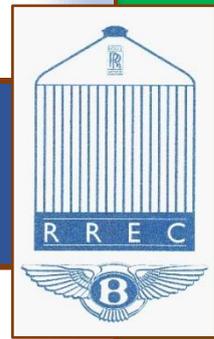
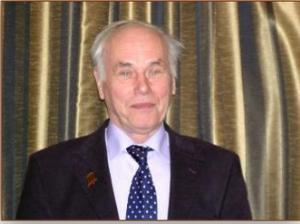


North Eastern Section Newsletter

March 2026



The North Eastern Section is an Affiliate of RREC Limited
trading as the Rolls-Royce Enthusiasts' Club



Rogers Ramblings

Looking round and working on my PII, I am always in awe and impressed with the attention to detail of the engineering. This feature sustained from the foundation of Rolls-Royce is now a mark of quality used worldwide.

On a separate note, unfortunately, the visit to 'Twisted Performance' cannot now take place. The warm welcome and BBQ at Hall Engineering will continue as planned where there is ample secure onsite parking.

Roger Hall, Chairman.



Contact Point Comments

There is not much going on at present with the cars of most people cocooned away from inclement weather and the ravages of salted roads. The most recent event was the Section AGM in January which is reported elsewhere in this Newsletter. It is satisfying to hear positive comments about an Event that you have organised as it recognises the efforts that have gone in to make it a success, but from a personal perspective it is always a huge relief when an Event you are responsible for concludes without some sort of hiccup or coming off track. A Chief Executive once said to me

“You are only as good as the next job that you do”, a comment that makes sure that feet are kept on the ground and there is no resting on your laurels!

The RREC is organising a Conference at the end of March and this Section will have two representatives in attendance. This is the first Conference for several years and appears to signal an intention on the part of the RREC to have a greater engagement with Sections than in the past as, arguably, past Conferences were no more than talking shops. I think that the big issue the RREC Board has to bring to a conclusion at the moment is the relationship with the Sir Henry Royce Foundation and the financial consequences associated with achieving that before serious consideration can be given to strategic objectives including the establishment of a National Exhibition Centre.

Rod MacLeod, Secretary.

Important Information about booking to attend the Annual Rally 2026

The RREC's flagship event, the Annual Rally & Concours d'Elegance will be held at Kelmarsh Hall, from 26th-28th June. **PLEASE NOTE THAT EARLY BIRD TICKETS** are on sale at a discounted rate until 14th March, after which they will revert to a full price ticket. TICKETS CAN BE PURCHASED ON THE GATE OVER THE RALLY WEEKEND but at a premium to the pre-booked rate. See page 28 for details.

North of England Rally at Harewood House 1st – 2nd August 2026

For booking details of the Northern Rally see page 29 - 31.

Welcome to new section members

You will be made most welcome at our local gatherings whether it be a social evening or a North Eastern Section car rally event. We are a friendly group of people so please make yourself known to us to be assured a warm welcome.

No new members to report.

Front Cover

Top left: L-R Dylis MacLeod, Margaret Blacklock and Elizabeth Younger having a catch up during the Christmas Party at the Old Mill Metal Bridge in Coxhoe, Co. Durham.

Bottom Right: L-R Janice Hall, Tony Gray, Nick Clark, Audrey Gray and Dylis MacLeod enjoying a cuppa before the AGM this year held at Headlam Hall Hotel in Gainford near Darlington, Co Durham.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Our noggin and natter evenings take place on the third Wednesday of the month from 6.30pm at The Old Mill, Metal Bridge, Coxhoe, Co. Durham, DH6 5NX. The venue provides an excellent food and drinks menu and there is lively banter taking place throughout the evening. The conversation is definitely not just about cars, all sorts of subjects come up for discussion like the governments 'Green Agenda' to the fitting of most efficient log burning stoves for your home, the subjects are endless. We have a hardcore of attendees but new members will always be made most welcome, so come along and join us for an evening of controversial conversation, or just good crack. You're heard the saying" the more the merrier". As the Old Mill requires numbers, Rod will send you an email on the weekend before, asking you to reply if you are attending. On arrival please order your food and drinks at the bar and ask the staff to point you in the direction of the conservatory where we are usually seated.

Section Events for 2026

- Wed 18th Mar: Noggin & Natter at the Old Mill Metal Bridge Coxhoe, Co. Durham. (RM)
- Sat 21st Mar: Lunch at The Blacksmiths Arms in Swainby, North Yorkshire. (NC)
- Wed 15th Apr: Noggin & Natter at the Old Mill Metal Bridge Coxhoe, Co. Durham. (RM)
- Sat 18th Apr: BBQ at RS Hall Engineering in Thirsk North Yorkshire. (RH)
- Sun 3rd May: Pre 1960 Classic Car gathering at Middlesbrough District Motor Club. (NC)
- Sun 10th May: Yorkshire Charity Clay Day at Duncombe Park, Helmsley in North Yorks. (AF)
- Sun 10th May: Hurworth Grange Community Centre Classic Car Show near Darlington.
- Wed 20th May: Noggin & Natter at the Old Mill Metal Bridge Coxhoe, Co. Durham. (RM)
- Sun 24th May: Thornton-le-Dale Sports Association Classic Car Show North Yorkshire. (PT)
- Sun 7th Jun: Visit to Kiplin Hall and Gardens in Scorton with the Yorkshire Section. (JH)
- Wed 17th Jun: Noggin & Natter at the Old Mill Metal Bridge Coxhoe, Co. Durham. (RM)
- Sat 20th June: Stokesley 'Classics on Show' on the Showground in North Yorkshire. (AF)
- 26th-28th Jun: Annual Rally & Concours d'Elegance at Kelmarsh Hall in Northamptonshire. (RREC)
- Sun 12th Jul: Post 1960 - 2000 Classic Car gathering at Middlesbrough District Motor Club. (NC)
- Wed 15th Jul: Noggin & Natter at the Old Mill Metal Bridge Coxhoe, Co. Durham. (RM)
- Sun 19th July: N.E.C.P.W.A. Newby Hall Classic Car Rally & Autojumble, Ripon, North Yorkshire. (NC)
- Sun 26th July: Ripon Old Cars Classic Car show at Ripon Racecourse in North Yorkshire. (NC)
- Sun 2nd Aug: North of England Rally at Harewood House near Leeds in Yorkshire. (RREC)
- Wed 19th Aug: Noggin & Natter at the Old Mill Metal Bridge Coxhoe, Co. Durham. (RM)
- Sat 29th Aug: Ingleby Arncliffe Classic Car Show near Northallerton in North Yorkshire. (AF)
- Sun 30th Aug: 1900 - 2000 Classic Car gathering at Middlesbrough District Motor Club. (NC)
- Wed 16th Sep: Noggin & Natter at the Old Mill Metal Bridge Coxhoe, Co. Durham. (RM)
- Sun 4th Oct: Beam in Steam at Tees Cottage Pumping Station in Darlington Co Durham. (AF)
- Wed 21st Oct: Noggin & Natter at the Old Mill Metal Bridge Coxhoe, Co. Durham. (RM)
- Wed 18th Nov: Noggin & Natter at the Old Mill Metal Bridge Coxhoe, Co. Durham. (RM)
- Wed 9th Dec: Section Christmas Party at The Old Mill, Metal Bridge, Coxhoe Co Durham. RM)

Future Events

Lunch at the Blacksmiths Arms in Swainby North Yorkshire Saturday 21st March 2026 (NC)



This year's first section lunch will be held at The Blacksmiths Arms in the village of Swainby in North Yorkshire, DL6 3EW. The pub is a family-owned independent free house that provides a great service and value for money. The present owners took over the pub in 1994, and have performed extensive renovations that includes the addition of the Barn Restaurant where we will be seated at 1pm for our meal.



Booking details are on page 21.

BBQ at RS Hall Engineering in Thirsk, North Yorkshire Saturday 18th April 2026 (RH)

We will travel to RS Hall Engineering in Thirsk North Yorkshire for a BBQ at Unit 1 Allendale Road, Thirsk Industrial Park, Thirsk. **YO7 3NX**. Please arrive from 12.30pm - 1pm where complementary tea, coffee and soft drinks will be available.

The BBQ consists of sausage, beef burger along with a choice of either chicken or beef steak. This will be accompanied with a selection of sides salads or a vegetarian option is available if desired. The cost is £20 per person, so why not come along and enjoy a delicious BBQ, hosted by our Chairman Roger Hall and his good lady Janice. As reported in the January Newsletter, this event was to include a visit to Twisted Automotive, a luxury automotive specialist who are situated close by, but due to circumstances beyond Roger's control, unfortunately the visit to Twisted can no longer go ahead. This was a disappointment, but as the caterers have been booked Janice made the executive decision the event will now be a 'Section Soiree', in other words, time to get together for a good old chinwag.

Janice and Roger hope you will still come along and enjoy the BBQ and they look forward to seeing you on the day.

This event is restricted to a maximum of 30 people so book early to avoid disappointment.

Booking details are on page 22.

Pre 1960 Classic Car gathering at Middlesbrough & District Motor Club Sunday 4th May 2026 (NC)



Middlesbrough & District Motor Club is based in Coulby Newham in Middlesbrough TS8 ORP, the club house being the original Coulby Manor House and gardens. The premises are open every day and provide social facilities that include lounge bar & snug, function rooms and a beautiful garden ideal for displaying all things motoring. This event is for **Pre 1960's** classic cars to form a gathering of like-minded people to convene for a brew and a

good old chin-wag about all things old and mechanical. On arrival there will be a complementary cup of tea/coffee for exhibitors and later in the day, BBQ food will be available at a modest fee.



Booking details on page 23.

The Yorkshire Charity Clay Day at Duncombe Park near Helmsley in North Yorkshire

Sunday 10th May 2026 (AF)



The Yorkshire Charity Clay Days Preview is on Sunday 10th May 2026. This event is held in the beautiful grounds of Duncombe Park in Helmsley North Yorkshire YO62 5EB. We have been invited along with the Yorkshire section to form a display of Bentley and Rolls-Royce motor cars in front of the main marquee for the delight of the charity event participants. There will be a variety of exhibitors as well as a bar, canapes, ice cream vendor and coffee barista, which you are most welcome to enjoy. This is a picnic event

with free entry to the venue, so why not come along and enjoy the day.

[Booking details on page 24.](#)

Thornton-le-Dale Sports Association Classic Car Show in North Yorkshire

Sunday 24th May 2026 (PT)

The TDSA Classic Car Rally is the perfect place to see some of the most beautiful classic cars and is also a great opportunity to meet other enthusiasts and learn more about these amazing vehicles. Last year's event had over 400 cars in attendance from across the country covering countless years of manufacture, make, model, and mileage! The show is held on the Showfield in Thornton-le-Dale (YO18 7SE) a small village in the North Yorkshire Moors National Park. If you are thinking about attending the show on Sunday 24th of May 2026, be sure to mark it on your calendar as it will be an event you won't want to miss!

[Booking details on page 25.](#)

Picnic at Kiplin Hall and Gardens in Scorton, North Yorkshire, with the Yorkshire Section

Sunday 7th June 2026 (JH)



Picnic at Kiplin Hall, situated near Scorton Richmond North Yorkshire DL10 6AT. The hall is a unique Jacobean house filled with furniture, portraits, paintings, and the personal belongings of the four families who have owned the Hall over the past 400 years. Wander from room to room, and enjoy the treasures on display.

Take in the far-reaching views across the lake to the folly; savour the sights in the formal gardens, or feast in the atmospheric Tea Room using the quaint mismatched china that was so adored by Bridget Talbot, Kiplins last family owner. The cost is £9.00 per person which includes admission to Kiplin Hall, the gardens and lakeside walk. We have designated parking in front of the hall where you can set up your picnic table and enjoy the delights of the surrounding gardens.

[Booking details on page 26.](#)

Stokesley 'Classics on Show' in North Yorkshire, TS9 5JL

Saturday 20th June 2026



Stokesley Rotary Club hosts 'Classics on Show', a classic car, truck and agricultural vehicle show in Stokesley North Yorkshire. The show is held on a large open display area in the town that has been the home of Stokesley's Agricultural Show (TS9 5JL) for the last 130 years. In previous years exhibitors' entry to this event was free and you could just turn up on the day. But in 2026 there is now a £5.00 entry fee that entitles the owner to bring

a classic vehicle on to the field together with two people. As with other organisations you must register your vehicle and pay on-line. Although payment can be made by cheque, you must first register on-line via the Rotary Clubs website.

[Booking details on page 27.](#)

Past Events

AGM at Headlam Hall and Spa Hotel near Darlington Co. Durham

Sunday 25th January 2026



We were treated to a very dank and dismal Sunday morning as members travelled to Headlam Hall Hotel near Gainford on the outskirts of Darlington in Co. Durham, this years venue for the North Eastern sections 2025 AGM. This was a new venue for the AGM but not for the section. Headlam Hall was the base for our very successful Autumn Break in 2025 celebrating the 200th anniversary of the Stockton and Darlington Railway. The hotel dates back to the 16th century when it was a family home but in this day is a privately owned

and run country house hotel. Headlam Hall was purchased by John and Ann Robinson in 1997 and was in a poor state of repair. They spent a number of years renovating the building and converting the outbuildings to create what was once a family home in to a luxury country hotel.

On arrival, members gathered in the coach house for a cuppa and a catch-up with other members prior to the AGM getting underway. Attendees then proceeded to the conference room and once seated Chairman Roger Hall welcomed everyone to the AGM and at 11:15 am prompt, called the meeting to order. Roger ensured the proceedings ran efficiently by adhering to the agenda and maintained order throughout, after all lunch was at 1^o clock.



Anita Clark with Paul and Sophie Tunnicliffe



Roger Hall starting the proceedings

Rod MacLeod, Secretary gave his report and stated, the section had ticked over throughout 2025 with all the organised events being very successful. In particular the Autumn Break organised by Nick and Anita Clark, Rod thanked them for their hard work in organising the event and not least, Nicks calm cool and collected responses to last minute difficulties created by the SD&R event organisers.

Rod then changed hats and as Treasurer, he reported that the North Eastern's sections finances are in good order but due to a small deficit the scope for event subsidies will be limited for 2026. As

there were no questions from the floor, the meeting moved on to the reports from the section Webmaster, Membership Secretary and finally the Newsletter Editor, John Harrison.

Webmaster: The section websites popularity has improved over the last year. In 2024 we had 794,000 hits. As of the 1st January 2026 the website has attained just over 1.5 million hits. The majority are from the UK and USA with some of the more obscurer ones coming from Afghanistan, Vietnam and Iran. I also update the Club website North Eastern Section page with news and event details.

Memberships Secretary: Last year saw the North Eastern section membership increase from 100 to 114, this figure includes joint memberships. Our numbers were boosted by 12 existing club members who were transferred from the Northern Section (Cumbria area) on the instructions of Andrew Whittaker, the then club Chairman.

Newsletter Editor: In September 2025 Peter Charlton made the decision to step down as editor. He had been in the post since late 2017, producing his first Newsletter in January 2018.

Thanks go to Peter for his efforts in producing the section Newsletter over the last 7 years. As of January 2026 I will be producing 6 Newsletters a year in the hope of keeping members better informed of events and where possible booking forms will also be included in the publication. I hope you find the Newsletters informative and enjoyed reading the publications.



Members at the AGM



Paul Tunnicliffe receiving the Ray Hornsby Trophy

Roger then presented Paul Tunnicliffe with The Ray Hornsby Trophy, in recognition for 'Best Section Members Car of the Year, chosen by the Chairman'. Paul's car is a 1994 Rolls-Royce Silver Spirit III that he rescued from a hotel car park in Nottingham. Follow Paul's journey on the recommissioning of his Silver Spirit on 'Life on Cars', Paul's YouTube Channel. Congratulations for a well-deserved award.

Next, Roger presented Nick and Anita Clark with The

McGarr Trophy in recognition for their hard work in organising a very successful Autumn Break at Headlam Hall to celebrate the S&DR 200th Anniversary. Many thanks to you both for organising such a successful event.



Nick Clark receiving the McGarr Trophy

David Wyld our Hunt House representative gave a presentation on behalf of the RREC management committee informing members of the present situation between the RREC and the Foundation. Unfortunately this seems to be an ongoing saga that we all hope will be resolved in the not-too-distant future.



On conclusion of the AGM, we moved back in to the dining room of the coach house for lunch. The menu choices consisting of either pate, soup or goats' cheese for starters, beef, fish or chicken for mains. This was followed by 'sweets to die for' and you probably will, sticky toffee pudding and custard, cheese



and biscuits or fruit compote with double cream laced with brandy, all washed down with either tea or coffee.

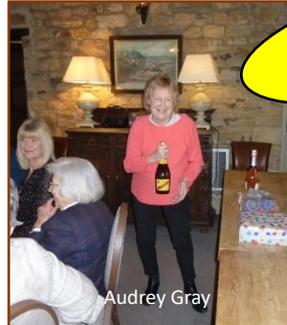
The day concluded with a raffle consisting of approximately 25 prizes. Andrew Carter from Penrith bagged a copy of The Rolls-Royce Motor Car, Alice Ward from Wallsend a bottle of red wine and Audrey Gray of Darlington a bottle of Prosecco.



Andrew Carter



Alice Ward



Audrey Gray



Paul trying to claim the candelabra as a raffle prize. "No Paul, it's the Hotel's!!"

Unfortunately Paul Tunnicliffe had to be told the candelabra on the table were part of the hotel's furniture and not donations to our raffle, just be satisfied with your set of books you won, he looked so disappointed.

Headlam Hall Hotel was an excellent venue with all members thoroughly enjoying the day, the North Eastern section would like to thank the staff of the hotel for making our AGM a very successful and enjoyable event.

History of the Rolls-Royce Silver Ghost

By John Harrison

The original Rolls-Royce Silver Ghost was a specific demonstrator car, Chassis No:60551, registration number AX 201 was produced in 1907 to showcase the quality of the new Rolls-Royce 40/50 hp model range. The 40/50 was originally put together in the summer of 1906 at Claude Johnsons the company's managing director insistence the company began a one-car policy. The chassis was fitted with a 48 hp. six-cylinder engine that Henry Royce developed during the late summer of 1906. This composed of twin blocks each with three cylinders with a 4.50" bore and stroke.



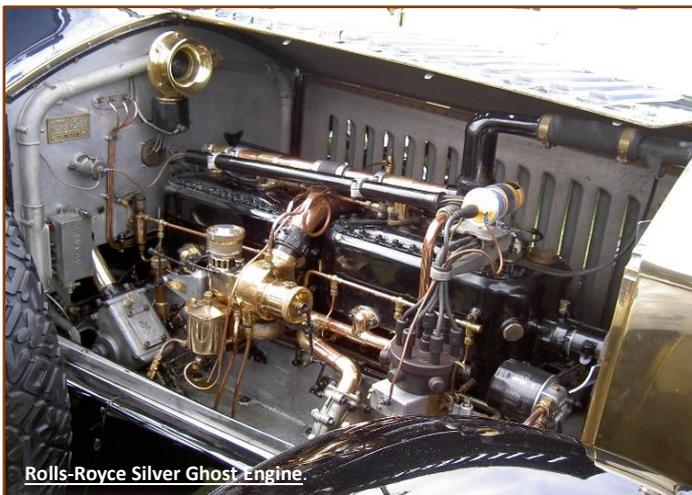
A four-speed gearbox was used with an overdrive on top and direct drive on third. In 1910 the engine stroke was increased to 4.75" to enhance low-end torque and overall engine displacement.

It debuted at the 1906 Olympia Motor Show but earned its legendary name and the reputation of being the "best car in the world" through a series of gruelling reliability trials.

The car was originally known simply as the Rolls-Royce 40/50 hp, a name based on its taxable horsepower rating.

Claude Johnson, commissioned the 12th chassis to be a factory demonstrator and publicity vehicle.

Johnson specified that the car's coachwork, a "Semi-Roi-des-Belges" open touring body by Barker & Co., be painted in aluminium paint, with all the metal fittings (lamps, etc.) silver-plated instead of the usual brass. Due to its gleaming, silver appearance and its remarkably quiet, smooth operation, Johnson nicknamed it "The Silver Ghost". A prominent silver plaque bearing the name was fitted on the scuttle. The press and public quickly adopted the "Silver Ghost" name, and soon all 40/50 hp models were referred to by this name, though Rolls-Royce didn't officially use the name for the entire model range until the Phantom was launched in 1925.



The Silver Ghost was an engineering marvel for its time, designed by Henry Royce with meticulous attention to detail to be supremely reliable. It featured an innovative 7,036cc (later 7,428cc) side-valve, six-cylinder engine with a seven-bearing crankshaft, which significantly reduced vibration, a common problem in other cars of the era.

In 1907, the original Silver Ghost (AX 201) was entered into the Scottish Reliability Trial (1907) and covered 2,000 miles with only one minor delay, proving its durability and also a 15,000-mile non-stop endurance trial started at the 'Cat and Fiddle Inn', at the crest of the

famous hill on the edge of the Derbyshire Peak District, in Buxton, under the scrutiny of the Royal Automobile Club (RAC). The car ran with a record-breaking performance for 40 days and nights, completing the equivalent of the London-to-Glasgow route 27 times. This demonstrated the extraordinary durability and minimal maintenance needs demonstrating a total service cost after the run of a negligible £2 2s 7d. These events, orchestrated by Johnson, proved the 40/50's were of superior quality, making it "The Best Car in the World" according to *Autocar* magazine, thus and establishing Rolls-Royce with the accolade engineering excellence, bespoke craftsmanship and luxury status in motoring.

The 40/50 hp was produced from 1906 to 1926 in the UK and in 1919 Claude Johnson started a subsidiary company RRCCW to produce the Ghost in the United States in Springfield Massachusetts with a Canadian Mr E.J. Belnap as president. This was to save the heavy import duty on cars been imported to the USA. Rolls-Royce Custom Coach Work, stands for a program by Rolls-Royce of America (Springfield, MA) in the 1920s that used independent coachbuilders like Merrimac Body Company to create unique, semi-custom bodies for their chassis, with notable designs like the Piccadilly Roadster, bridging classic bespoke artistry with production efficiency. Production ceased in 1926 two years after the Ghost ceased production in Derby.



1923 Springfield Silver Ghost: Ch No:359HH
Coachwork by RRCCW



Rolls-Royce Silver Ghost Armoured Car

1919 saw the introduction of the aluminium piston fitted as standard to all 40/50 engines. The same year the electric lighting was installed and the electric starter although this was designed by Royce back in 1914 production was halted by the great war. The success of the first Rolls-Royce Silver Ghost in public trials established the company's reputation for excellence, reliability, and luxury, making it a symbol of prestige worldwide. The chassis and engine proved so robust that they were converted into a range of armoured cars during World War I. and were famously used by Lawrence of Arabia.

The total production between 1907 and 1926, a total of 7,874 Silver Ghosts were manufactured in the following locations, Derby, England where 6,173 chassis were built and Springfield, Massachusetts USA: who produced 1,701 units. The survival rate is approximately 19% of the original production run that remain in existence today, which is a remarkably high figure for a vehicle's built over 100 years ago. Surviving examples can be found at prestigious institutions such as the National Motor Museum, Beaulieu in the UK and the Henry Ford Museum in the USA and of course. some members of the Rolls-Royce Enthusiasts' Club.

The North Eastern Section is very fortunate to have a member who owns such a car. Frances Dodd is the owner of a 1914 Rolls-Royce Silver Ghost, Chassis No: 2BD, Registration No: JW 1747, with coach work by H.A. Hamshaw Limited of Leicester.



1914 Silver Ghost Open Drive Limousine Chassis No: 2BD
owned by Frances Dodd

By the early 1920s, competitor performance had improved, leading to the launch of the New Phantom (later Phantom I) in 1925 as the Silver Ghosts successor. Many of the nearly 7874 Silver Ghosts produced between 1907 and 1926 are still in running condition today, a testament to their exceptional build quality.

Following a year of arduous testing, the original Silver Ghost AX 201 was sold to Daniel Hanbury, the second son of Sir Thomas Hanbury. Upon Daniel's death in 1945, the car was bequeathed to his son-in-law, Air Marshal Sir Alec Coryton, who subsequently part-exchanged it with Rolls-Royce for a 1939 Bentley Mk V a H.J. Mulliner saloon. After a three-year restoration between 1948 and 1951, AX 201 entered service as a promotional tool, travelling around the world. In 1984 Franklin Mint took extensive photographs of the car while it was in storage, and produced a die-cast model that went on to become one of the firm's best sellers.

By 1989 restoration was in order, a process that took a year and culminated in the car's participation in the 1990 Silver Ghost Charity Tour between John O'Groats and Land's End. Further restoration was undertaken in 1991 by SC Gordon Coachbuilders Luton and P & A Wood in Essex.

With Rolls-Royce Motors Ltd being sold in 1998, AX 201 ended up in the stewardship of Bentley Motors as part of the purchase of the Crewe Works by the Volkswagen Automotive Group. In December 2020, AX 201 was purchased from Bentley by Sir Michael Kadoorie for £75 million pounds. He is the owner of 47% of Hongkong and Shanghai Hotels. As car is classified as a cherished historical artifact in the UK, it remains under his ownership with a covenant, it must stay within British borders.

The Rolls-Royce Silver Ghost's success was the cornerstone of the company's enduring reputation for excellence in engineering and luxury that remains to this day. The name was revived in 2009, the Rolls-Royce Ghost, with its name paying homage and honouring its iconic predecessor 'The Silver Ghost' produced in 1906.

Below are photographs taken at the 2007 RREC Annual Rally of some of the Silver Ghosts that participated in the Silver Ghosts Centenary Scottish Tour 1907-2007 to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the legendary reliability trials to mirror the original routes and achievements made many years ago.



Picture	Year	Reg No:	Chassis No:	Coach Builder/Body
1	1910	NB6104	1302	H J Mulliner - Tourer
2	1911	X2477	1831	Woodall Nicholson - Roi des Belges
3	1912	R1284	1937	1 st Hooper 2 nd Claybourne - Open Drive Limousine
4	1914	PP7954	64RB	Hooper - Open Drive Limousine
5	1919	R3701	12LW	Franklin – 2 Seat Tourer
6	1920	MH2245	50RE	Barker – Torpedo Tourer
7	1921	XO4485	94NE	Burnett Reyner - Tourer
8	1924	Q28874	S64LK	Willoughby – Pickwick Limousine
9	1925	XY6932	120EU	Barker – Barrel Tourer



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UK Vehicle Excise Duty (VED) Changes in April 2026

Vehicle Excise Duty (VED) is changing, the UK government is updating its motoring tax system to reflect newer environmental, economic, and policy priorities. Below are the key factors driving these changes:

1: Annual Treasury Updates and Inflation Adjustments

Each year, the Treasury reviews and revises VED as part of its standard fiscal updates. For 2026, this includes increases across petrol, diesel, hybrid, and electric vehicles. These adjustments help align tax rates with inflation and broader economic conditions.

2: Encouraging Lower Emissions

The government continues to use VED as a tool to incentivize cleaner vehicles. High-emission cars face significantly higher first-year charges up to £5,690 from April 2026 to discourage the purchase and use of more polluting models.

3: Bringing Electric Vehicles into the Tax System

From 2026, electric vehicles will no longer be exempt from VED. This shift reflects the growing number of EVs on the road and the need to maintain tax revenue as petrol and diesel sales decline.

4: Rebalancing Costs for High-Value Vehicles

Cars with high list prices over £40,000 for petrol/diesel or £50,000 for EVs will continue to face a "luxury car tax" supplement. This is designed to ensure that owners of more expensive vehicles contribute proportionally more.

5: Preparing for Future Road-Use Taxation

The government is laying groundwork for longer-term changes, including a mileage-based tax for EVs starting in 2028. This reflects the need to replace declining fuel-duty revenue as the fleet electrifies.

In the UK, Vehicle Excise Duty for "old" vehicles is determined by their age and, for some, their engine size or emissions. The rules split these vehicles into three main categories

1: Historic (Classic) Vehicles: Over 40 Years Old

Vehicles that are at least 40 years old qualify for Historic Vehicle status, which makes them exempt from paying Vehicle Excise Duty. On 1st April each year, the exemption threshold moves forward by one year. From 1st April 2026 vehicles built before 1st January 1986 will be exempt from paying Vehicle Excise Duty. This exemption only applies to vehicles used for private purposes. If used for hire, reward, or trade, you must still pay Vehicle Excise Duty.

2: Vehicles Registered Before 1 March 2001

For cars registered before this date that aren't yet 40 years old, VED is based solely on **engine size**:

Engine size 1549cc and under: Lower flat rate.

Engine size over 1549cc: Higher flat rate.

Current rates for these vehicles are available on GOV.UK website.

3: Vehicles Registered Between 1 March 2001 and 31 March 2017

Tax for modern classics is calculated on CO2 emissions and fuel type, categorized into 13 bands (A to M).

4: High-Emission Trap

Some high-performance cars from this can face annual tax bills as high as **£750+**.

A high emission trap used in the UK to describe a situation where owners of specific older, functional, but high-polluting vehicles (e.g., those emitting over 255g/km) face disproportionately high VED costs, sometimes exceeding the car's actual value.

For further information go to [Vehicle tax rates \(V149 and V149/1\) - GOV.UK](#) for up to date information on vehicle excise duty changes and rates from 1st April 2026.

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Paul Tunnicliffe discovered a 1994 Rolls-Royce Silver Spirit III that had been abandoned in a car park. With great trepidation he made the decision to buy the car with the aim to recommission it back to its former glory. This acquisition prompted Paul to join the Rolls-Royce Enthusiasts' Club and share his incredible journey on his YouTube Channel 'Life on Cars' as he recommissioned his



Silver Spirit III. Paul's channel documents performing tasks on not only his Rolls-Royce, but on a variety of other projects. This includes a 2006 Jaguar XK (X150) V8 4.2, a 1990 Toyota MR2 barn find and a rare Mk1 Mazda MX5 California Limited Edition, plus other interesting videos. With the help from other NE section



members, Paul has produced videos about pre-war cars that include the removal of wheels on a vintage Rolls-Royce with special nut tool and exploring the features of a 1939 Derby Bentley Mark V he came across at his first Rolls-Royce Enthusiasts' Club event. To access Paul's videos click here, [Life on Cars - YouTube](#)

Should I be driving

by Richard Roberts

Richard is a new RREC member who has spent his professional life as a private client solicitor primarily dealing with elder clients, wills and trusts. He is happy to share some of his professional insights with us.

In the last few months, I have had two elderly clients involved in separate road traffic accidents - one relatively minor, one much more serious which resulted in four people (including the driver) being hospitalised for quite some time. Post-accident, both drivers admitted that pre-accident they had been experiencing brief blackouts and yet had continued to drive because they had over 50 years driving experience behind them and *'of course I am safe....on the whole'*.

In recent weeks, one of my good friends who is in his late 50's has had a mild stroke. It's obvious he will never drive a manual car again, and eyesight issues may make driving an automatic impossible. For someone who has enjoyed a rich tapestry of cars this is a major blow to his independence.

Throughout my career, I have had many rural based clients for whom the loss of their driving license is devastating. Many voluntarily restrict themselves to the daylight quadrangle of home church supermarket and surgery but even that can pose a danger. It may be fine when the roads are quiet but for those who live in popular tourist areas even daylight driving in the summer months can be challenging.

Now in my late 60s, I find that I cannot cope with night driving like I used to, and I know this is a common problem. Dual carriageways and motorways are fine but A and B class roads in the countryside are more challenging with sudden on-coming headlights. I am also finding greater stress driving in urban traffic partly because of the attitude of other drivers, and partly the multiplicity of potholes and avoidance thereof! I am learning to adapt to this because I can still recognise the potential dangers.

However, I am increasingly concerned that I just cannot process the amount of traffic sign information thrown at me especially in unfamiliar urban areas. Its fine if I have passengers who can assist but often, I am alone. Satellite navigation can be a good aid but there are times when I just can't process information at a rate commensurate with the surrounding traffic.

All these topics were much discussed over a recent lunch I had with fellow Gay Classic Car Group members and many of us recognised that we were 'not as good as we were'. Inevitably that led to the question 'how do you tell someone they shouldn't be driving?' and equally inevitably someone started Googling statistics –see

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/reported-road-casualties-great-britain-older-and-younger-driver-factsheets-2024/reported-road-casualties-in-great-britain-older-driver-factsheet-2024>.

They do not make good reading, and fuel the media storm after any serious fatal road accident involving an elderly driver.

One of the wonderful benefits of a specialist car club membership like the GCCG is that we have a diverse age range of enthusiasts who love to drive. This means us older drivers can draw on very willing younger members to be the 'chauffeur' - and not just for club events. However, that's perhaps a start on how we might tackle the aged parent or close friend who really shouldn't be driving. Rather than telling them point blank, encourage family and friends onside to chauffeur, to think much more about car sharing, then progressively suggest the economic benefits of giving up the car and having a regular contract with a local taxi firm, or even persuade them get the Uber App on their smartphone! I have a lovely friend in her mid-80's who gets so much fun out of booking and using an Uber in and around Durham – watching their progress to collect, chatting with the drivers and being delivered right to the door. I willingly admit that I often treat younger friends to the theatre or concert ticket if they chauffeur me. In fact, much as though I love driving – and I still do 16,000+ miles a year – I now love being a passenger.

However what are the legal responsibilities that fall on us to decide that we are not safe, or in fact to 'shop' those who we feel aren't safe?

You must tell DVLA if you develop a 'notifiable' medical condition or disability or a condition or disability has got worse since you got your last licence renewal.

Notifiable conditions are anything that could affect your ability to drive safely. They can include diabetes or taking insulin, syncope (fainting), heart conditions (including atrial fibrillation and pacemakers), sleep apnoea, epilepsy, strokes and glaucoma. That doesn't mean to say that you will be automatically stopped from driving with those conditions, but the DVLA needs to be notified.

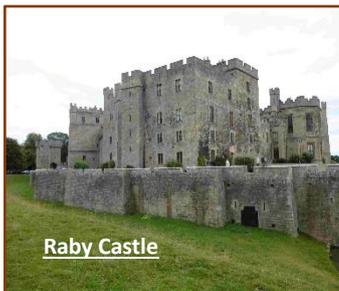
I would venture to suggest though that anything that seriously affects your eyesight, your reaction times, hazard perception, confusion or lack of concentration should be prompting you to consider voluntarily surrendering your driving licence.

And that is the point at which you really need the help of your family and friends to be brutally honest with you. You should be asking them "If I am driving, do you feel safe"?

If the answer is no (or just silence) please voluntarily surrender that driving licence and with it your potential to cause a serious, potentially fatal, accident.

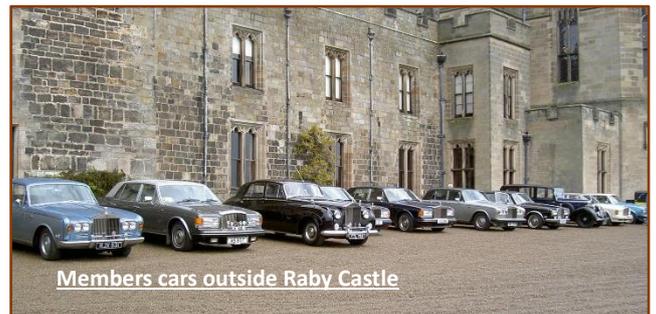
Newsletter articles from bygone years.

VISIT TO RABY CASTLE – 18th APRIL 2003



Raby Castle

About twenty cars arrived on a bright Sunday morning to visit this 14th Century castle situated in sweeping parkland with lakes, historic gardens, formal lawns, ornamental pond and rose gardens. The



Members cars outside Raby Castle

castle is occupied by Lord Barnard who took the opportunity of inspecting our cars while we were being taken on a conducted tour of his home. We were welcomed with coffee in the entrance hall, designed to accommodate a coach and horses to allow passengers to alight in the dry. The coach could drive in on one side and out on the other. We were then taken on an extensive and fascinating tour of the



Peter Kitchings 1936 Rolls-Royce 25/30 Limousine by Park Ward Ch No: GRM 23

castle including the Great Hall, the Chapel and the kitchens, which we were told were still in use until the mid-1950's. After looking round the inside of the castle we had the opportunity of admiring the gardens and grounds and sampling the



Nick Clarks 1934 Rolls-Royce 20/25 Landaulette by Rippon Brothers Ch No: GWE 51

excellent cooking in the 'Stable Café'. There was an interesting collection of club cars representing all decades from the thirties onwards and there was also one or interesting visitor, a diminutive Austin Seven.



John Harrisons 1956 Silver Cloud 1 Ch No: SYB 106



Austin Seven

VISIT TO DARLINGTON RAILWAY MUSEUM AND "TORNADO" UNDER CONSTRUCTION

SUNDAY 27th APRIL 2003



Thirty-nine section members and friends turned out for the first event in the North Eastern calendar on Sunday 27th April, a visit to the Darlington Railway Museum, on the site of the historic North Road station. We first met at Hallgarth Country hotel for coffee, biscuits and buns prior to proceeding in convoy to the museum with 14 "proper" cars, from Section chairman Richard Hall's Turbo R, to the Frankie's 1929 20hp landaulette, body by Lawton-Goodman, plus John Harrison's 1965 Silver Cloud III, all of which lined up



at the front of the museum. The museum houses a distinguished variety of artifacts, including Stephenson's "Locomotion" of 1825, the oldest surviving Darlington-built locomotive, "Derwent" of 1845 as well as some interesting North Eastern Railway locos. A bonus for us railway fans was to see the ex-LNER A2 Pacific "Blue Peter" temporarily housed in the museum prior to some serious repairs which will take at least two years. Retracing our steps back to the hotel we all enjoyed an excellent lunch served privately for us in the conservatory

(accompanied by some of the heaviest rain seen for some time). By the time that we returned, again in convoy to the museum, the rain had stopped and we proceeded to experience what for some was the highlight of the visit. Situated adjacent to the museum,



Hopetown Carriage Works, the former Stockton and Darlington Railway workshops, is the site of a unique locomotive building initiative. Here the A1 Steam Locomotive Trust are constructing a new Pacific A1 class locomotive, "Tornado", built to Arthur Peppercorn's original LNER design. On completion this huge engine will be the first

steam main line loco to be built in this country since 1960 and will undoubtedly be the premier hauler on main line specials. The engine is about half completed and the boiler is shortly to be ordered from Europe as there is no longer the capability to construct it in the UK. We were all most impressed with the cleanliness and order of the place and the workmanship so far has to be seen to be appreciated. Certainly Henry Royce and W.O. Bentley would approve, both being former railway apprentices which was the foundation of their engineering excellence. The workshops are not normally available for private Sunday viewing and we are grateful to Dave Elliott and Ian Howitt of the Steam



Trust for allowing us the privilege to see this amazing testament to local ingenuity and initiative. All too soon we had to depart, altogether a full and interesting day.



Members Cars for Sale

1926 Rolls-Royce 20HP Saloon by Park Ward

1926 Rolls-Royce 20HP Saloon by Park Ward. Restored by the renowned David A.C. Royle in the mid 1980's keeping a lot of the original features, and still in superb condition throughout. Smart blue over black with tan leather interior. Fresh engine rebuild and new radiator in 2007/8, recent tyres and overdrive fitted. Drives exceptionally well £49,950 ono.

Contact Nick Clark Tel: 07766 958801
or email nickclarkrr@outlook.com



For Sale: 1934 Rolls-Royce 20/25 two door 'Coupe' by Hooper

A one-off designed car, with overdrive, for further details contact,

Contact Allan Fishburn Tel: [01642 551835](tel:01642551835) or email: allanfishburn@hotmail.co.uk



Members Spares for Sale

Klaxon Horn suitable for Pre-war Roll-Royce - fully restored £395.00

Pre-war Rolls bakelite mushroom type HT coil, fully rewound £525.00

Derby Bentley 3½ litre dynamo, fully reconditioned £695.00

Large collection of pre-war Rolls-Royce tools and spares including oil guns, inspection lamps, oil cans, bulb holders etc. Please contact me with your requirements.

Contact Nick Clark Tel: [07766 958801](tel:07766958801) or email: nickclarkrr@outlook.com

Auto-Vac gaskets. Pair of top gaskets £9.99, fuel switch gasket £7.99 - p&p £2.00

20HP, 20/25 and Phantom engine linkages. Offers.

20/25 Starting motor. Overhauled running well. £350

20/25 Ace Wheel discs for sale. £30.00

Silver Shadow tool box, £150.00

Pre-war Rolls-Royce ammeter gauge. £275.00

Contact Peter Charlton Tel: [07906 163427](tel:07906163427) or email: petercharlton1@yahoo.com

Members Spares Wanted

Wanted: A good 20/25 Cylinder Head and Block. Tel: 07906 163427

The two Silver Cloud combination spanners.

20HP Radiator, must be in good condition.

Any Rolls-Royce or Bentley Bakelite electrical fittings and junction boxes.

20/25 Temperature gauge complete with bulb.

20HP Starter solenoid.

Bakelite mushroom coil and ballast resistor holder.

Contact Peter Charlton Tel: [07906 163427](tel:07906163427) or email: petercharlton1@yahoo.com

Wanted: Any Rolls-Royce or Bentley project car needing recommissioning up to and including SZ models Turbo R, Brooklands, Spirit etc anything considered.

Contact Paul Tunncliffe Tel: [07939 285264](tel:07939285264) or email: tunncliffepaul71@gmail.com

Advertising in the Newsletter

Any members wishing to advertise on the sale or wanted page, please contact the Newsletter editor.

MEMBERS WELFARE

Members are asked to let the Chairman or Secretary know if they are aware of any members of the Section who are unwell or in hospital.

Unfortunately, long-standing section members Geoff and Sheila Mansfield have decided not renew their membership due the health issues and advancing years. The section wishes them best wishes for the future.

For the benefit of new section members a brief history of the North Eastern Section of the RREC

The North Eastern Section of the Rolls-Royce Enthusiasts' Club (RREC) was established in 1969. It now operates as an affiliate of the RREC, which caters to owners and enthusiasts of Rolls-Royce and Bentley motor cars.

Historical Milestones: In 1969 the section was formed, becoming one of the early regional groups of the main club that was founded in 1957.

1978 Reorganization: In September 1978, the section established a new meeting venue at Hardwick Hall in Sedgefield, with Gordon Blacklock appointed as Section Secretary and Wilf Davis as Chairman.

1979 National Recognition: The section was awarded "The Section Trophy" (Club Enthusiasts' Trophy) for making the most progress in the previous year.

1980 Expansion: The North Eastern Section collaborated with the Northern, East Midlands, and Yorkshire sections to launch the North of England Rally at Harewood House, which remains a staple club event today.

The McGarr Trophy: Following their 1979 success, the section established its own annual trophy to recognize the "effort and enthusiasm" of ordinary members.

Ongoing Activities: The section hosts monthly noggin and natters, attend classic car rallies, visits to local attractions picnic events and annual dinners such as Christmas Party and AGM.

To view a list of upcoming 2026 events and social meetings, visit the North Eastern Sections website rrec-northeast.org.uk/events

DISCLAIMER

The Section Newsletter is published in January, March, May, July, September and November. Copy deadline for each Newsletter is 15th of the month preceding publication. The Editor reserves the right to edit any copy submitted. Please note that the opinions expressed and advice offered in this Newsletter do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Committee or Editor. The North Eastern Section is affiliated to RREC Limited trading as The Rolls-Royce Enthusiasts' Club accepts no responsibility for the results of adopting any advice contained in this Newsletter. When possible, a short report is submitted to The Spirit & Speed for the Section News pages. The deadline for submission of these reports can be found on contacts page of Spirit and Speed and if you have any items for inclusion in this report, please submit them to John Harrison, as above, and in good time. The trademarks ROLLS-ROYCE and the ROLLS-ROYCE badge device are the trademarks of Rolls-Royce PLC. Members are reminded that they should at all times use their best endeavours to preserve the value and validity of the brand names and trademarks of both Rolls-Royce PLC and of the club.