



The BMW Club
United Kingdom & Ireland



The BMW Club Southern Section

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BMW Club 75th Anniversary Rally

Words by Alison Bailey

Photos by Lesley Smith, Erica Body & Alison Bailey

Date: 21st August 2026

BMW Club 75th Anniversary Rally – A Weekend to Remember!

What do you get when you put 38 Southern Section members, a university campus, a few hundred motorcycles, some fantastic roads, a Yellow Coat, silly games, a rock band and rather a lot of cake and chocolate into one weekend?

A BMW Club 75th Anniversary Rally, of course!

And what a weekend it was!



Friday 21st August – The Journey North

Four bikes and seven Southern Section members met outside the White Hart Pub in Stockbridge on Friday morning, ready for a scenic ride north to Harper Adams University in Newport, Shropshire, for the BMW Club's 75th Anniversary Rally.

The weather was beautiful, although thankfully a little cooler than some of our recent rides. A much more comfortable temperature for riding, and nobody was complaining!

We wound our way through Hampshire and Wiltshire before reaching Lechlade in Gloucestershire, on the edge of the Cotswolds, where we stopped at Hillier Garden Centre for refreshments.

From there we continued through the Cotswolds, although Burford was extremely congested. One to remember for the journey home—or more accurately, one to avoid!

We carried on through Gloucestershire to The Land Oak in Kidderminster, where we stopped for a rather late lunch before continuing through Worcestershire towards Harper Adams.

We arrived at around 4:30pm, where we were greeted by John and Anne Martin, who were doing a brilliant job as car park attendants. Once checked into our rooms, it was time to head down to the bar, where we met up with more Southern Section friends and members from other sections.

The evening meal was served in true university style—serve-yourself canteen fashion—but the food was delicious, with plenty of choice. After dinner we headed back to the bar and spent the evening chatting with friends old and new from all over the country.

Saturday 22nd August – Bikes, Backmarkers & a Bit of Chaos!

Saturday dawned bright and beautiful, starting with a hearty cooked breakfast. What else would you expect before a day on the bikes?

Eleven bikes gathered for a rideout organised by Mike and Lesley, with Chris and Alison volunteering as backmarkers.

Our job was to keep everyone together.

It didn't quite work out like that! 🤪



We set off on the circular route that Mike and Lesley had carefully planned and we had tested a couple of weeks earlier. It took us through some beautiful villages, including Shawbury and Whitchurch, before heading towards Lost Barn Coffee Roasters in Malpas for lunch.

When we arrived, we discovered that two bikes were missing.

A quick phone call established that all was well, and our missing riders eventually joined us for lunch. So, technically, we hadn't lost anyone—we'd just temporarily misplaced them!



After lunch we set off for the second part of the route, which was every bit as enjoyable as the first. Beautiful roads, stunning scenery and plenty of open countryside, with wonderful views across the surrounding fields.

We passed through Eccleshall, a lovely village where we had stayed while testing the route, before eventually making it back to Harper Adams.

This time, we arrived all together and without losing anyone. Result!

One of our riding companions, John from the Scottish Section, sent Mike a lovely message afterwards:

"Mike and Lesley, thank you for a great weekend. I definitely think you Southern lot are the most sociable people I have ever known. Your whole group was so welcoming to me, even the ones I hadn't met before."

Thank you, John! We were delighted you enjoyed the weekend and felt so welcome. You're now officially honorary Southern Section—although we're not sure if there's a membership form for that!



After another excellent evening meal, it was time for the main entertainment. Before Chippy took centre stage, we were treated to a fantastic performance from six members of the Western Section, who donned their Village People outfits and gave us a brilliant rendition of YMCA. They were so good they were persuaded to perform it twice—and judging by the applause, nobody was complaining.



Saturday Night – Hi-De-Hi Meets Play Your Cards Right!

Our very own Southern Section Chairman, **Chippy**, had been given the job of providing the entertainment—and he certainly didn't disappoint.

He donned his **Yellow Coat** and went into full *Hi-De-Hi!* mode, complete with his assistant Lesley, and organised a selection of wonderfully silly games.

Members from the Southern, Western and other sections were persuaded—or perhaps encouraged under extreme pressure—to take part, resulting in plenty of laughter and some highly competitive silliness!



After a short break, Chippy had his very own Brucy Bonus moment and hosted a game of Play Your Cards Right.

The prizes?

Boxes of chocolates!

Needless to say, suddenly everyone was taking the game very seriously.

"Chippy, it was nice to see you, to see you... nice!"

A huge thank you to Chippy and Lesley for putting so much effort into making the evening such fun.



Sunday 23rd August – A Day Off the Bikes

Sunday started, as all good rally days should, with another hearty cooked breakfast.

Today was a day off the bikes, so after breakfast we met up with friends for a Biker Down course held in one of the university lecture rooms.

The first session was presented by the fire service and hosted by the police, covering what to do when you arrive at the scene of an accident, including setting the scene, calling the emergency services and assessing casualties.

I was there.

I just can't remember any of it!

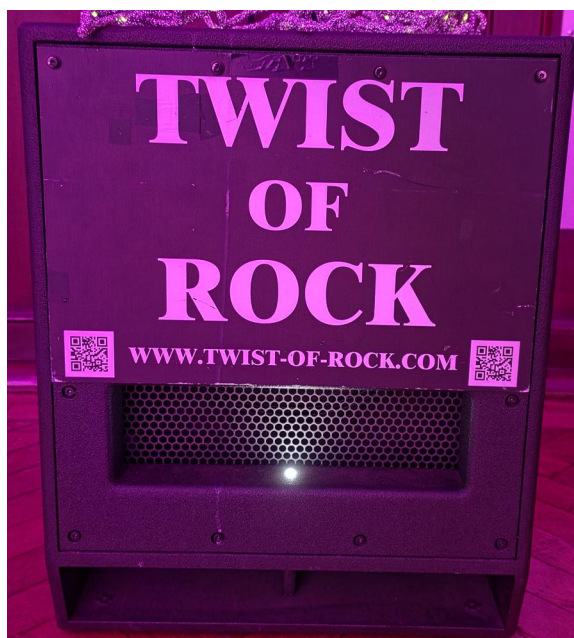
The ladies will know why! 😊

The second session covered first aid specifically for motorcyclists, while a third course covered making yourself more visible to other road users and riding safely. We didn't attend the third session, but there was certainly plenty to learn for those who did.

The rest of the day was spent wandering around the site and exploring the trade stands. The Roadlok stand seemed to be doing a roaring trade, with three members of our group purchasing new locks.

And then there was Chris, clearly overcome by the excitement of the shopping experience, who became the last of the big spenders and treated himself to a curly luminous wire for the princely sum of £4.99.

Money well spent, apparently!



Sunday evening brought another highlight, with live entertainment from Twist of Rock. They played an excellent mix of rock and pop, including songs from ABBA, Queen, The Cult, Journey and many more.

They were fantastic, and the dance floor was certainly getting plenty of use.



Halfway through the evening there was a raffle, where John Martin did particularly well, winning himself a ground anchor. Not quite as glamorous as a holiday in the Maldives, perhaps, but considerably more useful for a motorcyclist!



Monday 24th August – Homeward Bound

Sadly, Monday morning arrived all too quickly.

With check-out by 9:00am, it was an early breakfast, bags loaded onto the bikes and time to point ourselves south once again.

The journey home was enjoyable, with a couple of stops for refreshments along the way. We deliberately took a different route to avoid Burford, where traffic had given us quite enough of a headache on the way up.

We travelled through Stow-on-the-Wold, which was busy too, but thankfully nowhere near as bad as Burford.

Eventually, all four bikes and seven tired but happy riders arrived safely back home at around 4:00pm.

Then we crashed!

What a Weekend!

The BMW Club's 75th Anniversary Rally was a fantastic weekend from start to finish. It was wonderful to see around 38 Southern Section members there, as well as meeting so many members from other sections across the country.

There was great riding, good food, plenty of laughter, excellent entertainment and, most importantly, lots of friendship and camaraderie. A massive thank you to the National Committee for organising such a brilliant rally, and particularly to Jim Bettley for all his hard work behind the scenes. Thank you also to our very own Chippy and Lesley for providing Saturday night's entertainment and giving us all something to laugh about! And, of course, a huge thank you to Mike and Lesley for organising the routes, leading the rideout and once again giving us some fantastic roads to enjoy.

It was great to see so many Southern Section members supporting the rally and to spend time with friends from around the country.

Here's to the next 75 years of BMW Club adventures!

And hopefully next time we can keep all the bikes together... although we're not making any promises! 🏍️ 😊

