

# ASOC

June 2022

# NEWS

The magazine of the Auto-Sleeper Owners' Club



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To claim your discount, you must present your ASOC membership card at the time of order or arrival. You will not qualify for the discount by presenting your membership card after work has commenced.

**RALLY INFORMATION**

**Points to remember:** Marshals should let the rally coordinator know when their rallies are fully booked.

Always carry your ASOC membership card when attending rallies.

Inform the marshal if you plan to bring a car, tent or trailer to a rally.

All rallies start at 12 noon unless otherwise stated in the rally information.

**Running a rally:** If you would like to run a rally, contact the rally coordinator for "Guide for Rally Marshals". When a date and venue is chosen you will receive the "Rules for Rally Marshals" and asked to sign a marshal's declaration which should be returned to the rally coordinator. Assistance and advice is available from the rally coordinator or a committee member.

If you would like to assist a rally marshal to see what is involved in running a rally, or interested in the details of possible rally sites we have, contact the rally coordinator.

**Important:** All potential rally dates and venues must be checked with the rally coordinator, who will check that the club will be able to comply with regulatory and insurance requirements.

## EDITOR'S VIEW

The views expressed by the editor may not be the views of the committee or ASOC

Welcome to June News

We are back monthly from this issue, so hopefully we can keep the pages full.

We had a very successful AGM and National Rally with over a 100 vans attending, and would like to thank the National Team for all their hard work in making it so successful after a break of two years.

As Editor, I look forward to receiving all your news, articles and photos in the coming months.

## CHAIRMAN'S CHAT



Our trip over from the island to the National and AGM started with a three-day stopover at the Mercedes' dealership in Lancashire. The gremlins have been keeping us on our toes throughout the period in one way or

another with the van and tow car. Despite the best efforts of the SMC service team both before and after the National, it looks like we will be seeing them again with the same issues sadly.

I think we can mark down the 33rd National Rally and AGM a success and it was great to meet in person again, having 106 vans and 198 members attending. The meals were spot on with quality and quantity, I had many members giving me positive feedback and complementing the catering and the Newark showground staff.

It was great to meet the 26 new member 1st time ralliers at an informal coffee and chat on Thursday afternoon. Thanks to all who made it possible. How many members had their van weighed by our friends at SV Tech and were within their permitted weight? Den will give you the lowdown on the results later in the magazine. I hear Auto-Sleeper members are far more legal than Autotrail or motorhome fun members.

Friday was technical day, which was well supported by tech representatives from Whale pumps, Thetford, Derby Motorhomes and our good friend and long time supporter from Auto-Sleepers Alan Curry. I was sad to hear that this was his last visit to our National as he is seeking retirement next year.

The Stuart Goodwin Pavillion was a hive of activity all day on Friday and Saturday, I would like to thank all those involved with running the various activities during the event. Did you try your hand-eye co-ordination with Peter's helicopter simulator or taking part in the craft making sessions.

The AGM was successful, with no major issues to address, we then moved onto the Open Forum where a number of items were raised by members to which the new committee will look into during the coming year.

I think all who attended agreed the food was excellent and tasty. Judging by the number of members dancing throughout both Friday and Saturday night's entertainment, the entertainment was spot on.

A Big thanks once again to Martin and his National Organising Team, Ozzie, Liz, Jan and all the Marshals, helpers too numerous to list in this small article for putting on a great event. A big thank you to all who supported the raffle this year which made £1,454 for the TOFS Charity.

As the event wound down on Monday and we all made our way onward or home, a number of the committee members, who had all previously tested negative prior to the event started to test positive for Covid 19. With how so many of us having successfully avoided Covid throughout the last two years, will, unfortunately give us all something else to remember the 33rd National for. Hopefully, the outbreak has only effected a small proportion of the attendees with any luck.

As Carol and I made our way back to the Island, we were sad to learn of Mike Valentine's death, our thoughts are with Mo and their family at this sad time. Mike was an active Rally Marshal and member of the club and will be missed by all who knew him. Until next time

Stay safe, Steve Chairman



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**WE NEED YOU!**

We all know our Management Committee work very hard on your behalf, but life is getting a bit difficult because several members are doing two jobs.

### **WE NEED VOLUNTEERS**

I know lots of you say "Oh, I couldn't possibly." But actually - you could. There is plenty of support for newbies and we really don't bite!

When we have a full Committee, things are not onerous. We only have four Committee meetings a year - July, October, February and May at the National. We know there is a lot of talent out there and your commitment is only for three years, so please help us keep our Club running.

We are in desperate need of a Rally Co-ordinator. Neil is leaving at the end of the year, so we need someone on board quickly to 'shadow' Neil in preparation to take over. We won't lie, this is one of the bigger jobs, but once you understand what has to be done you can tailor the role to suit your mode of working. Same goes for any of the committee roles.

Outside of the committee, we need members to join the National Rally Sub-Committee, whose Chair is Martin Ross. Currently, Stuart Wood arranges the set up of the Sir Stuart Goodwin pavilion for the National and he's been trying to pass this on for a couple of years, since he is also on the Management Committee as Regalia Officer. There are always lots of volunteers to help moving tables and chairs, but we need someone to co-ordinate it. **LOTS OF YOU WILL BE ABLE TO HANDLE THIS.**

So please put your name forward, either to Martin or Ozzie, or anyone else on the Committee. Similarly, Yvonne Wood has done an excellent job as Raffle Organiser for the National Rally for a number of years and wants to pass it on. **CAN YOU TAKE THIS OVER?**

Again, get in touch with either Martin or Ozzie or any Committee member.

**WE REALLY DO NEED YOU, SO PLEASE GET ON BOARD**

*Chris Brown, Vice Chair*

# TECH with Dennis

As your Technical Officer, this is my last official "Tech News". Thank you all for your forbearance especially in the early months while I was settling into this role. I have had many interesting technical enquiries over the last four years, most of which were a learning experience for me. As a result, I know more today than I did yesterday (but I have forgotten more today than I did when I was younger – it feels like a race!)

As I write this, we have a prospective new Technical Officer who, all being well, will be co-opted on to the Committee. There will be more news on this is due course.

Thank you for all your good wishes at the National Rally as I stepped down from the committee. Of course, It was with mixed feelings that I relinquished the post of Chairman, Technical Group. As I said, I will not disappear and will continue to contribute whenever appropriate. As I have said before, I believe that the Committee will be enriched by a fairly regular turnover of members and I appeal to members to come forward to help run the club. There are vacancies. Please contact Steve for information.

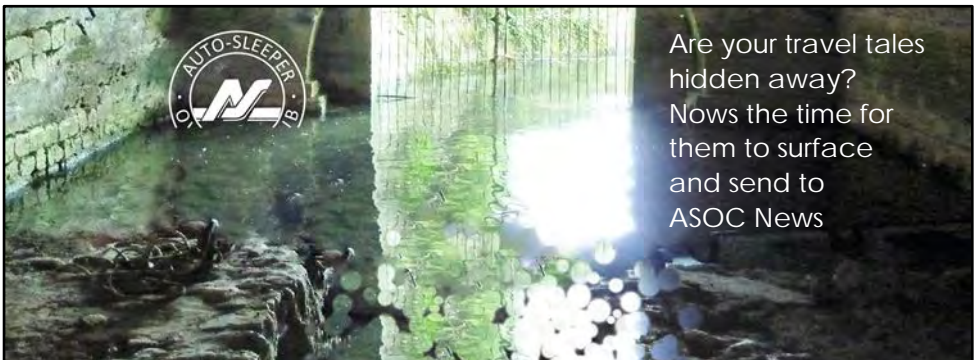
As you may know, the recording of the Tech open forum is on the website in the members area, here is a link to paste into your browser...

<https://www.asoc.uk.com/member/newark22/2022techforum.m4a>

Notable from the rally was Peter Brown's display of helicopters. It got me to thinking, without the need to organise the weighing and the tech day on the Friday, I might bring my 3D printer next year and have it run some demonstration prints and talk about 3D printing in general. What do you think?

I will soon relinquish my access to the Technical@asoc.uk.com mailbox as my successor takes over. For any friends who would like to informally contact me, my personal email address is [dennisdownie@gmx.co.uk](mailto:dennisdownie@gmx.co.uk) and I would be very happy to hear from you. However, technical queries should still go to the ASOC mailbox as usual with your membership number.

Best wishes to you all Dennis.



Are your travel tales hidden away?  
Now's the time for them to surface and send to ASOC News

# IMPROVING YOUR OFF-GRID ENDURANCE

Dennis Downie

I'm sure many of you will agree that 3 or 4 days endurance "off grid", without an electric hook-up when it is overcast or raining is not sufficient for attendance at many of our rallies. I have seen instances of fellow members having to leave early and return home because there was insufficient charging available from our solar panels. Leaving site on un-planned trips to get a bit more charge in our leisure battery is not always the answer. Most at risk, especially for older vans is damage to the leisure battery by becoming discharged.

This month's article is very long and I feel it needs a precis so, having taken the advice described below, I have the following conclusions/suggestions for increasing the time you can spend without electric hook-up. A full explanation and discussion is given in the article, with background detail.

1. Increase your leisure battery capacity by adding a second battery
2. Consider an upgrade to a Lithium Iron Phosphate (LiFePO4) leisure battery
3. Add more solar panel capacity
  - a. On the roof
  - b. Using portable folding panel type

Can you really do all this?

To find out, last month, I visited a company called Simmonsigns, who own Solar Technology International, the supplier of solar panels to Auto-Sleepers.

I wanted the facts about the solar panels and systems installed on our vans with a view to assess the scope for improving or upgrading them. I had a very welcoming response from them.

The reason for my visit

1. To discuss options for end users
2. To try to see through the fog of advice on the internet and on forums
3. To dispel some of the urban myths that exist
4. To understand why we have what we have and what the limitations might be

Who did I talk to?

My visit was with the Company Chairman Phil Simmons who gave me a potted outline of his business. Simmonsigns make "street furniture" of the traffic management and traffic safety types, many of which require power - such as bollards, traffic lights, Belisha Beacons et.al. Solar power for these systems is his main motivation for owning a solar systems company.

What is limiting us?

My first concern was the limit placed on our vans by the Sargent specification of 120 watts of solar power as a maximum. I was advised by Sargent that the 120 watt

figure was arrived at by designing the solar charging circuits to handle a maximum current of 10 amps. The highest reading of amps on the Sargent panel screen is 10amps and a 10 amp fuse is fitted in the system. Forgive the technical swerve here, but the calculation goes like this;

$$\begin{aligned}\text{volts} \times \text{amps} &= \text{watts} \\ 12 \text{ volts} \times 10 \text{ amps} &= 120 \text{ watts}\end{aligned}$$

This is the calculation that was used by Sargent – but is it the correct calculation? Re-arranging this calculation, what should we get from our 80 watt solar panel?

$$\begin{aligned}\text{watts/volts} &= \text{amps} \\ 80 \text{ watts}/12 \text{ volts} &= 6.6 \text{ amps}\end{aligned}$$

That would be great, but I wager no-one has achieved anything near this figure even on the best of sunny days.

Why is this wrong?

Well for starters, a solar panel has a “maximum power point” to use the jargon. This is a voltage that it generates when delivering the best current it can for the available solar energy. For our panels, this is 18 volts, and it is the solar controller in the van that converts this to the appropriate voltage for battery charging – somewhere just over 12 volts. It turns out that the specified output of a solar panel is a function of this maximum power point voltage and if you use this in the calculation, you cannot get more than 4.4 amps from your 80 watt panel. I may have got close to this, but I have never seen 4 amps.

What is going on?

The standard test to determine a solar panel maximum output has little relationship to the real world of leisure use. I was advised that the test protocols were developed in the USA and rely on an idealised set of criteria that will include the sun at its highest point, the panel directed and maintained at the best angle towards the sun and the atmospheric conditions all being the best they can possibly be (cloud cover, pollution, temperature, humidity etc. etc). I guess useful when designing solar systems for spacecraft maybe, but only theoretical for we who are leisure users and live on the earths’ surface and away from the equator. Many optimised solar systems also track (follow) the sun as it rises and falls during the day, something our panels cannot. As there is no other credible way to describe solar panel performance, the theoretical yield in Watts is what is included in the supplier’s specification.

What does this mean for us?

Put simply, it means there is scope for “beefing up” our solar panel system. We have a 10A limit and a panel that cannot deliver more than 4 amps even in idealised conditions.

What do Sargent say about this?

At a recent meeting with Sargent, they acknowledged all of this and stated the limiting factor is, in fact 10 amps, not 120 watts. They now state 200 watts as a guide figure for maximum solar panel use with their latest systems. They do not

want to see more than 10 amps in the circuit boards of their system. The 10 amp fuse fitted is not easily accessible and requires a strip-down of the EC400, 500 or 700 power supply to change it.

Is this all bad news?

Not at all. It gives us something to “go at”.

When Phil Simmons bought Solar Technology International, his experience told him he needed to do some real-world testing of his own. He conducted a series of tests with the initial objective to see if mixing and matching different solar panel sizes and differing technologies had any detrimental effect on the effective output of an array of panels when wired in parallel. The current “wisdom” is that you should not do this. He found that mixing different sizes and technologies (ie polycrystalline and monocrystalline solar panels) had no adverse effect on the amount of energy harvested.

That undermines one urban myth - “you cannot mix sizes and /or types of solar cells on your motorhome” - YES YOU CAN! (but the Maximum Power Point must be the same on all panels)

His testing also confirms that you cannot work out the current available for charging your leisure battery from the wattage quoted by the panel supplier using the formula above.

How was the testing conducted?

His tests used an array of panels consisting of 2 x 80 watt panels and 1x 45 watt solar panel. This gives a potential total of 205 watts of solar capacity. For this test, his panels were optimised by being arranged angled to the sun to get the highest current output on a clear day. In theory, with this array of panels, the absolute maximum solar charging current could reach  $205\text{w}/18\text{v} = 11.39$  amps.

However, the most that the testing could squeeze out of the panels was less than 10 amps.

The test used an MPPT charge controller

There are two types of charge controller. Those fitted in our vans are called PWM (Pulse Width Modulation) controllers, designed to condition whatever energy the panel delivers for battery charging. Another type is available, called MPPT (Maximum Power Point Tracking) controllers. MPPT controllers control the load impedance presented to the panel to maintain – or “track” the Maximum Power Point of the panel and can yield more output, especially on duller or cloudy days when the panel may not otherwise reach its maximum power point.

Here is a link to a full explanation of MPPT and how it works.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maximum\\_power\\_point\\_tracking](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maximum_power_point_tracking)

The test panels were connected to an MMPT charge controller for maximum output.



## Panel performance on our vans

So, it can now be appreciated how our 80 watt panels may really be performing when not pointed at the sun, but laid flat on the roof of our vans. Taking into account the reduced performance caused by dust and dirt accumulation, rainwater and condensation on our panels and our inability to track the angle of the sun, we could see normal, real-world energy harvested at a lot less than 50% of what we might expect from the simple, Sargent calculation shown above - even for the briefest period at midday in mid-summer when the sun is at its highest on the sunniest of days. This is in line with my experience on my 2020 Bourton and previous 2017 Stanton.

## What can we do about this?

Last year, in an attempt to make a simple improvement, I replaced the Sargent PWM controller for a Solar Technology International "PV Logic MPPT Pro" solar charge controller. I was disappointed to find that the improvement was only marginal. MPPT suppliers and manufacturers quote between 15% and 20% improvement in available solar output, but the caveat of "under certain circumstances" is always there somewhere. While any improvement is welcome my observation is that a small improvement of a small (real) solar current is still only a small improvement and unless you start with more than a few amps (or more watts of solar panel), the cost of replacing an existing PWM controller with an MPPT is not justifiable. It is said that MPPT controllers will give you more in cloudy conditions, which is demonstrably true, but a small % increase of an even smaller charge current in cloudy conditions from an 80 watt roof mounted panel may not materially improve the independence of mains hook-up that we are seeking. This is an option when we have done all the other things recommended and we still have some budget to spare.

## Here are some recommendations you can consider

It's not all bad news. There are some useful things suggested but, sadly, none of them are cost free. Here are the discussed options...

### 1. Increase your leisure battery capacity

A second leisure battery will increase your endurance. For new or nearly new vans, fit a battery of the same type, size and age. or set aside the original battery as an emergency spare or retire it completely and add two batteries of increased capacity.

- PROs.
- Easy to instal and connect, often alongside your existing battery wiring system.
  - By selecting a larger pair of batteries, you can more than double your existing endurance. – eg 80AH original to 2 off 110 AH for a whopping 220 Ampere Hours\*\*.
  - Needs no changes to you existing charging systems apart form an additional fuse at the new battery harness.
  - It is Relatively cheap.

- CONS
- Increased weight, decreases your payload
  - Needs some hardware to physically secure the additional battery.
  - May (but not always) reduce storage space (it has to go somewhere)

*\*\*What must be appreciated is that the rated capacity of a lead-acid battery of any type, is NOT what you actually have as useable energy. You will yield as little as 50% of its capacity before it is considered safely discharged and the voltage begins to drop. The Sargent EC700 system protects the leisure battery from serious damage by cutting the battery off below 10V. From an 80AH battery you may get as little as 40AH energy available.*

*Older systems may not include this protection feature. Over-discharging lead-acid leisure batteries is the biggest single cause of early failure.*

## 2. Convert to Lithium Iron Phosphate (LiFePO4) leisure battery(s)

LiFePO4 batteries have significant benefits.

- PROs.
- You have much more of the quoted capacity available for use. A LiFePO4 battery can be used down to as much as 10% of its rated capacity. So, for an 80AH LiFePO4 battery you get approx. 72AH of useable energy compared with approx. 40AH for an equivalent Lead-acid battery.
  - They are lighter. At approx. 9Kg an 80AH LiFePO4 is typically half the weight of a flooded cell Lead-acid Leisure battery. So, for about the same weight, two LiFePO4 batteries will give you 144AH useable power instead of 40AH from your lead-acid leisure battery. A shocking (forgive the pun) increase of 260%!
  - Long life: if managed appropriately, the cycle count (the number of times it can be recharged will often exceed 2,000 (will maybe outlast your ownership of the motorhome)
- CONS
- They are expensive. Approximate cost is £650 for an 80AH LiFePO4 leisure battery
  - There are some (as yet) unanswered technical questions relating to retrofitting LiFePO4 batteries to existing lead-acid leisure battery equipped motorhomes.
  - LiFePO4 batteries will be damaged by charging at temperatures below 0°C. Presently, not all LiFePO4 Battery Management Systems or chargers manage this risk. This needs careful selection of your new battery (something I am working on with the battery suppliers)

For now, unless fitted at the point of manufacture of the motorhome, the jury seems to be out on this upgrade. There are also potential pitfalls from the equipment in our vans that may have a negative impact on an expensive battery.



### 3. Increase Solar Input (Add another solar panel)

I went into this meeting worried that the available space on the roof of our motorhomes would limit the option of more solar input.

As discussed above, there is a limit of 120 watts as maximum allowed in the Sargent system design of the EC range of electrical systems. (eg EC700, 500, etc). Although it seems that does not mean 120 watts of solar panels, rather 120 watts delivered solar energy. I will be meeting with Sargent to discuss this soon and will report back

#### 3.1 Replace the 80watt panel with a larger panel.

PROs • No changes to the motorhome wiring or drilling of the roof required for extra cables

CONs • Only a marginal increase in solar charging capacity  
• Leaves you with an 80W panel not used

#### 3.2 Find space on the roof for an additional panel

PROs • Cheaper than writing off an 80 watt panel

CONs • May need additional wiring through motorhome roof  
• Flat orientation on the roof will not harvest all the potential solar power

#### 3.3 Use an additional external portable folding panel system

PROs • Can be deployed as and when needed  
• Easy to keep clean  
• Can be directed at optimum angles to the sun  
• Your existing 80 watt panel will continue to maintain your leisure and/or vehicle battery as before.

CONs • Storage required when not in use  
• Approx. 4Kg weight. (Additional rigid panels will be heavier)  
• Folding panels can be used to increase solar input. With an external input connector fitted, wired to your existing Solar charge controller, this system could be very convenient.

As mentioned previously, testing has shown that a total of 205 watts of solar input with an MPPT controller failed to yield more than 10amps. So, all of these options could be considered without overloading the Sargent systems. I will report further on this at a later date.

*The idealised solution would seem to be the following*

1. Add LiFePO4 leisure batteries (as large a capacity or as many as your budget will allow)
2. Add a folding 120 watt (or greater) panel with an external connector for use as required (possibly use with an MPPT charge controller-replacing your existing PWM controller)

Typical component costs for this might be

£650 per 80AH LiFePO4 battery

£400 for a 120 watt folding solar panel with MPPT controller

£??? For wiring, installation and testing

My caveat for the LiFePO4 option is that more research needs to be done regarding retro-fitting LiFePO4 batteries and their low temperature charging risk along with the suitability of your existing charging system.

The option of fitting a folding panel + MPPT controller NOW and considering LiFePO4 next time your existing leisure batteries need changing might be the most sensible route for now.

Stop press

I have bought a 160W folding solar panel for use off-grid. It will work with the MPPT controller I fitted last year that I mentioned earlier. It is very neat and weighs just over 5Kg. It is made up of four solar panels folded to form a very useful carrying / storage bag.

I have yet to decide whether to wire it in parallel with the one on the roof or use it on its own by having a selector switch to use one or the other as appropriate. Maybe a switch that can select one or the other - or both to give me a total panel spec of 240Watts for really "crummy" days. The great news is that it takes up almost no room under the nearside bed. If 160 watts proves too much at peak times, a tea towel over one of the panels will reduce the solar input but in cloudy or dull times, I will get what I need (hopefully) - I will report. The next challenge will be how to secure it in use so it does not blow away, but can still be adjusted or moved to follow the sun if needed. I have a cunning plan.

Here is the panel I bought. Less than £154...

[https://smile.amazon.co.uk/gp/product/B07YKP8H9K/ref=ppx\\_yo\\_dt\\_b\\_asin\\_title\\_o06\\_s00?ie=UTF8&psc=1](https://smile.amazon.co.uk/gp/product/B07YKP8H9K/ref=ppx_yo_dt_b_asin_title_o06_s00?ie=UTF8&psc=1)

If anyone is already doing this, I would be delighted to hear from you. I am renowned for re-inventing the wheel!

Closing

In closing, I would just like to say that there are some loose ends that I wish to tie up in the coming months, so this will not be my last contribution to ASOC News. I hope to see (have seen) some of you at the National in April and future rallies.

## A little money problem

Brian Ellis

A teasing quiz I acquired recently which is for those who can remember the "Old Money" before decimalisation changed everything. See if you can tot up to the grand total

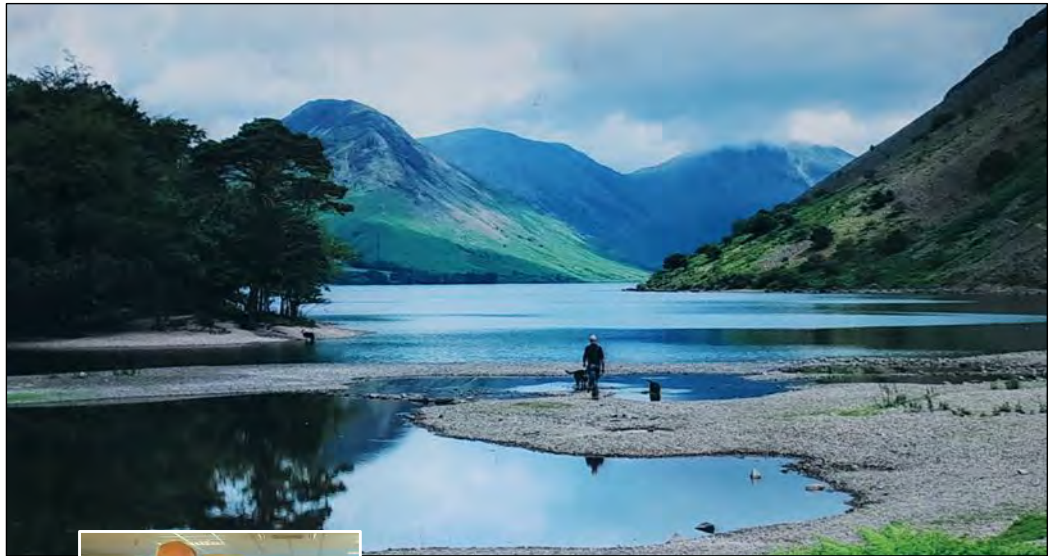
<i>cryptic clue</i>	<i>answer</i>	£	s	d
A stone	_____	—	—	—
Old fashioned bicycle	_____	—	—	—
Male singer	_____	—	—	—
Poorly fish (cephalopod)	_____	—	—	—
One legged ladies underwear	_____	—	—	—
portion of royal headgear	_____	—	—	—
Up and down motion	_____	—	—	—
A leather worker	_____	—	—	—
Mercury, Uranus and Pluto	_____	—	—	—
A type of pig	_____	—	—	—
		TOTAL:	£31	15s 2d

# At the National Rally, Newark 2022



We would like to thank everyone who helped with marshalling at the National Rally at Newark. Your help was much appreciated and made the positioning of all the motorhomes so much easier for us. Thank you everyone.

Jan and Vic Hicklin 2301



The winner of the 2022 photo competition was Shirley Sturgeon

Shirley receiving the prize from Chairman Steve Ryan at the AGM.



photo: David & Adele Johnstone-Wright



A rare sight: Three Anniversary Excutives parked together at the National Rally



Members enjoying Saturday night dancing to the Soundations



Photo of our table of new found friends. This was taken on the Saturday evening. Our 1st adventure with the club and we found everyone so friendly and enjoyable.  
Tony and Margaret Lago 11350

Thank you to all at the Newark National  
TOFS charity

It was a very successful weekend and a great job was done by all who organised the various events to raise proceeds for the TOFS charity, the overall amount raised was £1,454.24. Carol Ryan Treasurer

\*\*\*\*\*

We could not run the National with the same efficiency as we do without willing volunteers to help us out. A big thank you to the volunteers who helped us move tables and chairs in the Sir Stuart Goodwin Pavilion on the Thursday morning and Saturday tea time.

Thank you to the volunteers serving behind the tables and serving tea and coffee in the Sir Stuart Goodwin Pavilion.

Also a big thank you to the volunteers to sell raffle tickets, without your help it would be an impossible task for us.

Thank you to anyone who donated prizes for the raffle. We are now thinking of raffle prizes for next year's National. Yvonne & Stuart (National Sub Committee)

\*\*\*\*\*

We would just like to say a big thank you to Ossie and Martin and all those who helped, for all their hard work in finally getting to run the National Rally and AGM after the two years of lock down.

The only word that comes to mind is "good" - good company, good entertainment, good food, good cakes at SMC and good weather!

The only downside is that several members have tested positive for COVID, on their return home. Hopefully it will be no more than a bad cold.

Jackie and John Moss 5639

SUNDAY NIGHT QUIZ with quiz master Jean Sellers



This is the first year that the winning team was presented with the Gill Hopkins Trophy. Gill was our Minutes Secretary who died in 2019.

The winning team were the Round Tablers, the members being Alan & Betty Barr 9299, David & Penny McRoberts 11399, Geoff Dye and Mary Driver 7296, Arthur Allan 11386, and Brian & Linda Ellis 2360.

They were presented with the trophy and a cake, donated by SMC Motorhomes, to eat.

## Presentation at the National

Steve, our chairman presented the traditional glassware to Neil Rogers after 25 years as a committee member and Rally coordinator, and to Dennis Downie our Technical advisor, who stood down as a committee member.

\*\*\*\*\*

## National Rally Tombola 2022

The Tombola Stall raised £151.00 for this years Charity, Tracheo-Oesophageal Fistula Support, known as TOFS. Chris and I would like to thank all our members for their kind donations of bottles and cans which helped to make the tombola such a great success.

*Liz Irvin and Chris Brown*

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## MANY THANKS

Martin and Ozzie would like to thank all the volunteers, too many to name individually, who helped make the National go without a hitch and therefore enjoyable for everyone. Without their help the National would not have been the success it was. So, thanks to you all and give yourselves a pat on the back.

In this magazine you will find the first episode of the lost boy's adventure to recuperate, in readiness for planning the 2023 National, but most of all to promote the event in their own inimitable style.

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We congratulate Martin and Ozzie who guided their team through this last three years of organising what turned out to be a very successful National Rally. We can imagine them longing to escape to their home planet on many occasions. They even managed to squeeze some sunshine in which made meeting with friends old and new so much easier.

We were lucky enough to get a prize in the raffle but one thing we were not so lucky with was getting a dose of the dreaded covid in which we believe we were not alone. We hope those who did succumb had a mild dose.

On the whole a very enjoyable weekend and looking forward to the next one.

*Allan & Moira Blackstock 4067*

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We have just returned from the AGM at Newark and would just like to say a huge thanks to Ozzie and Martin for all their hard work, and also all the hard work that the Comittee do throughout the year. It is much appreciated .

*Ian and Jean Sellers 8655*

# THE HUB

Places to stay

Pubs, aires and informal sites

<https://www.wildcamping-moonfruit.com>

Forestry and Land Scotland

Stay the night at 41 car parks across Scotland

This runs from April until end October 2022

<https://forestryandland.gov.scot/news-releases/stay-for-another-night>

Camping-Car Park

<https://campingcarpark.com/>

We have used these quite a lot and they are good being of a uniform excellent standard. Each site has a fixed number of places and will not take any more. The card only gives you access to the system and NOT a guaranteed place. For that you need to join the bookings system at €29 per year. (The €5 is a one off). You can then go to website and book a place for the night. If you use them a lot it is convenient to keep a credit on your account but this is not essential as you can pay at the site with a credit card.

Any credit is held over but it will stop showing on your account and you need to ring up the help system to get it reinstated. (It takes about a day but not at weekends) Robert Strawson.

LPG tank users travelling to Europe

Having recently checked the continental adapters to fill my LPG tank in Europe. I noticed that two of the rubber washers out of the three adapters had split.

Planning to top up my LPG tank at Autogas 2000, I took the adapters with me. The washers were replaced at a cost of £0.49 each.

If you are planning to travel to Europe, please check your adapters, as a split washer would cause a gas leak while filling your tank. Autogas 2000 offer a discount to ASOC members and they can post parts out to you.

Liz Irvin 4636

A big thank you to Tony and Margrete for stepping in at the last minute to marshall the Peterborough Motorhome Show, we were just 12 vans, Sally Dodds, Head of Events kindly put us all together near the centre, a lot of the big stands were missing but it was nice to get out. Peter and Polly Hill 5798

FOR SALE

Sporty trailer complete with jockey wheel, two spare wheels (both with new tyres)  
£550 ono

John Jones, Mansfield 01623 627903

It is with great sadness that I write to let you know that Mike died on 4th May, his birthday!

The last 4/5 months were very difficult for him, although in great pain at a great deal of the time, he remained cheerful when we as a family were around. He is now free of pain and at peace. I can ask no more. I shall try to continue as he would have wanted, with a smile. I know that for the Family, life will never be as it was before, Mike was a caring man who helped us all so much with his love and time.

Thanks to all of you who have sent us wishes. Your lovely words have given us great consolation at this difficult time.

Mo and Family.

#### SAD NEWS

MIKE VALENTINE 1940 - 2022

Mike and Mo Valentine joined the Club in 1997.

Mike came onto the committee in 2004 retiring in 2018. In that time, he held the post of Vice Chairman, Chairman and Charity and Exhibition Officer.

Mike had the ability to listen to the points being made at committee meetings then succinctly sum up the debate.

Mike was the person I went to for advice as his words of wisdom were spot on, and for this I will be forever grateful for his guidance.

Our thoughts go out to Mo and the family at this sad time.

*John Osland-Jones Secretary*

## THE ADVENTURE BEGINS in Old Portsmouth Dockyard



Owing to the scrapes that Martin and Ozzie got into going around the universe drumming up interest in the 2022 National Rally and AGM, the lost boys thought that as they evaded the evil clutches of Emperor Ming and their good behaviour bond has expired, the two lost boys thought it would be best to have a boating trip circumnavigating the British Isles. Promoting the Club 2023 National Rally.

NATIONAL RALLY & AGM THURSDAY 27 APRIL – MONDAY 1 MAY 2023

So, to this end, they had their vehicles converted into amphibious sea going motorhomes still powered by dillyhium crystal engines tuned to perfection by engineer Scottie, at the Auto-Sleeper boat yard situated in Portsmouth docks, supervised by their top designer, Rowland Emett.

While the vehicles were being modified the two lads set up camp at the Still & West pub in Old Portsmouth run by Andy Pandy, Teddy, and Looby-Loo. There they took two postal courses, one in seamanship from the HMS Troutbridge School of Navigation and the other, Captains Blyth art of crew management, passing both with flying colours.

The sea-going vehicles, were launched with great ceremony on Friday 13th, watched by the Woodentops and Spot the dog. Tinkerbelle renamed the crafts as the Executive Marine and the Kemerton Oceanic. After leaving Portsmouth harbour it was left hand down a bit passing Horse Sands Fort and around the Isle of Wight for sea trials. All went well until they hit the Needles, now the lighthouse stands alone.

Back at the boat yard for repairs, Tinkerbelle was pressed into crewing on the Executive Marine and Marvin the paranoid android likewise on the Kemerton Oceanic. Stores were stowed, hatches lashed down, charts studied, then it was off out of the harbour turning right at Fort Blockhouse onto the Solent followed by the RNLI lifeboat from Portsmouth Lifeboat Station as a safety precaution.

All went well out onto the Solent, then the English Channel, so the lifeboat took its leave. Captains Martin and Ozzie signalled their thanks. According to their charts the course was southwest to Penzance. With the wind behind them and not a clue what they were doing, the lost boys were happily on their way.

Follow more of the intrepid travellers adventures next month.

# CLUB EVENTS

Neil C. Rogers, Rally Coordinator  
01325 954508 ncr@mypostoffice.co.uk

Please inform the marshal if you plan on bringing a car, tent or trailer to a rally. Additional parking space may be required. Members must have their membership cards ready for inspection at rallies. If you are unable to attend a booked rally then please inform the marshal A.S.A.P. as there may be other members wanting to attend.

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19 - 24 June (5 Nights)

Wigginton Grasshoppers FC Rally

York Wigginton Playing Fields, Mill Lane, Wigginton, York. YO32 2PY.

Rally Marshalls: Alan & Glenis Hurst 07982 416878

assisted by Les & Pat Udale 07762 164776

Site Fee: £10 per night. Rally Fee: Couples £4 Singles £2

Booking Slips & cheques payable to:

Alan Hurst, 6 Chadwick St, Little Lever, Bolton. BL31ND.

Please send SAE or email for confirmation.

This is a Greenfield site with water and chemical disposal point, toilets, showers & changing rooms, with Squash Club evening bar.

The bus stop is at the entrance to the site with regular buses to York and Haxby Village with local shops, supermarkets, takeaways and pubs.

Directions: From the A64, exit onto the A1237 York North to Clifton moor roundabout. Take the B1363 signposted Helmsley and Wigginton. At the first traffic lights turn right into Wigginton. The site is 150 yards on the left signposted Sports Club & Playing Fields.

2 -7 July (5 Nights)

Stafford Boat Club, Maple Wood, Wildwood, Stafford, ST17 4SG.

Rally Marshalls: Angela and Bob Warwick, Linda and Brian Ellis.

Emergency Telephone: 07530 366237

Site fee: £15.00 per night inclusive of electric.

Rally fee: £4.00 per couple. £3.00 singles.

Please send your rally slip and cheques to:

Mr. R. G. Warwick, 14 Furneaux Gardens, Fareham, Hants., PO16 7HD, Including a S.A.E. or (clearly written email address). This is a level grass site within a working boat club on the Staffs & Worcester Canal with direct access to the towpath. There is a steep decent to the camping field. We have use of the club house during bar opening hours from 8.00 pm in the evening. One toilet and shower are available below the club house, but own sanitation is advisable. laundry facilities are also available, Dogs welcome on lead at all times.

# CLUB EVENTS

Bus stop to Stafford 8-10 min walk away, local shops and pub 10-15 min. walk away. Canal fishing is available with proper rod licence. Places nearby National Memorial Arboretum, Trentham Estate and Gardens, Shugborough Hall Stately Home. (National Trust former home of Earl Lichfield).

Rally starts 12 noon Saturday 2 July and finishes 12 noon Thursday 7 July

Max 27 Vans.

7 - 12 July 2022 (5 nights)

**FULLY BOOKED**

Leon's Field, St Ives, Huntingdon, Cambs. PE27 5ER.

Rally Marshalls: Barbara & Al Buckett Mobile No: 07818 006733.

Green field site – No electricity – No toilets.

(Charging facilities available for mobility scooters only).

Site fee: £7.00 per night. Rally fee: £2.00 per unit or £1.50 singles.

Total for 5 nights £37.00 per unit or £36.50 singles.

Rally slips and cheques payable to:

Mr A Buckett 16 St Margarets Drive Walmer Deal Kent CT14 7UJ.

Enclose SAE or email address for confirmation and directions.

Do not enter St Ives town centre. Follow directions.

The site is by the Great Ouse river 200 yards from the picturesque town centre.

There is a market on Friday and Monday and there are plenty of pubs, restaurants, cafes and a variety of shops. Buses run every 10 minutes to Huntingdon and Cambridge.

A trip on the St Ives guided bus to Cambridge is quite an experience and bus passes are accepted. Beautiful riverside walks nearby.

Dogs on leads are welcome.

PLEASE DO NOT arrive before 12pm on Thursday. Rally closes 11am Tuesday.

Rally limited to 40 vans

18 – 24 July 2022 (6 Nights)

Beehive Field, Trowbridge Road Bradford-on-Avon, BA15 1UA

Rally Marshalls: Barbara and Al. Buckett

Mobile: 07818 006733. Telephone: 01304 369149

Assisted by Jackie & John Moss

Green field site – No Electricity – No Toilets

Site Fee: £7.00 per night. Rally Fee £3.00 per unit or £2.00 singles

Total for 6 nights £45.00 per unit or £44.00 singles. Level site with easy access.

Rally slips and cheques payable to:

Mr A Buckett. 16 St Margarets Drive, Walmer, Deal, Kent CT14 7UJ.

# CLUB EVENTS

Enclose SAE or email address for confirmation and directions.

The site is adjacent to the Kennet and Avon Canal towpath ideal for cycling and walking. Hire boats are available at the Marina.

Bus stops outside the site to Trowbridge and Bath. Sainsbury supermarket is about 20 minutes walk away.

An area with many National Trust Sites. Ideal for visiting Cheddar Gorge, Wooky Hole, Bristol and Bath.

PLEASE DO NOT arrive before 12 pm on Monday. Rally closes 11am Tuesday.

Do not approach through Bradford-on-Avon.

6 - 10 August (5 nights) Redcar Rugby Club, Green Lane, Redcar, TS10 3RW

Rally Marshals: Martin Ross, Lesley Prince & Liz Irvin.

Emergency telephone 07901 771040.

Site Fee: £10 p.n. no electric.

Rally Fee: £2.50 couples £2.00 singles.

Please send your rally slip and cheques to:

Martin Ross: Elvina Wold Road, Barrow-upon-Humber, North Lincolnshire, DN19 7BT.

Email: [mross@uwclub.net](mailto:mross@uwclub.net) Including a SAE or clearly written email address for confirmation.

This is a level grass site, 5 mins walk to the beach with good cycle routes. Buses run regularly directly from the bottom of Green Lane to Marske, Saltburn, Staithes, Runswick Bay and many other places on the way to Whitby. Buses also run directly into Redcar or its a 20 to 30 minute stroll along a promenade right next to the beach, where there are numerous shops, with a Morrisons supermarket, pubs, cafes and fish and chip shops, including Pacittos - famous for its lemon top ice creams.

The clubhouse bar is open 5 pm - 11 pm where meals are available certain nights.

Directions: From A19 N or S take A174 signposted Redcar & continue to 6th roundabout. Turn left onto A1085. Continue through Marske and along coast road to Redcar. Look for sign for Redcar Rugby Club & turn left onto Green Lane. At the roundabout take 2nd exit. Entrance to site on right in 200 yds.

There are showers and toilets. Dogs welcome on leads at all times.

Rally starts 12 noon Sat 6 August and finishes 12 noon Thurs 11 August.

Whitby Rally follows on starting Thurs 11 August and is only 40 - 50 minutes drive away across the scenic North York Moors via A171.

Please be aware that Martin will be away until 14th July and will reply to your rally applications as soon as possible, be assured there is plenty of room.

Follow on to Whitby.



# CLUB EVENTS

11 - 16 August 2022 (5 nights)

Eskdale School, Whitby, North Yorks.

Rally Marshals: Liz Irvin, Peter, and Chris Brown.

Emergency Telephone 07711 271568 (Marshal's mobile)

email [lizirvin@outlook.com](mailto:lizirvin@outlook.com)

Site fees: £10.20 per night. Rally Fees: £2.00 couples, £1.50 singles.

Total with rally slip £53.00 couples, £52.50 singles.

We have the use of toilets and showers.

Arrivals after 12 noon on Thursday. We will be using the playground, car park and tennis courts. I am trying to negotiate emergency battery charging. The school balcony will be available this year. Places will be limited.

Booking slips and (cheques payable to Mrs E Irvin,) please send to

Mrs E. Irvin, 43 School Lane, Kirk Ella, HULL, East Yorkshire. HU10 7NP.

Telephone 01482 658345 or mobile 07711 271568.

Please enclose SAE, or clear email address on slip for confirmation.

In June and early July, please use email or mobile contacts, for confirmation.

The Whitby Regatta is still planned for this year. The school is off the Scarborough Road. Buses stop at the school gates to Whitby. Come and explore Whitby's fascinating and historic streets and waterfront. For walkers, the Cleveland Way coastal path is nearby. The Sainsbury's superstore is nearby on Stainsacre Lane.

Directions: From Scarborough on A171, on entering Whitby, after the 30mph sign, turn left into Eskdale Road after the lay-by, and the school entrance is on the left.

From Guisborough or Pickering on A171, enter Whitby and continue to the Scarborough road, cross the new Esk Bridge and up the hill to the top, Stainsacre Lane. Entrance is off Eskdale Road before Sainsbury's store and petrol station.

Postcode YO22 4HS.

18 -22 August Western Motorhome Show Malvern

Rally Marshals: Gary and Pat Wanklin emergency Phone 07885 812512

If you require a booking form go to [www.outandaboutlive.co.uk](http://www.outandaboutlive.co.uk) booking forms or book on line

Please mark the form ASOC and note special club rates arrive Thursday £73 Friday £70.all bookings for Saturday night entertainment must be made and paid to Warner's when returning your application form to them .

Applications closes on Wednesday August 3rd if you wish to rally with the club then you must return your Application form to Warner's by this date .

Then you MUST complete a rally slip ( this also applies to internet bookings ) return it with the rally fee of £2.50 couples £1.75 singles. ➡

# CLUB EVENTS

Cheques payable to Gary Wanklin 18 Beverley Way Malvern Worcs WR141LA  
Telephone 01886832364

Please collect the club rally information pack from the ASOC marshals before parking where directed

The rally will end at 12 noon on Sunday but you may remain on site until 12 noon Monday.

22nd - 26th August 2022 ( 4 Nights) St Cross Symondians Cricket Club  
Winchester SO23 9RT.

Rally Marshals: Rita & John Tubb and Jean & John Gutsell.

Emergency Telephone:07754 761423 ( Marshals Mobile).

Site Fees: £48.00. Rally Fee £5.00.

Please send your rally slip and a cheque for £53.00 payable to Rita Tubb together with your email address or an SAE for confirmation and directions.

To Rita Tubb, 70 Charnwood Crescent, Chandlers Ford, Hampshire SO53 5QL.

Telephone: 023 8026 7294 Mobile 07754 761423.

This is a Greenfield Site with a C.D.P and Water point.

The site is less than a mile from Winchester centre. There is a bus stop outside the site which will take you there, alternatively it is a nice walk along the river.

Buses are available from Winchester Bus Station to Southampton, Romsey, Alresford, Alton, and various other destinations.

Places of interest: at Alresford there is the Watercress Line (Steam train), Various National Trust places in the area, The Royal Green Jackets Museum, Whitchurch Silk Mill, Jane Austen's House, Winchester College tours, Intech Science Centre, Planetarium, Marwell Zoo, Winchester Cathedral or visit Southampton Docks to see the Ships in Port, or Visit the Isle of Wight. Please do not arrive before 12 Noon.

Limit 30 Vans

## THREE SITES SCOTTISH TOUR

31st August – 9th September (9 nights)

Rally Marshals: Moira & Allan Blackstock Telephone 01772 749178.

Telephone during rally: Moira – 07891 704186. Allan – 07969 312703.

Site Fees: £230 Rally Fees: £20.

Rally Slips with fees to:

**FULLY BOOKED**

Mrs M Blackstock, 39 Sumpter Croft, Penwortham, Preston, PR1 9UJ.

All sites are hardstanding with electric hook-up.

# CLUB EVENTS

31 August – 3 September

The Wheel Caravan Park, Rough Castle Farm, Falkirk, FK1 4RX

Within walking distance of the Falkirk Wheel (for the fairly fit). If you would like to take a trip on the wheel and along the canal please indicate on your application. If enough are interested we will try to make a block booking.

There is a bus service from The Wheel into Falkirk with a stop at the Kelpies.

Falkirk is about 30 miles each way to Edinburgh and Glasgow.

3 – 6 September

Five Roads Caravan Park, Alyth, Blairgowrie, PH11 8NB

Easy access to Dundee, Perth, Forfar, Scone Palace and Glamis.

The Blackbird Inn is right next door serving food and drinks.

The Blairgowrie Highland Games will be held on Sunday 4th September.

6 – 9 September

Ballater Caravan Park, Anderson Road, Ballater AB35 5QW.

The caravan park is adjacent to the River Dee.

Ballater, situated in the heart of Royal Deeside is a favourite of walkers and cyclists.

The town is near Balmoral Castle and the railway station is worth a visit.

No longer used by trains but a section is set out as Queen Victoria used it and boasts a popular café.

*Directions to The Wheel will be sent along with your confirmation and the others will be given out during the rally.*

# All about the Queen Quiz

Brian Ellis 2360

1. What date was Queen Elizabeth II born?
2. The Sovereign's birthday was first officially marked in 1748 for whose birthday?
3. In what month and what day of the week is the Queens official birthday celebrated?
4. What is another name for the Queens Birthday parade?
5. The Queens birthday is celebrated by a 41 gun salute in Hyde Park, 21 guns in Windsor Great park and how many guns salute at the Tower of London?
6. The Queen has eight grandchildren. How many are boys?
7. What troops carry out the Trooping Of The Colour?
8. Prior to Covid the Queen had attended the Trooping Of The Colour every year of her reign "except" 1955, why was this?
9. What is Queen Elizabeth II's "full" name?
10. What was Elizabeth's father's title before he became king?
11. In February 1945, Princess Elizabeth joined the Women's Auxiliary Territorial Service and trained as what?
12. The Queen has four children, what are their names in order youngest to the eldest?
13. During the 1981 Trooping Of The Colour, as Queen Elizabeth was riding her horse Burmease, what did Marcus Sarjeant do that earned him 5 years in prison?
14. By what nickname was Princess Elizabeth known to Princess Margaret and her close family?
15. Princess Elizabeth married Prince Phillip, an officer who served in which of the British Armed services?
16. Her husband was a Prince in his own right but of which two countries?
17. In what year did Queen Elizabeth II surpass the reign of her Great Great Grandmother Queen Victoria?
18. Elizabeth the Queen mother died aged 101 just seven weeks after her younger daughter Princess Margaret, but in what year was it?
19. What did the Queen have for the first time on 25th November 1975?

All about the Queen Quiz answers

1. April 21st 1926
2. King George II (His birthday fell in November so a summer date was chosen for the celebrations with a better chance of fine weather)
3. A Saturday in June, in Summer time.
4. Trooping of the Colour
5. 62 gun salute at the Tower Of London
6. Four Boys. Prince William, Prince Harry, Peter Phillips, James Viscount of Windsor.
7. The Household Division Foot Guards and Household Cavalry.
8. A national rail strike caused the cancellation of the event in 1955.
9. Elizabeth Alexandra Mary Windsor
10. The Duke Of York
11. Driver mechanic
12. He fired 6 shots at the Queen, fortunately all blanks.
13. Youngest is Edward then Andrew, Ann, and the eldest is Charles.
14. Lilibet
15. The Royal Navy
16. Prince Phillip of Greece and Denmark
17. In the year 2015
18. The year 2002 (She was born 4th August 1900 and died 30th March 2002)
19. A number one UK hit with Bohemian Rhapsody (and yes it is a Queen question)

A little money problem answers

criptic clue	answer	£	s	d
A stone	14 pounds	14	-	-
Old fashioned bicycle	penny farthing	-	-	1 1/4
Male singer	tenner	10	-	-
Poorly fish cephalopod)	sick squid	6	-	-
One legged ladies underwear	half a knicker (10 bob)	-	10	-
portion of royal headgear	half a crown	-	2	6
Up and down motion	a bob	-	1	-
A leather worker	tanner	-	-	6
Mercury, Uranus and Pluto	three far things (3 Farthings)	-	-	3/4
A type of pig	Guinea (£1 & 1s)	1	1	-
TOTAL: £31 15s 2d				

Running a rally: If you would like to run a rally, assistance and advice is available from the Rally Coordinator or committee member. A "Guide for Rally Marshals" is available from the website. When a date and venue is chosen you will receive "Rules for Rally Marshals" and asked to sign a marshal's declaration which should be returned to the rally coordinator. It is important that all potential rally dates and venues are checked with the rally coordinator, who will confirm the club will be able to comply with regulatory and insurance requirements.

If you would like to assist a rally marshal to see what is involved in running a rally, or interested in the details of possible rally sites we have, contact the Rally Coordinator.

Whitemead Rally 14 - 18 March, 2022

We would like to thank Jackie and John Moss and Janet and Paul Nash for another superb rally in the Forest of Dean. Being the first rally in the year it provides an opportunity to catch up with our friends, many of whom we may not have seen for some time.

Fortunately, the weather was very kind to us (with the exception of Wednesday when it rained all day) we were able to sit outside and enjoy the sunshine.

Our "welcome packs" contained a quiz and there was another quiz which necessitated a visit to each van to collect the relevant info from the tags hanging on each wing mirror.



There was a walk to the cafe in the forest for those who wanted to enjoy the surroundings, but sadly the ground was too muddy for the walk into Coleford, although several brave ralliers took an alternative route to Whitecroft.

We were fortunate that we were able to meet in the clubhouse in the evenings to enjoy more socialising, quizzes and paper aeroplanes (the latter can get very competitive). Several keen ralliers took to the indoor pool, jacuzzi etc.

On the last night there was a hot meal served in the club followed by the results of the quizzes and a chance to say our farewells to our friends.

Thank you again Jackie, John, Janet and Paul for all your hard work and making this such an enjoyable rally. *Jeff and Chris Harrison 7648*