

CLUB TORQUE



THE NEWSLETTER OF THE RMDC

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Quarter 4 2021

WELCOME FROM THE EDITOR

Club Torque is Back! After a period of isolation and a new L plate editor at the handlebars its back hopefully in quarterly format subject to members contributions. Many thanks to Steve Hillier our previous editor of the last few years. Steve has surrendered his editorial duties to focus on life down under. Enjoy Christmas dinner on the beach Steve, all the best.

Content has always been an issue for all editors of the newsletter over the years of my membership. Thank you to everyone who has contributed to this edition. The next edition is planned for the 18th of March a couple of weeks after the club AGM. If you have ideas to enhance the club / newsletter, please come along and co – op or volunteer for one of the committee roles.



For those members of the “Green Club” who find it hard to park up their pride and joy when they jet off on holiday. Travel on a plane with British engines and you can relax in the knowledge that a little of the same company tech that you sit astride is powering you to your destination.

Spare a thought for those club members who may never be tempted to fly again! Let the badge warfare continue (Laugh).

Safe travels all.

FIRST LOVE

Guy Moody

So, there it was, an immaculate four-year-old, one owner, three-thousand-mile Suzuki GS 1000 (an HC variant if you're that way inclined). I can't remember the price, but it was affordable for a freshly mortgaged 25-year-old. Those were the days.

It came from a long extinct dealer in the backstreets of Maidstone. The seller was Brian, Bullshit Brian to his mates in the bike club, but not to his face. Brian was notorious for being the wrong side of 40 with a penchant for a new bike every 6 months, an HP salesman's dream, and having a drop-dead gorgeous girlfriend the wrong side of 16. Those were the days indeed.

Brian pointed out the name of the previous keeper on the logbook. Hmm, a certain Paul Dunstall Organisation, builders of then extremely desirable and quite quick motorcycles. Evidently the engine in my new toy had been bored, stroked, flowed and blue-printed. None of this meant a dickie to me but as a mate with an 1100 Katana found out later it made it very rapid. It didn't affect its reliability either.

The Eighties was a curate's egg of a decade. I was single, had my own gaff, a smiley blonde and a decent collection of two-wheelers in the garage but it was the era of 'me me me' and I had failed in the red braces and Porsche department. Still, I did have a bloody quick motorbike....

Smiley blonde and GS – a perfect summer.



They say they don't make them like they used to. Not only was the GS quick, it was two up comfy and economical. Unlike most bikes I've owned since. The current Mrs M drew the line at my GPZ 900 and refused point blank to ride pillion on the ZX 9R.

A truce was declared for the BMW GS but my bikes have been blessedly pillion free for the best part of ten years now.

I rarely used the GS 1000 for commuting or trips to the shops. The runabouts, of which there were many, did the donkey work.

GS in front of my GT380 which was bought for a hundred quid from a bloke in a pub and then sold back to the same bloke a year later for a hundred and fifty. Should've kept it. It's a classic now worth thousands. Yeah right.....



The GS clocked up most of its miles on holidays or trips to foreign GP circuits. It saw Norway to the north, Hungary to the east, Yugoslavia to the south and Ireland to the west along with a great many places in between. Never made it to Spain but got very close.

The bike took the pair of us to Budapest in 1984. You needed a visa, green card and an International Driving Permit back then. A bit like driving in the EEC post Brexit (unless the rules have changed in the last five minutes).

Hungary then had a 45-mph speed limit for motorcycles and we were followed from the border by the security services. I wasn't paranoid in those days so it must be true. The bike ran fine on the watered-down paraffin they called petrol and even returned over 65 mpg which I guess was some consolation for the scenery crawling past.

Germany however was a different ball game. No speed limits on the Autobahn. I was riding with my mate and his missus who were on an 1100 Katana. Most of you will have spotted where this is going. After one fuel stop we decided to have a 'wee blast'. 102 miles and 50 minutes later onto reserve. Not bad, but the experience of being flashed out of the overtaking lane at 140+ leaves a memory. Three cars, nose to tail, shot past at least 30 mph faster. No wonder German pile-ups are often stretched out over half a mile or so. My mate was incandescent. He couldn't keep up. Maybe Brian hadn't been bullshitting after all.

By the end of the decade life had moved on. The smiley blonde had stopped smiling and bugged off with a computer programmer. So, I celebrated by moving from Kent to Cambridge to a new job. The GS, a KH400, an XT350 and an MZ came with me. The smiley blonde was replaced with a top of the range model with more sophisticated handling. (Mrs M made me write that).

The GS continued to rack up the miles. A trip to the Yugoslavian Grand Prix at Rijeka via the Austrian GP at the Salzburg ring in 1989 gave me my only cause for concern. The electrics started playing up, blowing fuse after fuse. Intermittent faults. My favourite. Still, it got me home. A fortnight later at the French GP in Le Mans the lights went out all together with the bike conking out completely a few hundred yards from home. Phew! Suzuki's of a certain age had a habit of chewing up alternators. A couple of hours with a multi-tester and a hundred quid and it never troubled me again.

I think I may still technically be in Yugoslavia, potentially a problem if it still existed. Again it was a visa jobbie. Surrender Part B on the way out along with any unspent currency. A couple of miles from the border we looked at the map. Either back the way we'd come or home via Italy. We could clock up another country on the European Grand Tour. Italy it was. After a couple of miles the road surface disappeared. Half a mile further it was blocked by a drop-down barrier. Silly sods, soon have that up. A bit further again and another barrier – with guards. Oops. They were two bemused Italians and after a quick squint at our number plate we were waved through. No paperwork, nothing. Too much trouble. First customers for years, I guess.

One of the problems of living in Cambridge – apart from the appalling traffic management in the city centre – was that it added a couple of hundred miles to my continental jaunts. The fuel range was never enough. A previous night trip from Zeebrugge to Northern Germany had been rescued at 2 in the morning by a mysterious Dutchman cycling out of the gloom to point the hapless Englander to a petrol station that was hidden half a mile away in the opposite direction. I had about a teaspoon of fuel left. That was too close for comfort.

With another overnighter to Germany on the cards I fitted a bigger tank from a GSX 1100 which gave a range of about 250 miles. At the same time I fitted a box section swinging arm, also from a GSX, and a pair of S&W shocks in a desperate attempt to cure the effects of many many miles of wear and tear. I didn't notice the difference. The bike however looked like crap.....

In hindsight my fondness for clearing off to Northern Europe in midwinter killed the bike.

A weekend jaunt to Bremen in November 1991 resulted not only in a mild case of hyperthermia but also got the bike filthier than ever before. I've never been a fan of cleaning bikes – unless they're new and the novelty hasn't worn off - they get jet washed once a year whether they need it or not. I usually keep a bike clean by leaving it in the garage if it looks like rain. (That's why only Jasper has seen my Boxer Cup Replica!). So the bike went back in garage somewhat grubby. As an incidental we learned on the boat on the way back that Freddie Mercury had died so it was a bit of a downer all round.

A month later I set off to meet the bike club at a New Year's Eve party in Belgium. I was the only biker, along with 6 cars, 2 lorries and a bus at Dover that bleak Boxing Day. I think I got the award for terminal stupidity.

If you get too close, you'll notice that the tank is hand painted. A later design used 'sticky back plastic' (© Blue Peter) as pinstriping. It was horrible.



A couple of days after recovering from a European sized hangover two of us set off from Brussels to Cologne to meet up with a bunch of German mates to see a belated New Year German style. Gawd it was nippy.

Sitting in a friend's apartment the night before our ride back to Zeebrugge we learned that the temperature was forecast to remain below minus 3 the following day and we had an early morning start. The ride there had been our starter for 10. Gawd it was even colder, and the motorways were slathered in highly corrosive antifreeze for obvious reasons.

By the time I got back to Cambridge, and with 78,000 miles on the clock, the bike looked and sounded decidedly worse for wear, so I did what any self-respecting biker would do. I tarted it up and flogged it pronto.

The original parts went back on, and elbow grease applied. The swinging arm was sold to a chap in Norwich, but the tank sadly didn't sell. It went to a tip a couple of years later. Eejit.

The bike sold to a guy in Cornwall. He called me up later to say that it had broken down on the way back. He wasn't bothered and said he recognised the rattle when he started it up. It was nothing serious but beyond my limited spanner twirling abilities.

According to the DVLA XMX 628S is still out there. It's now blue and has been on SORN for the past 5 years. I don't want it back, no room at the inn, but I wonder what she's been doing for the past 29 years. I often wonder about the smiley blonde as well. Just don't tell Mrs M!

BRAKES

David Sexton

Someone at 'The Austin', where I was an apprentice, asked one of the Brake Development engineers 'How often does brake failure occur?' He replied, 'Usually only the once.'

I still have two friends who have had brake failure. Both happened on track days but show the potential for failure is not far away, in an emergency braking situation, for example. The cause in both cases was vaporisation of the brake fluid in the front brake callipers due to heat generated and water absorption, which lowered its boiling point.

Mark fitted Yamaha R1 front callipers to improve his Suzuki GSXR1000 to improve the brakes. Unfortunately, he used an opened bottle of brake fluid he had in the garage. He went straight on at Gerrards at Mallory Park and cleared the 3m catch fence. He refitted the Suzuki callipers and returned at Rockingham International, unfortunately using the same brake fluid and had brake failure again, thankfully without injury.

Andy's recent occurrence was at Snetterton on his Suzuki GSXR750 which he has had since new and only uses for track days now, again without injury.

Replacing the brake fluid with new fluid from a sealed container, fixed both problems and both riders continued the track day. Generally, with this type of failure the lever comes to the bars but can recover when the brake cools down. If it ever happens to you or anyone you know do not ride the bike until the fluid has been replaced, it has not fixed itself!

After Andy's recent incident I decided to replace the fluid in my track day Honda CBR400RR when I got home. When I removed the cap from the front master cylinder, I found a 20mm long chalky lump (presumably made from the absorbed water and minerals in the brake fluid). I carefully removed the lump and bled both brakes with new DOT4 fluid. I noticed that the new brake fluid container had a 2021 date stamp, so I checked my spare opened brake fluid, 2011! This meant that the last time I replaced the fluid was at least 10 years ago. I threw it away. This meant that must the same must be true for my Suzuki SV650S, so I did that as well.

My new bottle of brake fluid cost less than £5, which did both bikes, so it seems to be good value for money to me.

Service intervals on cars and bikes say to replace the brake fluid at regular intervals.

NOTE - For bikes with ABS you may need to take it to a dealer as the ABS pump may not bleed by simple means and may need to be connected to a diagnostic tool

When did you last replace the brake fluid in your bikes?



FIRST JOB

David Sexton

I never thought about what job I wanted; I was going to be a Formula 1 driver! Careers weren't discussed at my school in the early 1970s. The Richard Hale school was a grammar school and I presume it considered that its mission was to send all its pupils to university after O and A levels.

It wasn't discussed at home either, although my dad arranged a visit to an optician. I also went with a friend and his older brother to an open day in the engineering department of University College, London which was interesting. Some friends knew what they wanted to do, one was going to be a commercial pilot, and another joined the army at 16. I just drifted along, without a care in the world.

I was in the middle stream at school and enjoyed science subjects. In the final year before O levels they started a crash course O level in Advanced Mathematics. Up to this point we had been taught Modern Mathematics but apparently this didn't prepare us for A level science subjects. I struggled with the Advanced Mathematics and should have sought help. The school didn't have a careers department just a few leaflets in the library. I failed the O level and suddenly I was not allowed to study science at A level and would have to leave.

My new stepfather Brian asked me what I was interested in, which was cars and the moped we had rebuilt in the cellar for me to ride when I was 16. Between us we decided that an engineering apprenticeship would be a good idea. He swung into action chasing application forms, as it was rather late to apply, which I completed, and he took me to the interviews.

I gained a technical apprenticeship at the Austin motor company in Birmingham. My mum and stepfather took me up on the Sunday before, with me, my moped and worldly possessions in the back of the car, to the YMCA where the Austin had arranged for me. I think they must have driven the route I needed to take on the Monday to the apprentice training school.

On the first day 100 apprentices (all male) turned up, mostly locals and some international. The first and most important thing we were given was a map of the site as it was 3 miles long and employed over 30 000 people and had its own internal bus service. Induction lasted a week with explanations of what would happen during our apprenticeship, company rules and what is now called Health and Safety. They scared us with films about accidents and potential consequences which has served me well for 45 years in industry, probably saving my life or at least serious injury.

We were split into three groups; some went to Aston university. The rest were split into two groups, one group went into the training school to learn to use hand and machine tools and the other went to Bromsgrove college to study engineering theory. The groups swapped over after for 6 months. The theory group studied for City and Guilds, ONC and HND in Mechanical engineering where they also had to teach us the Advanced mathematics we didn't learn at school.

It was a good place to study engineering as the factory produced compete cars from design, raw materials casting, forging, sheet metal pressing and body assembly, machining, trim, paint, and final

assembly on site, which is called vertical integration and very unusual now as companies tend to be more specialist.

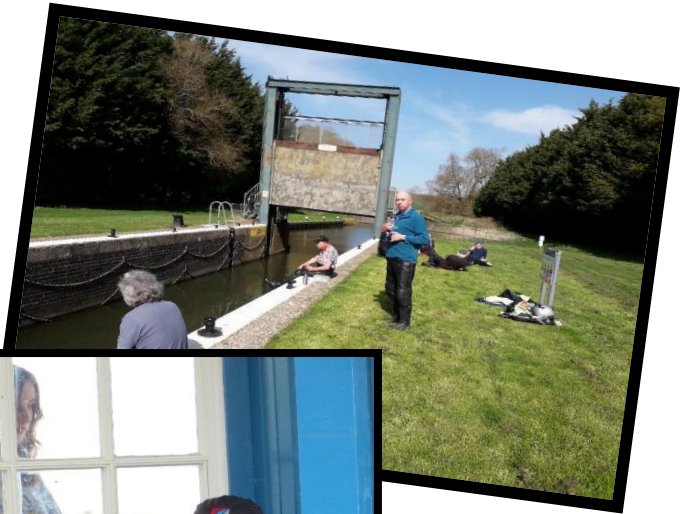
The apprenticeship lasted five years, included moves to various departments after year one, controlled by the training officer. Some I can remember include the Work engineers during the 3 day week, trying to keep the factory running, machine shop, engine rectification, gearbox assembly and quality. I managed to arrange a move into Engine development by knocking on the door and asking, followed by other vehicle development departments where I obtained a job when I completed my apprenticeship.

Like with Dudley's article, the Austin factory has been flattened after years of under investment and terrible industrial relations destroyed the indigenous car industry. It gave me the foundation for an for a 45 year engineering career and hobbies maintaining and racing motorcycles, cars and bicycles.

RIDE OUT DESTINATIONS

Alan Evans

A Sample of Ride Out Destination's.





CLUB SHOW PLANNING

Mark Coningsby

Have you ever wondered just what is required to make a 3-hour bike show in the middle of summer potentially (Mark hasn't managed to plan the weather yet) raise significant sums of money for local charities? Here follows Mark's hastily written notes on the subject: (ED)

Timeline

June

- Day after the show / that same night – social media event creation of the next bike show.
- The day after tidying and cleaning of the sites is required. Basically, the reverse of set up (see last page below).
- Couple of days after the show sort through the show equipment, secure safely in storage (stored FOC). Check for items that have run out, broken, or just “gone” and list.
- Collect all signs from roadsides.
- Catering donation.
- Set date for shakedown – typically the next club night, but I don't think this works as new members come along and just hear a lot of show talk, rather than a club meeting.
- Suggest date for presentation evening and concourse. The recommended date is always soon after the show and in the summer months.
- Once date is agreed, communicate said date to the chosen charity contacts and invite their members along. It's sometime prudent to also personally invite any person's that contributed greatly to the event that are not part of the club e.g., family, friends, and businesses.

July (typically)

- Following presentation, social media photos of the presentation, amounts raised and where it all went should be made.
- Send “save the date” for next year emails to this years and any other exhibitors. They already have this date from previous communication, however it's good to remind them and thank them all again. Each show is the third Wednesday of June.

January or Dec

- January – revise google form for changes of information, costs date etc etc.
- January – check terms and conditions.
- Read and check that the BMF affiliation continues to cover our event.

-January – typically mid / late Jan, to allow the Christmas period and the “sales” etc. to ease off, contact exhibitors. Send google booking form, terms and conditions, FAQ (there will be lots of out of offices and emails that will bounce back to you).

-There will be a steady stream of questions and emails about the show, payments, cheques to give to treasurer etc.

-At this time, if you wish, book the following:

Medics - — to be paid 48 hours before event

Toilets - — paid for when ordered

Skip - — paid for when ordered

Coaches - — paid for after the event

Confirm date with Food vendors - Confirm date with Eternit

Text and confirm about PA system.

Remind club members of the June Date!

The Third Wednesday of January, post about the Show on the FB page of a 6-month reminder. Share two various local groups and clubs' pages.

Each month post about the show. Who has booked etc. etc. — this level of "advertising" and personal interaction with peoples comments and posts shows how personable the event is.

March

- Check over the Google spreadsheet from the form. You will need to make sure that there's no doubling up on trophy payments or requests. This can become a little difficult, so daily checks are needed.

At the same time as above, remove the various options from the google booking form for

There will likely be one or twenty wrong emails that have bounced back or gone nowhere. This will require some time and effort to find the right people, either by calls or emails, as to who to book for the show.

- I suggest advising everyone of a cut-off date for payments. Setting it two weeks before the show, tends to work.

- Liaise with SERV that they would be willing to do car park duties again.

April

- order stickers for signs - make sure to get the right size to cover the last ones!

- Pull out all signs (made easier if sorted after the last show) clean and reapply new stickers

- Check all hand stamps are working

- Check all fire extinguishers have pressure

- Check number of / order meal vouchers

- ._Check line spray
- ._Create new poster and share

_ Remind club members of the run up to the show

May early May to be sure -

- Order "best " Trophies. f80 from <http://trophystore.co.uk/>
- Reprint A3 display signs for the "best" display area
- Contact Steve Coningsby re use of Whaddon Green for the Park & Ride to get it cut by Pete Coningsby
- ._ Check how Eternit "looks" what needs cutting etc.
- Purchase raffle tickets - enough for Helmet Park and raffle
- ._ Most businesses will require an invoice and will chase for these. Best way to not be overwhelmed is to just do them all at once, rather than each time one asks.

Throughout May check payments are being made! Chase if required.

Mid - May:

- Set timing out for the set-up days, when, who, how
- ._Advise that from 2022 the setup is the afternoon / evening before or in the days leading up. The rationale is that not many club members can assist on these, daytime, but if set up in the evening more would be able to, thus making the process a lot easier and not as exhausting for all involved. - Email club members asking who will be available on the week for set up and on the evening of the show. Create lists and allocation of duties.

Between May Bank Holiday and the end of May, wait until grasses are cut before putting signs out. Put them out to soon and they will be removed / stolen

Between May and June, the FB page gets busy. Daily checks and replies to comments should be made!

June (2 weeks before the show)

- Discuss layout with Ken and Steve
- Show walk around with club — First Wednesday of the month
- Check with Treasurer the show float. £1000 - £500 in 5s the rest in £1 and £2 Push Facebook posts a lot!!
- Letter to residents informing them of the disturbance on show day

Week of the show:

Sort Show barn — this is a work area for Mark, so tables, stock, packing equipment needs to be moved and stored out of the way, safely.

- Sort all exhibitors into lists for Ken to know who is coming and how many, but also sizes. Some exhibitors like to be in the same spot each year but are told this might not happen.
- Check Eternit bar staff are okay with use of the safe

-Purchase waters etc. for club members — Eternet take what they give us off their donation!

Show Set up

Ideally set up main elements two days before, with finishing elements on the day.

I am going to strongly suggest we set up on an evening / Afternoon. Perhaps the Sunday afternoon before could be an idea? With finalising parts in the week.

Allocation of duties comes down to who has responded to the emails in May and subsequent emails.

-The setting up of the show is very dependent on the weather.

-It is now a two-day process. However, this is only as it allows members not to get too exhausted setting up in one day. If the weather is good, and there enough people, most of the work can be done in one day.

However, too hot and everyone gets exhausted, too wet and we risk chewing up the grass. No one wants to set up in the rain, so getting the best time and day can be a logistical headache. -Trailers will need to be borrowed from Pete Coningsby.

Day of the show

With hopefully large amounts of things set up prior to the day, the finer elements can be dealt with

-Collection of tables and chairs.

-Collection of fencing.

Bags in bins (before the day they might blow away!)

-Set up of helmet park, Club Stand, Medics gazebo, "best in show" gazebos.

-C E will sort himself out with PA set up

-Signs around the villages to direct traffic

From 1700hrs —

-Ideally members are ready to go. However, we all have lives and this is where, through years of experience, it is a "allocate by the seat of your pants" event*

Listing various areas does work, but allocating people, unless you know they are going to be there, doesn't. Happy to discuss and advise.

At the End of the evening all monies should be secured by the Treasurer.

Ices and Drinks should be approached for their donations (typically collected by Mark or Steve).

All bins emptied and as much tidied away as possible and placed inside the large club gazebo or helmet park.

ADDENBROOKES TOY RUN

Steve Griffiths

2021 Cambridge Toy Run

In aid of Addenbrookes Hospital

This was my second time on this event, I have to say it was as good as the first time, although apparently not as well attended this year (350 Bikes) but that may be as a result of the wet roads and overcast weather threatening rain. It was also the last day of the Bike show at the NEC.

The day started with a meet up at Tesco's in Royston at 8:30 and then a steady ride to the Pergola Restaurant near Little Eversden on the Barton Road. A great little Italian restaurant that has supported this event for years. After parking up there was plenty of time for a chat over a brew and breakfast roll, with other club members arriving to join us, around 15 members approx. I don't think you will ever see such a large gathering of Santa's and Elves anywhere else, with many of the bikes decorated as well, it truly is a spectacle to behold!!

There followed a briefing by the organisers and the police and then it was "Gentlemen Start your engines" time for the fun to begin.

Basically, rules of the road are adapted to suit a large convoy of noisy happy bikers being escorted by Police motorcyclists and event marshals. We leave in convoy two abreast and stop for nothing! Red lights waiting traffic all ignored unless unsafe to do so!

As we headed to Cambridge people come out of their houses and wait along the route to see us go by, cars coming the other way with drivers and passengers waving and filming us, most with big smiles on their faces. For us the order of the day is ride and enjoy yourself – revving of the engine sounding of the horn all encouraged as is waving at the onlookers. The route takes us into Cambridge up past the Fitzwilliam Museum and then Downing Street and St Andrews Road onto Hills Road passing the Christmas shoppers most of which join in the fun. We then go round Addenbrookes onto Trumpington park and ride where the charities await our arrival and after parking up the present giving starts.

The Red Hen Project were on hand to receive the presents into large dumpy bags with three large transit vans ready to take the goodies away to be distributed to Addenbrookes and the children that they help in the community.

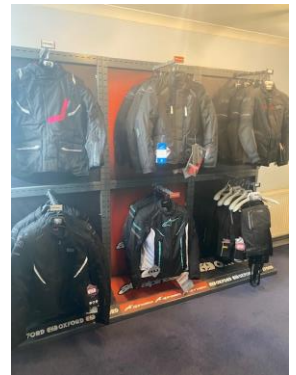
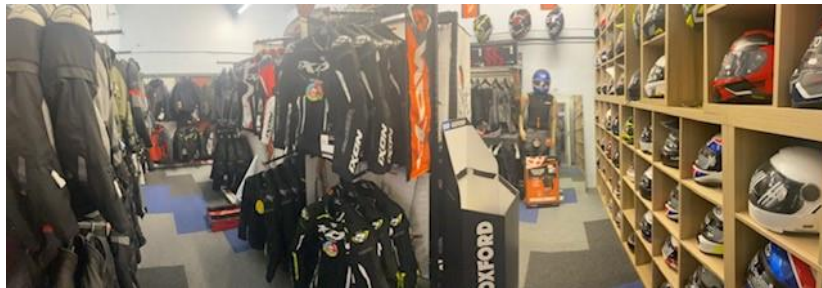
All in all it's a few hours out of your day, but – it really does give you a great buzz and feel good factor and gets you in the mood for Christmas all in the aid of charity.....



LCI MOTORCYCLING

Ben Lawrence

If you fancy a local ride out club member and Camrider Ben Lawrence would be happy to welcome you at LCI Motorcycling. Located a minute's ride from Mc Donald's Sawston the shop offers a range of products and services. Currently there are no refreshments available onsite although there are many options in the local vicinity. (ED)



LCI LCI
Motorcycling

Unit 25, Eastern Counties Leather Industrial Estate
London Road
Sawston, CB22 3EE
01223 789858

Full range of clothing, helmets, gloves, and boots.
Parts, servicing, and tyres also available.

lcimotorcycling.com

Open Mon – Sat 9.00am – 6.00pm



FOR THE NEXT ISSUE



Remember it's your newsletter so it only works if you submit items.

The next quarterly issue is March 18 2022 so I look forward to articles of interest etc.

Please send articles in word format to:

keithbaker5@btinternet.com