



The BMW Club
United Kingdom & Ireland



The BMW Club Southern Section

Beemers' Picnic

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"If you go down to the woods today, you'd better go on a bike....."



When Mike offered to lead a rideout we had no idea where we would take everyone or what the theme of the ride would be, but the amazing weather of this summer provided the ideal solution – a picnic!

But where? Our routes would often take us to the beautiful roads and countryside around Salisbury Plain in Wiltshire, but we thought a change was in order so a search on Google for a suitable picnic site led us to the Staunton Country Park in Havant. After checking it out we decided that it would be ideal – trees for shade, a small café for those who didn't want to bring their own food, and clean toilets! Destination decided, it was fairly easy to plan a route that we thought everyone would enjoy.

So, on a bright sunny Sunday morning 11 bikes and 15 people gathered at Aylings Garden Centre in Trotton for a quick cuppa before we set off on the A272 through Midhurst.



Our route took us on the B roads through Lickfold, Fisherstreet and Plaistow, then back to the A272 near Billingshurst. Back on B roads we rode through Adversane, Bradford Bridge, Thakeham and Abingworth to Storrington.

Having negotiated the notorious heavy traffic in Storrington, we headed south through Amberley to join the A29, where we stopped for a short break to stretch our legs and re-hydrate at the famous Whitehill car park – a popular bikers’ gathering place. The café here is currently being rebuilt and expanded, but there is a burger van in the meantime.

Suitably refreshed we re-joined the A29 for a few miles before once more taking B roads through Heath End and Graffam and the A286 back towards Midhurst. Joining the A272 briefly, we turned off towards South Harting, West Marden, and through Rowlands Castle to Staunton Country Park, just north of Havant.



We'd had a little over 70 miles of very varied roads, from traffic-free B roads winding through the small villages, open fields and shady woodlands of the South Downs National Park where we encountered several horse riders and groups of cyclists, to faster A roads with more traffic and even traffic queues in places – the sunshine brings everybody out!



At the country park we realised just how much you can carry hidden on a BMW. From top boxes and panniers an amazing array of folding chairs, picnic blankets and food containers appeared, to be replaced by helmets and jackets as we thankfully dis-robed after a very warm ride.

Having found a nice, almost flat, space under a shady tree we spent a very pleasant couple of hours relaxing and chatting before reluctantly deciding that it was time to leave the shade and brave the hot sunshine again for the journey home.



This was the last rideout on this year's calendar and we certainly ended on a high note. The warm weather, the wonderful roads and scenery, but most of all the lovely people made this a really enjoyable day. Thanks everyone who joined us and especially to Chris and Alison for acting as tailenders to make sure that we didn't lose any one on the way and to Nicholas who came across on the ferry from his home on the Isle Wight.

