

# HIGHWAY

July 2024

Blackpalfrey Motor Club of Kent



The **Blackpalfrey Motor Club of Kent Ltd (BpMCK)** is a member of **Motorsport UK**, the **HRCR** and of three Regional Associations, the **ASEMC**, the **ACSMC** and the **AEMC**. Blackpalfrey is also a partner club in the **Weald Motor Club** consortium. These organisations allow Blackpalfrey members to compete in a wide range of events, for both **classic** and **modern** cars, organised by many other motor clubs all over southern England.

*The home of Historic Road Events in the South East*

**Welcome** ... this edition of HIGHWAY is my first in the editorial seat, and I would like to start by thanking Brian Millen for all his hard work and for trusting me to take things forward. You will start to see some changes as I get to grips with it all, so please bear with me – it will be a work in progress for the next few months so any feedback, comments and suggestions welcome, and please do forward your articles or ideas and any photos, events, notices, etc – you know the drill!

For those of you that don't know me, I joined the club about three years ago with my husband Mark, he had spent the previous 18 months rebuilding a classic Mini as an homage to the Works Cooper S Monte Carlo winning cars, and once complete it looked the part – so we thought we should be rallying in it! Having met a BpMCK member at a car show who encouraged us to give it a go, we joined up and enjoy participating in Reg Runs... a challenge for the brain and a test of marriage!



Photo: Brian Millen

I am looking forward to getting to know more about motorsports, the club and its members especially with the club's 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary next year, so if you would like to get in touch, please drop me a line, [sue.blackpalfrey@gmail.com](mailto:sue.blackpalfrey@gmail.com)

Sue Watson

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Copy for August HIGHWAY to be submitted to [sue.blackpalfrey@gmail.com](mailto:sue.blackpalfrey@gmail.com) by 24<sup>th</sup> July

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# Chairman's Chat

Well, that was a surprise! I had always said I did not want to be Chairman of Blackpalfrey, but after the success of The 2024 Hughes, lots of back-slapping and cajoling has found me in this prestigious post. At the AGM I said I was prepared to take on the role, but only on certain conditions, and that EVERY member of the Club should be active in making the Club one to be proud of. I said I would lead and assist, but **not be there to do everything!**

Following in the footsteps of Brian Millen will always mean there will be some changes. After all, Brian was a founder member of the Club in 1965 and has held all the posts at various times since then. Without his dedication to the Club, it would not exist today. One thing Brian, Alan Blissett and a few other long-standing members are going to do over the next few months, is to put some history of the Club together so that we can celebrate our Jubilee next year. If anyone has any press cuttings of events, dinners, etc please let Brian have them.

So, having taken on this mantle, the first thing I came across was the new web site being launched on 2<sup>nd</sup> June, and it is so much more user friendly than the old one which we had been using for many years. It was time for a change, and this new site is one where we can easily update or amend individual parts without causing other parts to fall over. We must thank Steve Thompson for getting it to where we are today, assisted by John Ash who has run its predecessor for many years. Not to say it will stay as it is – it will continue to evolve.

One thing that was immediately impacted was the entry system for our Sunday 12 car Regruns. We have switched over to MTC1 which is run under the banner of Chelmsford Motor Club, but in reality, it is Tony Michaels's baby. He has developed it over the past few years to the extent that it is used by many rally events throughout the UK, and one we have used for The Hughes. It has many more features than our old system, and we need to learn how to use it to our best advantage. Jack & Matt have been the guinea pigs for their June Regrun, and a few things have come to light already. So please bear with us whilst we get to grips with the new software, and we hope that the next event will run smoothly.

Whilst on the technology side of things, our membership and e-mail software (membermojo) has been developing and Steve and Tom have found some additional areas here where there are subtle extras that we can use. See if you can spot any of them when we e-mail you next. We are trying to standardise our e-mail addresses as far as possible, so please check our contacts list in this Newsletter and update your own Contacts List so that your e-mails go to the correct address.

At the AGM we welcomed some new faces onto the Committee and hopefully, we will continue to bring some more new faces into actively helping run our events and admin of the Club. You will see that the Newsletter is now edited by Sue Watson. Sue has been an active competitor in our Sunday Regruns over the past few years in Mark's Mini Cooper 'S'. As one of our "next Generation" members, I think she will bring a fresh look to the newsletter. If any of you have been participating in recent events, please e-mail her some words at [sue.blackpalfrey@gmail.com](mailto:sue.blackpalfrey@gmail.com).

We held our first Committee meeting last week and have several things which are beginning to line up for the forthcoming year. One is a visit to Patrick & Pam Watt's home where they will be telling us about their exploits over the past month on the Peking to Paris Rally – see separate item later in here. Hopefully we can begin to plan more events during the summer and autumn, before we get back into the Regruns and Weald Friday 12 car series. Ideally, I would like to see more Scatters, and even a treasure hunt or two. Volunteers, please contact Phil Smith.

We are still lacking a Secretary (Andy is staying on until a volunteer can be found). We also need someone to take on the role of Social Secretary, as we hope to have more non-competitive events during the forthcoming year. Can we **PLEASE** have 2 volunteers for these roles?

Our main events remain the Hughes (26<sup>th</sup> April 2025) and Tour of Kent (6<sup>th</sup> October 2024).

The Hughes takes a large amount of organising, and from having been deeply involved in it over the past 2 years, it became obvious that we do not have the manpower to run such a large and prestigious event from within our own membership. We have decided to make it a Co-pro event run along the lines of the Kent Targa Rally with it running under the Weald Motor Club banner and Blackpalfrey as the major organising Club. The whole event takes 10 months to organise, and we are about to have our first Hughes Committee meeting. One thing that became obvious to me is that an “Event Director” was needed to lead the team and ensure everyone was up to speed with their respective roles as once one aspect dropped behind schedule, it impacted on the rest of the team’s work. If there is any member who would like to become involved in the organisation, no matter how small a part they want to play, please let me or Dave Hughes know.

Tom Ash & Trevor Hawkins have spent many years organising the TOK and 2025 will be the last year they will be involved. Luckily, Simon Ingarfield and Bob Pilcher have offered to sit alongside them this year to learn the ropes and take over running the event in 2026. Andy & Martine Kilby have offered to help on some aspects of route checking, etc. Once again, if you are interested in helping, please contact one of them.

So, I look forward to seeing each and every member of the Club out and about playing your part in our events. If not – expect a call from me! For those overseas and distant members, I will forgive you, but you can still be an active part of the Club by keeping us up to date with your activities via Facebook or an article or two for the Newsletter. On that topic, it was good to see Barry Callen partaking in the Mike Jordan run at the weekend, whilst they were over from Australia.

Dick

**STOP PRESS!**

## BpMCK Member Invitation

Patrick & Pam Watts have kindly agreed to tell us about their epic journey in the Peking to Paris Rally, from which they have just returned.

We have been invited to their home near Marden on the evening of **Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> July**, refreshments will be available.

Numbers are limited and will be allocated on a first-come-first-served basis. If you would like to be part of this evening, please email your names to [dick.blackpalrey@gmail.com](mailto:dick.blackpalrey@gmail.com) to reserve your space.

More details will be available in due course.



BpMCK is a club that actively promotes Historic and Classic *competitive* car events (as well as our popular Tour or Kent – part of the HRCR Scenic Tour Series), we also encourage our members, who may or may not, have a Classic Car to get involved in ‘the new name in grassroots motorsport’ – STREETCAR. The StreetCar disciplines are based on: Autotests, AutoSOLOs,

Car Trials, Cross-Country, Touring Assemblies, Navigational Scatter Rallies, 12 Car Rallies, Road and Historic Rallies and Targa Rallies and all these events are run by us and other local clubs, to which we are invited.

Want to know more?

- Contact: Steve Thompson, [streetcar.blackpalfrey@gmail.com](mailto:streetcar.blackpalfrey@gmail.com) or any Committee Member.
- Check out: <https://streetcarmotorsportuk.com/>
- Join the MSUK StreetCar Facebook Group: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/streetcarmotorsportuk>

# 2023 Club Awards

Bp

Following the AGM on Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> June at Newnham Court Inn, Brian Mill was pleased to present the 2023 Club Awards.

<b>Rally Championships 2023</b>	
Champion Driver, <i>Olivers Trophy</i>	Chris Rose
2 <sup>nd</sup> Driver	Graham Banks
3 <sup>rd</sup> Driver	Tom Ash
1 <sup>st</sup> Novice Driver, <i>Barrie Lees Trophy</i>	Rupert Burne
Champion Navigator, <i>Gainsford Trophy</i>	Dick Athow
2 <sup>nd</sup> Navigator	Graham Mayes
3 <sup>rd</sup> Navigator	Amy Rose
1 <sup>st</sup> Novice Navigator, <i>Redbar Trophy</i>	Carole Burne
<b>Winter Series Championships 2022-2023</b>	
1 <sup>st</sup> Driver <i>Fernall Trophy</i>	Graham Banks
2 <sup>nd</sup> Driver	Nigel Mead
3 <sup>rd</sup> Driver	Barbara Athow
1 <sup>st</sup> Navigator <i>Presidents Trophy</i>	Graham Mayes
2 <sup>nd</sup> Navigator	Archie Pelling
3 <sup>rd</sup> Navigator	Rosemary Mead
<b>Marshals Award</b>	
<i>Derek Camp Trophy</i>	Harry Paice & Linda Collins



Graham Banks



Dick Athow



Brian Millen presenting LtoR: Rosemary Mead, Archie Pelling, Carole Burne, Rupert Burne, Nigel Mead, Harry Paice & Linda Collins



Dear Editor

At last!! After many years, in the distant and more recent past, of trying to pass on the role of HIGHWAY Editor to someone else, we've had a positive response.

I would like to thank all the contributors, of event reports, articles and photos, over the years for helping to make my 'job' pleasurable and, at times, frustrating and most importantly, to continue offering your news and stories to Sue Watson, [sue.blackpalfrey@gmail.com](mailto:sue.blackpalfrey@gmail.com).

Being Editor certainly widened my interest and knowledge of club motorsport, not only in the SE but all over the UK, as internet searches for results and event photographers became the monthly norm, in order to enhance event reports.

It is a 'fun' job but does rely largely on members' contributions to make HIGHWAY readable and interesting, offering Club news on our own events and those in which members have competed, to the rest of the membership. We have members competing in the top level of RallyX, in national HRCR events and in world-wide Tours and competitions, as well as in more local events at Club level.

It's time for a fresh approach and I look forward to Sue's new ideas and layout but, ultimately, it's up to the readers/contributors to offer Sue suitable material to help her in this role...

Best wishes and regards to all

Brian M.

## ***National Motorsport Week*** ***11<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup> July 2024***

Motorsport UK is launching an exciting new initiative: National Motorsport Week! A national week dedicated to celebrating motorsport, set to run from July 11<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup> 2024. This annual campaign is designed to bring together the entire motorsport community in the UK, providing a platform to celebrate and promote all forms of the sport and the individuals who contribute to its vibrant ecosystem. To see what events are taking place visit the Motorsport UK events page: <https://www.motorsportuk.org/events/>

## ***Tour of Kent 2024***

This year's Annual Tour for Classic Cars supporting Demelza Hospice Care for Children event will take place on Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> October and entries will be opening shortly!

Keep an eye on the website (<https://www.blackpalfrey.club/about-1>) for further details on the event and to enter.

Please join us to help raise funds for a very worthy cause – whilst enjoying a grand Tour round the Garden of England!



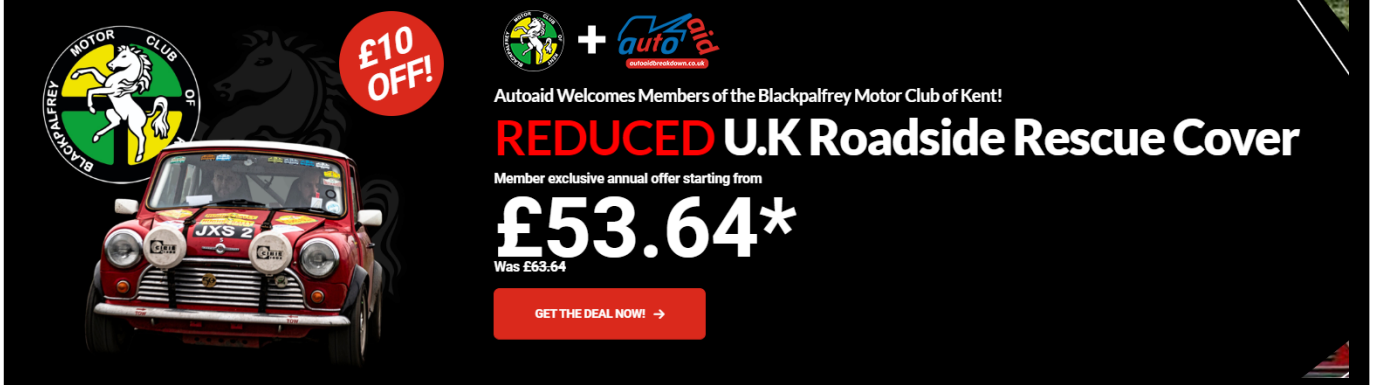
# North Weald Airfield

Sadly, the curtain seems to be falling on North Weald Airfield. We have known there have been increased environmental pressures on the venue for a number of years, but it now appears, if the stories are true, that much of the airfield site has been purchased for development. This means that 2024 may well be the last year of sprints at North Weald. This historic airfield has been the starting point for many of our members over the years and it is disappointing that the use of this venue for motorsport is passing into history.

## New Website – Perks!

Hopefully you have had a chance to check out the new website <https://www.blackpalfrey.club/>

Top right on the homepage is a new feature **Member Benefits** which we hope will grow with offers for BpMCK members – currently Autoaid are offering reduced Roadside Rescue Cover ... but keep an eye out for further offers and benefits, and if you have any ideas for companies that might be interested in participating contact Steve, [streetcar.blackpalfrey@gmail.com](mailto:streetcar.blackpalfrey@gmail.com)



**£10 OFF!**

Autoaid Welcomes Members of the Blackpalfrey Motor Club of Kent!

**REDUCED U.K Roadside Rescue Cover**

Member exclusive annual offer starting from

**£53.64\***

Was £63.64

GET THE DEAL NOW! →

## Summer Tabletop Rally *Elise Whyte | Venture Creator*

Join us for two weeks of plotting practice. From tulips to map references, this is the perfect way to get your practice in before the Winter season starts! 10 regularities over two weeks with no time pressure. Just complete the plotting before the Sunday of each week to be entered into the prize draw to win a [Quest Drive!](#)

<https://www.venturebound.co.uk/ttr>



# East Anglian Classic Rally 2024

**Navigate through the latest HRCR Clubmans Rally Championship with Dick Athow**

A few weeks ago, I received a phone call from Jim Bowie asking if I was available to navigate for someone on the East Anglian Classic. He had 5 drivers who were without navigators – it is after all, the holiday season. So, after that, I found myself sitting next to Richard Warne in his Austin Healey 3000. Richard is President of Green Belt Motor Club and has been rallying for more years than he cares to remember, but is fairly new to Regularity Rallies, this being his 4<sup>th</sup> one. The car was restored to works specification with a full-on rally cam, Liege gearbox ratios, etc. and period Hald Tripmaster, something new to me. It was the single trip and not the Twinmaster. When I met up with Richard at the start, the first thing I noticed was that the cherry red car would be in the running for 1<sup>st</sup> place at a Councours d'Elegance show. Sitting in a Healey 3000 for the first time makes you realise how cramped conditions were for a full on International rally they were renowned for competing in.

Our Club was represented by Mike Cochrane who was, as usual, navigating Angus McQueen in his Cortina GT, seeded 11, and Graham Mayes/Keith Howard in a Mk 2 Golf GTi seeded 2 behind us at 33.

The number of entries was even lower than The Hughes, with only 34 in the main event and 4 in the Clubmans, but only 35 started. We must get the Northerners to travel South to make these events worth putting on and I have made representations to HRCR for this to be reviewed. I have suggested that ALL rounds count to the Championship, rather than dropping two from the overall scores. That way, we should get more entries from those who live in colder climes!

The start was from the usual Grange Hotel, Thurston which is a bit like Fawlty Towers in appearance! Signing



Photo: Graham Mayes

on took place the day before, and one hour before we were due to start, we collected our navigation for most of the route. All was simple navigation, with no nasties - spot heights, grid lines, avoid these points, etc. The Finals which had been issued earlier in the week had given us 10 map references for Regularity D and in the morning's handout it gave directions of approach/departure, and the speed changes at some of these points.

Regularity A was about one hour long and took us across country towards Lavenham Airfield. During this time, I encountered a sticking clock. It would freeze when I pressed the remote but would not re-start after the normal 35 seconds. After missing three IRTC re-sets, I realised the clock must have been set to a different mode than Regularity but did not have any handbook with me to find out how to re-set it. So, it was press once to stop it upon arrival at the TC, then press and hold it to zero it, then press to start the timing for the next section. All of this took about 10 seconds at each TC, so that had to be factored in to all my calculations from now on.

Then came 3 tests at Lavenham Airfield on the broken concrete perimeter road. Test 1 was 0.78 miles of broken concrete, with potholes the size we find on our lanes in Kent, and partly through a farm storage area where there was machinery and hay bales to avoid. Test 2 was slightly shorter and had two sections which were very tight and twisty, the first around piles of wood chippings, and the second around more farm machinery and debris. The third one looked on paper to be more open, until you read the distance – 0.15 miles. There were 20 gates/cones to navigate through and it was very tight – at one point we had to reverse to get us round a two-stage hairpin and we took a maximum! It was during these tests that the rain started, albeit only light to start with, but sufficient to make things a little slippery. It was then off to coffee.

After coffee we had 45 minutes of Reg B which meandered around the countryside West of the A134 before finishing near Sudbury. It was here that Angus McQueen/Mike Cochrane failed to record their start time. They

were not the only ones to fall foul of this self-start, and it was to have a major influence on the final results as they incurred a 5-minute penalty. Part way through this reg I worked out why I was having problems with the timing. The Brantz clock would seem to stick at 5 minutes something for a long time, then jump to 7 minutes. I realised that there was a fault with the clock reading – one part of the digit was not functioning! That meant I had to make all time calculations from that point on by using time of day, rather than elapsed time.

Then the rain started again, but this time it was a real downpour. So much so, that we had to stop to put the hood up! This cost us almost 5 minutes.

Test 4 Belchamp Otten was 1.3 miles long on concrete farm tracks, most of which had been covered in dry dust before the earlier rain. This meant it was like a skating rink in most places. One or two areas had dried a little and we could make the most of the Healey's power.

Regularity C was another 1-hour trip along narrow country lanes which took us Westwards towards Haverhill before heading North towards the finish East of Newmarket.

Test 5 was Primrose Hill which was used last year, so I know it would be fast once we had worked our way through the tight cones and potato crates. Here the Healey could really stretch its legs and we were flying on the good concrete roads, interspersed by short smooth gravel sections, only to be spoilt by two very tight 180's in the final 200 yards.

Lunch was in the Village Hall at Kennett, and the sun was out at full strength again, so it was down with the hood for the rest of the day. Leading were Matt Aybrey/Ryan Pickering in their Mini Cooper S on 10:14, with John Haygarth/Martyn Taylor 2 seconds behind them. Ian Crammond/Matthew Vokes were 3<sup>rd</sup> on 11:04. Angus and Mike were lying in 16<sup>th</sup> spot on 16:34 whilst we were 27<sup>th</sup> on 24:36 and Graham/Keith one behind us on 32:17

We then went off to Test 6 at Bay Farm. Once again, this had been used last year, but after complaints about the roughness of the dirt farm track in last year's event, they stayed on the farm's concrete road this year. At 0.82 miles long, it started with a very tight section of 12 sets of cones/gates in amongst the farm buildings and high stacks of packing boxes. Again, it was too tight for the Healey, and we lost time here before getting out onto the open farm track which had 3 chicanes to slow us down. Sadly Grahame Mayes/Keith Howard ran out of brakes on Test 6 but fortunately it was they were braking in a straight line going into a "stop box", rather than going into a corner!



*Photo: Andy Manston – M&H Photography*



Refuelling was next before going on to Test 7, Park Farm, a favourite last year. This year was to be no different for most competitors, but not for us. The Test started on a concrete track before turning into a belt of trees at the edge of a field. About 400 yards of straight before a tight 90 left/right onto another track and a passage check just before a merge. All was clear when we arrived there, so we set off again at speed before heading onto some rough tracks around a reservoir and into another belt of woodland. This time the route was far from straight. In fact, the trees were about 10 feet apart but not in lines. So, we tiptoed our way through these at not much more than walking pace. Any attempt to accelerate gently met with the front understeering towards the next tree, and so it was gently, gently through this 200-yard section. Once through this, the route opened out to a wide farm track going downhill for about 200 yards of sandy soil before a split, first time it was 90 right 200 yards of concrete track and then another 90 right onto another sandy track, to re-join the first part of the route after a Passage Check. Then it was round the reservoir and back into the windy track through the trees and onto the sandy downhill before Split left this time, to the finish. By now the sun had dried up the ground, and we were covered on a cloud of sandy dust as we turned left, so I could not read the last 100 yards of the route due to the dust getting into my eyes! Ah, the joy of open-top cars. Angus and Mike had a wrong test, incurring 8:28 of penalties, enough to spoil their day even more.



*An early exit for Graham Mayes' car 'Ruby' who suffered complete brake failure on the first test after lunch.*

*Photo: Graham Mayes*

It was then straight into Reg D which took us Southwest of Bury St Edmunds back down to Lavenham Airfield for a repeat of the three morning tests but reversed this time. The potholes seemed to be getting larger the 3<sup>rd</sup> Test was still incredibly slippery in the twisty parts and we had to stop and correct two overshoots here.

Then it was on to the Final Regularity which took us back North towards Bury St Edmunds. The navigation for the first half of this 45-minute section had been given to us at the start of the day, and the second part was handed out just as we started this regularity. I looked at it only to find it was in order tulips, but whilst it had the arrow, it did not have the start point. Looking at the pre-plotted route and the timecard there were 4 TC's so I guessed we would have two on the pre-plotted part, and 2 on the new part of the route. I concluded it was better to try to keep to time on the first two, and when we came to the end of the pre-plotted route, I would sit and plot this additional part. That way we would only lose time on the 3<sup>rd</sup> section but try to minimise that by upping the driving tempo to TC3 to make up as much lost time as possible. Hopefully we could then keep to time on the last section. In the end we dropped 3:10 to TC3, but TC4 was spot on time. That was the only clean section of the day! Again, there was drama on this Reg when John Haygarth/Henry Carr threw away a win when they missed a code board incurring 100 penalties.

At the finish it was a well-deserved win for Matt Abrey/Ryan Pickering in a Mini Cooper S on 22:02 from John Haygarth/Martyn Taylor on 23:24, with Peter Higton/Henry Carr in 3<sup>rd</sup> place on 23:49. Angus McQueen/Mike Cochrane fared better than us, finishing 16<sup>th</sup> overall after their happenings. They were 4<sup>th</sup> overall on the Regularity Sections, but 21<sup>st</sup> on the Tests. Had they not had the two mishaps, they would have been in the running for the win! We finished 24<sup>th</sup> overall – 24<sup>th</sup> on the Regularities and 22<sup>nd</sup> on the tests. To show the level of expertise on this type of event, the top crew dropped only 38 seconds all day on the regularities, against my 17:31!! More practice required.

# Dates for your Diary



## Sevenoaks and District Motor Club Ltd

Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> July: All day

**Summer AutoSOLO Rnd6 at Brands Hatch**

Register here to enter or marshal this event: <https://linktr.ee/7oaksAutosolo>

For other Sevenoaks and District Motor Club events, check out their calendar: <https://sevenoaksmotorclub.com/calendar/>

## Maidstone and Mid Kent Motor Club

### Evening Autotest Series

Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> July: 18:00 – 20:30

Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> August: 18:00 – 20:30

Register here or enter or marshal these events:

<https://www.mmkmc.co.uk/index.php/events/164-evening-autotest-2024>



### Summer Slalom

Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> July: 09:00 – 16:00

Register here or enter or marshal this event:

<https://www.mmkmc.co.uk/index.php/events/167-summer-slalom-28th-july-2024>

## Club Nights: WATCH THIS SPACE FOR DATES & DETAILS

Usually held at: The Newnham Court Inn, Bearsted Road, Maidstone ME14 5LH  
(<https://www.greeneking.co.uk/pubs/kent/newnham-court-inn>)

**ALL WELCOME**

Club Nights/social events can include; visits, talks, training, etc alongside other social events, scatters and treasure hunts. However, we need a Social Secretary to coordinate the calendar – if you think you could get involved, please contact any member of the committee for a chat!

## Promoting Blackpalfrey Motor Club of Kent: Oh So Retro!



Four BpMCK members, Jack Stewart, Matt Davies, Mark & Sue Watson will be hosting a club stand at Oh So Retro on Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> September 2024 at The Rec, Palm Bay Avenue, Margate CT9 3PP from 10:00 – 16:00. With over 1,500 classic and retro cars, scooters and motorcycles, live music, trade stands and lots more, they are aiming to encourage some new members to join. It's a great event and there is plenty to see and do, so if you are attending, please go and see the BpMCK Team and maybe spare half an hour to talk about BpMCK with prospective new members! <https://ohsoretro.co.uk/>

# Car Review

**Andreas Zacharia shares a report on his BMW Z3 that he will be competing in**

## **1998 BMW Z3 R124JAA**

**Year Bought: November 2023**

**Year Sold: N/A**

**Length of Ownership: 7 months**



When the Z3 first launched in the UK back in 1995, the two-seater rag top roadster market was beginning to get a bit crowded. Buyers could choose from the MK1 MX5, the newly launched MGF, the Alfa-Romeo Spider 916, or even the Fiat Barchetta – as long as you didn't mind your sports car being front wheel-drive. Wait another year or two and you'd also get the option of having an Audi TT, the Mercedes CLK, and Porsche Boxster. But far from being overlooked, the Z3 caused a commotion, largely because it was being driven by James...no, not that obscure 90s band who sang about sitting down but James, James Bond.

After several years' hiatus, not behind the wheel of a Great British Aston but a German BMW - built in Spartanburg, USA no less. If this wasn't enough to make you feel a bit shaken, your heart might've been stirred by their cheeky advertising campaign. Now, almost 30 years on, you'll have to forgive those who will have forgotten that it was indeed a Bond car, starring in GoldenEye for almost 20 seconds. Nonetheless, this appearance worked and paid dividends for BMW helping secure Z3s place in the market: and its initial sales success is attributed to the film. By the time the Z3 bowed out to the Z4 in 2003, more than 300,000 had sold - not bad for the plucky little roadster that was a bit late to the party.

Even if you see this product placement for what it was, a marketing gimmick, it's impossible to ignore the fact that from its inception the Z3 was infused with a bit of Bond. BMW kicked off the project in 1991 behind smoke and mirrors, bringing on board their in-house designer Joji Nagashima in secret (who later gave us the E39 5 series). While you can see the obvious design influences from the previous Z1 and 503 roadsters, the final Z3 design that was penned in 1993 has its own unique character blending this 60s charm in with distinctive 1990s curves.

It's a classic design...

Long bonnet? ✓

Seats so far back they're almost over the rear wheels? ✓

Wide rear arches? ✓

Rakish windscreen? ✓

For me, though, it is its distinctive flowing swage lines that run from the headlights all the way to the tops of the doors and round to the back of the hood that does it. The unmistakable kidney grille flanked on each side by two sweeping headlights also give the Z3 that traditional BMW image, one that oozes confidence and masculinity (something missing from BMWs of late). While the Z3's design was polarising, and remains so even today, like Sophie Ellis Bexter it has overcome allegations of cheesiness to gradually become increasingly well-liked.

But the Z3s enduring popularity can also be attributed to how well the design has mellowed with age. What might've been seen as a bit forced-retro 30 years ago, today it seems like an old school 90s roadster worthy in its own right. In fact, ahead of its 30<sup>th</sup> birthday the Z3 is now having a bit of a comeback, with prices steadily rising. But you've not missed the boat - they are still competitive. It's not too late to bag a bargain as there are still over 12,000 in the UK as of 2023.

There was another reason why many people flocked to the Z3, myself included last November, and it wasn't only to do with Pierce Brosnan's chiselled jawline, (well...not entirely, given I opted for one in Atlanta blue with the beige interior): the fact that BMW made drivers' cars. And while they'd not had much experience in the two-seater roadster department, they knew how to make a rear-wheel-drive car and make it handle well. This was when 'the ultimate driving machine' was king. The M44 1.9 dohc engine, while not the spriteliest of the bunch, it has a fantastic ability to rev, and you have to work it quite hard with both peak power and torque found beyond 5,000rpm. While this might not sound ideal for a sports car, I confess, to me, it is absolutely sublime, and genuinely harks back to true great roadsters of yesteryear, just without the mechanical issues.

Pushing the car to the upper band of its rev range is tantalising, addictive even, especially when your right foot is flat down. Dropping into third while accelerating out of a tight hairpin turn is, simply put, bloody good fun. And while the M44 engine is by far the final word in torque and speed (I would have liked a bit more power given the c.1300kg kerb weight), it is nonetheless a characterful and peppy unit when it needs to be. Most will tell you to avoid this engine, but it has charm. And, if you are thinking about the weight distribution, it is this 1.9 16v early unit which is the pick of the bunch, and, having pushed it to 110 on the German autobahn I can tell you, it does shift. I've not driven the 6-cylinder versions, but the 2.8 and 3.0 are the known favourites.



The absence of scuttle shake is also a welcome surprise, and it won't surprise you when I say that the overall finish and feel of the Z3 is studier and more solid than any MX5 that I've driven – perhaps this is the trade-off for a lighter kerb weight for the Mazda. In addition, the Z3 doesn't have the same tendency to rot either, they suffer far less from rotten sills, and when they do go, replacement panels are relatively cheap and mostly, easy to fit.

The Z3 is by no means a game changer; front engine rear wheel drive two seaters have been around since the dawn of motoring, and so the Z3 must be compared to the competition of its day. Which, when you discount

the front wheel drive Barchetta, you're left with the MK1 MX5, and suffice to say, it does lack some of the precision and crispness of its Japanese brethren. After all, having owned four MX5s in various guises, its rear suspension, shared with the E30 and E36, was pre-historic even at the Z3s launch. It lacks the natural sensitivity of its competitors.

The seating position also takes some getting used to. Offset steering wheel and pedals can begin to take its toll after a couple of hours on the road, you feel a bit contorted. You're also sitting a little higher than I'd have liked, and seats themselves aren't as comfy as you'd first think and lack good bolster support. Taken alongside the fact that the Z3 was meant to be a more premium offering, heavier, roomier and more solid than the MX5, the more premium Z3 should be better at tackling long continental journeys.

So how do you spot a 007 from a double-agent? As with any car approaching 30, there are a few areas to look for if you're in the market for one. Avoiding the later 8v 1.8 and any car with an automatic transmission, you will find a good project Z3 starting for around £1000, but I'd recommend spending between £3-5K for either a very good 1.9 or a solid 2.8. It's money well spent; values of the Z3 have been climbing in recent years. Do look out for tired trim, earlier cars suffered more here with their build quality, so it's not unusual to find broken window regulators and the even the doors they attach onto, the welds are prone to failing (ask me how I know).

Watch out for damp interiors, too, given away by a car that frequently mists up. Leaks are usually caused by split rear windows, leaking a-pillar sills, or clogged windscreen plenums. A squeaky steering wheel and wobbly wayward handling is usually because of a worn universal steering joint, and misaligned wheels. These cars run on wide tyres so it's important to make sure all four corners are well shod. Finally, the 6 cylinder cars require a bit more care so bag one that has comprehensive service history. VVTs are known weak spots and can be pricey to put right, oil leaks are also quite common on the 1.9, though this is usually solved with a fresh rocker cover gasket. A temperature gauge that refuses to go to the middle is also a telltale sign that the thermostat needs attending to as well. Otherwise, the Z3 shouldn't be too painful for your wallet.



If you bear these foibles in mind when buying a Z3 you're unlikely to be disappointed, in the ownership or driving experience. Having recently taken mine on a 1400-mile trip across Europe to Laon and the Black Forest, I can attest that each twist and turn was an absolute joy to be behind the wheel. Simply just drop the roof, and the gear you're in, and you'll be shaken (not stirred) for all the right reasons.

**Engine: 1895cc Power: 140bhp**  
**0-60mph: 9.2 seconds**  
**Maximum Speed: 127 mph**  
**Torque 133ft-lb**  
**MPG 32-35 Miles Per Tank**  
**392 Transmission**  
**5 speed manual**

[thisisandreaszach94@gmail.com](mailto:thisisandreaszach94@gmail.com)

*If you would like to submit an article on your current car or one you have 'loved and lost' email the details along with pictures to [sue.blackpalfrey@gmail.com](mailto:sue.blackpalfrey@gmail.com) and your article will feature in a future edition of HIGHWAY*

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- Club Rugby Shirt: £30
- Ladies Short Sleeve Oxford Shirt: £30
- Club Short Sleeve Shirt: £30
- Club Sweatshirt: £20
- Club Polo Shirt: £20
- Club T-Shirt: £12

*All club clothing comes with the club badge embroidered. You can add your initials or name below the badge for a small extra cost.*

### Other items:

- Club Mug: £5
- Club Umbrella: £20

All items can be purchased from the Club Shop  
<https://www.blackpalfrey.club/shop>

or email: [trevor.hawkins@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:trevor.hawkins@blueyonder.co.uk)

# BpMCK: Officials and Committee

Thanks to all members who were able to attend the AGM on 12<sup>th</sup> June 2024. There have been some changes to the committee and all posts are listed below:

President	Brian Millen	<a href="mailto:brian@blackpalfrey.co.uk">brian@blackpalfrey.co.uk</a>
Chairman	Dick Athow	<a href="mailto:dick.blackpalfrey@gmail.com">dick.blackpalfrey@gmail.com</a>
Vice Chairman	Brian Millen	<a href="mailto:brian@blackpalfrey.co.uk">brian@blackpalfrey.co.uk</a>
Treasurer	Brian Millen	<a href="mailto:brian@blackpalfrey.co.uk">brian@blackpalfrey.co.uk</a>
Secretary	Andy Elcomb	<a href="mailto:andy.blackpalfrey@gmail.com">andy.blackpalfrey@gmail.com</a>
Membership Secretary	Lee Busbridge	<a href="mailto:membership.blackpalfrey@gmail.com">membership.blackpalfrey@gmail.com</a>
Competition Secretary	Phil Smith	<a href="mailto:phil.blackpalfrey@gmail.com">phil.blackpalfrey@gmail.com</a>
Social Secretary	VACANT	
HIGHWAY Editor	Sue Watson	<a href="mailto:sue.blackpalfrey@gmail.com">sue.blackpalfrey@gmail.com</a>
Chief Marshal	Grahame Standen	<a href="mailto:grahame.blackpalfrey@gmail.com">grahame.blackpalfrey@gmail.com</a>
Equipment Officer	Bob Pilcher	<a href="mailto:rlpageng1@icloud.com">rlpageng1@icloud.com</a>
Safeguarding & Environmental Officer	Lesley Busbridge	<a href="mailto:Cso.blackpalfrey@gmail.com">Cso.blackpalfrey@gmail.com</a>
Web Master	Steve Thompson	<a href="mailto:streetcar.blackpalfrey@gmail.com">streetcar.blackpalfrey@gmail.com</a>
Club Shop	Trevor Hawkins	<a href="mailto:trevor.hawkins@blueyonder.co.uk">trevor.hawkins@blueyonder.co.uk</a>
Awards Secretary	Peter Boyce	<a href="mailto:peter.blackpalfrey@gmail.com">peter.blackpalfrey@gmail.com</a>
Association Representative	Brian Millen	<a href="mailto:brian@blackpalfrey.co.uk">brian@blackpalfrey.co.uk</a>
Committee Members	Dave Hughes   Simon Ingarfield	
Directors	Brian Millen Dave Hughes Dick Athow	<a href="mailto:brian@blackpalfrey.co.uk">brian@blackpalfrey.co.uk</a> <a href="mailto:hughesey44@gmail.com">hughesey44@gmail.com</a> <a href="mailto:dick.blackpalfrey@gmail.com">dick.blackpalfrey@gmail.com</a>

If you are not a member of Blackpalfrey and have perhaps come across this edition of HIGHWAY on the website, why don't you join us?

To find out more about BpMCK and what we do, to join or rejoin contact any Committee Member.

You can also check out <https://www.blackpalfrey.club/> for more club info or <https://www.blackpalfrey.club/join> to join online and to find our Privacy Notice and Club Rules



*Coming in the August edition... Report from the June Regrun, Olga on the Cotswold Classic, photographic memories and more! Send in your ideas, letters, articles and pictures!*

# Applications are sought for Motorsport UK Committee and Advisory Group Members



If you would like to shape the future of motorsport in the UK, now is your chance.

A range of Discipline and Cross-Discipline Committees represent the various branches of the sport, tasked with the developing strategic and tactical initiatives to inform the Council and the Board with plans for the development and future of motorsport.

The Committees are supported by the Executive team at Motorsport UK, who are jointly responsible, along with the Chair of the Committee, for the strategic direction of Committee work and the successful realisation of work by the Committees.

These Committee roles are entirely voluntary; however, expenses will be paid to cover travel to and from Committee meetings. These are held up to three times per year. Meetings in person are held at the offices of Motorsport UK in Bicester and through the year will be a mix of in person, hybrid and online only. Appointments are for up to three years, with new members initially serving a probationary term.

Applications are sought for the following Committees, Expert and Advisory Groups:

## Discipline Committees

- Autotest Discipline Committee
- Cross Country Discipline Committee
- Esports Discipline Committee
- Historic Discipline Committee
- Kart Discipline Committee
- Race Discipline Committee
- Rallies Discipline Committee
- Speed Events Discipline Committee
- Trials Discipline Committee

## Sub-committees

- Autocross & Rallycross Sub Committee
- Dragster Sub Committee
- Medical Expert Group
- Sprint & Hill Climbs Sub Committee
- Kart Technical Sub Committee
- Young Officials Sub Committee

## EDI

- Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Advisory Committee
- Disability & Accessibility Expert Committee
- LGBTQ+ Expert Committee
- Racial Diversity Expert Committee
- Women in Motorsport Expert Committee
- Sustainability Advisory Committee

## Cross-discipline Committees

- Judicial Committee
- Medical Committee
- Regional Committee
- Safety Committee
- Technical Committee
- Timekeeping Committee
- Volunteers & Officials Committee

## Working Groups

- Clerks & Stewards Working Group
- Marshals Working Group
- Scrutineers Working Group
- Rescue & Recovery Working Group
- Training Working Group

## How to apply?

If you have relevant experience of the specialist discipline areas, and feel you can make a significant contribution, we welcome your application. All we need is a covering letter on how you can contribute to the Committee with your CV which should outline your relevant areas of specialist expertise.

Applications should be emailed to [committeeinterest@motorsportuk.org](mailto:committeeinterest@motorsportuk.org) by Monday 12th August 2024.