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Brothers of the Third Wheel United Kingdom New Members Guideline's

Welcome to Brothers of the Third Wheel UK Chapter! To help all members old and new, we have compiled a list of "things to know" and guidelines to help you into the sometimes complicated world of biker politics. Even if you are an old school biker/triker, please read on, as some parts are relevant only to BTW in the UK. We have tried to be as un-patronising as possible in this fact sheet, but have also tried to make it as easy as possible, even for the newest "newbie" to understand.

Brothers of the Third Wheel was formed in 1983 in America by Jim Sickler and is NOT A CLUB but an ASSOCIATION made up of trikers worldwide. We help each other, support each other, chat about trikes, get together, ride out, party and have fun - WE ARE A FAMILY. Jim, along with his wife Lady, remained Directors until 2012, when they retired after 30 years as Directors of the world's biggest TRIKE association. In the UK our Director is Dean Barnitt and Assistant Director Kathy Barton (Punky & Beano). Due to the continued efforts and hard work of our members we are a well-respected and known association - however this is ONLY due to the fact we abide by rules that each of us must follow set down by the 1%'s, the MC's and the MCC's. Please remember as you read on, if there is anything you don't understand or are unsure about contact Punky or your local Road Captain, they are more than happy to help and advise you. All contact details can be found on the BTW UK site.

In short there are a couple of main types of motorcycle club. These are the 1%'s or the MC's and the MCC's. There are also Brotherhoods and clubs such as the National Chopper Club, who although don't have the letters MC in their club colours have the same status as the 1% MC's. The 1% MC's (so called as in the late 1950's in America, there were motorcycle "gangs" as the police then called them. The majority of them (or 99% of them) were law-abiding motorcyclists, leaving the 1% of the gangs as the troublemakers and lawbreakers the 1% name stuck and is still used today. 1% Clubs or MC's can be recognised by their "back patches". These are their club colours, sewn onto the back of their cut off and jackets. Each club has their own colours and club name. Each member will have made a SERIOUS commitment to their club, often putting themselves, their finances even friends and family on the line for them. They are required to do a probationary period called "prospecting" for perhaps up to a year or more before they are allowed to be voted in as full members. A prospect can be recognised usually by having only the lower "rocker" on the back of their cut offs. Even in the eyes of a non-club biker, prospects are STILL to be treated with RESPECT. They are out to prove they are worthy of full club colours. They will have almost always been in a MCC or an MC before they prospect for a big back patch club. Women are generally not allowed in MC clubs (but more on that later).

In most areas of the country, the 1% clubs oversee the smaller clubs and many are in alliance with them. This is a mutual agreement between them and the smaller clubs. The 1%'s are the "big boys" and not much goes on without their say so. If a MCC club has a problem with another club, or a new bike club wants to start up, they HAVE to contact their local back patch club first. WHY? RESPECT. Examples of 1% clubs are (this is in no way exhaustive, nor is it favouritive, and each area may be different). Hells Angels Motorcycle Club (HAMC), Satan's Slaves, Outlaws MC, Blue Angels. PLEASE contact your local Road Captain if you are unsure of your local back patch club. There are also smaller back patch clubs that may be limited to a few areas or even one area. They too will have prospected for their club, and will be in close liaison with the bigger clubs. There are many and too many to list so PLEASE again contact someone local to you in BTW if you are unsure. Again, even if they are a smaller club they are still a back patch club and they are to be treated with respect.

MCC's or Motorcycle Clubs will wear a "side" patch or a "front" patch. They are NOT allowed to wear back patches and SERIOUS repercussions have occurred due to members not abiding by these rules. Again, members of MCC's will have prospected for their club, generally without as much of a commitment and perhaps not as long as the MC's. A lot of the clubs try not to be involved in "politics" and get together as a family/social club, to ride out, party and enjoy their bikes. This is not to say they don't abide by the rules. Women are allowed in MCC's. However, please again treat MCC club members with RESPECT. You don't know whom they know and you might not know who they are in an alliance with. The last situation you want to get into is a full on club and their back patch club on your case.

Now a word on women in bike clubs. Back in the day few women actually rode bikes and were just pillions or the "ole lady" thankfully things have changed! Women in general though still aren't allowed in back patch clubs. There are a couple of women only back patch club's in The States, e.g. Devils Dolls MC and Women in the Wind, but few and far between. Most MCC's are run these days with women as full members, with the same rights and votes as the men. HOWEVER...please bear in mind that the biker world is predominantly male and always will be. MC clubs don't take kindly to women "throwing their weight about" and some will not even consider a women's point of view, nor involve themselves in talks with women, MCC club members or not. As a woman please be careful what you say around MCC and back patch club members. They might take offence with what you say, BUT it won't be YOU who hears about it. The male members of your association will generally be told to "deal with you" or face the consequences. Enough said.

In BTW we are allowed to wear our back patch as we are a TRIKE ASSOCIATION and NOT a MOTORCYCLE CLUB. In BTW our back patch is classed as a badge by 1% MC's as our members DO NOT prospect for their badge, but simply buy it. However, as mentioned before, this is only due to constant talks and good communications with the MC clubs. In a few parts of the country, BTW members are NOT PERMITTED TO WEAR THE BACK PATCH. IF YOU ARE IN ANY DOUBT ABOUT THIS PLEASE CONTACT YOUR LOCAL ROAD CAPTAIN OR PUNKY.

PLEASE DO NOT UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCE ATTEND A RALLY OR SHOW WITHOUT FIRST GETTING THE OK from the organisers of the said event if you want to wear your back patch. A lot of clubs like to know if back patch clubs are going to be present and some rallies/shows etc would rather "back patch by prior arrangement", it's also peace of mind for yourself. If at ANYTIME a 1% member asks you to remove your patch even if it was deemed fine before, PLEASE DO SO. DO NOT ENTER INTO A DISCUSSION about it with them. Contact Punky ASAP and let him deal with it. DO NOT ATTEMPT TO DEAL WITH IT YOURSELF. Punky will then find out why this has happened, what the ongoing situation is, and, if it is a genuine mistake, let you know if it will be safe in future to wear patches in your area. If a 1% or MC member wants to know who is in charge of BTW please give them Punky' name. Again DO NOT try to resolve situations yourself. Try to remember who the club concerned are, but do not ask for club members names individually.

To our knowledge this has only happened once or twice in the last 15 years. All our members removed their back patches and had a great weekend. This showed both the MC that asked and the other MC's that got to hear about the event, that BTW are an association that is willing to show respect to other 1% MC's and are only about having FUN on TRIKES. End of the day, BTW is a FAMILY TRIKE ASSOCIATION and we are NOT into conflict of ANY kind. By taking off the back patch, the problem was solved and they now have no problem with our members wearing their back patch. Both Shaun and our road captains have spent a LOT of time building good relationships with a lot of 1% MC's and MCC's throughout the UK and Ireland. This has involved a lot of face- to-face meetings and some sticky situations. However, through this work BTW-UK Chapter is now well known by the major 1% MC's. We have formed agreements and alliances with numerous 1% MC and MCC's so we have now built up very good contacts, and just to give you an idea, will list a few of the MC's we are now known by: Barrel Bikers, Hells Angels, Warlocks, Outlaws, Satan's Slaves, Sons of Hell, Blue Angels, Devils Disciples and Druids.

The areas we **ARE NOT ALLOWED to wear back patches in are**, Kent although Hells Angels Kent will NOT allow us to wear our back patch in Kent they have NO problems with us wearing our FRONT patch in this County. **Tyne & Wear** Hells Angels Tyne & Wear will NOT allow us to wear our back patch in Tyne & Wear they have NO problems with us wearing our FRONT patch in this County. **Wales** although Hells Angels Wales will NOT allow us to wear our back patch in Wales they have NO problems with us wearing our FRONT patch. **Cornwall** Defiant Few do not want anything worn on the back. **LEEDS OR SCOTLAND** Blue Angels DO NOT want us wearing our patches. **Devon** (Satan Slaves)

The areas we **ARE NOT ALLOWED to wear ANY** patches front or back are **Northamptonshire**, (HA Northants) **Hampshire** (HA Hampshire).

As problems appear to be cropping up all over the Country it was agreed at the BTWUK AGM in April 2010 that no member will wear their back patch while travelling. This will ensure that no one travels in an area that does not allow back patches by mistake. Updates will be added to these guidelines and copies sent out with the AGM minutes; but for the most up-to-date information please contact your Road Captain or Punky.

Please Note: BTW-UK will buy back your patches if you decide to leave BTW and pay for postage. If you want to sell your patches please email Punky at: btw-uk@hotmail.co.uk

Some of you may be thinking by now...."I'm never wearing a patch if it causes all this fuss!" but to be forewarned is to be forearmed. Many of the above situations may never involve you, you may go to rallies and shows and parties for years before someone even mentions patches, or you may attend your first rally and find people asking questions. In BTW we all represent each other; we all stand for the same thing. PLEASE remember this when wearing patches that YOU are representing the worlds biggest and best TRIKE ASSOCIATION with over 6,000+ members worldwide. Let's keep it this way so that can all enjoy it for years to come. Many of the bigger back patch clubs are not concerned with TRIKERS and are content with us all enjoying the same thing in life - to ride, to be free and to ENJOY, So get on your trikes and ride!