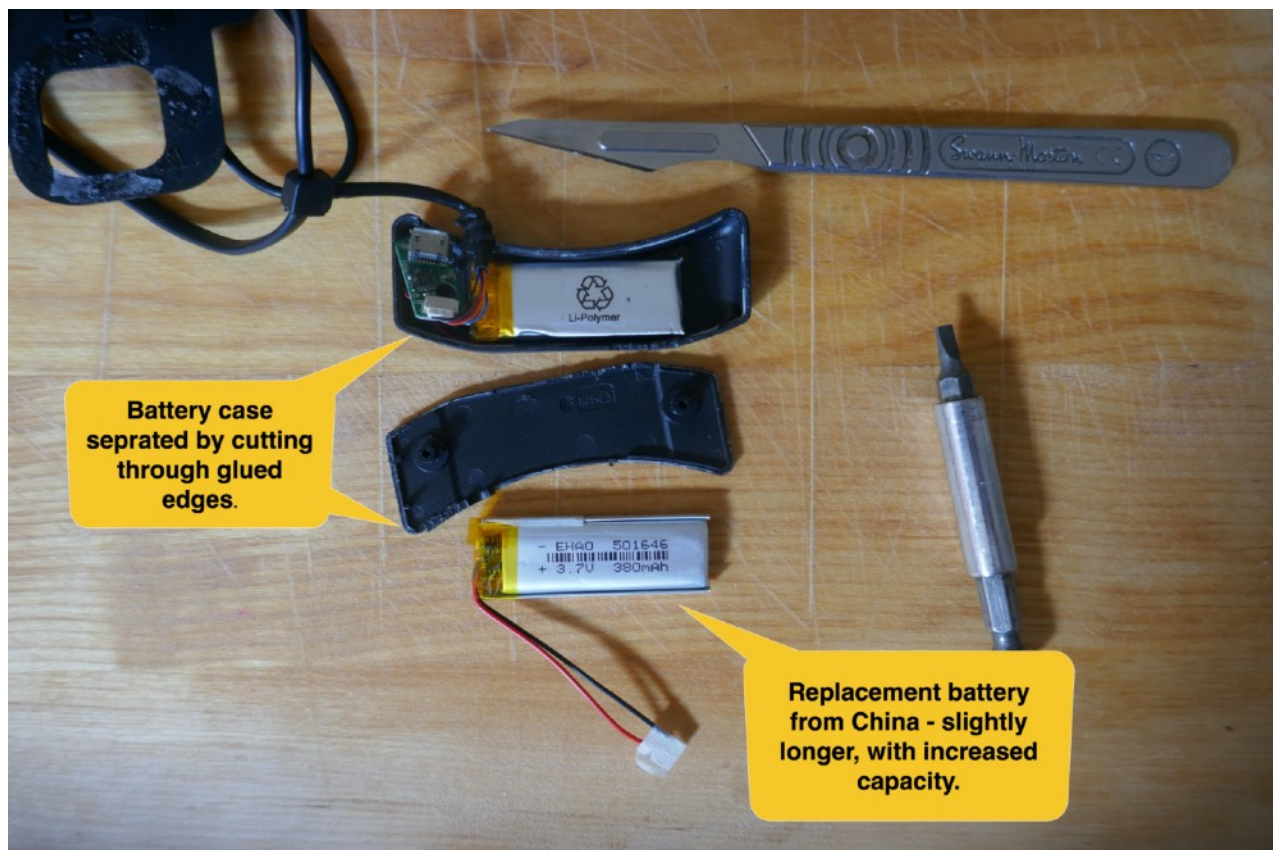
Enjoy. Keith Gilbert



Technical Corner

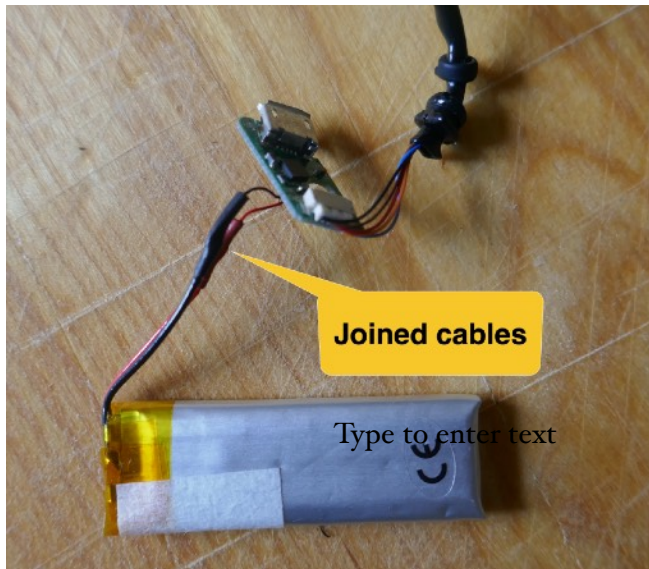
Replace a battery in a Sena 10U.

Last month your editor was whinging about Sena building obsolescence into their products by fitting LiPo (Lithium polymer) batteries as the power source, without any OEM replacement. In this particular case a Sena 10U intercom went from 4hr of use to 1hr over a 2.5 year period. Lesson for today, never buy a battery driven product where the battery cannot be replaced. The thought of wasting £218 was the trigger to search for some clever individual who had overcome the same problem. Youtube is an incredible facility in this regard, and I have nothing but admiration for those who are willing to show how to achieve some goal. In my case I struck lucky finding a gentleman who did [exactly what I wanted](#). My efforts were very similar, except that in the original, part of the battery case



was destroyed, whereas, with the use of a scalpel and a small screwdriver, I was able to cut through the glue linking the two halves and prise them apart, with minimal damage. I purchased two batteries from China for the staggering sum of £10.28, including postage.

The JST (Japanese solder-less terminal) battery connector on the pcb was too small to remove, so I just soldered the new battery wires to the original. Finally, I sealed the two halves together along most of the edge with insulating tape and, using 2 mm nuts and bolts, joined the top and bottom to the frame

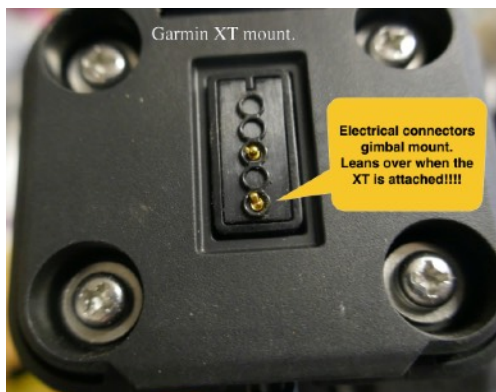


for mounting in the helmet. NB 10 x 2 mm nuts, washers and bolts for £3.87 from eBay. That's a total of £14.15 and I have a spare battery to insert in a few years time. Should see me out! The proof of the pudding is in the eating, so it was with some satisfaction, that after a 3hr run, I switched the unit off and on to hear the sing-song tones of an oriental lady saying, "Battery level is high!"

Someday I'd like to test exactly how long the battery lasts under 3 conditions, i) just a satnav, ii) satnav & phone, iii) satnav, phone & entertainment. It would be even more useful to connect with another rider via Bluetooth, must be someone out there with a Sena who would like to talk to me. *Ed.*

The Last Laugh Word

My thanks again to this month's contributors. When Terry B's article came in I asked if it was inspired by Brian C's story of his first trip abroad. His reply gave me a smile, "Yes Colin, us oldies inspire each other." Perhaps a few more 'oldies' might be inspired to regale us with some memories.



Chris A's story of the satnav problems on their trip to Horncastle just made me more determined to get to the bottom of the problem, as my own woes with the Garmin XT continue. I won't bore you with the software idiosyncrasies I'm struggling with, but take a look at the picture on the left. I was riding along when the device switched itself off, only to come back on 15 minutes later. Looking at the terminals I could see that the pins are mounted in a spherical socket like a gimbal and can 'roll around' in that socket. Now the XT is attached to the mount by first tipping the device away from the mount,

putting the bottom into a groove on the mount then levering the device up to snap into a clip at the top. So there is a slight sliding action when the satnav is mounted. You can see in the picture that one of the pins is pushed upwards (in the direction of the sliding action). It's easy to pull the pin back down, but it's got to be an awful design. One member told me he wouldn't buy a Zero electric bike, as 'No good design ever came out of America.' Harsh, but in this case I concur.



