

Secretary's Report 2026 AGM

1. Good evening everybody. Here is the Secretary's Report for the Lancashire Centre activities over the last 12 months since our last AGM in April 2025, including what problems we have and what are our plans for the future..
2. It has been a difficult year in and that we have lost four of our friends.
 - a. Many here will be still shocked at the recent sudden death of David O'Brien who was diagnosed with aggressive non-treatable leukaemia. David was a smashing chap, a keen rider and an accomplished singer. He, together with Brian Lord, Tony O and Doddy will all be missed but forever remembered.
 - b. Some good news is that Brian, our Vice-chairman looks great following treatment at Wythenshawe Hospital. In the words of Stanly Holloway " My word you do look well."
3. The lesson for us all is to make the most of every day and ride our Velos every time the sun comes out.
4. Our new WhatsApp group is a great help in this, allowing rides to be set up at short notice when the weather forecasts are good. Please have a chat to me afterwards if you want to join the Group.

5. Summarizing significant events and activities during the year since our last AGM

- a. In June,
 - i. on a beautiful summer's evening, we had our barbecue organised beautifully by our Chairman Billy and the wonderful Ann. We were entertained by fascinating stories of Tony O's life as a Manchester police motorcyclist.
 - ii. A few days later we reran the Shuttleworth Flyer Ride after a gap of many years – a superb ride around the Lake District despite typical dampish Lakeland weather.
- b. July
 - i. brought a fascinating evening talk on the development and operation of the Bloodhound Guided Missile given by our own John Davidson.

- ii. July is also the month of one of the highlights of the year, our annual Lancashire Centre holiday, now in its fourth year. We based ourselves in Grassington and had 17 riders in our party including our National Chairman Roger Franklin and wife Jane. The Yorkshire Dales were superb. The weather could have been kinder as our first afternoon was like a monsoon, but the next day was absolutely gorgeous with warm sunshine. Motorcycling at its best. I can highly recommend these 4-day breaks. We are off to North Wales this coming July, so come and have a word with me if you would like to join us.

c. August

- i. brought our first Ladies Day, a completely different, very pleasant day. sans Velocettes, spent together with wives and partners exploring the RHS gardens at Bridgewater on a lovely warm summer's day, it was hard to resist the temptations of the spring bulbs on offer.

d. In September,

- i. another fine day for the Derbyshire Dawdle, with the Peak District magnificent with lovely clear views and some excellent tea stops.
- ii. A few days later, following some serious Velocette Pale tasting,
- iii. David Simmons gave an excellent talk on the Avro Arrow .

e. In October

- i. Stan led us round the delectable Bowland Forest on a fine day, proof what a beautiful county Lancashire can be.
- ii. and at Astley, Julie from Biketrac gave a presentation on Motorcycle security.
- iii. followed by Chinese night

f. In November,

- i. Andrew Guttmann gave an excellent, entertaining talk on Magnetos. We plan to invite him back to tell us all about dynamos and wiring diagrams.

g. In December

- i. we had a delicious Christmas lunch at Farington Lodge
- ii. followed a few days later by the Christmas buffet and quiz organised by Chairman Billy and the always amazing Ann.

h. In January

- i. on a cold winter's night, Tony O was voted as Clubman of the Year (posthumously), and Henry Tindell was selected for the Dennis Igoe Trophy in recognition of his excellent Fishtail Reports.
 - ii. We were then entertained by the video of our President Ivan Rhodes recalling with his amazing memory, Velocette achievements over the last eighty years.

- i. February
 - i. Our three wise men, John, Brian and Billy fascinated us with technical advice on Velocette issues during Question Time,

- j. In March.
 - i. speaker Judith Atkinson gave a very interesting talk about the construction of the Bridgewater Canal.

- k. During the course of the year, members were able to join in other events organised by our sister VOC Centres such as:-
 - i. the Bring and Buy sales at Huncote and Stone,
 - ii. the Borders Raid at Kelso,
 - iii. the National Rally at Litchfield,
 - iv. the Welshpool weekend,
 - v. the Harold Willis Ride,
 - vi. The Peak Tour
 - vii. Lunch each month with VOC Northumbrian Centre etc

- l. Also, members were able to help each other with providing missing spares and offering technical help and

- m. Phil Gray made a third batch of his super Roll-on Centre Stand which sold like hot cakes.

so, a busy year with a lot going on!

6. **Some Lancashire Centre Statistics:**

- a. Our present membership is 161 of whom 26 are new members joining in the last twelve months.
- b. Only 7 of these new members have contacted our Centre.
- c. 36 Members left the Centre last year, so our membership has dropped by 6%.

d. Attendance at the Astley Meetings since Feb 2025

20 Max
(Magneto Night)

9 Min
(January Ivan Rhodes video)

14 Average

e. Participants on 2025 rides

9 Max (Derbyshire Dawdle)

2 Min (Shuttleworth Flyer)

5 Average

f. July 2025 Holiday, Grassington

17 Lancs & other VOC members

g. Aug 2025 Ladies Day

5 Members and wives

h. Dec 2025 Christmas Meal

11 Members & wives

7. Challenges:

- a. So clearly our challenge is to steady this fall in membership and attract younger, active members.
- b. Geography is a major problem as the Lancashire Centre is very large.
 - i. Our most northerly member lives in Carlisle and our most southerly in Bangor, 200 miles apart - and the City of Manchester is a major hurdle to travel through to the riding areas.

- ii. It is too far for the majority of our members to travel to our Friday Evening Meetings at Astley (The Centre of Gravity of Our Membership lies a few miles to the west of Preston)

8. **What are your Committee doing about it?**

- a. To try and tempt the New VOC members to come and contact us.
 - i. Henrys super Reports in Fishtail are very important and I like to think they show Fishtail readers what a vibrant Centre we are.
- b. We need to keep Velocettes prominently in the attention of the public, especially the motorcycling public.
 - i. Rides to favourite motorcycling gathering points such as Rivington Barn, Southport Carousel, Devils Bridge, could help us here. Milke Hamilton's rides to Glasson Docks are a perfect example of this. People want to know what these interesting motorbikes are with these strange Fishtail silencers.
- c. Our Stand at The Manchester Bike Show was perfect for displaying Velocettes to the public but sadly this is now no more.
 - i. Instead, we have an invitation to put on a display at the "Wings and Wheels " Air Show at Woodford in July and the "Salt Marsh Motorcycle Festival" at Pilling in September. Opportunities we should seriously consider accepting.
- d. A New Lancashire Website is almost ready for launch. It will be accessible by Search Engines so we hope our Centre will come to notice of any interested person in the northwest. More of this later.
- e. We need to make our club attractive and relevant to as many of our existing members as possible especially those in the North
 - i. Brian Gibbon did a superb job this year publishing rides and social gatherings, especially attractive to our members in the north of our Region. Rides with the VMCC and our sister South Lakes LE Velo Club, lunches with the Velocette Owners' Club, Northumbria Centre, and weekly evening meets at the Oasis Café Milnthorpe are working very well. Good one Brian

9. **Acknowledgments:**

- a. Finally, we all need to acknowledge and thank the work of:-
 - i. Ste Lord who has taken on the role of Treasurer at short notice when Ernie fell ill.
 - ii. Henry Tindell for his great Fishtail Reports
 - iii. Brian Gibbon for his work in the North
 - iv. Alan Grice for faithfully acting as our Gate keeper and providing our milk tea, coffee and biscuits.
 - v. Brian Hoy for tempting us with possible large cash prizes on the football cards.

- vi. Billy for winning the long-distance attendance prize by a country mile.
- vii. And to Ann for her super buffets and barbecues

10. **Conclusion:**

- a. A good year I think.
 - i. I invite questions or discussions.
regarding our progress and future direction
 - ii. bearing in mind after the formal AGM we will have a discussion and a
collection of ideas of what we want to do during the next twelve months.