

THE TRECKER



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Editor's Corner

As the year end approaches, I've been looking back, not just over the past 12 months but over the 11 years or so since we joined Suntreckers. Not a huge expanse of time, but in many ways the world now seems a very different place. We'd never heard of Covid and although Russia may have been flexing its muscles in Crimea, there was no major war on the edge of Europe. We were also 11 years younger, had a bit more energy and were excited about getting involved with our club, making new friends and discovering lots of new (to us) rally sites.

I'm pleased to say we've got a lot out of our membership and can honestly say that our lives have been richer because of the many new friends we've made and good times we've had on rallies in the UK and overseas. We've also taken the plunge and volunteered as rally officers on a few occasions and have always found it rewarding.

Much has been written elsewhere on the subject of declining rally attendance and cancellations and I've no wish to add to that here. What I do want to highlight though is the urgent need to appoint a new Rally Organiser. Most of you will know by now that Martin has decided to stand down for personal reasons. Although he has agreed to complete the 2026 Yearbook, we need a volunteer now so that Martin is available to assist with the handover of his duties. **This role is absolutely vital to the existence of Suntreckers – if there are no more rallies organised beyond the end of 2026 then there will be no Suntreckers in 2027 and beyond. Please contact any committee member as soon as possible to find out more or offer your services for this essential task.**

Just in case any of you had forgotten, it's now time to renew your Suntreckers membership. Unless you joined after 1 August 2025, or you have already renewed, your current membership will expire on 31 December 2025. If you don't renew before the end of this year you will have to pay the £10 rejoining fee in addition to your usual £30 annual subscription.

I think that's all from me this year, so all that remains is to wish you all a Merry Christmas and a happy and healthy New Year and we look forward to seeing many of you again in 2026.

Geoff Heyes - Editor

Chairman's Chat

The summer is well and truly behind us now and temperatures have plummeted. We can take time to reflect on our adventures this year. Jackie and I attended a number of rallies plus the Gala and we enjoyed seeing old friends and making new ones. However, there were many rallies we didn't go to that we will try to make next year. How many did you go to? Was it your usual locations or somewhere different? Whatever your winter holds, be it some travel in search of winter sun or some sort of hibernation, keep safe and we look forward to seeing as many of you as we can in 2026.

Alan Ingram - Chairman

Rally Organiser's Report

As some of you may be aware I am not continuing with my Suntreckers membership. Our youngest grandchildren are enjoying fishing, which is a hobby I have done since being about seven years old. As they are school age, they can only go at the weekend and I want to have the pleasure of going fishing with them. I think they actually do like spending time with their grandad.

Now for the rally programme: I've arranged four continental rallies, starting in northern Spain at the end of May and heading back through France to finish in Brittany in late June. Hopefully dogs are allowed on all of them. Please try to book early to avoid disappointment and not suffer the cancellations we had to endure last year.

Now for the UK rallies. I've had to do a bit of shuffling backwards and forwards with the dates, ideally to get two rallies per week. Bank Holidays are proving to be more difficult with the clubs because their members want to be there as well, resulting in fewer spaces for us. This year the BareWest event had an effect on our rallies and I've worked round next year's dates to get some suitable rallies booked around that time.

I can see as time goes on the clubs are going to be more demanding about rally reservations. Yorkshire Sun requests a £50 deposit one month before the rally date and now Broadlands is no longer reserving spaces exclusively for us, plus they are doing online bookings. I envisage more clubs becoming stricter with their bookings as it is important revenue for them and they can't afford to turn away people with the hope that Suntreckers will take all of the reserved places. The commercial sites are already doing this - Dolcoed did not have any places left for some members who tried to book at the last minute this year.

I'm not trying to be negative but just want to make you aware of the trends. When you get the Yearbook pages, please try to get your first three months booked as soon as you can, or even better the whole rally season to ensure that you have plenty of rallies to go to and we don't get too many cancellations.

As for myself, I will do all the rally pages to ensure that the Yearbook is available and when someone takes over the Rally Organiser position, I will explain what I have done and why, as well as giving them a few pointers.

Finally, as for me - gone fishing!

Martin Hodgson - Rally Organiser

Rally Reports

Rally 58 – Woodside Field

This was so nearly a rally that didn't happen! Firstly the Rally Officers, Terry & Lesley, had to cry off for health reasons, our thoughts are with them*. With only a couple of bookings received along with some prospective members coming as a taster to Suntreckers, who would take it on? We decided to step up and accept the challenge. Some late bookings came in so things were starting to look up, all we needed was a bit of good weather.

We were at Western Sunfolk immediately prior to the rally and the weather was worse than abysmal, so we were a little worried - but all turned out fine. Yes, we did have some rain but the sun shone too and we could enjoy the outdoors and several of the usual Suntrecker activities prevailed. In the evenings we gathered in the gazebo provided by the site owner so it was full-on days throughout the rally. Lyn also created a new game called 'hunt the dressing gown belt' which many found amusing but I don't think it will catch on for future rallies!

We also ventured off site to visit a couple of local hostelrys for group meals - with liquid refreshments of choice. The taster rally resulted in one new member joining us as well as another potential member, so the goal was achieved. Thank you to all who attended making it an enjoyable time.



Sunshine is always welcome, even if it is sometimes a bit too bright!

Suntreckers had recently purchased a new smaller banner which had its first outing at BareCamp a couple of weeks prior to the rally. With the sun shining we took the opportunity to show it off with some of the ralliers.

Alan and Jackie

* Note – we are delighted to report that as of the beginning of December, Lesley is feeling much better. All being well she and Terry will be running the Woodside rallies again next year.

Rally 59 – Telford

The warmth of the welcome at Telford Naturist Club certainly made up for the rather overcast October weather.



A happy group of Treckers enjoying the Telford ambience.



Looking a bit chilly for the boules competition.

Nineteen of us gathered for Rally 59 and it wasn't long before we were enjoying our daily coffee mornings in the fabulous club house. Telford laid on hot suppers for Friday and Saturday as well a Sunday roast with desserts for only £5 a head, all washed down with cost-price drinks from the bar.

With prizes flowing for the boules competition (organised and won by Jeff – well done!), the all-singing, all-dancing quizzes and a fun Sunday evening sing-a-long I think we can safely say a good time was had by all.

Meanwhile the sauna and jacuzzi kept us warm, with two sessions of aqua-fit led by Telford club member, Lyn.

Ed and Margaret – Rally Officers

Changes to rally fees and rally officer's allowance

Having received feedback about our current rally fees and the amount rally officers are allowed to claim per night, the committee has decided to make some changes which will come into effect at the start of 2026. We think that the changes reflect where Suntreckers is today and that they will be well received.

The rally fee and how it is split between the rally officer and club funds has hardly changed in the last 20 years, possibly longer. It was originally introduced to reimburse the rally officer for postage, telephone calls and other administrative costs before the rally, with any surplus being available for spending during the rally, for providing tea and coffee etc. It goes back to the days when communication was done by post or telephone calls from a landline – very different to today, when digital communication is the norm and almost everyone has a mobile phone with inclusive minutes.

These days very little is spent on administration, but frequently much more is being spent on provisions for the rally, including tea, coffee, cakes and prizes. The changes explained below will give rally officers more opportunity to cover these expenses for the benefit of the ralliers.

Rally fee

This will increase from £7 to £8, from which the rally officer will receive £5 and £3 will go to club funds. Currently the rally officer receives £2.50 with £4.50 going to the club.

Rally Officer daily allowance

The allowance used to be £7 and was increased to £10 in 2025. It will now revert to £7. It should be mentioned here that the daily allowance is there to be claimed if desired. Many rally officers do not claim anything, some claim for every night they can and others in between claim a portion relevant to the amount they have spent for the benefit of the ralliers. There is no right or wrong, but it does help to keep overall club costs down if rally officers do not claim the whole amount, especially on rallies with minimal attendance.

Suntreckers Committee

A warm welcome

Let's give a warm welcome to the following members who've joined us recently:

| | | |
|------------------|----------------|-----------|
| Neil & Karon B | Norfolk | 03-Sep-25 |
| Graham & Ann H | Glos | 19-Sep-25 |
| John & Gail L | Monmouthshire | 27-Sep-25 |
| Nigel F | Worcestershire | 29-Sep-25 |
| Nigel & Jacqui G | Wiltshire | 30-Sep-25 |
| John & Claire M | Glos | 28-Oct-25 |
| George R | Hampshire | 25-Nov-25 |

Look forward to meeting you on a rally soon.

And finally...

Members' contributions for *The Trecker* are always welcome, as are photographs, which should be sent as separate files and not embedded in a document. Please remember that you need permission from everyone in your photograph.

Please send all contributions to thetrecker@suntreckers.org.uk

Thank you to John for sending this newsletter by email, as well as to John and Lyn for printing and sending out the paper version. Also, thanks to Steve for putting it on the website.