

**The Future Development of the
Motoring Organisations' Land Access
and Rights Association**

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October 1989

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1. Introduction

1.1. I was appointed in June 1989 to carry put an appraisal of the work of MOLARA, including the problems it faces, and to suggest future directions for the Association. The detailed brief, agreed in discussions with the Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer, was to:

1. assess MOLARA's development and achievements since inception;
2. report on the external challenges facing the Association;
3. assess the relationships of member organisations to the Association, and suggest means of achieving closer relationships;
4. assess MOLARA's relationships with external organisations, especially the Sports Council; and
5. recommend a plan of action to help MOLARA in protecting and developing motorsports and motor recreation.

1.2. The work proceeded by conducting "surgery" meetings with representatives of each MOLARA member organisation. Each was also invited to bring a local or non-MOLARA member to generate a wider grass roots range of views. Discussion at the meetings centred around a list of eight questions prepared by myself. I also held discussions with past and present Motorsports Liaison Officers of the Sports Council, the first Chairman of MOLARA, and the officer employed on the Northern Motorsports Project (Appendix 1 lists the persons and organisations involved). In addition I had access to the minutes of MOLARA meetings, and all of the reports of the Principal Officer. A number of case history files were also looked at. As a consultant to the Sports Council, and a Chartered Town Planner I have, of course, also had a number of contacts with MOLARA since its inception. I would, at this point, like to thank Duncan Gordon and Alan Kind for their assistance in providing information, and to MOLARA Committee members who, at no little trouble to themselves, came to Rugby or London to see me.

1.3. The Report follows the order in the detailed brief (as above) and contains six sections. Section 6 constitutes the proposals, and also functions as a shortened form of the report. The term "motorsports" is used throughout - it refers to both competitive motorsports and motorised recreation.

2. Development and Achievements

2.1. MOLARA was established in July 1986 as a non-corporate, non-profit making combine of motorcar and motor cycle organisations. Its basic objectives (stated in paragraph 5.1. of the Constitution) are to protect, pursue and promote the interests of motorsport ... "particularly access to the countryside ... and (to) further protect the use of vehicular Rights of Way for recreational purposes."

2.2. The Constitution also lists detailed aims as follows, (my slightly abbreviated wording - for full wording see Appendix 2):

1. Retain the use of existing Rights of Way, and monitor any changes.
2. Represent member organisations on committees and at inquiries.
3. Develop land and access for motorsports.
4. Monitor environmental problems and advise accordingly.
5. Promote regional liaison groups to prevent site mis-use, solve land problems and demonstrate good practice.
6. Provide an advisory service to motorsports centres and organisations.
7. Encourage local authorities and others to make provision for motorsports.
8. Promote a responsible attitude to the use of the countryside in trade adverts and the motorsports press.
9. Issue guidance to user groups through Governing Bodies and others.

2.3. MOLARA's current activities are primarily financed by donations from member organisations, totalling circa £25,000 per annum. A Principal Officer is employed by the Association. He operates as a self-employed Consultant on an indefinite contract whose terms are negotiable every three years. In addition the Association utilises administrative support from the Land Access Bureau, a Department of the ACU. This also deals with all statutory consultations received by the ACU on Rights of Way matters. A full-time Officer, and further clerical support, (to a total value of circa £12,000), is provided by the ACU for this purpose and for MOLARA work.

2.4. Since its inception the Association has pursued a fairly open-ended brief. A paper prepared by the Principal Officer in June 1986 listed nine short-term and 15 long-term "projects and priorities". Most of these have subsequently been tackled in some way. After only three years the range of activities pursued, particularly for such a small organisation, has been extremely wide. This has created, for the resources deployed, extensive exposure for the Association. A presence has been established as a responsible umbrella body representing the interests of motorsports.

2.5. In order to give an impression of what has been achieved, I would instance the following:

1. the promotion of motorsports generally; through the mounting of a MOLARA stand at motoring and agricultural shows; mounting of a conference, and speaking at other conferences and seminars; television and radio appearances; press releases and brief articles;
2. advice on the development and design of trail parks, particularly to local authorities;
3. the dissemination of information and intelligence to members on a regular basis, including the extensive use of press cuttings, photocopies, articles etc.
4. involvement in National Park issues, especially in the Lake District, the Yorkshire Moors and the Yorkshire Dales; comments on National Park Plans; and a proposed Lake District Private Bill;
5. advice and MOLARA-written codes of conduct; for riders in the countryside generally; for green lanes, and on the Ridgeway specifically; sponsorship for leaflets has been obtained; and signs for voluntary limitations on the use of green lanes have been printed;
6. mediation over the vehicular use of green lanes (eg Yorkshire Dales National Park, the Ridgeway, Monks Trod); advice on re-classification issues under the 1981 Countryside and Wildlife Act; Enduros in Wales and competitions on By-Ways;
7. involvement in a wide range of site-related conflicts, loss of motorsports sites, noise complaints, Article 4 Directions etc. The Sreatley moto cross site is a good example of this category;
8. representation through Committees; eg MOLARA representation on House of Commons Rights of Way Committee (Hazlehurst);
9. responses to inaccurate media reportage, and sensationalism in the trade press (eg the Royal Society for Nature Conservation and "off-road damage"); articles in Trials and Moto Cross News..

The list could easily be extended. It represents a transformation of the position occupied by motorsports only four years ago. It is easy to take for granted what has been achieved, the networks that have been built up, and the co-operation and effort that has been expended to make the above things happen. However, in looking to the future there are always lessons to be learned from past activity. The remainder of this section discusses some of these.

2.6. The selection of which issues should be tackled by the Principal Officer has not been guided by firm instructions from the Committee. Indeed in his first End of Year Report the Principal Officer notes the pattern of time and resource use as "almost arbitrary".

Nevertheless a structure has emerged. An early emphasis on wheels parks has reduced as the ACU Training Division has become more involved. Rights of Way and four wheel drive matters have occupied most time, especially the subject of damage to, and conflict on, green lanes. This is, however, seen as a minority interest by a number of members of the Association. Between 1987 and 1988 the amount of time spent on conferences, a major aspect of promotion, reduced.

Principal Officers' Estimate of Time Utilisation

	Per Cent	
	First Year	Second Year
Wheel parks, urban	30	20
Rights of Way, green lanes	30	35
Competitive clubs	20	25
Conferences	10	5
Servicing peripheral organisations	10	15

2.7. The wish of the Principal Officer not to turn down individual requests for help in the early stages of MOLARA's development has led to a heavy load of site level case-work. "Being effective on the ground" is good for establishing the credibility of a new organisation, and it is an important criterion used by some members to measure the Associations' usefulness to their sport. The impression is that a number of the broader and more generic tasks have been pushed back as attention has focused on the specific issues.

2.8. Early intentions of creating a dialogue with the Countryside Commission, and links with such organisations as the Nature Conservancy Council and the National Farmers Union, do not appear to have matured. MOLARA is not within Countryside Link, the channel for the

voluntary movement to speak to the Countryside Commission, for example. There has been relatively little time put into promoting motorsports with some of the major landowning agencies such as MoD, or the Water Authorities. An early style of commenting on policy reports, such as the Countryside Commissions **Recreation 2000**, or material on the debate about alternative land uses, seems to have evaporated under the pressure of specific events. Of particular interest has been the focus on rebutting or discussing, often immediately and at length, various media items. Most of this reactive work is on discussion ground of other people's making. A number of members felt MOLARA should be operating more often with issues of its own choice. Hard thought should be given to how far single appearances on the media bolster the image of the Association as compared, for example, to the dissemination of more thoughtful and considered material targetted at key decision-makers.

2.9. The question of the regional representation of motorsports interests has proved difficult. It raises a number of questions. Should MOLARA act at national and regional levels directly, using resources from perhaps the Sports Council, the manufacturers, the local authorities and others? Or should local effort be concentrated on trained "expenses only" volunteers who can form a network tackling regional issues? Or, thirdly, should some form of Regional Motorsports Liaison Committee framework be set up across the country? The latter seems the course favoured by the Sports Council and MOLARA but, for a variety of reasons, including reluctance among motorsports interests at local level to become involved in such work, only the North West, Yorkshire and Humberside and the Northern Regions have gone ahead. There are some problems in each Region, not least the questions of breadth of membership, and powers to make policy which, in each case, are different.

2.10. When formed, the Association had seven members. Three more, the Association of Rover Clubs, the All Wheel Drive Club and the Civil Service Motoring Association have subsequently joined, and an application from the National Autograss Sport Association is pending. (The Welsh Trail Riders Association have left due to a decline in membership). It is unclear which further motoring organisations are eligible to join the Association. Committee minutes record suggested approaches to the manufacturers, but few concrete results have been reported. Some of my interviewees felt it worthwhile considering whether other vehicular users of Rights of Way (eg Carriage Drivers) should be approached to join, or whether users such as the British Horse Society might identify sufficiently with the access issues to seek membership. Groups such as the Association of Metropolitan Authorities or the Association of District Councils were also mentioned by one interviewee as possible members.

2.11. Perhaps the strongest feeling gained from my discussions with members was of a tension between short-term "fire-fighting" and longer-term persuasion and networking

activities, with many suggesting that too much effort was being devoted to the former. Some members see too many of MOLARA's activities as reactive rather than pro-active, and local and regional rather than national. Others suggested that MOLARA too often appears to tie itself to confrontational issues, rather than co-operative ones. The Association should, it was argued, be less associated with "bad" news (for example, conflict, environmental damage) and should more often be where the "good news" is (for example noise reduction, smoother tyres, land restoration).

2.12. The majority view appears to be that, following the initial three year familiarisation with issues, the time is ripe for more considered, long- term aims to dominate what is done. MOLARA does not appear to have any means of clearly measuring its success or progress; attempts should also be made to remedy this situation.

3. External Challenges

3.1. This section is concerned with the wider external environment, and the major changes which will form a backcloth to MOLARA's operations in the future.

3.2. Clearly we are witnessing a major growth in concern for the environment among the general public. This is translating itself into Government concerns to promote "green" policies. At the same time agricultural priorities are less clear, but there are pressures to diversify the economy in rural areas. Some of the major trends of concern to motorsport and motor recreation appear to be:

1. **greater pressures for decentralisation from the major towns and cities.** This suggests many newcomers will continue to move into rural villages and upland areas such as National Parks. In such locations they are frequently highly vocal in resisting, or attempting to restrict, motorsports events and activity;
2. **a major growth in membership for the "green" organisations,** many of whom are hostile to motorsports interests. It has been suggested that, by the mid-1990's, ten million people will belong to some form of environmental pressure group - a three-fold increase on current figures. The Ramblers Association and the Council for the Protection of Rural England appear two of the most active groups on the ground at local level. They can be expected, on current trends, to continue the argument for the removal of recreational vehicles from RUPPs, and for increasing controls over motorsports activity in the countryside generally. As their membership increases so will the money and staff they can devote to lobbying activities;
3. **more "planning" in the countryside.** Greater attention is likely to be paid to comprehensive countryside planning. Here we already find a growth in the members of counties producing "Countryside Strategies". How far these will accommodate motorsports, or seek to exclude them is unclear, and requires monitoring. The National Parks may seek a tougher regime for motorsports than in the general countryside, with wider powers of control. (The Lake District proposed Private Bill is indicative of this). Park-wide statutory local plans are in the offing, bringing more detailed policies to the uplands;
4. **changes to the designations "package".** Extra areas of the countryside may be subject to designation as Sites of Special Scientific Interest, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty or even lowland National Parks. For example, the South Downs and the New Forest are currently being promoted for National Park status. The process of re-classification of RUPPs

into BOATs etc, may also, over the next few years, lead to potentially confrontational situations with a wide variety of local authorities. Some 90 per cent of farmers in Environmentally Sensitive Areas have taken up conservation grants. It is likely that ESAs, or something like them, will be extended to further areas of countryside in the 1990's.

3.3. The trend towards greener policies is reflected in a number of reports suggesting new priorities in the countryside. Perhaps the most significant so far is the Countryside Commission's **Planning for a Greener Countryside**, which stresses the need in the 1990's to produce a "sustainable and multi-purpose countryside" in which there will be an increased emphasis on environmental quality. It contains no sustenance for motorsports stressing the **quiet enjoyment** of the countryside under the heading of "Access". As an example of action on the ground, the Commission are reported to have spent nearly £50,000 on a survey of users of the Ridgeway, the results of which form the case for persuading the Department of Transport of the need for a TRO.

3.4. Changes in emphasis within the planning system continue to take place. The foreseeable future will see an emphasis on comprehensive District Plans, and both the Countryside Commission and the Nature Conservancy Council are producing advice to strengthen the green content of such plans. There will be new advice on sport and recreation in the countryside through a Planning Policy Guidance Note, and a revised Circular on Planning and Noise. It is significant that motorsports have not gained much relief from recent proposals. For example proposals by the Department of the Environment to relax development control (the General Development Order) in the countryside specifically omitted motorsports, as did the 1988 Ministry of Agriculture Farm Diversification grants scheme.

3.5. The Environmental Directorate of the European Community in Brussels is already ahead of the UK Government in its green thinking. The recently introduced environmental assessment procedures for large proposals, and more recent proposals on habitats (Proposed Directive on the Protections of Semi- Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora), are indicators of pressures that are likely to intensify in the 1990's. Could 1992 lead to uniform EEC-sponsored noise controls on motorsport across Member States? Could motorsport be banished from all EEC-recognised habitat areas?

3.6. MOLARA members felt that the problems listed in detail in the Sports Council sponsored study **Providing for Motorsports - from Image to Reality**, basically remained valid. Discussions revealed that noise was felt still to be the most significant issue, especially for moto cross and grass track events. More powerful two-wheeled machines were leading to more erosion; and dust had been a major problem in 1989. Secondly, motorsports were still losing sites for a wide variety of reasons, including competition from other users and a poor

public image. The green lanes issue was a one-off within this category, which was coming increasingly to the fore. There was a need particularly for more sites for autotests, trials and karting.

3.7. Issues of conflict with ecology and wildlife were considered to be overstated, and not as important as the first three issues. However, in addition to conflicts with SSSI designations, and the procedures for notification introduced in the Countryside and Wildlife Act of 1981 (Section 36), some conflicts with English Heritage over individual sites, have occurred. It is also possible, in the new Environmentally Sensitive Areas, that the use of land for motorsports could render landowners ineligible for the conservation grants offered. (This opens up the possibility of such a caveat being placed on a whole range of future conservation grants).

3.8. A number of members thought that motorsports were losing ground. The question was raised - "Is society gradually rejecting motorsport?" There remained some defensiveness and pessimism over this, a situation that we had noted in our 1986 study for the Sports Council.

3.9. Within this picture MOLARA will need to decide more clearly the role it wishes to play. Efforts will need to be made to find natural allies, and to co-operate to create new accommodations of interests. Allies may include farming and landowning interests, perhaps private forestry concerns, and even other users of Rights of Way such as the British Horse Society. Most MOLARA members held the view that the Association must be at the forefront of making motorsports environmentally sensitive and sympathetic users of the countryside. Many of the other interests in the countryside access debate are skilled at using the media and developing simple-to-assimilate information. MOLARA must also be able to project an uncluttered and sympathetic image.

4. Relationships of Member Organisations

4.1. MOLARA has, in effect, created a new pattern of relationships between what were disparate organisations. Its major success, commented on by all, was that the various disciplines sit round a table four times a year and talk to each other. For many this is an invigorating experience. It was suggested that common problems could be shared, and other people's problems appreciated. More tolerance between motorsports bodies had resulted. Others suggested that MOLARA was a forum where the "honest" discussion of each other's problems took place. For many the chance to "speak with one voice" was valued, especially when this allowed an effective riposte to be mounted against a group such as the Ramblers Association. It is much to the credit of Member Organisations and Governing Bodies that the original complement of LARA members remains, and has even grown over the years.

4.2. However, whilst a maturity of view has been generated, many felt that the natural level of co-operation had not penetrated down sufficiently to the regional and lower levels. But membership of MOLARA had created new contact networks of Rights of Way Officers able to liaise over more local issues. A number felt that at the regional level there should be "mini-MOLARAs" operating perhaps as an executive arm of the national body. Some members pointed out that major differences existed between the constitutions of present Regional Liaison Committees or Federations. The Northern Body was on the "mini-MOLARA" model, whereas in the North West neither the AMCA, the BMF or the TRF were members. This situation needed rectifying.

4.3. Details of the administrative set-up of MOLARA occasioned some comment. Whilst there was little apparent problem with the location of the office at Rugby (in the centre of the country), it was felt there was some lack of clarity over the dividing line between the ACU, the Land Access Bureau and MOLARA. However, the presence of MOLARA at the ACU offices in Rugby allowed a major subsidy in administrative support costs to occur. If the full market costs of such services were to be paid by Members there would need to be a 25 per cent increase in donations, or a reduction in general activity. At the same time, however, it appeared to me there is no irreversible requirement that the ACU Rights of Way consultations process, and MOLARA business have to be conducted from the same room, or indeed the same town. I very much hope that after 1992 new premises, with a less dependent relationship for MOLARA vis a vis the ACU only, may be found.

4.4. The particular staff arrangements of MOLARA were alluded to in Section 2: The Major comments under this heading related to the location of the Principal Officer in Newcastle and the inevitable difficulties of managing an office 200 miles away. The resultant high travel costs were noted by some. There was also a feeling, although few could substantiate it, that issues located in the North had received more attention than those in the South or South West.

5. Relationships with External Organisations

5.1. MOLARA has speedily become seen, by local authorities and other public bodies, as an umbrella organisation representative of motorsports interests. My impression is that knowledge of MOLARA's existence at local authority level is patchy, being limited to those authorities active in access matters, or areas where the Association has been involved directly. Certainly there is cause for gratification in the way MOLARA is being consulted by many local authorities and National Park Authorities, as important policy statements are being prepared. For example, the Association has been involved in the Lake District and North Yorkshire Moors National Park Plan reviews, and the Countryside Strategy for Hampshire. There have been some requests for contact with MOLARA at the preparation stage of local development plans, but little time appears to have been devoted to this "forward planning" aspect in companion with more immediate site level work. This type of work, if it were to grow, could easily swamp the present scale of resources of the Association. For example a recent study of access in Hampshire, involving among others representatives of the Ramblers Association and the British Horse Society, invited MOLARA participation in its deliberations, but this has not been possible.

5.2. Contacts with the voluntary bodies have had a variety of outcomes. Discussions with the Royal Society for Nature Conservation (following their critical 1987 report) have resulted in an insert in the MOLARA "Code of Conduct for Drivers and Riders in the Countryside". Contact with groups such as the British Horse Society are good, not least because MOLARA circulate them with access information. The Principal Officer has also attended one of their meetings. Groups such as the Council for the Protection of Rural England, and the Ramblers Association however, have proved more difficult to engage in discussion over the legitimacy of motorsports in the Countryside.

5.3. Relationships with the Sports Council have been good since the inception of MOLARA. The original research funded by the Sports Council helped place motorsport and the motor recreation on the countryside (and urban) planning map. Numerous dissemination seminars, organised by the Sports Council, have acted as platforms for promotion and publicity for MOLARA. MOLARA have attended CRRAG (Countryside Recreation Research Advisory Group) Conferences and the Principal Officer has led seminar and discussion groups on more than one occasion.

5.4. Since the early 1980's a Sports Council officer has held the duty of Liaison Officer with motorsports interests. While this task only takes a small part of the Officer's time, the link acts as a valuable source of advice, support and encouragement. Within each Regional Office

of the Sports Council there is an officer nominated to deal with more localised motorsports matters. For example, representations may be made to landowners on behalf of clubs and this action may even extend, on rare occasions, to written submissions at appeals. (It should be noted that the promotion of motorsports provision is not an activity with equal priority in each Region). The Sports Council have been pleased to see the establishment of MOLARA as a way of representing the views of previously disparate motorsports disciplines in the countryside. They are looking for a continuous improvement in relations between motorsport organisations, particularly those covering the same or similar disciplines.

5.5. MOLARA was recognised in 1988 as a "related organisation" by the Sports Council. This is the first step in opening up the possibility of application to the UK Affairs Committee of the Council for grant aid. Any grant would be based on the submission of a realistic forward planning framework with a limited number of major objectives and work areas. A detailed three year programme would then need to be developed. The Sports Council would also need to be assured that Member Organisations supported the aims of the Plan, and would do so throughout its duration. The MOLARA proposals for two "research projects", submitted in 1988, were not approved as they were not part of an ordered and assessable programme, as suggested above, irrespective of any intrinsic merits they may have had.

5.6. At the regional level a Motorsports Development Officer was appointed in 1988, in the Northern Region, to:

- a) develop community participation in all disciplines of motorsport in and around Tyne and Wear, and
- b) assist local authorities and others in the provision of permanent facilities.

The project has an initial duration of 30 months, some 12 months of which have now been completed. The Project Officer works under the day-to-day direction of Norcare Ltd. There is a Management Committee made up of representatives from the Sports Council (Northern Region), Norcare Ltd, and the Northern Motorsports Federation. Their task is to set performance targets and advise on the writing of a "strategy" for motorsports development. MOLARA's Principal Officer represents the Northern Motorsports Federation on the Management Committee of this project. (He is also the Secretary of the Northern Motorsports Federation). The project utilises funds mainly from the abolition of the Metropolitan Councils.

5.7. The remit of the officer is, in my view, not very clear. He is expected to apply himself to improving the participation levels of the residents of the Tyne and Wear area, and is also asked to act as Secretariat to the Northern Motorsports Federation and another body, the Local Authority Motorsports Forum. One of the nine parts of the job description suggests the

Project Officer will develop a strategy, (presumably for the whole Region) yet, at the same time, it is suggested he may be involved in the organisation of individual events, as well as taking work off the shoulders of the Principal Officer of MOLARA and Sports Council Regional Office staff. As this is the first Motorsports Development Officer appointment it is of importance to MOLARA to see it succeed. Now that the initial phase of the project is over, there is a need to sharpen its focus and specify target outcomes.

Scale of Sports Council Support

5.8. The scale of possible future support for MOLARA has not been indicated by the Sports Council. Sports Council figures suggest that motorcycling (through ACU) received £20,500 in 1987-88 (mainly for training), and the figure is planned to run at around £25,000 until 1990. Some support is also given to karting. In this context it is worth noting the following 1987-88 grants paid to other sports and recreation organisations:

Rambling £53,500

Mountaineering £116,500

Riding £177,500

Hang gliding, which has around 5,000 active participants, received £51,500; and gliding, with 10,000 active participants, £87,000.

5.9. The scale of any support sought can only be justified by reference to a Programme of Work. This lists what is required to discharge the aims of the Association. It is for this reason that the aims, objectives, plan of work and, indeed, name of the Association should betray a clarity of intentions among all concerned. Section 6 aims to prompt that process.

6. Future Plan of Action

6.1. MOLARA has been successful in establishing a presence as an umbrella group representing motorsports, as well as providing a service for the Governing Bodies. It performs functions which cannot be tackled by the sports individually, and assists in presenting a consistent view on current environmental issues. Outside pressures, particularly the rapid rise in green consciousness among the electorate, make the need for a MOLARA-style organisation imperative in the future. Individual members now realise they must concert efforts to promote a place for motorsports in the countryside of the 1990's and beyond.

6.2. Building on the foundations of the past three years the following principles should guide future activities:

- a. continuous attention to the creation of a professional image matching the quality of the outputs of other organisations in the environment arena;
- b. striking a conscious balance between long-term and short-term work;
- c. being selective in the issues that are pursued, closely monitoring progress;
- d. being less legalistic and producing more outputs accessible to all interests concerned with motorsports and the environment;
- e. operating more often in co-operative situations rather than in confrontational ones; and
- f. making a major effort to understand and come to terms with green politics and their implications for motorsports at both National and EEC levels.

Recommendations

6.3. The existing aims, objectives and roles of the Association are not entirely clear. Different members suggested that MOLARA was either an umbrella, a forum, an advisory service, a mouthpiece, or an information and intelligence service. Some believed it makes policies. The Principal Officer in his 1988 Annual Report states that it is not a lobby or pressure group although I suspect that it is, in practice, both. The present Constitution refers to "issuing directives" and "developing land access", although the main stress is on working through the Governing Bodies. The most recent debates within the Association have focused on three concepts, those of assertion, protection and development. I see the "assertion of rights" theme, in the greener climate of the 1990's, being replaced by an emphasis on the responsible use of our environment. Key words among the objectives I propose are: reasonable rights of access;

encouragement of others; advice and guidance to others; and co-operation. I therefore recommend:

1. paragraphs 5.1 and 5.2 of the Constitution should be replaced by one paragraph, covering aims and objectives, which should read: "The Association exists to promote the responsible use and enjoyment of our environment - for motorsport and motorised recreation - by:

- a. protecting reasonable rights of access to the countryside, and negotiating new forms of access;**
- b. encouraging local authorities and others to make provisions in their areas, and on land in their control;**
- c. monitoring national, regional and local trends and advising member organisations and others on any aspect of motorsport and the environment, and**
- d. co-operating with others to demonstrate good practice in the provision, management and use of land for motorsports."**

I believe these words cover all of the activities mentioned in paragraph 5.2 of the present Constitution (see Appendix 2) and give freedom for a very wide range of future action. It is clear, at the same time, that MOLARA is an advisory body, not a Governing Body. This does not mean it cannot have a recommended view or "stance" on issues. The present Governing Bodies must retain their independence in policy making although they may, from time to time, take up advice from MOLARA.

6.4. The Sports Council have already requested a change in the name of the Association, and this was implemented just over a year ago. In my view the current title and acronym is lengthy, ugly and confusing. I agree with one of my interviewees who saw it as indicative of confusion over what the Association is and what it is trying to do. Most of the non-specialist Press I have seen have managed to get the title of the Association wrong. It appears most cumbersome in any list of the main interest groups associated with access and the environment. I feel a change of name would do no harm and would remove the rather harsh idea of "rights" and their "assertion", implied in the present title. I would suggest a name of no more than three words, to replace the existing seven. The ones I considered were; Motorsports Link; Motorsports Federation; Motorsports Alliance and Motorsports Forum. The name Motorsports Advisory Service could be used. I also considered the Federation of Motoring Organisations, and the Motoring Organisations' Forum. I am well aware of the distinction between motorsports and motor recreation which cuts across the Committee, but consider it important not to get stuck with past compromises. You will be judged by outside

interests by your ability to continually up-date the logic and image of the Association. I therefore recommend that:

- 2. the Association should now be called Motorsports Forum. This title should always appear, on notepaper and in any other publicity, together with the phrase "Promoting the responsible use of our environment for motorsport and motor recreation."**

This will, I hope, satisfy those in motorised recreation that their interests are very much included.

6.5. In order to clarify priorities, assess resource needs, and monitor progress I recommend that:

- 3. the Association should develop a programmed approach to its work; this would constitute a five-year Forward Plan, the overall thrust and details of which could be approved by the Committee. It should include a number of programmes (see Recommendation 5 below);**
- 4. the Forward Plan should contain detailed objectives and specify indicators for their achievement. Objectives would be reviewed annually against achievements.**

This plan would have many benefits. It would reflect the Committee's strategy for the short and medium term. It would relate to the level of MOLARA's activities, and provide a justification for members' donations. It would be the main part of any application to the Sports Council for grant aid, and would be a strong indication of worthiness for support. Scope would, of course, exist within such a plan for adjustments as circumstances changed and for initiative at officer level.

6.6. The Sports Council's current Corporate Plan stresses the importance of increasing participation as well as promoting excellence. Further aims are those of "improving access to sports sites in the countryside", and mounting "demonstration projects aimed at illustrating good practice". Support for local authorities as providers is also mentioned. Given the above priorities I recommend that:

- 5. the Forward Plan should have the following programme headings;**
 - a. access and participation;**
 - b. support for providers;**
 - c. co-operation to demonstrate good practice; and**
 - d. monitoring and advice.**

6.7. In Appendix Three I have listed programmes under the aforementioned four headings, together with some measures of performance. They are also geared to the scale of activities

likely to result from a successful bid to the Sports Council. The Forward Plan should indicate what can be achieved in the first year, and should distinguish what can be achieved on current resources from what will result from receipt of grant aid. I recommend that:

6. a group of four or five persons, chaired by one of the Executive Officers of the Committee, be charged with further developing and refining the embryonic Forward Plan (at Appendix 3) as soon as possible. This should be regarded as the foremost current priority of the Association. The Sports Council's liaison officer should be consulted during its preparation.

(The 1986 to 1991 Forward Plan of the British Association of Parascending Clubs Ltd., may be a useful model to follow in this exercise).

6.8. With a new Forward Plan, and the prospect of grant aid, attention should be devoted to creating effective definitions of roles in what will be a growing organisation. The Chairman, in his April AGM Paper, stressed the need to review the roles of the present Principal Officer and the Bureau in the context of the future requirements of the Association. I believe that the employment of a full-time salaried officer is a more appropriate mode for managing staff, setting targets and monitoring progress, than a freelance consultancy arrangement. I therefore recommend that:

7. a full-time salaried Principal Officer should be appointed, operating from the administrative headquarters of the Association.

The post holder should be charged with; day-to-day management of the Association's affairs, in conjunction with the Secretary of the Committee; promotion of the Association externally; monitoring and updating the Forward Plan; and the organisation of staff, volunteers and consultants to best achieve the objectives of the Association.

6.9. The Association will need to decide, if Recommendation 6 is approved, the resources of staff, guidance and facilities required to achieve the objectives. I believe that the Association should, over a five year period, be aiming for the equivalent of two full-time posts, in addition to existing resources, to discharge its necessary promotional, advisory and mediatory functions. I recommend that:

8. any bid to the Sports Council for support would need to be in the order of £40,000 to £50,000 per annum for each of three years in order to discharge objectives of the Association effectively.

I would anticipate total staffing along the following lines.

- a. Full-time post - Principal Officer (see paragraph 6.8.)
- b. Three-quarters post equivalent - Planning, ecology and environment, noise and Rights of Way matters
- c. Three-quarters post equivalent - Special Projects, good practice, evaluations of initiatives, regional liaison
- d. Half post equivalent - Administration, bi-monthly newsletter, printing and production of leaflets, codes of practice
- e. Existing Land Access Bureau post

Post a. would be funded by MOLARA. Posts b. to d. would be funded for three years by grant aid. The existing Land Access Bureau post (approximately half of which appears devoted to MOLARA matters) is post e.

6.10. Following MOLARA approval of the Forward Plan, application should be made to the Sports Council's Grant Aid Policy Group (UK Affairs Committee) for assistance. Recently prepared guidance on the acceptable form of any bid should be obtained from the Sports Council. I therefore recommend:

9. a sub-committee of the Association should, upon approval of the Forward Plan, prepare an application for Sports Council grant aid. The good offices of the Sports Council's Liaison Officer should be used in the preparation of the necessary documentation.

6.11. Irrespective of the outcome of any application for grant aid the Association will need to put its finances, and its filing systems; into a format where the assessment of programme areas can be made. Conventions will need to be developed to disentangle Land Access Bureau staff time and costs from those of MOLARA. Expenditures will need to be "allocated" as they are made (eg travel costs) to one or a number of the programme areas. I suggest therefore that:

10. a system of accounting for costs and time, which allows annual analysis by programme areas, needs to be put in place.

6.12. The Association must also look to increase its income from other sources. I therefore recommend:

11. approaches should be made to motor car and motorcycle manufacturers, retailer organisations, site and circuit owners, oil companies, or other groups identified by Committee members, to seek financial support.

Any approaches should be based on instances of ways outside money could be used; eg sponsoring leaflet printing, an essay prize, awards for environmental care or improvement by motorsports clubs, money for project officers, etc.

6.13. Eligibility for membership of the Association has been little discussed. However new members should, in principle, be sought. There is a need to discuss a number of issues under this heading. Are large single marque or vintage clubs eligible? Are all non-pedestrian green lane users eligible? Should the organisations referred to in paragraph 6.12. (above) be invited to join? If so, should they be approached formally with a view to membership?

12. The Committee should consider the range of possible future membership, and actively seek new members where appropriate.

This initiative would, if successful, also have the effect of increasing the financial resources of the Association.

6.14. There is no provision in the Constitution for the revision of members' donations in line with changes in the costs of providing MOLARA services. I therefore recommend that:

13. membership donations should be amended in line with the Retail Price Index or some other commonly agreed index of price changes. The Treasurer could be charged with recommending to the Committee the mechanics for such a change.

6.15. Given the programme of work implied by the recommendations above I consider that the question of Regional Liaison Committees or similar organisations cannot occupy too much time in the next 12 months. However, MOLARA needs to have a view on the matter. I recommend that:

14. a small sub-committee should assess the constitutions, rules and regulations of the three existing Regional Committees with a view to writing a revised standard Constitution, the promotion of which should become MOLARA policy.

In the longer term, and as the Regional Committees develop, a more precise specification of their relationships to MOLARA should be developed. It seems to me that with limited resources it is not possible for much direct or regular MOLARA involvement in Regional Committees to take place. For example, the "cost" in lost opportunities elsewhere could be very high if a MOLARA officer

were to attend all regional meetings. In any instance I would see local liaison (the main remit of the Regional Committees) as clearly outwith the scope of MOLARA.

6.16. No doubt members will debate at length the content of Appendix 3 - the Draft Programme. I would not regard it as complete. However, I would ask members to note carefully the types of activity envisaged as virtually all were suggested in the individual discussions. Most prominently there was a feeling that more time must go into publishing "awareness" material. Six leaflets come to mind, in addition to the 4WD and motorcyclists' ones already produced. These are:

- a. a leaflet describing what **MOLARA** is, its aims, objectives and its style of operation;
- b. a leaflet describing what each member organisation is doing about noise;
- c. a leaflet looking at issues surrounding motorsports and **nature conservation**;
- d. a leaflet listing what each member organisation is doing in terms of **consideration for other users, and land erosion**;
- e. a leaflet on "getting into motorsport" and emphasizing **training**; and
- f. a leaflet on **good practice** mentioning for example, Mastiles Lane research, TRF Shell Better UK Award, voluntary wardening for BHS, restoration schemes etc.

6.17 In conclusion, I would point to four developments - within the programme approach - which, if put in place, could make a major difference to the impact and penetration of the Association. First, it is important to introduce more digested and digestible versions of the information circulated so fully at present, as well as other relevant material. I agree with the suggestions of a number of persons that the authority of an organisation is not only enhanced by collecting its own systematic evidence on issues (eg green lane damage), but by the quality of its publications. I am not proposing a BBT-level publication but a bi-monthly or quarterly **Newsletter** which presents MOLARA as "the environmentally sensitive, socially responsible face of motorsport and motor recreation in action." Second, an **Annual Conference**, based on a theme agreed by the Committee each year, would heighten the profile and authority of the Association. Instead of discussion being on others' terms it could be on "MOLARA's ground." Third, the programme suggests a conscious shift to become involved in selected **local action projects**. This may involve participation in Action Sport projects, Access Action projects sponsored by the Countryside Commission, or work with the Groundwork Foundation, the Probation Service, organisations for the handicapped, and so on. Only two or three action projects should be pursued at any one time, and each should be monitored.

Finally, the question of enlisting the active support of a "personality" to match the likes of Brian Redhead, Bill Oddie, Mike Harding and others deployed by the other environmental organisations should not be forgotten. The development of a clearer image, and a more attractive face in respect of environmental issues, can only bring closer the day when such a personality will take up the cause of motorsport.

Appendix 1

Persons Consulted

Geoff WILSON	Chairman, MOLARA British Motorcyclists Federation
Gerry COLEMAN	Secretary General, MOLARA Auto Cycle Union
Don GREEN	Treasurer, MOLARA Amateur Motor Cycle Association
Alan KIND	Principal Officer, MOLARA
Duncan GORDON	Land Access and Rights Bureau
Doug BRISCOE	Racing Secretary, Amateur Motor Cycle Association
Frank CARTER	Chairman, Trails and Enduro Committee, Auto Cycle Union
Carol DAVIS	Secretary, Amateur Motor Cycle Association
Chris DEVENISH	Club Activities Manager, Civil Service Motoring Association
David GILES	Chairman, Trail Riders Fellowship
John HIGGIN	Secretary, Trail Riders Fellowship
Tony KEMPSTER	Vice-Chairman and Rights of Way Officer, Association of Rover Clubs
Bill KERSHAW	Chairman, Welsh Trial Riders Association, MOLARA Representative on the Hazlehurst Committee
Steve KIRBY	Rights of Way Officer, Hants and Berks Rover Owners Club
Les NEEDHAM	Director of Sporting Services, Royal Automobile Club Motor Sports Association
Tony PLOSZAJSKI	The Sports Council, London Motorsports Liaison Officer
Tim STEVENS	Access Officer, British Motorcyclists Federation
Andrew THOMAS	Northern Motorsports Project, Norcare, Newcastle-upon- Tyne
Graham WRIGHT	The Sports Council, Southern Region Office, formerly Motorsports Liaison Officer

Appendix 2

Objectives of MOLARA

5.1. The Association will protect, pursue and promote the interests of motorsport, particularly in respect of access to the countryside and will further protect the use of vehicular Rights of Way for recreational purposes.

5.2. The general issues referred to at 5.1. above are expanded further below but not necessarily fully:-

(a) Countryside Access

- (i) Retain the use of existing Rights of Way as appropriate.
- (ii) Monitor Rights of Way changes.
- (iii) Represent through its member organisations countryside motorcycle and motoring interests at committees and inquiries.
- (iv) Develop land access for motorcycle and motoring sports use.
- (v) Monitor and advise on motorcycle and motoring environmental problems.
- (vi) Seek ways to prevent misuse of the countryside by all drivers and riders and to encourage good use, whenever possible by promotion of regional liaison groups within motor sport.
- (vii) Promote the development of voluntary waymarking.

(b) Development

- (i) To provide an advisory service to off-road motorcycle and motoring centres and organisations.
- (ii) Promote countryside compatibility with motorcycle and motor sport.
- (iii) Encourage Local Authorities and major land owners to provide off-road motor and motorcycle recreational areas.
- (iv) Promote a responsible attitude to use of the countryside in trade adverts and editorials.
- (v) Issue directives and guidance notes through Governing bodies to event organisers and to trail using groups.

(Extract from Constitution of MOLARA, as revised 5 July, 1988).

Appendix 3

Possible Forward Plan 1990 - 1995

The programme areas are:

1. Access and participation
2. Support for providers
3. Co-operation to demonstrate good practice
4. Monitoring, advice and promotion

For each programme the following headings should be completed:

- a. Background
- b. Planned objectives
- c. Achievement indicators
- d. Resources

(This appendix covers planned objectives (heading b) only. The acronym MSF (Motorsports Forum) is used instead of MOLARA in this listing).

Programme

1. Access and Participation

- a. support the protection of reasonable rights of access for motorsports, by publishing Access Guide and holding one day Conference/Training Day for access staff of member organisations;
- b. promote the retention of threatened sites and access by approaching MoD regarding allocations, and attending hearings (where generic issues dominate) to give evidence;
- c. protect the reasonable use of green lanes by circulating paper on alternative positions regarding RUPP/BOAT re-classifications; hold one day invitation only conference to agree position; publish conclusions to members, outside organisations. Collect data on use of green lanes, and origins of damage on green lanes;

- d. promote participation by devising programme of activities around "Ways into Motorsport" by discussions with schools, youth service and other relevant interests; produce leaflet on ways into motorsport with an emphasis on training, agree future roles between MSF, Star Rider and ACU;
- e. demonstrate noise reduction efforts by consultation among Members, production of leaflet on current codes for noise and noise reduction/attenuation;
- f. develop programme of education of motor vehicle users about wildlife and conservation, by discussions with the Nature Conservancy Council and voluntary organisations, production of a leaflet, and design of a pilot demonstration project. Discuss and implement programme for targetting the media.

2. Support for Providers

- a. advise local authorities on the types of policies for motorsports to be included in development plans, by study of relevant plans, discussions with relevant planners and motorsport interests, publish advice and send to all Chief Planning Officers in UK;
- b. consider role of motorsports in National Parks in context of Park Plan Reviews, by assembling current experience where reviews complete, deciding approaches and circulating recommendations to members and National Park Officers;
- c. stimulate interest in provision by private landowners, by assessment of development/use possibilities, discussions with NFU and CLA, prepare policy paper, organise one day conference;
- d. assess effect of proposed privatisation of Water Authorities on motorsports, by preparation of internal policy paper with recommended actions;
- e. assess best forms of local authority current provision and management arrangement, by interviews/survey of relevant local authorities, production of leaflet showing alternatives;
- f. promote the creation of one major permanent multi-purpose motorsports centre in each Sports Council Region by discussions with Regional Federations and other interested groups, development and promotion of a "concept plan" and development brief;

3. Co-operation to Demonstrate Good Practice

- a. demonstrate willingness to restrain use in the interests of the environment and other users by producing leaflet on voluntary codes of restraint of Member Organisations, monitor effects of voluntary restraint;
- b. demonstrate co-operation with other interest groups to secure new forms of access, by taking part in two selected Access Action projects, and monitoring involvement;
- c. demonstrate co-operation to encourage participation at local level, by participation in two "Action Sport" projects (one rural and one urban based), and monitoring involvement;
- d. illustrate co-operation of motorsports interests to conserve natural environments, by production of leaflet showing examples;
- e. demonstrate willingness of manufacturers to acknowledge restraint of 4WD use in most sensitive areas, by developing (in conjunction with manufacturers) appropriate point of sale material, and use of voluntary restraint signs on trails;
- f. encourage all non-vintage motorsports and motor recreation vehicles to use unleaded petrol by discussions with manufacturers and oil companies, and production of policy statement;
- g. develop greater understanding of motorsport issues at regional level, by monitoring activities of Regional Motorsports Federations and assessment of Northern Motorsports Project;

4. Monitoring, Advice and Promotion

- a. explain aims, roles and operation of MSF by producing leaflet, producing sponsored video for hire and sale ;
- b. disseminate news of relevant environmental developments to members and key decision-makers in outside organisations, by weekly circulations of edited information, and production of good quality bi-monthly Newsletter;
- c. increase general awareness of MSF among motorsports participants, by production of articles in motorsports press;
- d. promote aims of MSF to key decision-makers by attendance and speaking at conferences, and programme of meetings with major organisations;

- e. make economic case for motorsport by, devising study to assess employment created and value to the British economy, offer student scholarship (sponsored) for defined study;
- f. investigate social, family composition of motorsports participants by, sponsored study of all participants in selected National Parks and selected organisations (eg TRF);
- g. respond to proposal legislative changes by, monitoring legislation; preparing recommendations for action by Committee;
- h. monitor EEC proposed directives and changes by, subscribing to a monitoring service, providing briefing papers for Committee, making contacts with equivalent organisations in EEC Countries.