

# Pan Talk

Issue 12 - March 2016

The Occasional On-Line Magazine of The Northern Pan Riders



## The Cover Photo



The photo is taken at Sedbury Layby on the A66 near Scotch Corner ahead of Dale & Sue's ride into the Northern Pennines.

An odd few months. We have had no decent weather forever and the ride out in January was cancelled due to bad weather on the intended route. We tried for a substitute in the Dales, which was forecast better weather, but an unforecast snowfall had dumped itself on the road to Hawes, so that was cancelled too. The trip to Zoe's Place was an experience which left many of us thinking - 'even if there is the slightest chance of snow, the bike is staying in the garage'. We thought we had plenty of time, but the snow fell 6 hours ahead of the forecast.

PanTalk this month is an oddball collection of things that I have been doing while the bike has been in the garage. I make no apologies for the number of pages focusing on Basecamp and the Zumo this time. If you want something different in PanTalk, then please send it in! I've been tearing my hair out with on-line training videos, Garmin Support, and inadequate documentation. The results is a collection of things that it seems not even Garmin Tech Support are aware of. At some point, if you use a Zumo 590 and Basecamp, you will want to know.

Over the years I have collected all sorts of snippets of information about riding a motorbike. Some of it from training, some of it from reading, all of it from practice. I always imagine that everyone knows this stuff. Maybe they do, but then again, there was a time when I didn't, so maybe they don't. So I bit the bullet and wrote down a series of headings. Then I organised them into categories. Then I put them into PanTalk. Pointers to stuff that can be researched or talked about.

PanTalk has a slightly different layout this month. Its always handy to have a couple of printed issues lying around at events such as Bikewise. Although I plan it as if it was a double page electronic magazine (it was originally on issuu.com), this doesn't leave room for the bindings. The new layout allows for this - on the screen there will be slightly wider margins to the left and right alternately.

# Contents

<a href="#">Zoe's Place - February Ride Out</a> .....	<a href="#">4</a>
<a href="#">Flash for Cash</a> .....	<a href="#">7</a>
<a href="#">Northern Pennines Ride Out</a> .....	<a href="#">8</a>
<a href="#">Brecon Beacons and Black Mountain</a> .....	<a href="#">10</a>
<a href="#">Insurance Check</a> .....	<a href="#">11</a>
<a href="#">New On Line Mapping Pages</a> .....	<a href="#">12</a>
<a href="#">Honda Parts Are Not Always the Cheapest</a> .....	<a href="#">17</a>
<a href="#">Video Trailers</a> .....	<a href="#">17</a>
<a href="#">So that is why my Cross Head Screws Get Rounded Off</a> .....	<a href="#">18</a>
<a href="#">New Road Watch Web Page</a> .....	<a href="#">19</a>
<a href="#">BaseCamp Database</a> .....	<a href="#">20</a>
<a href="#">The Zumo 590</a> .....	<a href="#">21</a>
<a href="#">Step By Step Basecamp Videos</a> .....	<a href="#">27</a>
<a href="#">Riding a Motorcycle</a> .....	<a href="#">28</a>
<a href="#">Club Riding</a> .....	<a href="#">30</a>
<a href="#">Article Index</a> .....	<a href="#">31</a>

Please - I am still wanting articles, snippets, space fillers, photos, routes, trip reports, etc etc for future editions of Pan Talk. Any offerings or suggestions please to [pantalk@nprclub.co.uk](mailto:pantalk@nprclub.co.uk)

Many thanks

John

Click on the title or the page number to go directly to a particular page.

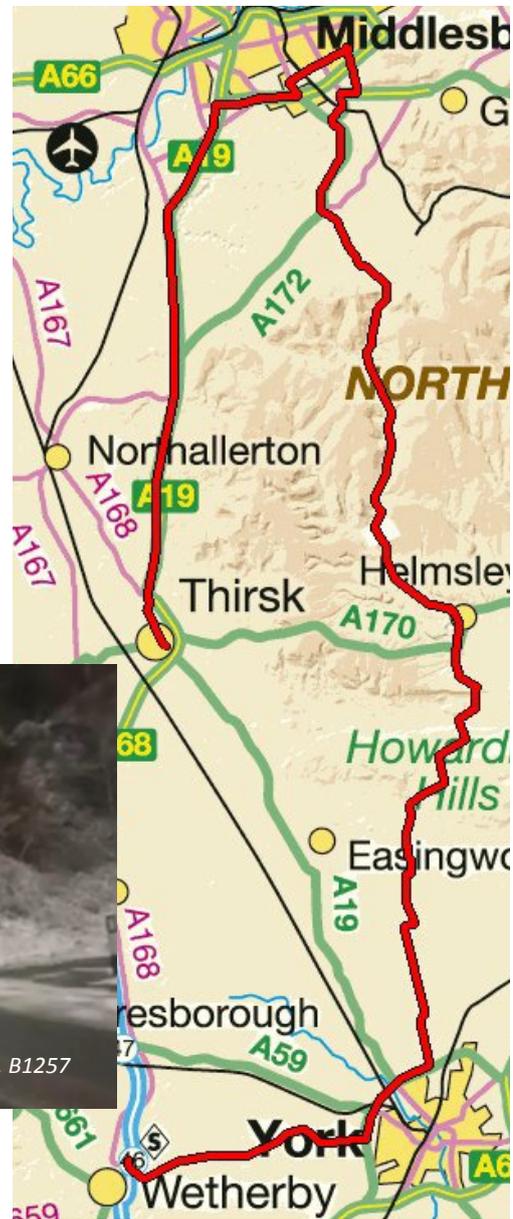
## Zoe's Place - February Ride Out

Alan & Netty's Sleigh Ride - 14 Feb 2016

The 9 o'clock start was unusual for the club, but it was light enough when to load up the bike after we had got up, and the roads were clear and ice free when we set off at 7:30 - surprising, as normally, around dawn, the morning dew often hits the cold roads and they are treacherous for half an hour.

We were heading off to Middlesbrough in order to give a cheque from the club to the staff at Zoe's Place - a charitable organisation which offers respite and palliative terminal care to babies and support to their parents.

The ride over to Wetherby was cold, but pleasant with the heated gear plugged in and switched on. The forecast was for a cold crisp day, but there were no signs of clouds until much after in the afternoon, in the Northern Pennines sometime around tea time.



That was OK, we planned to be up at Zoes place by midday, and to clear off as soon as we had presented the cheque to the staff at Zoe's Place and head back south smartly down the A19 to have a late lunch at Thirsk. 17 members turned out on 9 bikes - Alan, Jeanette, Richard, Anne, Alan, Louise, John, Lynne, Graeme, Sally, Alex, Ann, Clive, Ursula, Nigel, Jessica and Dale.

The run to the York by-pass and on to Helmsley was fine. The roads were filthy with accumulated grit, muck and salt, made it difficult for cameras, lights and visors to see through the accumulated grime. The dips of the



Yorkshire Wolds and the shadows of the hedges from the low sun hid long stretches of ice. We stopped at Helmsley for a loo break and to clean off lights, visors and cameras.

The run north to Stokesley is a motorcycle classic and is normally teeming with bikers. Not today - we had it to ourselves. Much of it was wet and clear, with the occasional presence of visible wheel tracks warning us of icy patches. The ascent and descent of Newgate Bank, 5 miles north of Helmsley was particularly icy, but was easily managed with care and avoiding the repeated temptations to use the brakes. I'm sure

that the ABS would have coped, but I wasn't going to be the one to find out.

At 11:00 and just 15 minutes from Middlesborough, we hit the first snow fall. It was quite thick and visors needed frequent finger wipes to remain clear, but so far, it wasn't settling and we continued to Zoes place with the intention of handing over the cheque and heading back south as quickly as possible. If this was the snow that had been forecast it was about 6 hours early.

We always get a grand welcome at Zoe's Place and have in the past had a tour of the facilities that they have for supporting the children and their parents. It seems that they have everything covered, and the love and care that they provide is second to none. Today though, we were anxious to be as brief as possible. We had the customary cheque signing and presentation photos and popped through to see the children and the staff and took some more group photos.



40 minutes later we were back on the road and heading for the dual carriageway of the A174. The snow had built up alarmingly and the couple of roundabouts near Zoes place were already covered in a thick white slush, the sort of stuff on which you really don't want to have to put your foot down to support a heavy motorcycle.

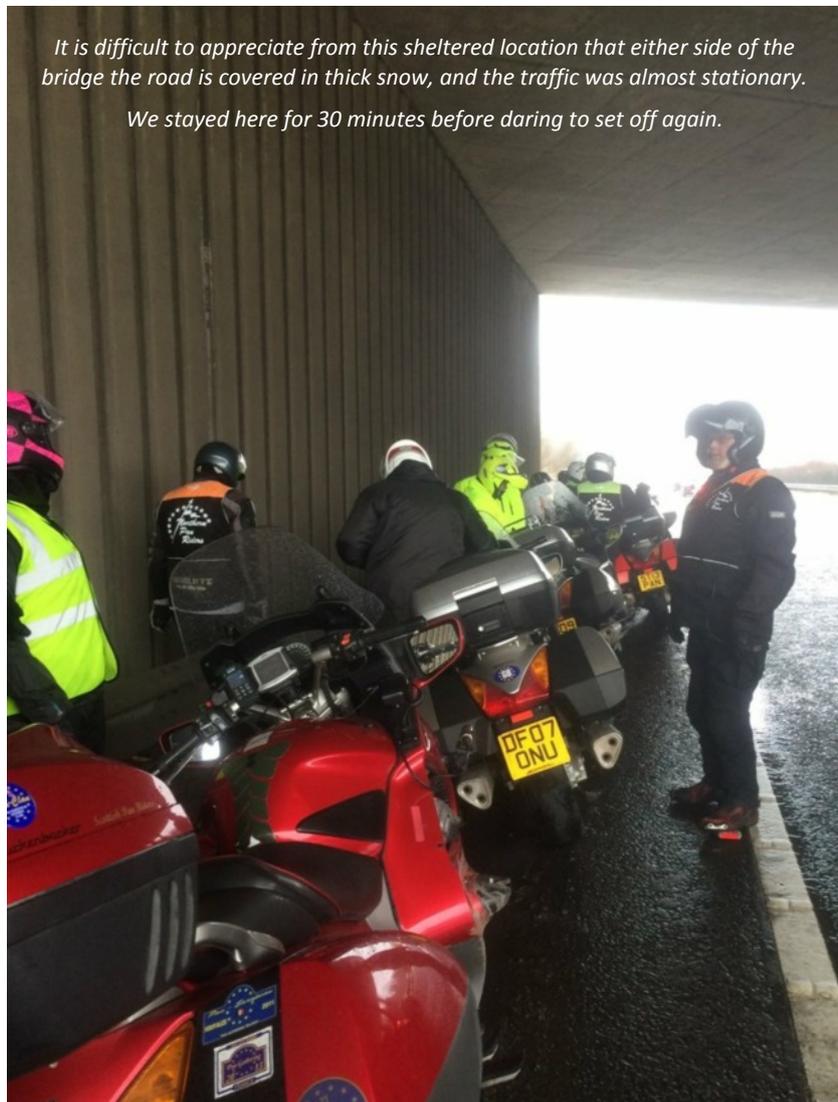
Never mind, we reasoned that traffic will have cleared much of the snow from the dual carriageways of the A174 and A19. Not so. As we joined, traffic was crawling along and the road was completely covered. The compacted wheel tracks offered better control than the softer snow between the tracks. Pick one, stay upright and make no sudden changes of direction or speed. This became more and more difficult as the traffic was repeatedly slowing to a standstill. A police car in front stopped traffic from joining the road down a slipway. It seemed that this sudden snow dump had caught everyone out.

## Club Ride Out

Alan pulled over under a road bridge where we waited for 30 minutes, watching the cars hurtle by and then brake hard as they spotted the tailback 100 yards in front, snaking all over the place.

Frightening to see the lack of awareness of car drivers.

Eventually the traffic began moving, the snow filled wheel tracks became more compacted and we set off again, very tentatively. A few minutes later it was all gone. The roads were largely clear except for heavy surface water and we had 20 miles of event free riding before hitting the next snowfall, just after the exit to Northallerton. This was not quite as bad as before - either that or we had become used to riding on it by now - and we covered 8 miles at an average speed of 25mph. Then suddenly at Thirsk, it cleared up again. We didn't stop for a break as we knew the snow was following us from the north. Shortly after, blue sky appeared in the west and as the rest of the group headed down the A1, we turned off home and had an hour in brilliant sunshine on bone dry roads.



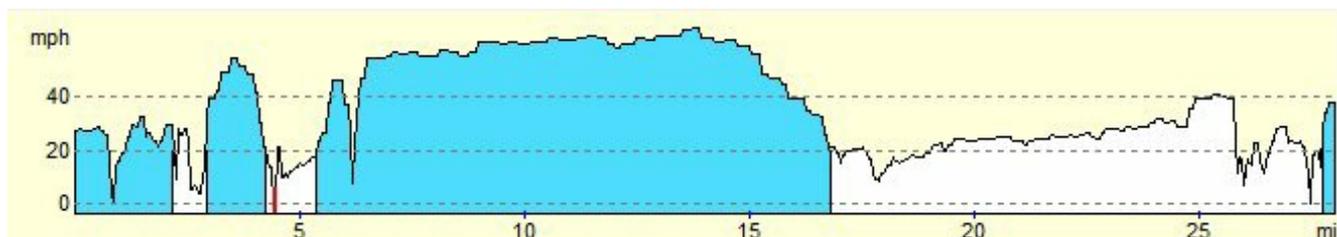
*It is difficult to appreciate from this sheltered location that either side of the bridge the road is covered in thick snow, and the traffic was almost stationary.*

*We stayed here for 30 minutes before daring to set off again.*

I know the roads from Harrogate very well, but never have they had as much grip as they seemed to have this afternoon !

Thanks to Alan & Jeanette for leading in such difficult circumstances, and particularly to Richard and Anne who were in the firing line from all of those drivers coming from behind who were travelling far too fast for the conditions.

*Below is a speed profile of the run from Zoe's Place to Thirsk, taken from my satnav logs. The white sections were where the snow was at its worst, reducing us to little more than 20mph*



John & Alex

## Flash for Cash

### Apparently a Growing Scam

And nothing to do with Richard armed with a charity box and a leopard skin thong.

Its not new, but its the first time I had heard of it. I have been 'brake tested' on an fast open road a few times, but I always keep my distance anyway, and it didn't even register as a close call. Odd behaviour though to slam the brakes on for no obvious reason, other than to try to defraud the insurance company by making a false claim. Capturing the scenery is not the only reason I have my bullet camera running on every ride.

This is subtly different. You are waiting at a T junction, intending to turn right, when the car coming from your right flashes their headlamps. You might take this as an indication that you can pull out and turn across the front of the car. The problem is that they do not slow down and plough into the side of you. With no witnesses, and my bullet camera would be useless in such a situation, you pulled out without looking. Your fault. They put in a hefty claim, you use your no claims bonus at best or get slapped with a due care and attention if any attending police don't believe you.

Even if they do - the flashing of headlights is only recognised in the highway code as an indication to another driver of your presence. Nothing else.

#### Rule 110

Flashing headlights. Only flash your headlights to let other road users know that you are there. Do not flash your headlights to convey any other message or intimidate other road users.

#### Rule 111

Never assume that flashing headlights is a signal inviting you to proceed. Use your own judgement and proceed carefully.

As motorcyclists, we are probably all aware that a headlight flash can also mean that the the oncoming motorcycle has just hit a bump and we are probably tuned in to not believing anything to do with headlights.

But I got to thinking - do I include this possibility in my defensive riding ? I mean, most of us can spot a careless or absent minded driver a long way off - probably even before they press the next button on their smartphone. It is something to do with the body language of the car; the fact that they are busy sorting out their music; the just-set-off' water vapour from the exhaust; checking their hair in the mirror; their road position doesn't look quite right - whatever..... Sometimes of course we don't know why, we just sense that they are about to do something stupid. I make no comment about white van drivers here. Damn, I just did.

I know both cars that attempted to get me to run into the back of them accelerated quite hard from a roundabout and then slowed and stayed at a steady speed to allow me to catch up again. That seemed odd and I hung back. He tried a couple of time to entice me closer, accelerating away and then lifting off a little.

But how do we spot someone who is deliberately out to get us ? There must be clues, and suggestions for future issues of PanTalk would be most welcome. But in order for the scam to work in their favour, they must be the ones with right of way. They have to give you the opportunity to go in front of them or across them - which may be with a headlight flash or a hand gesture - so that you make the move and they can say that they couldn't avoid you. They have to get their timing right, so there may be a little hesitation in their approach to a likely crash site before the flash is given, or there may be a headlight flash with no real attempt to slow down. They may stop on the main road to let you turn across a junction, in which case they would need to accelerate pretty hard in order to hit you - so they may be too close for comfort as you turn across.

I don't know. I am just thinking as I type, but I know that I will be looking out for places where it could happen.

I know one thing. I suspect I do this already anyway, but I wont be responding to any 'I give you the right of way' indications unless a) the vehicle has stopped moving to let me out, and b) there is plenty of room for me to get across before his foot accidentally slips onto the accelerator.

Its not in the highway code as a recognised gesture, but instantly recognised for a motorcyclist that is not going to go anywhere is the rider sitting back from the handlebars with arms folded.

John - with thanks to Dick for the [link to the reference](#).

## Northern Pennines Ride Out

Dale & Sue - Sunday 13 March 2016

A cold, foggy morning greeted our arrival at Sedbury Layby, but the forecast had promised to be the best day of the year so far and although it was cold, the roads were damp and the thick mist prevented us from seeing the surrounding countryside, everyone was pretty optimistic.

So Dale & Sue, John & Lynne; Alex; Alan; John & Lynne; Alan & Netty; Andy & Tracy; Dave; Richard & Anne set off in convoy into the mist towards Middleton in Teesdale. Dale had planned a brief stop, but over there the sun was beginning to show through, the day was warming up and the prospect of sitting with a coffee now and continuing on drying roads in half an hour's time had a certain appeal.

The B6277 to Alston is a delight, and we follow it past the canoeists braving the rapids at Low Force and catch the briefest of glimpses of the waterfall at high force through woodland on the left. After the zig zag chicane at Langdon Beck we turn left to head over the moors and through St John's Chapel to pick up the A689 past the mining museum, (complete with a less than authentic miner's playground) and on through NentHead towards Alston.

We pull up in a parking place on the right near the petrol station, and decide to go into Alston House, whose signs claim ownership. This had been a regular stopping place for us, but it had been a while and the place has been really improved. Rolling in, unannounced, 14 of us were able to find tables and order food with no problem at all, and we spent a good couple of hours having a leisurely lunch.

The run over Hartside was pretty good; Hartside Cafe was heaving with motorcycles, but the right hand curve at the top demands more attention and we head down into Langwathby and then on back roads towards Kirkby Stephen.

A satnav glitch led us down a country road heading west towards the distinctive saddleback profile of Blencathra in the distance and past a breakers yard for caravans. We slowed and observed what was going on there and it became apparent that this had been a caravan park which had been obliterated by floodwater. A machine control section followed and we headed south-east on narrow country lanes with 'Do Not Follow SatNav' signs. The reasons became obvious as farm buildings were close to the roads and some corners were pretty tight. Large vans and vehicles with trailers would have no way of escaping.

The road alongside the Settle Carlisle Railway leads us past the ruins of Pendragon Castle, past the Ski-Jump profile of Boar Fell and over Aisgill Moor, followed by the equally delightful run on the A684 to Hawes. The PenyGarth cafe has changed hands and has been spruced up in the last year, although it still has only one loo.



*Two shots at Sedbury Layby, awaiting the off.*



*A686 from Alston. A snow covered Cross Fell on the left*



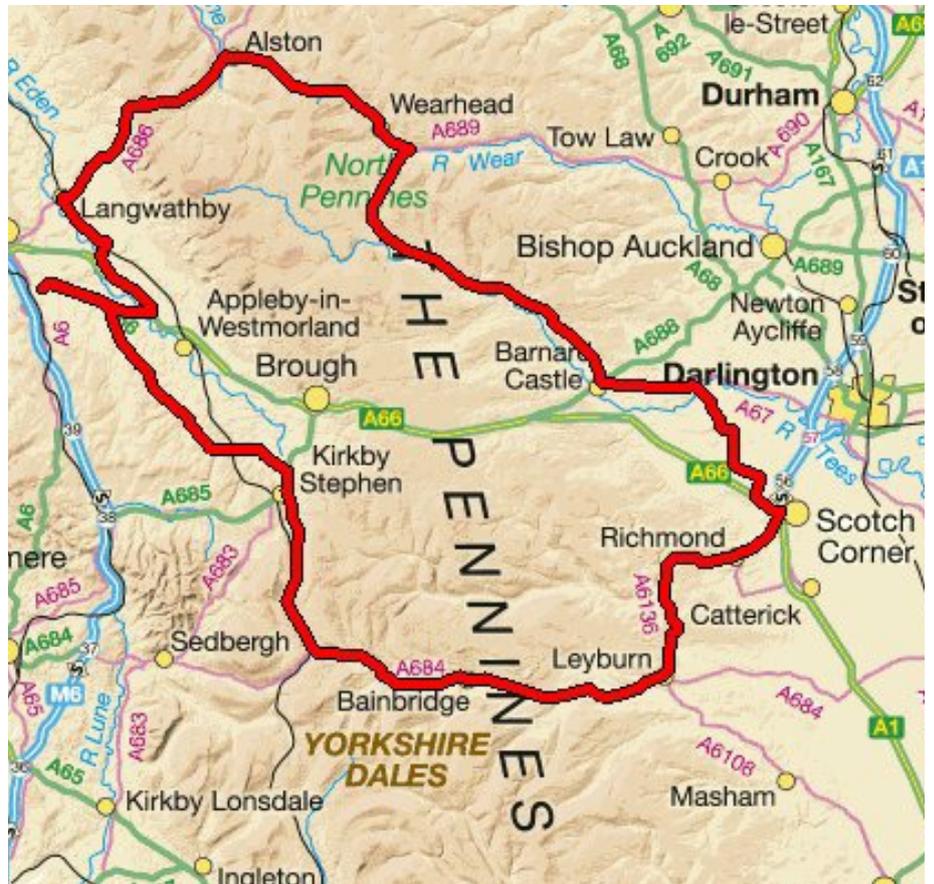
Club Ride Out



The bend at Hartside Cafe

We say our goodbyes at Hawes with different people going in different directions. Others members will have headed back towards Scotch Corner from Hawes, but we head off towards Ribbleshead and Settle, risking the A65 to Skipton. In fact it is blocked at Coniston Cold, and we take a circuitous route along back roads to pop out beyond Gargrave on car-free roads back home.

An excellent ride Dale, nicely paced and adapted to compensate for the temperature, the road conditions and the timings. It was nice to be back out on the bike again.



John



Approaching the Hairpin on Hartside Height

# Brecon Beacons and Black Mountain

- A One Day Tour in South Wales - 141 miles.

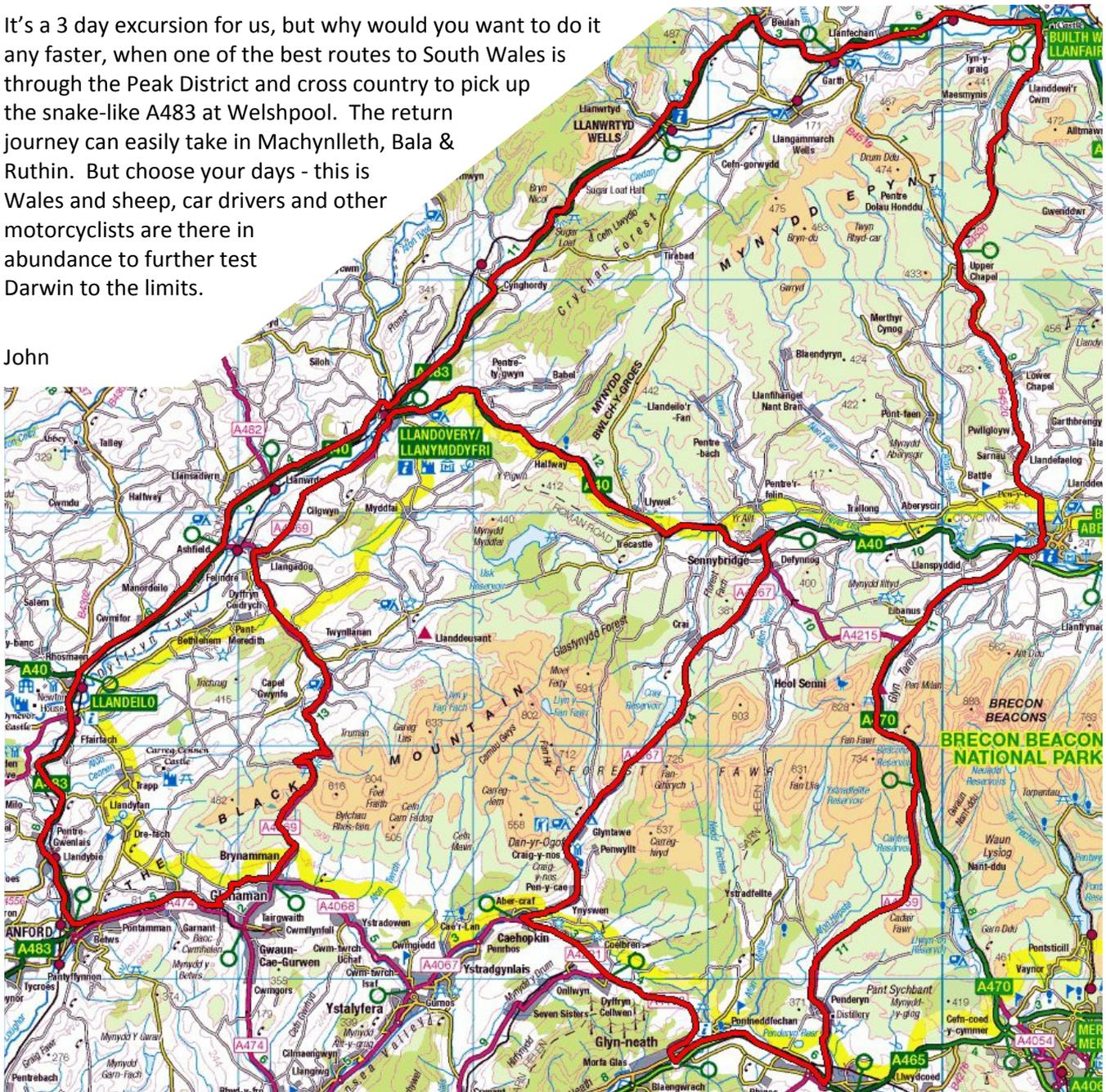
Not to be confused with the Black Mountains, 28 miles to the East, this route is one of my 'One Day Circuits' and an attempt to string together some classic Welsh roads. The links between these sections ain't half bad either.

Starting at Builth Wells and taking an anticlockwise direction the route heads southwest on the A483 - a straight forward and fast run to Llandovery, picking up the A40 and then the A483 from Llandeilo to Ammanford. The purpose is to get to the south end of the A4069 at Brynamman, the start of Black Mountain Pass - a superb mountain road with an inviting mix of open bends, flowing twisties and wide hairpins. Popular with car and bike clubs since Top Gear started using it for filming and one of only a handful of really excellent mountain roads which we have in the UK.

Back to Llandovery on the higher section of the A40 to pick up the A4067 South West from Sennybridge. This is an elevated run climbing to almost 1500 ft on roads with superb views, a good surface, sweeping bends and very little traffic. From Caehopkin, a left turn toward Glyn-neath and Hirwaun on the only road which will get us to the southern end of the A4059 - seemingly referred to locally as Dead Sheep Mountain - a visual demonstration of Darwin's theory of natural selection. It is a superb, sinuous, scenic, 11 mile stretch climbing all the way to the junction with the main road. The A470 heads north the towards the town of Brecon maintaining a steady descent by clinging to the curves of Fan Fawr, the mountain on the west side of the valley below us on the right.

It's a 3 day excursion for us, but why would you want to do it any faster, when one of the best routes to South Wales is through the Peak District and cross country to pick up the snake-like A483 at Welshpool. The return journey can easily take in Machynlleth, Bala & Ruthin. But choose your days - this is Wales and sheep, car drivers and other motorcyclists are there in abundance to further test Darwin to the limits.

John



## Insurance Check

### Have you checked yours recently ?

We all know that when it comes to bike insurance, it is important to inform your insurers of any changes which may affect the policy. Even the tiniest of thing could invalidate your insurance if the bike is not as it is declared to be. An example of this might be the addition of reflective panels - as this is regarded as a cosmetic change for which an insurer might require notification. Don't tell them, they may not pay up in the event of a loss.

But it seems from recent experience that this communication is not always a two way process. For example - I thought that I was insured to ride another person's bike (3<sup>rd</sup> party only). Not on last year's policy, I wasn't. When that change happened, I do not know, but I found a note tucked away somewhere in one of the documents that said that unless the policy specifically states that you are covered for riding another person's bike, then you do not have that cover. There was no change to the cover note - it never stated anything anyway, even though I had been covered previously. A sneaky change and can only have been done to catch out the unwary. I mentioned it when I renewed a month ago. Oh, we have removed that now - you are covered again.

And the previous year, I was offered a cheaper insurance which was 'the same cover as my present policy'. I asked for the written details before agreeing. Indeed, they were extremely similar, both offered by the same under-writer, and both seemed to be the same - same wording, same layout. A quick read through and I might have missed it - but I was looking specifically for something that had changed.

And I found it. Just one tiny difference: I had declared that my bike is stored at my home address in a locked, brick garage. In my existing policy, if my bike is taken when it isn't in the garage, but is near to my home, I get to pay double the excess in the event of a claim. I'm happy with that.

The cheaper look-alike policy stated that if the bike was taken from outside my home, then no payment would be made. I raised this with the insurance broker. Yes sir. Most policies are like that now. Do you not want that ?

"No I do not." I clarified my point of view. "So I arrive at the house, go inside the house to unlock the garage door to put my bike away. When I come out the bike has been stolen. I cannot make a claim ?"

"That is correct sir."

He knew about the change, but he wasn't going to tell me.

There seem to be more ways than there used to be that insurance companies can get out of paying up when the unthinkable happens. Things that you would normally take for granted, but which are now excluded, and it's up to you to go hunting through the policy documents for them.

And when was the last time you checked your tyre pressure, or the manufacturers maximum recommended loading ? Are these included in the 'get-out' clauses in your policy ? I saw both of these when I was hunting around. The tyre pressure is worrying. Yes, having the correct pressure is a safety issue, but my present car has an odd sticker on the passenger side door. Rear tyre pressure, 1-3 people, 26 psi. 4-5 people with luggage - 46 psi.

So unless I drop my passengers off at a garage forecourt, for part of my journey the insurance company would not pay up in the event of an accident. No thanks, I don't want that either.

John

# New On Line Mapping Pages

...now that Google changes have prevented the old method from working

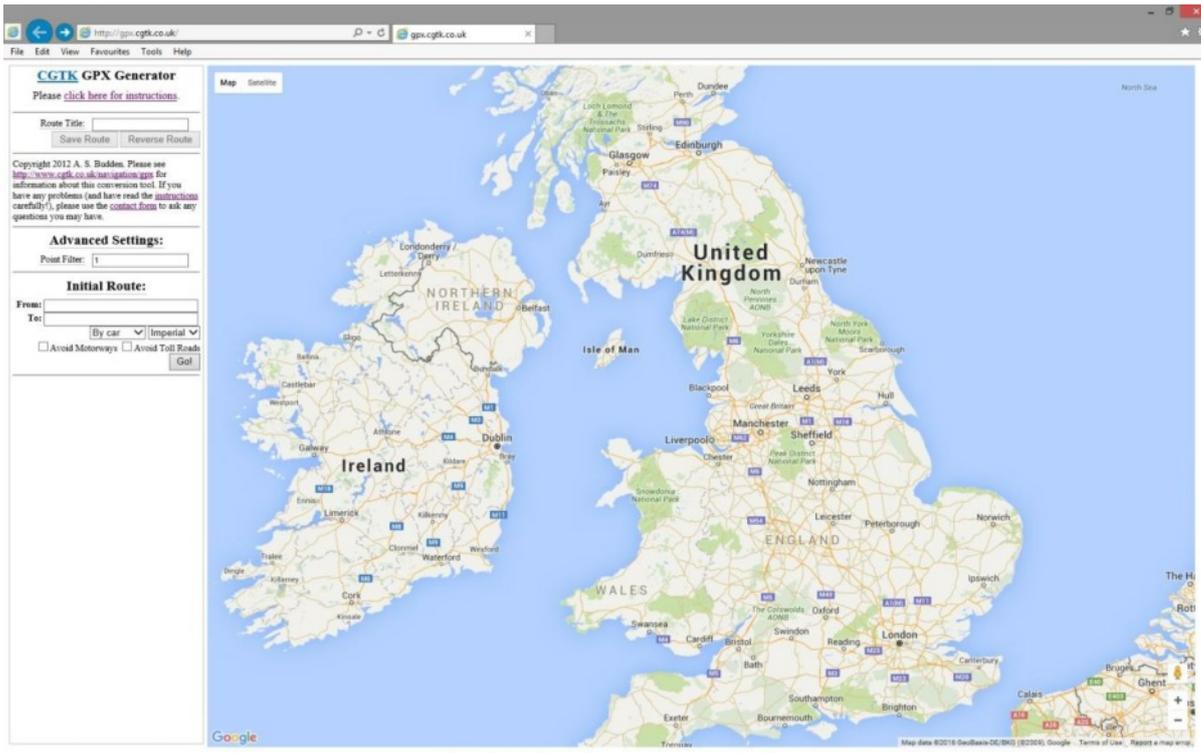
A while ago in the February 2014 issue of Pan Talk, I did an article on mapping routes for the Garmin, using Google maps. Unfortunately, Google changes have ruined that method for me.

But, rather than sitting back and saying sod it! I got to looking about for another mapping tool, the first one that I came across was developed by A.S.Budden which after emailing him and asking if I could use his page on our site, he agreed, See Below.

[Link to our site click here](#)

Or direct Click below

<http://gpx.cgtk.co.uk/>



## How Do You Use It?

It works in a similar way to the main Google Maps page, so hopefully you will find this easy to use. You can plan a route (either using the "Initial Route" box on the left or by right-clicking on the map and using the context menu) and drag the path around to create the route that you want. Due to a limitation of the Google Maps free API, the route is limited to 10 waypoints. Once you've planned your route, click "Save Route" and the route will be uploaded to Mr Budden's server. It will be given a permanent URL and converted into two GPX files: one for Garmin GPSs and one for other GPSs (the latter one only contains the waypoints rather than including the whole path from Google's direction service). Links should then appear underneath the "Save Route" button and you can download the GPX files.

Before saving and after saving see pictures.

**CGTK GPX Generator**  
 Please [click here for instructions](#).

Route Title:

Copyright 2012 A. S. Budden. Please see <http://www.cgtk.co.uk/navigation/gpx> for information about this conversion tool. If you have any problems (and have read the [instructions](#) carefully!), please use the [contact form](#) to ask any questions you may have.

**Advanced Settings:**  
 Point Filter:

**Initial Route:**  
 From:   
 To:   
   
 Avoid Motorways  Avoid Toll Roads

**CGTK GPX Generator**  
 Please [click here for instructions](#).

Route Title:

Route saved: <http://gpx.cgtk.co.uk/jqwfU>  
[Download Garmin GPX File](#)  
[Download Generic GPX File](#)

Copyright 2012 A. S. Budden. Please see <http://www.cgtk.co.uk/navigation/gpx> for information about this conversion tool. If you have any problems (and have read the [instructions](#) carefully!), please use the [contact form](#) to ask any questions you may have.

**Advanced Settings:**  
 Point Filter:

**Known Issues**

Limited to 10 waypoints (this is a limit imposed by Google).

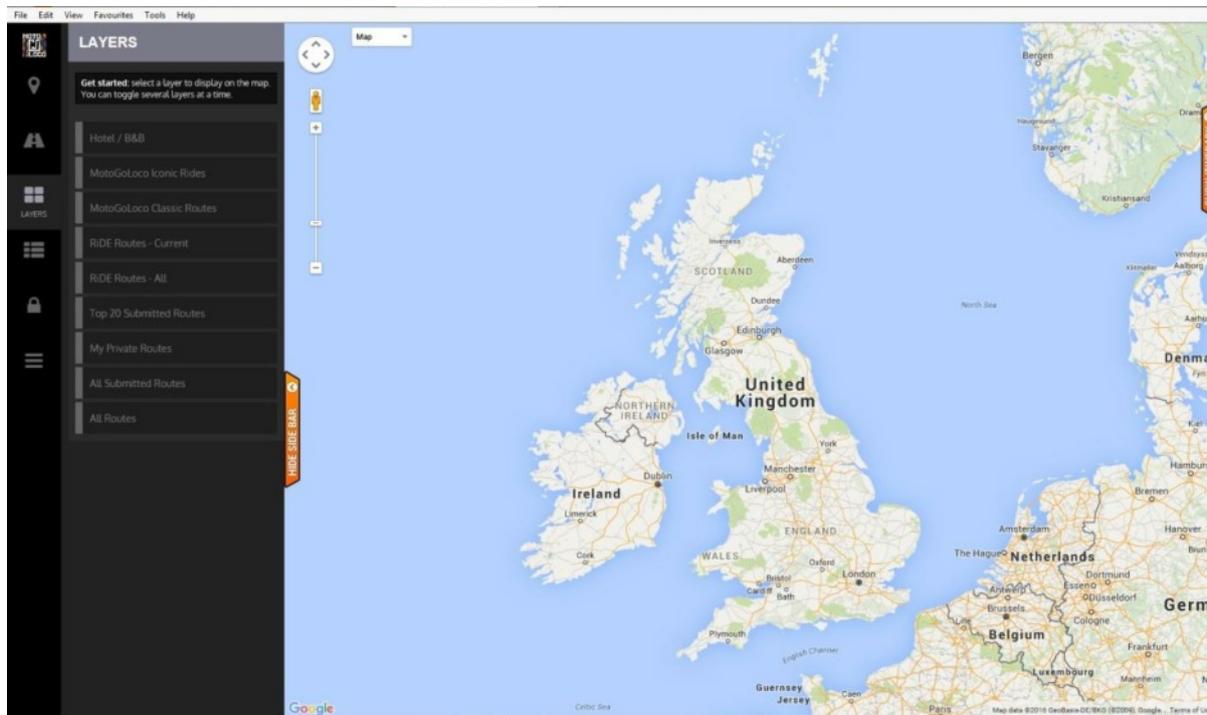
Opera Browser gives incorrect filename when downloading GPX file (.htm instead of .gpx).

It is not as polished as Google Maps (hopefully this will improve as Mr Budden learns more Javascript).

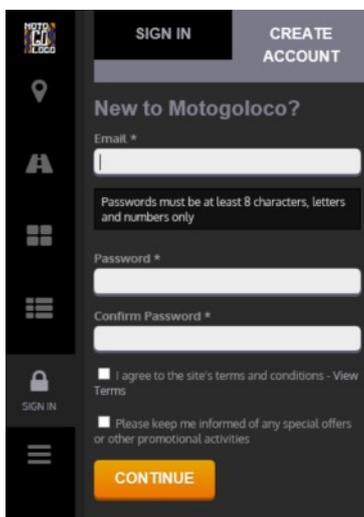
The next one that I came across was a bikers mapping tool, and quite a bit different, there are a lot of saved routes by other people and when you export your map and save it as a gpx file, it only gives you a direct line between the waypoints, but I managed to find a way around that by saving it as a kml file and then converting it in GPS visualiser, does that all sound like gobbledegook? Let me try to explain..

First of all lets open Moto Go Loco create a Map <https://www.motogoloco.com/map/>

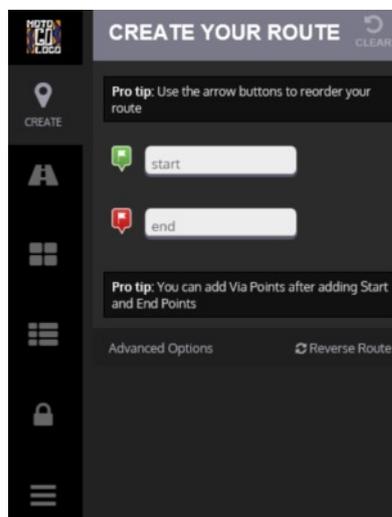
If there are orange and blue markers all over, click on layers in the menu on the left hand side of the page and then click on "Hotel/B&B" that should deselect and remove the markers.



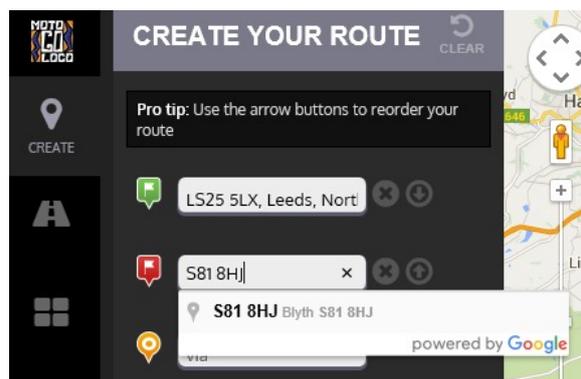
First of all Create an account

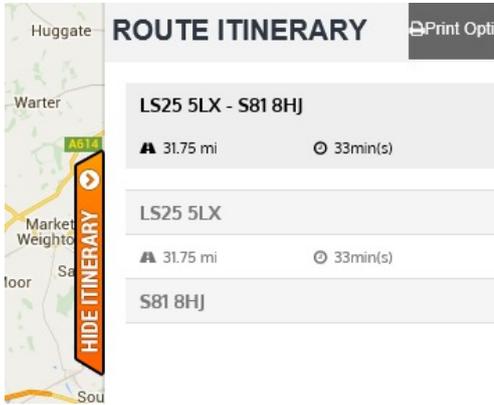


Then click on create



Lets say were are setting off from Squires, so in the start box type "LS25 5LX" which is the post code for Squires, and we want a route to Jaynes café, Bawtry, type "S818HJ", when you type in the post code an address will appear immediately below, click on it to give it it's full address or it will not recognise it , see pic on the right



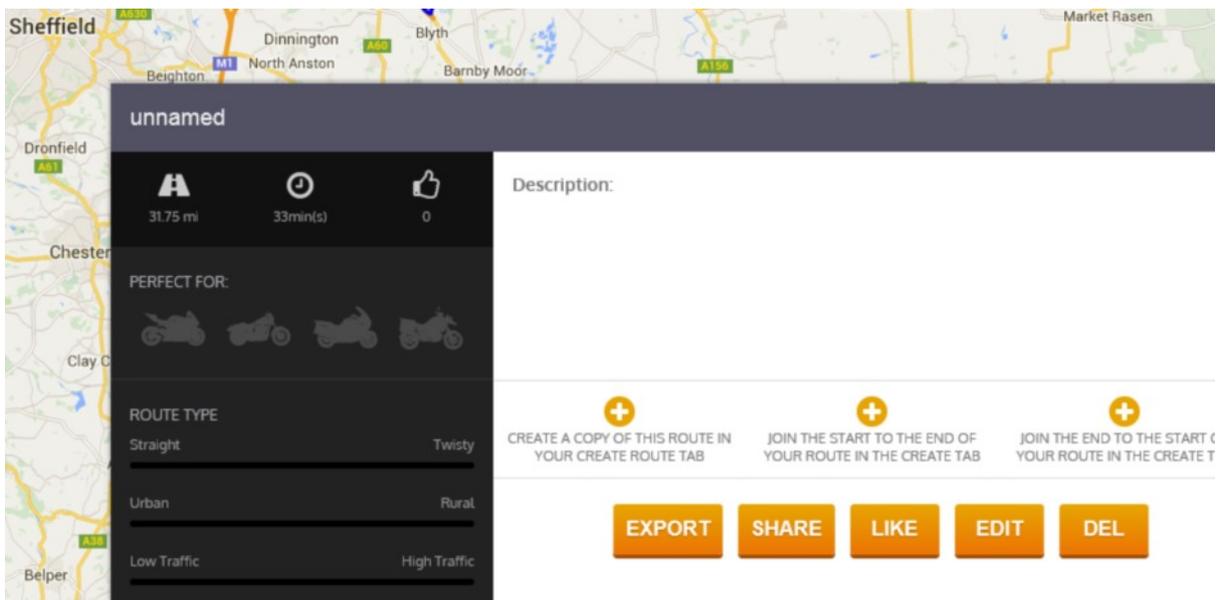
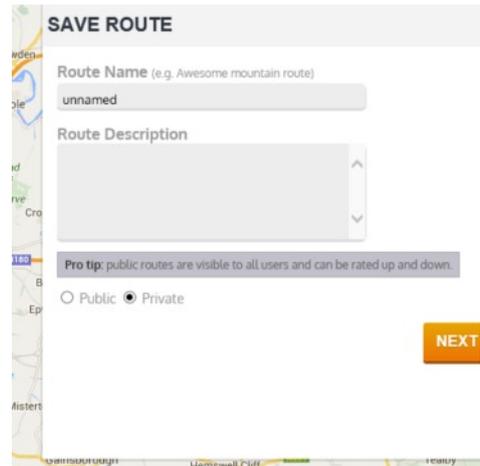


On the right of the display you will see the Route Itinerary, giving you the mileage and approximate time of travel.

On the left in bright orange colour click on “save” button, at this moment in time we are not bothered about the “via marker” immediately above it, and you will also see below it the “advanced options”. This is for setting any avoidances, but we are just staying with a simple route.

So click on **Save**, and on the right side of the screen you will see the display shown on the right:

Type your name for the route where it says “unnamed”, when you have done that Click NEXT then click NEXT again on the next screen, then “SAVE”, you should now see the picture below, I have left my map as unnamed, as I will be deleting it.



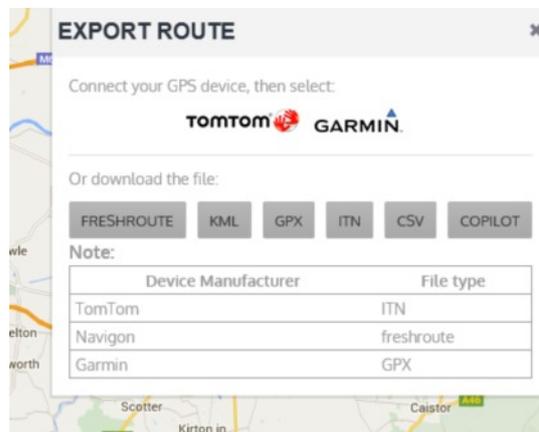
Click on “EXPORT” and you should see

If you just want marker to marker in a straight line click on “GPX”, but if you want a detailed map click on “KML” and save it to a safe place where you can find it again.

Now open the web page GPS Visualiser

<http://www.gpsvisualizer.com/>

Click on “Covert to GPX”



To set more options, use the detailed input pages:

- [Google Maps](#)
- [Convert to GPX](#)
- [Google Earth KML](#)
- [Convert to plain text](#)
- [JPEG/PNG/SVG maps](#)
- [Sandbox \(drawing\)](#)
- [Plot data points](#)
- [Geocoding](#)
- [Profiles \(elevation, etc.\)](#)
- [KML overlays](#)

Click on browse and select your KML File, when you have done that click on the convert button, this will take you to another page then do what is described

**Your data has been converted to GPX.**

Right-click on the [following link](#) to download the file to your hard drive; you may want to give it a more sensible name.

[Click to download 20160207054234-48200-data.gpx](#)

Don't forget - when you right click on the link, use the option to “Save target as” and then select the folder that you wish to put it in.

You should now have your gpx route in the folder where you want it.

At this point you can either connect your garmin and load it,

Or you can check your route on GPS Visualiser - <http://www.gpsvisualizer.com/>

Click on browse, select your file, then Map it.



If anyone would like to know more please get in touch.

Richard

## Honda Parts Are Not Always the Cheapest

... No - Really !

Its time to play spot the component. On the right are clips similar to the ones used by Honda for holding different parts of the fairing together. There are 18 of them altogether and to replace all with original Honda components would cost £84.35 incl P&P.

I had a few in stock from my old ST1300, but had run out. The problem is that they seem to break off one of the expanding segments.

Now I know that there are 3 different types. I also know that when the bike was first put together or when it was first serviced, the clips were not put back into the correct holes. I know this because I was determined to make a note as I took them apart for future reference. I discovered that both sides of the bike were assembled differently !

Anyway, I try to select the clips that fit best. Some of them have longer heads, which make them easier to get out in the recessed holes, but I am sure that I never put them back in the same place each time.

The clips in the photo were advertised as being the ones to replace part number 90657-SBO-003 - the ones that clip the lower cowl together under the sump. They are also used in some of the holes on the inner fairing either side of the radiator and the front wheel. They seem to physically fit in all of these holes, but are less easy to remove than the ones with the longer head.

Feeling flush, I bought 50 of them, and that little lot set me back just under £9.00 including P&P. Only time will tell whether or not they last as long as the OEM ones or indeed whether they work as intended.



John

## Video Trailers

**New to this edition of PanTalk**

For this edition, and probably only because it was winter and the bike has remained in the garage for much of the time, I spent a little time preparing some videos. One is aimed specifically for the club and the other is a whole series of videos that I created as I was trying help a friend in Reading get to grips with a Zumo 590.

They are mentioned in other articles within the magazine, but there was an empty space here, and I thought that a trailer wouldn't go amiss !

**A series of 11 short videos on creating routes in Basecamp for transfer to a Zumo 590.**

Details are on [Page 21](#). Videos are posted as a YouTube Playlist [here](#).

### Group Riding Video

A short 8 minute video showing the dynamics of NPR group riding as the 8 riders work their way past a slower car on twisty Scottish roads. The video shows synchronised action from behind the leader on on camera and from the back marker on another camera.

Full explanation is on [Page 24](#)

Video on YouTube is [here](#).



## So that is why my Cross Head Screws Get Rounded Off

### A revelation.

Well, I didn't know. I had put it down to bad technique, old screwdrivers, bad luck and even to screws made of softer metal. I certainly didn't put it down to my ignorance.

Yet that is what it was. Apparently, Honda use JIS cross head screws on their motorcycles. JIS stands for Japanese Industrial Standard, and their cross head screw slots and drivers are designed to minimise the tendency that other drivers have to lever themselves out of the slot.

I bought a full set of Pt 1, Pt 2 and Pt 3 drivers, and another Pt 2 driver which has a built-in impact mechanism to help remove the really awkward screws. They weren't cheap, but the feel is entirely different. With a normal Philips driver I feel that I need to push down on the driver quite forcefully in order to keep it in the slot. These Vessel JIS drivers just grip the screw and turn it. It really is a revelation - they're magic !

They have these readily available in the USA, but I had difficulty locating them in the UK.

RuggedRoads at [www.ruggedroads.co.uk](http://www.ruggedroads.co.uk) came up with the goods, and provided an excellent speedy service. [Here's a link](#) to the web page with the details of the drivers concerned.



*Information and Images used with kind permission of Rugged Roads.*

I saw an image when I was looking for these JIS drivers. It was a picture of someone holding a screw horizontally with the driver inserted into the crosshead. I didn't believe it. There had to be a trick. So I went and tried it for myself.



No trick. The screw is a Honda cross head screw with a small shoulder. The sort that you will find two of at the front of the fairing pocket, or fastening the fairing behind the mirror housing. The screwdriver is a Pt2 JIS Vessel driver, like the middle of the three shown above, except this one has an impact driver mechanism built into the handle. It has the same driver point as the normal one, but it has a much heavier handle. Bash the end with a hammer, it turns the screw a fraction.

Put the driver into the cross head, hold the screw and support it horizontally. The threads nearly ripped the skin off my thumb as I did this, but the driver stays where it is - horizontal. It didn't even budge in the cross head.

I tried the same trick with a Philips and with a Pozidriv driver in the same screw. They fell out of the head when they were vertical !

# New Road Watch Web Page

## Links to Councils' Traffic and Weather Pages

A number of councils have started to maintain traffic and weather cameras at key points on their road networks. Links are available from their websites.

I found 3 sites that might be relevant to Northern Pan Rider members and with Richard's permission, I have created a page with links to these sites.

The Ordnance Survey map on the page is just a picture which shows the locations of the cameras - currently these are in Durham, Cumbria and North Yorkshire. From the look of the sites, it seems as though other cameras may be going on line soon.

Typically the images are updated every 10 minutes or so and give a pretty accurate snapshot of what the road and the weather is like at that location. Some of the sites even show the weather information - presumably obtained from the roadside weather stations.

The page containing the links to the councils' sites can be found in the 'Our Rides' section of our website.

**Northern Pan Riders**  
The Club for Owners of Large Touring Motorcycles

Welcome! News Calendar Social **Our Rides** Media Events Pan Bay Our Club Pan Talk Join Us Disclaimer Contact Us

### Weather & Traffic Cameras

Some councils have websites which have webcams (some with weather stations) aimed at key places on the road network, to show the state of the road, which can be extremely useful if you are planning a ride out anywhere. Often one side of the Pennines gets completely different weather from the other side. Usually, images are updated every 10 minutes or so.

**This Year's Rides**

- 3 April 2016**  
Richard & Anne to lead this ride  
Foxton Locks, Gumley Rd, Market Harborough, Leicestershire LE16 7RA, United Kingdom [Map](#)
- 8 May 2016**  
Andy Dickens will be leading this ride
- 12 June 2016**  
John & Lynne will be leading this Ride  
Chester Service Area, Jn 14 M56 [Map](#)
- 10 July 2016**  
Alan & Jeanette will be leading this Ride
- 14 August 2016**  
Ken & Sue to lead this Ride
- 18 September 2016**

As always, the OS map has been obtained from the OS website and are available for use under the terms of the Open Data Licence. The appropriate copyright notice is given on the back page.

# BaseCamp Database

## How to keep a copy of your routes

I hate BaseCamp with a passion. But recently I traded in my old Zumo 660 for the newer Zumo 590 and one of the undocumented 'features' of the 590 is that it will not talk to Garmin Mapsource. The only realistic ways of getting routes from the computer software to the SatNav is to use Garmin's BaseCamp.

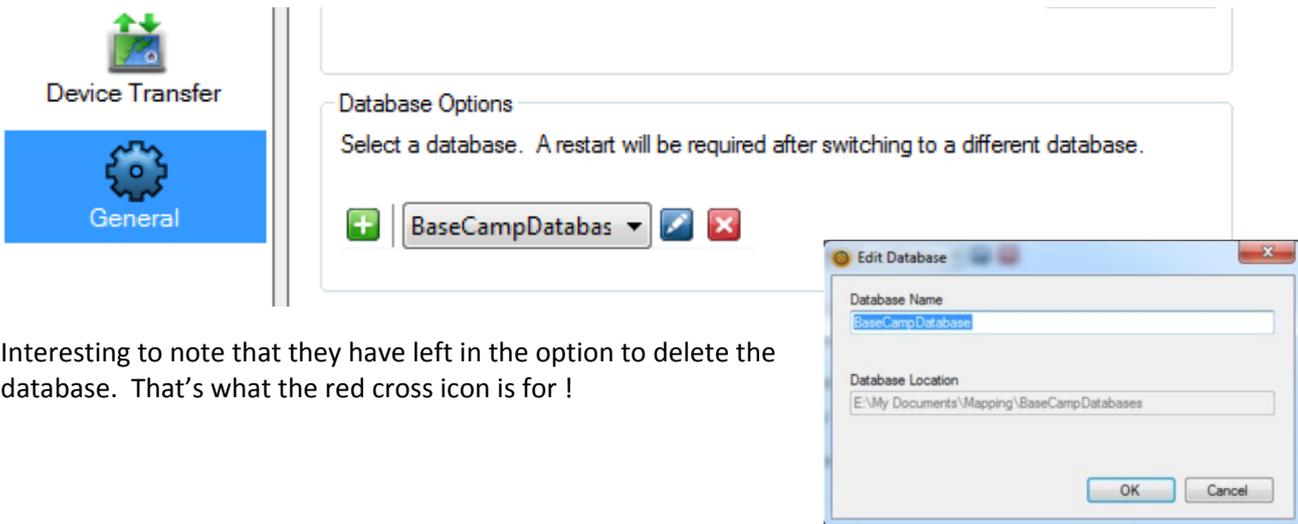
One of my pet hates from the earlier version of BaseCamp was that it was well capable of losing all of my routes in one go and this was because all of the routes were stored in a single database. You didn't have to save anything before exiting the program, you just had to hope that BaseCamp saved everything for you. Which to my annoyance, it didn't - on two separate occasions.

BaseCamp has a long list of modifications and bug fixes that it has introduced since the first release. The latest (as of 28/01/16) is version 4.5.2, obtainable from [here](#), along with the list of all of changes. Riveting reading. Something else to do if you happen to be waiting for paint to dry.

But one recently added feature is worth knowing about. You can specify where on your hard disk you wish to have BaseCamp store its database of your routes. And it will allow you to select which database to use at any time - so you needn't have your planned tour of Europe mixed in with your trip through the Dales. They can be in separate databases.

### Where is this ?

In the **Edit** Menu, click **Options** and then click the '**General**' gear icon. Part way down the dialog box is this section. Clicking the green plus icon or the blue pencil icon allows you to create or edit a database - what it is called, and where it is stored.



Interesting to note that they have left in the option to delete the database. That's what the red cross icon is for !

John

# The Zumo 590

The latest SatNav from Garmin



My third bike Satnav from Garmin - my first 550 gave up the ghost and was replaced under their £100 refurbish scheme with a brand new 660. There was nothing wrong with my 660 - I loved it and got to know it well, but I fancied some of the features on this latest model - particularly since the I never found a solution to the problem of pairing the 660 with a mobile phone.

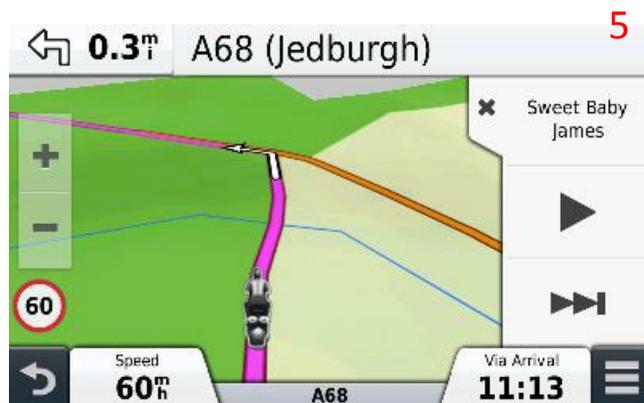
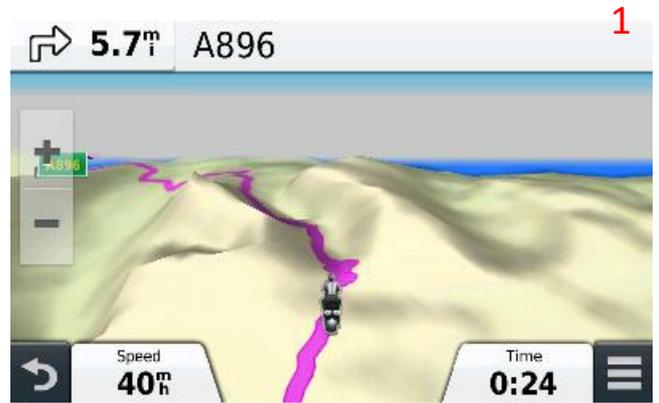
There are plenty of reviews about the Zumo 590, and I am not going to repeat them. I just thought I would illustrate some nice features which require a little more digging around.

On the right, the main navigation view - At the top, shown in the daylight colour scheme with the minimum of clutter - showing the 3D representation of surrounding hills. Here climbing Bealach na Bà from Applecross.

The following images on the right are a clockwise sequence of screen shots showing the various menus that are available on the right of the screen. The 2nd image shows Arrival Time, Direction, Via Distance and Via Arrival time - 4 items of data which can be selected from around 27 different options.

Also shown in subsequent images is (3) a brightness control, (4) features ahead on the current route and (5) the media player controls. The 6th image (below) shows a view after clicking the direction icon in the top left of the main screen detailing the next turning and an enlarged print caption. Scrollable to get the next / previous junctions.

When navigating, the top and the bottom of the screen display useful information about the road and the next turning. The menu button (bottom right) gives access to other features, including a skip feature to ignore the next alerting via point.



**Selecting a Saved Route**

1

No, its not in the "Where To?" Section as it has been for the last few models, but in the Trip Planner which is in the "Apps" Section. (1)

The start point of any route can be assigned a date and time, and the list of routes displayed is shown in date order under forthcoming trips - which is actually quite handy. Dates can be assigned in the Zumo 590 itself, or in Basecamp - which also has the facility for adding a 'layover' period for such things as lunch stops. Useful for planning a club ride perhaps.



2

The option to navigate to the start of a route on the Zumo 660 has gone - which is no bad thing, as once it had been selected it would take you to the start and then stop navigating completely, whereas what I really wanted was for it to continue navigation on the route that I had selected.

Now there is an answer to that, which is a little better:-

(Pic 2) Choose the desired route and ....

(Pic 3) .... a summary of it is displayed showing only the via points which are set to 'Alert on Arrival' (more later). This allows checking and even editing and moving of the route points, and a full screen map view is also available. The edit list allows movement of all main points and alerting points can be changed to non-alerting and vice versa.

Select 'Go' and .....

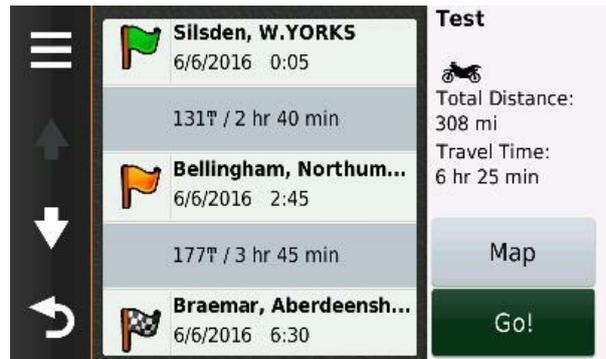
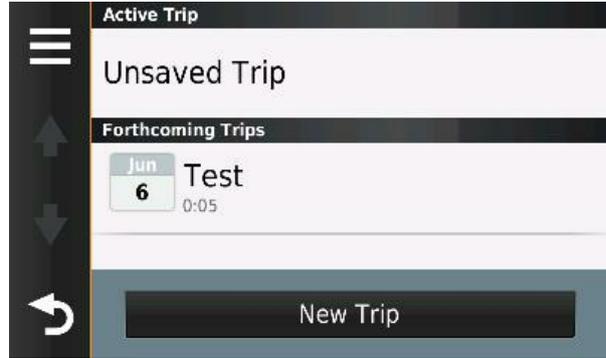
(Pic 4) .... instead of the 'Do you wish to navigate to the start point', you get the option to navigate to any of the 'Alert on Arrival' Via points that are listed under the heading 'Select Next Destination' in the last image on the right.

It sounds good in theory, and the obvious answer is to choose the start point. Perversely, my 590 has always shown the 2nd point at the top of any list - the first being available only by scrolling up. Ok once I had realised, but odd until I had got used to it.

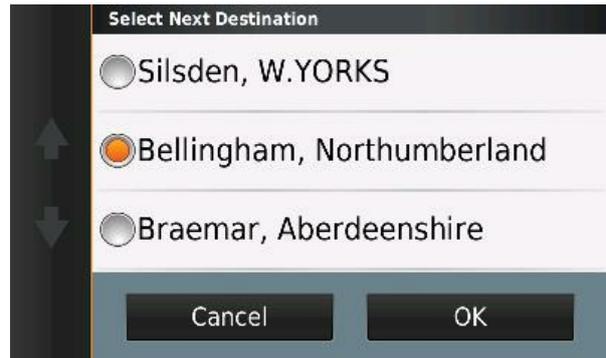
I find that there are two things to consider here. The first is that if I have already gone past the start point - which is a distinct possibility if the start point is a large area such as a car park - then the satnav will nag me to go back to it, so careful positioning of the start point is required to stop this from happening.

The second is that whichever point I choose as my next destination, it is my satnav that calculates the route to reach that point, and it will ignore any other points that I have included between where I am now and the selected point. If that 2nd point is a good few miles up the road, then I may miss out on the good roads that I had originally planned.

There is more on this and a couple of suggestions that will help in making the correct decision, on the next couple of pages.



4



**Terminology.**

Garmin have confused the issue somewhat by using terms which in earlier Zumos seemed to mean one thing, but which now seem to mean something different. You have to be careful reading posts on forums as people may be using the different definitions of terms from the current ones.

All routes have a Start Point and an End Point. Most routes have a number of additional points to act as intermediate destinations or simply to force the route along a particular road. The information below describes what the various points do, and how BaseCamp and the Zumo 590 treat them.

**Waypoints** Are points saved in the database for use as markers or for use in the route. Waypoints default to the flag symbol in Basecamp, although this can be changed. Waypoints can be added to your database by using the  **New Waypoint** tool.

**Shaping Points**

Basecamp and the Zumo 590 refer to a Shaping Point as one that is set to *Do Not Alert on Arrival*. They are intermediate points along the route that ensure that the plotted route passes through particular locations. A route can be created using the route tool, or by using the  insert command and dragging a new route point into position. Typically, this action results in a Shaping Point being created, unless the point coincides with an existing point in the database - in which case it assumes the properties of that Waypoint, and will be set to 'Alert on Arrival'.

**Via Points**

In BaseCamp, *Via Point* refers to any Point on the route that has been inserted as an intermediate destination or place to pass through. However, in the Zumo 590, when the term Via is used, it refers only to points that are set to 'Alert on Arrival'.

**Alert Point**

When transferred to the 590, an *Alert Point* will appear as a flag. It will alert the rider as the point is approached and inform of arrival at the point. Unlike the Zumo 660, the Zumo 590 will insist on navigating you to the precise location, even if it is just down a side road even if you continue along the plotted route. (Alert Point is my terminology, not Garmin's)

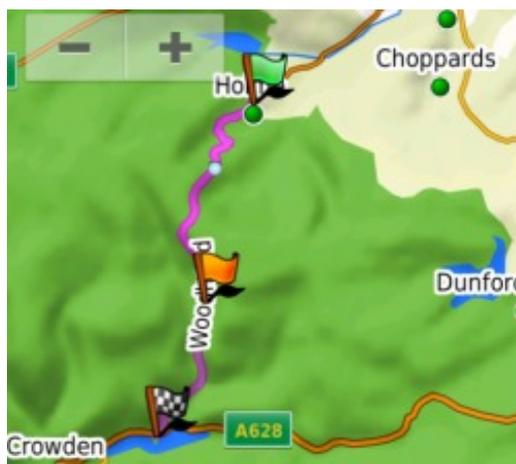
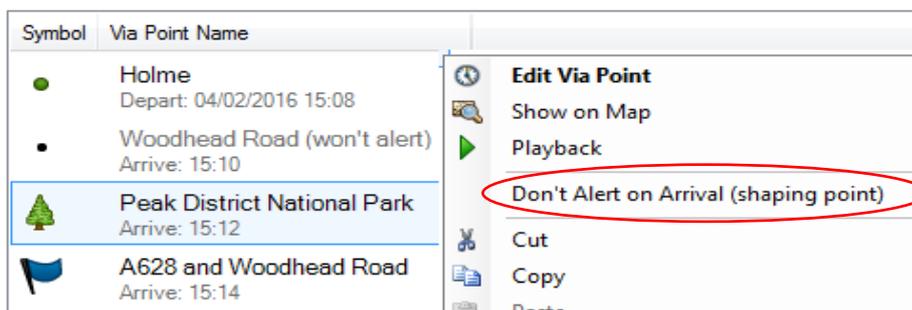
**Silent Point**

When transferred to the Zumo 590, a point which has been set as **Do Not Alert on Arrival** does not show on the 590's screen and the voice stays silent. The Zumo 590 and Basecamp are consistent in calling these 'Shaping Points' although in the past, a shaping point was regarded as something else. I call them Silent Points.

**In Basecamp**

The map of the road over Holme Moss has a Startpoint and Endpoint, a Silent Point on the Woodhead Road (circled in red), and an Alert Point at Peak District National Park.

See the screenshot below - I have highlighted the 3<sup>rd</sup> entry and right clicked to reveal how to change the Alert Point to a Shaping or Silent Point.



The picture on the left shows a preview of the route on the 590's screen. Note the Alert points are marked as flags. The Silent Point is shown as a blue dot.

This is not dependant on how the points were created - if I change the Woodhead Road to be an Alert Point (in Basecamp) and the National Park to be a Silent Point, the orange flag and the blue dot would change places.



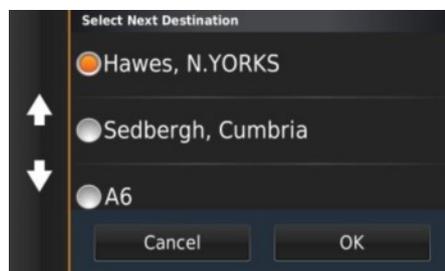
**Ghost Points** One of the big advantages of using BaseCamp (or Mapsource) is that providing Basecamp and your Zumo have the same version of map installed, then the satnav is *guaranteed* to reproduce exactly what was plotted on the computer. As well as the Start Point, End Point and Alerting and Silent Points, Basecamp transmits hundred of 'Ghost Points' which sit at very frequent intervals along your route. Providing nothing happens to force the route to recalculate once it has arrived at the Zumo, then the route will be identical to what was on your PC, regardless of your Zumo's routing preferences. ('Ghost Point' is a name that I have given them. They are actually Garmin's own GPX Route Point Extensions labelled as GPXX inside the .gpx file).

**Recalculation** ..of a route will happen if you allow it to. Eventually I will turn mine on to automatic, but at the moment I want to know when it is doing it, so I have set my 590 recalculation mode to 'Prompted'. The 590 doesn't always tell you like the 660 did. If the 590 recalculates the route, it uses its own routing preferences (that you have set) in order to calculate the route to the next alerting or silent point. If you only have a start and end point, then the whole route gets recalculated. This may be the case if you use eg Google Maps. But you can always re-load the original route.

**Also** Recalculation will also take place if the map on the Zumo is different from the one on your computer, and will also happen if you have a setting in Basecamp set incorrectly. See the last page of this article.

**Starting Out**

When you choose a route to navigate, the Zumo 590 ask you to **Select Next Destination**. The screen shows a scrollable list of points on your route - **but only the Alert Points are listed**. Choose one of these and the satnav will take you there using its own routing preferences **and it seems to ignore the presence of any Silent Points in between**.



**Routing**

The images on the right show 3 experiments. The Purple route is the one in the satnav, the red line shows the route driven. Red circles highlight the Silent Points on the route, green circles highlight the Alert Points. No recalculation was permitted.



**Fig 1** - Driving R to L - I took a northern alternative. SatNav nagged to go to the lower green point all of the time. Rejoining the purple route (top left) satnav continued to nag even after passing the Alert Point in the top L corner. I had to press skip twice in order to ignore the point that I had passed.



**Fig 2** driving from the south, I detoured onto the red road. No alert or silent points are involved. Satnav alerted me to being off route but continued navigating once I had rejoined the purple route.



**Fig 3** driving from the south. I took the direct red route, ignoring the two silent points on the plotted purple route. Satnav kept trying to navigate me to the first Silent Point, until I rejoined the purple route at the top. SatNav resumed navigation properly once I was back on the purple route without nagging me further. I didn't need to press 'skip' for any points.

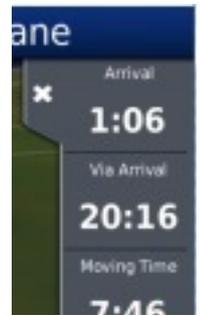
**Skip** There is one useful feature that I have not mentioned. From the menu button - bottom right, you can access a 'Skip' button. This tells the satnav to stop nagging you to visit the last viapoint. If you have passed another via point in the meantime, you will have to skip that too. 'Skip' requires 2 button presses, which is a bit awkward when riding. The skip button is installed by going to (Settings / Map & Vehicles / Map Tools)



**Point Type ?**

Maps, PC & SatNav

I will be using silent points which *Do Not Alert on Arrival (Shaping Points)* as much as possible as I can then ignore them (if I turn auto recalculation off) and I can then pick up the plotted purple route further along without having to press 'Skip'. On the continent, this can be an issue with new roads being built that are not on the map - I can still see where my original route was trying to take me.

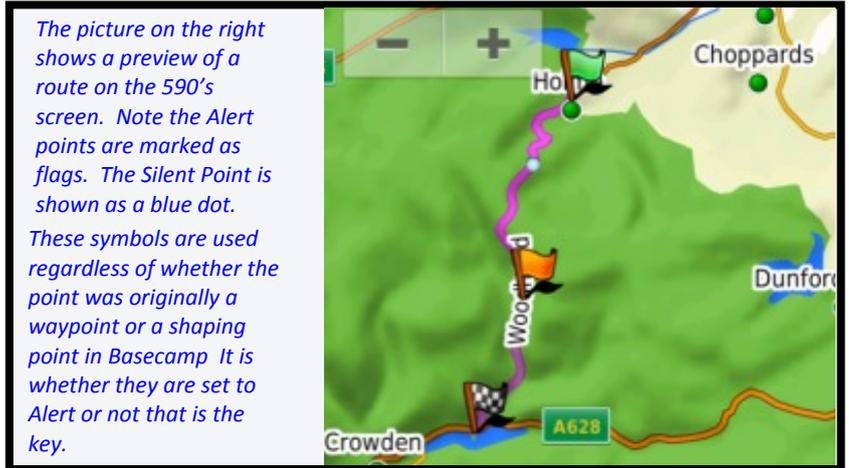


However, at key points along the route I will be placing Alert Points a few hundred yards up the intended road, and ensure that these are very precisely placed. All of my points will be carefully labelled so that I can recognise them should I need to Skip or start the route from some midway point.

But note that 'Via Arrive' display on the image taken from the previous page (shown above as 20:16). The Zumo 590 shows the next Alert Point. Points which Do Not Alert on Arrival will not show up in the 'Via' data displays if you have them visible.

**Confusing**

I found all of this very confusing. I knew my 660 very well - I knew when I could ignore the instructions and what it would do when I did. It was much better than my previous 550 in the way that it would allow me to ignore any of the route points (alerting or not) and would let me pick up the route further along, and would continue navigating on the original route.



*The picture on the right shows a preview of a route on the 590's screen. Note the Alert points are marked as flags. The Silent Point is shown as a blue dot. These symbols are used regardless of whether the point was originally a waypoint or a shaping point in Basecamp. It is whether they are set to Alert or not that is the key.*

The problem I had seems to be with the 590. It changes the way the navigation operates completely. In some respects it is more like the old 550 used to be. To make things even more confusing, the use of the terms shaping points, waypoints, via points and alerting points have changed over the years and there seems to be confusion evident in the different ways that Basecamp and the 590 still apply some of these terms.

I put together some short videos for a friend who was having similar issues with his new 590. These go through some of the processes of using Basecamp to prepare routes for the Zumo and some of the things to watch out for.

[Video Links are here.](#)

**My Suggestions for using a Route Transferred from BaseCamp.**

Start Point	Place the start point a few hundred yards along the route that you intend to follow rather than at the actual start. When the 590 satnav asks for the next destination choose this point. The 590 Satnav will create its own route to the point a few hundred yards away and then continue navigating as normal.
Coffee Break.	Make the coffee break destination a Silent Point (Don't Alert). Place an Alert Point further along the road where you intend to pick up the route after the coffee stop. Name it 'After Coffee' or similar. You can then choose to ignore the coffee stop if you wish, or if it is necessary to restart the route after the stop 'After Coffee' will appear in the list to select as the next destination.
Silent Points	Use as many of these as you wish - particularly if transferring the route to a friend, who may not have the same maps as you. Navigation continues if you ignore them and if recalculations are made, they appear to be made only up to the next point, after which the original route continues.
Alert Points	Make sure these are accurately placed. Zoom in to check. Use Alert Points wherever you may want to see them in the list when choosing the next destination, or you want to see Via Point info. Or use them all of the time if you are certain that they are on route and that you will pass through them. Use names you will recognise on the display
Skip	Always available if you want to miss an Alert Point and stop the satnav nagging. You have to install it on the menu first.
Recalculate	Set it to 'Prompted' until you are happy with what the satnav is doing and when.
Route Preferences On the 590	Used when a route is recalculated on the Zumo. I set it to Faster Time. Curvy roads is unpredictable. Shorter distance can force satnav to take a slip road off a motorway and rejoin it on the other side. Use Silent Points or Alert Points to keep you on the quiet back roads.

## BaseCamp Tips

### Maps, PC & SatNav

BaseCamp continues to develop - which is just as well. Since my previous attempt at using it, it has had so many 'improvements' and fixes that the list fills 11 pages. At the time of writing (050216) it is on version 4.5.2. Keep it up to date. Similarly for Garmin Express - currently 4.1.16.0.

#### To Prevent Zumo Recalculating Your Route When transferring it from BaseCamp.

i) **Make sure that the version of the map on the Zumo and the version on the computer are the same.** Use Garmin Express to download the same version to both PC and Satnav. Can't find it? No - nor can anyone else at first, but the option **IS** there. If you get to the point where it is downloading the maps, then cancel and start again. They keep moving the link around, and in earlier versions of Garmin Express, they missed out the option altogether. Get the latest version of Garmin Express.

ii) **The version of the maps are the same on both devices, but you get the message saying that the route was planned on a different version of the map.**

This may well be the case, or it may be that the software is treating map 2014.30 and 2014.3 as two different versions. It has been known. But select each route to be transferred and recalculating the entire route using your latest maps. It may be that it is the route that is out of date, not the map. Make sure that you are only transferring the selected routes too - not the ones from ages back. There are options on the Device menu to limit what is transferred.

iii) **Make sure that you are not telling it to recalculate the map !**

Or to be more precise, don't tell it **not** to recalculate. Hidden away in the **Edit / Options** menu in BaseCamp is a section called '**Device Transfer**'. This is where you can put ticks in boxes - or not (see right). Remove the ticks from here and many of the problems will go away - but it is up to you to make sure that the map is the same version on the satnav as it is on the PC.

#### Adjust the device transfer options

zūmo590 (Unit ID 3910443876) ▾

##### Transferring Routes

- Strip shaping points from routes on transfer to device.
- Also send the original route, in case I want to recalculate later.
- Always match route to the map on my device when transferring.

## Routing with Other Software

Many people prefer to use other software for plotting a route. Whatever works for you really, but there are a few things to be aware of.

- i) The maps will not be identical. A point plotted on another map may be plotted slightly off route on your satnav.
- ii) No Ghost Points are transmitted to the satnav, so the satnav will always work out its own route once it has the main points, using the routing preferences that have been set on the satnav.
- iii) On the Zumo 590, the main points may all be Alert Points.
- iv) The route may be transferred as a track rather than as a route. The 590 has an inbuilt tool to convert a track into a route and vice versa. The track points *may* all become ghost points. Any recalculation that takes place will obliterate the original route and the satnav will join up the start to the end using whatever route preferences you have set up.
- v) It is worth remembering that even if the satnav recalculates the entire route, you can always re-start the original route.

John

# Step By Step Basecamp Videos

**Not the usual - there will be stuff in these that you didn't know**

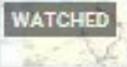
This series of short videos show you how to create a route that will always do what you expect on your satnav. It is aimed primarily at the confusing mode of operation introduced with the 590 style satnavs. At the time of writing, even the tech support didn't seem to know about this stuff.

Videos are posted as a YouTube Playlist [here](#).

John

**Step By Step BaseCamp (with Zumo 590)**  
 John Heath • 11 videos • 69 views • Last updated on 2 Mar 2016

▶ Play all   ◀ Share   ⚙ Playlist settings

1	 BC 01 Using Databases by John Heath	4:25
2	 BC 02 Import a GPX Route by John Heath	8:24
3	 BC 03 Create Route with Waypoints by John Heath	3:38
4	 BC 04 Transfer Route to Zumo 590 by John Heath	3:23
5	 BC 04a - Import a Route into Zumo 590 by John Heath	2:25
6	 BC 06 Using the Route Tool by John Heath	1:46
7	 BC 07 Checking A Route by John Heath	5:30
8	 BC 08 Routes with Waypoints 1 by John Heath	4:25
9	 BC 09 Routes with Waypoints 2 by John Heath	9:38
10	 BC 10 What the 'Ghost Points' do by John Heath	9:11
11	 BC 11 Routing Profiles and Custom Routing by John Heath	8:09

## Riding a Motorcycle

A collection of snippets of information that I have found useful

I don't presume to be able to give advice on this topic, and neither do I assume that how I ride is the best way or even the correct way. But all of the following snippets are things that I know about and use when I am riding. I'm not going to try to explain any of it - these are just pointers to information that is out there. You may know all of it or most of it, but some of it may be new, in which case I hope you think that it is worth finding out about.

### Reading the Road Ahead

On a bend, the vanishing point moves towards you if the bend is tightening and away from you as the bend opens out.

On a bend, the outside of your lane gives the best view of the road ahead. Beware oncoming traffic. Beware gravel.

### Balancing the Bike Front to Back.

When accelerating, some of the bike's weight is transferred to the back wheel

When decelerating, some of the bike's weight is transferred to the front wheel

Most of the braking force comes from the front tyre.

The front tyre has more grip when the tyre is squashed into the tarmac.

Progressive braking loads up the front tyre, giving a larger contact patch, before applying the full force.

Very sudden application of the front brake is likely to lock the wheel before the tyre has chance to grip.

### Cornering

The middle of a corner is not the time to realise you are going to fast. Get the speed right before turning.

Counter-steering is the most effective way of getting the bike to lean into the bends.

Lean and speed can be balanced with the amount of throttle (the bike will naturally slow down as you turn)

The outside of the bend on approach to and through the first part of the corner gives the best visibility....

...but sacrifice position for safety if necessary, and adjust speed accordingly.

Gradually applying power through the corner once the bend begins to open out and the vanishing point has started to move away can help lift the bike out of the lean and smooth corner exit.

Keep looking where you intend to go. On hairpins this will involve looking back almost over your shoulder.

Don't head for the apex (unless you have full view of the road ahead).

Decelerating when leant over will cause the bike to lean further.

Accelerating when leant over will lift the bike towards the vertical (and can save a slow speed tip-over)

The lean angle can be controlled by balancing the throttle with counter-steering

Keep your eyes horizontal. This will require tilting the head or bending at the waist in the opposite direction to the lean of the bike. My police instructor told me to think in terms of pushing the seat underneath me with one buttock. It felt as though the bike was leaning and I wasn't. I don't do it now, but it helped in the learning process.

Cornering results in tyre flex - which gives a larger contact patch and more grip than if the bike is upright.

Dual compound tyres (harder centre section, softer outer edges) have even more grip when the bike is leant over.

Gentle acceleration through a bend puts more weight on the rear tyre, giving even more grip.

Much of the cornering grip comes from the rear tyre.

Braking or rapid deceleration in mid-corner should be avoided because

it transfers the weight to the front tyre, which has a smaller contact patch with the road than the rear

it causes the bike to fall over to the inside of the bend .....

... which requires straightening the steering to correct, which puts the bike off line.

The rear tyre becomes unloaded, it may lose grip and 'step out'.

Even modern electronics cannot compensate for these

### Throttle Control

There is free play in the throttle cable and there is free play in the final drive gear.

Changing from slowing down to speeding up will cause the free play to be taken up suddenly resulting in jerks. If you have a pillion, you will be banging heads.

Jerky take-up of power can be controlled by:

Reducing the amount of free play in the throttle cable ( but the free play is there for a reason and varies with temperature - check lock to lock steering does not cause the engine revs to increase ).

Gently rolling off the throttle when decelerating.

Gently rolling on the throttle to find the 'drive point' beyond free play, before powering away.

Slowing down without letting the wheel speed overtake the engine speed (ie maintain forward drive)

### Visibility

Bikes can become invisible to other road users. Literally. The "I'm sorry mate, I didn't see you" response to a vehicle pulling out is a well worn cliché, but actually, it is quite possible that they didn't see you because their brain didn't pass on the information. They looked and you weren't there. They probably didn't look 'properly', but how many people actually know how to look properly ?

Example - count the number of f's in this sentence.

**Finished files are the result of years of scientific study combined with the experience of years.**

If you didn't get the correct answer, it's because your brain is interpreting the information it receives from your eyes and discarding whatever it considers to be irrelevant.

And that is what happens on the road. A bike on the main road approaching a car waiting at a T junction appears as a stationary object, surrounded by moving objects. In fact it is moving, but it barely changing in size and it is in a fixed position as far as the car driver is concerned. It therefore becomes a piece of irrelevant information. The driver's eyes can see you, but the brain chooses not to pass on the information. The biker has become a victim of 'motion induced blindness'. (Google it). Pilots are well aware of this phenomenon and are trained to be aware that they cannot see another aircraft if it is coming directly towards them.

So it is your job to make yourself visible, and having headlights on or wearing a high-vis jacket doesn't make you any more visible in this situation. In fact, there is an argument that these help to camouflage the rider.

#### Here are a number of ways to make yourself be seen:

Move around in the lane when approaching vehicles waiting to emerge from a side road ie deliberately move in your lane away from the vehicle so that you cross their line of sight, or weave.

Watch the driver's eyes. You can read a lot from them, and they can tell that you have seen them. They won't (normally) do anything stupid - like nipping out - if they know that you have seen who they are.

Observe cars behind - make sure that they are not looking past you and getting too close. Put yourself in their line of sight every now and then.

You will always be invisible to a driver that doesn't look ! Make sure that they have at least looked in your direction during the time you are approaching them.

Beware filtering at night. The bike's headlights merge in with the lights of the cars you are overtaking. To oncoming traffic you appear to be the headlight of a car in the line, some distance away. You are a light just like all of the others and something that they are deliberately looking away from so that they can see the road ahead. They certainly do not see you as a motorcycle, near to the centre of the road, quite close.

Beware using ultra bright riding lights. Drivers cannot see the shape behind them, and all they can see is an apparently stationary light. These too can be subconsciously ignored.

For more information, it is well worth taking a look at the Police BikeSafe website [www.bikesafe.co.uk](http://www.bikesafe.co.uk). They organise frequent workshops each year.

Oh, by the way, there are 6 f's in the sentence

John - with thanks to Dick for checking things over.

## Club Riding

### Follow the Leader.

Until you lead a ride with the club, it is difficult to appreciate how much extra stuff you have to think about. But once you have put behind you the niggles such as 'Am I riding too fast' and 'Am I going too slow', much of it is a simple matter of preparation. Most leaders will choose to do a recce on the Sunday before - to see what the road conditions are like; to get a more accurate impression of the route; to find the danger spots and the places where it is impossible to mark a junction; to spot overtaking opportunities; to verify the timing; and of course to check out the places to stop and eat. Doing this makes the ride itself quite straight forward.

The leader is the only person on the ride who cannot see the rest of the group. He does not know whether or not he is going too fast for the group. His only sources of information are the headlights of the Pans in his mirror, the presence or absence of the second and the third rider in the group, and any comments from the back marker over the radio.

So the leader has a fine balancing act to perform - maintaining a good riding pace to suit the roads and the countryside, and ensuring that no rider feels pressured to go faster than that with which he feels comfortable.

But how does the leader know? One way is that he has to rely on the riders that are second and third in the line to keep him informed - simply by being there, or not, as the case may be. Because following riders change at each drop off, the leader can build a good picture of the nature of the group.

The leader may decide to sit behind a car for some time - rather than overtake. Alternatively, the leader may choose to overtake a vehicle in front when there is no chance that the riders behind will be able to get past.

This is where knowing the road and the recce come in to play. If there is nowhere up ahead for other riders to get past before the next junction, then there is no point in the leader overtaking. On the other hand, if the leader knows that there is a place where he can overtake, and half a mile up the road there is a potential for 3 or 4 other riders to get past, it makes sense for him to take that first opportunity to enable as many other riders to get past at the next opportunity. The leader knows how far away is the next junction to be marked.

This may seem odd and dispiriting to the riders behind. To them it looks as though the leader has cleared off into the distance and is now no longer in sight. They may feel pressure to 'get a move on'. But in fact the leader will be just 30 seconds up the road and will have slowed down to wait for at least a couple of riders to get past. Leaving this sort of gap behind him is important for the following riders so that they know that there is space for them to slot in. As more riders get past, the leader will increase speed to allow the tail end riders to have room to perform the overtake safely. It is never OK for the following rider to make an unsafe or an illegal overtake in order to 'catch up'. Nor should following riders feel pressured into speeding, jumping lights, or taking other risks in order to close the gap. The leader is only just up the road, maintaining a slower speed and a constant gap for the others to slot in when they get the chance. Following riders will catch up automatically and if it looks like people are being left behind he will slow down or stop. It helps the leader to judge the correct pace if the rider who has just overtaken does not increase his pace until the rider behind has also got past.

This process is demonstrated from a couple of on-board cameras on the trip back from Girvan last year. I was behind the leader with a camera, so we get to see what the leader is doing. Richard was back marking with a camera so we get to see the rest of the group. I have synchronised and combined the videos here: [YouTube Link](#). It really is worth watching - its about 8 minutes long, but I make no apologies for not shortening it - I wanted to show how frustration can build unnecessarily when the group gets trapped with only odd opportunities for a single rider to get past.



The riders at the rear can easily imagine that everyone at the front has cleared off into the distance, yet this video shows that this impression is entirely wrong. Look at the 'markers' (sign posts, people, bends, trees, buildings) as the lead rider goes past. He is rarely ever more than 10 seconds ahead of the back marker, even though for a long time there is no sign of him. It looks like he has cleared off.

In the video it takes the whole group 3 minutes to get past the car. Surprisingly, as Richard is overtaking the car, he is still only 10 seconds behind the leader, just as he was at the start of the video. Of course, with the drop off system, if every junction is marked, the group can be allowed to become very strung out. But no matter how many hold-ups there are, you will always end up at the front!

John

# Article Index

A Résumé of Articles Published in PanTalk with Dates.

## Membership

Club Membership.....	July 2013
Membership Map.....	July 2013
BMF Membership Details.....	October 2013
Membership Map 2015.....	December 2015

## Members' Bikes & Guess Who

Guess who - A Panther, C90, Bantam, Ural, XS650, ST1100, ST1300.....	December 2013
Barry's Ex Police Pan.....	February 2014
Guess Who - BSA, 125 Kawasaki, ST1300.....	February 2014
Alex's article Motorbike, Milestones and Memories.....	February 2014
John Buys a new Pan.....	May 2014
Guess Who - Loads of bikes.....	June 2015
New Members - 2015.....	December 2015

## Club Events

Pete's Scotland Tour May 2013.....	July 2013
NPR at Biker events 2013.....	October 2013
Thunder in the Glens 24 August 2013.....	October 2013
Map - Rides out and Rides to Eat in 2013.....	February 2014
2014 NPR Challenge.....	February 2014
Online Logbook for NPR Challenge.....	May 2014
Canal Trip - Skipton to Kildwick - 1 June 2104.....	August 2014
Pete & Helen's tour of Northern Scotland, May 2014.....	August 2014
NPR Trip to Mosel Valley, June 2014.....	August 2014
Durham Bikewise.....	August 2014
The 2014 Challenge.....	December 2014
Canal Trip June 2015.....	September 2015
AGM 2015.....	December 2015
Christmas Do - 2015.....	December 2015

## Members' Tours

Dick and Ruth's trip to Scandanavia.....	October 2013
Britt Butt Rally 2013 - Graeme and Sally.....	December 2013
Belinda and Graham's Spanish Tour July 2012.....	December 2013
John's 9000 mile, 2 month American Tour 2012 - Route 66.....	February 2014
Tony's 3,100 mile Tour of SW USA.....	May 2014
Camping with a Pan European. John & Lynne share some tips.....	May 2014
Black Pudding Run October 2014.....	December 2014
Tour des Grandes Alpes.....	March 2015
Pan in the Sand.....	March 2015
Ticked off the List - Ayrshire Coast.....	March 2015
A Tour of Scotland.....	December 2015

**Routes**

Clwyd and Snowdonia.....	December 2013
A Tour of the Lake District passes.....	February 2014
A Long Scottish One Day Circuit.....	May 2014
Romans and Leadmining -240 Miles in Northumberland.....	August 2014
Routes - A Border Raid.....	December 2014
A Five Day Tour of Scotland.....	December 2014
A Mid Wales Traverse.....	March 2015
Moffat Figure of Eight.....	June 2015
West Yorkshire - Cat & Fiddle.....	December 2015
Brecon Beacons & Black Mountain.....	March 2016

**Maps, Pcs and SatNavs**

Google Maps to GPX (but Google has changed since this was written).....	February 2014
SatNav Speed and Indicated Speed on Vehicle Speedometers.....	December 2014
Continental Riding and Garmin Speed Alerts.....	December 2014
Zumo Maps & Routes.....	March 2015
Basecamp Databases.....	March 2016
The Zumo 590.....	March 2016
Step By Step Basecamp Videos.....	March 2016
New On-Line Mapping Software - to Replace Google ?.....	March 2016

**Snippets**

Sorry Mate, I didn't see you; Access Service Database; Pinking engine.....	December 2013
Driving Licence Renewal Age 70. Alex's useful insight.....	May 2014
So You Think You Can Ride ? Info about advanced training from Dick.....	May 2014
Observation musings.....	May 2014
Filtering.....	December 2014
Pub Talk.....	March 2015
Bridgestone T30GT Tyres.....	March 2015
USB Charger and Hi Viz Indicator Warning.....	March 2015
Insurance Premiums - NPR Members Reveal All.....	March 2015
IAM - What is Advanced Motorcycling.....	June 2015
USB Charger, SMC, Top Box Spoiler, Rear Visibility.....	June 2015
Bridgestone T30GT Tyres (more news).....	June 2015
Highway Code Quiz.....	September 2015
Advanced Riding.....	December 2015
Insurance Check.....	March 2016
Cheap Fairing Push Rivets.....	March 2016
JIS Cross Head Screwdrivers - Wow !.....	March 2016

**Show & Tell**

Heated grips, Video cam, satnav, cup holder, topbox rack, Radio.....	September 2015
SatNav Mounts, Throttle Locks, Power Supply.....	December 2015
Rukka Textile Riding Suit.....	December 2015
DogCam Bullet Camera.....	December 2015

**Workshop (not motorcycle)**

Radio & Autocom: Prevent accidental transmit.....	September 2015
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**Skills**

Riding a Motorcycle

**Club Rides Out**

Where have we been.....	July 2013
Northern Pennines, Dick Brew 7 April 2013.....	July 2013
Alston Run - John & Lynne - 9 June 2013.....	July 2013
Tan Hill - Ken - 14 July 2013.....	October 2013
Hard Knott Pass - Pete - 13 October 2013.....	December 2013
Blackpool - Richard - 8 December 2013.....	February 2014
A Frozen East Yorkshire - Richard - 12 Jan 2014.....	February 2014
Fridaythorpe -Alan - 9 February 2014.....	May 2014
Snowdonia - John & Lynne - 9 March 2014.....	May 2014
Northern Pennine Tour - Dick - 13 April 2014.....	May 2014
P & T stops - Richard's on-line Map.....	May 2014
Northumberland Borders - Alan & Jeanette - 8 June 2014.....	August 2014
National Arboretum, Lichfield - 11 May 2014.....	August 2014
Glasson Dock, Lancaster - Andy & Tracy - 13 July 2014.....	August 2014
A Tour Around Nidderdale.....	December 2014
Lincolnshire and The High Peak.....	December 2014
Middlesbrough & Zoe's Place.....	December 2014
Rides Out in 2014.....	December 2014
A Dales Dawdle 8 Feb 2015.....	March 2015
Swaledale, Buttertubs and Trough of Bowland.....	March 2015
A Scottish Border Run.....	June 2015
Mystery Weekend.....	June 2015
Scotland Weekend - June 2015.....	September 2015
Ravenglass Ride - July 2015.....	September 2015
Melton Mowbray - August 2015.....	September 2015
Hornsea - September 2015.....	September 2015
Northern Dales - John & Lynne - Oct 2015.....	December 2015
East Yorkshire - Dick & Ruth - Nov 2015.....	December 2015
Derbyshire - Alan - Dec 2015.....	December 2015
Where we have been 2015.....	December 2015
Zoes Place - Alan - Feb 2016.....	March 2016
North Pennines - Dale & Sue - March 2016.....	March 2016

PanTalk is an occasional magazine produced by and for members of Northern Pan Riders - a motorcycle touring club for owners of touring motorcycles.

Suggestions for articles are most gratefully received, and we are always looking for tour reports; your favourite roads; technical articles; simple modifications to your bike; your own brief riding history.

Photos help make articles more interesting about 1280 pixels wide works best for me. I can produce a map of routes taken using gdb (Mapsource / Basecamp) or gpx (log from satnav) format.

Please contact [pantalk@nprclub.co.uk](mailto:pantalk@nprclub.co.uk) with suggestions or articles

Many thanks to:

Alan & Netty for a very difficult lead in February

Dale & Sue for leading the March Ride

Richard for the Mapping software instructions

Alex for additional photos

Dick for additional ideas and for checking the Riding article

John for everything else.

Further Information about the club, can be obtained on our website:

[www.northernpanriders.co.uk](http://www.northernpanriders.co.uk)

[www.nprclub.co.uk](http://www.nprclub.co.uk)

Previous copies of PanTalk can also be found on the above site.

Also, random notices and comments on Facebook:

[Northern Pan Riders Pan European](#)