

## Sunbeam Alpine Owners Club Tours – Guidance for Organisers - DRAFT

Successful Tours in 2015-16 have shown that many members welcome driving events on good roads in attractive places, and based in good hotels. Of course, Tours have to be done well, especially as a weekend event will cost a couple at least £500, and the Club wants to see a consistent high standard for its members.

Organising a Tour need not be very difficult. The guidance here gives you the benefit of other people's experience in the SAOC and other clubs. It shows you how to make things easy for the organiser and good for the entrants.

1. Timing and duration. Traffic and competing events mean that Tours in either late spring or September are often the best. One-day events will probably only attract local people, so Tours should usually be 2 or 3 days. The basic options are:
  - a. Arrive late Thursday, drive Friday, Saturday and Sunday morning, or
  - b. Arrive late Friday, drive Saturday and Sunday morning.(Longer Tours using multiple hotels are possible but are much harder to organise).
2. Your schedule. You need to begin about 12 months before the event. Submit your ideas – place, timing etc to the Committee first. The Tour needs to be publicised 6-9 months before the event, and bookings should begin 6 months in advance. (Horn deadlines are the odd number months). Communications with entrants are best done via email – arrangements, bookings, changes of instructions etc.
3. The location. There are two main requirements – good routes and a good hotel. Full-day driving routes should be about 100 to 120 miles on a mixture of attractive roads. A Sunday morning route should be about 60 miles. Major cities and *prolonged* stretches of either dual carriageway or very narrow lanes are best avoided.
4. The hotel. Requirements are good value, adequate safe parking, a communal dining area and a lounge and bar where friends can gather. It's good to find hotels which have hosted other car club tours; ask around and contact other clubs for recommendations (good and bad).

The best arrangement is that you negotiate a good price for DBB, the hotel holds a number of rooms (15 to 20?) until about 6-8 weeks before the event, and members book DIRECTLY with the hotel. You are strongly recommended NOT to become involved in booking or handling payments. A few hotels demand a deposit. This must NOT be agreed without consulting the SAOC Committee.

We hope to attract members who have perhaps not attended SAOC events before, and it is vital that they are welcomed. Meeting in the lounge before each dinner should be encouraged, and the hotel should provide large tables for 8-12 for dinner and breakfast. You shouldn't need a separate dining room.

5. Stops and Attractions. The effort required on your part depends on the number of cars/people and the places you visit. If the group is about 30 people and you visit fairly busy tourist sites (e.g. a NT café) you should warn the café of your visit but just leave people to park and buy whatever they want. With a larger group or a small remote tea-room, you may have to make special arrangements. If you have to do this, the advice is to negotiate the price (e.g. for coffee or tea plus a biscuit), collect the money at the time of booking, issue tickets to members, and then pay the café against the tickets collected.

The same arrangement should apply if you visit a museum and negotiate a discount group rate.

By far the best lunch arrangement (for you) is to take the group to a car park near pubs, cafes etc and leave them to find their own meals.

A mid-morning coffee stop is almost essential; an afternoon tea stop can be optional.

There should be some optional provision for lunch before finally leaving for home. The Tour can end at some attraction with a suitable café, or there can be arrangements with the hotel.

6. Route selection and proving. You will have to select and survey all your routes. Even if you know the area well, it is essential to drive the routes and to write and later check your instructions. Google Maps and Streetview are extremely useful for checking mileages and what is written on signposts etc. – highly recommended - but are NOT a substitute for driving the final route. It is good to get an independent check of your instructions. Note that your Alpine's odometer may not be accurate....  
Check with Local Authority websites for details of planned roadworks and closures. And keep checking.
7. Route Guidance. The object here is that drivers and navigators ENJOY the event and don't get lost. It should not be a 'scatter rally' or other navigational test based on maps and arcane symbols. There must be NO element of competition (timing etc). The directions must be clear and helpful. The format shown below, which uses Excel, is proven and easy to grasp, but it is not the only possibility.
  - a. It uses acronyms for features and actions,
  - b. It gives the total mileage and the mileage between 'features'.
  - c. It allows for helpful text comments
  - d. It is good to include 'reassurance' features – if there is a complicated junction where error is possible, then provide a further landmark a little way along the correct road (e.g. Royal Oak on left)
  - e. As a fall back, it is a good idea to give post codes for key points on the route (coffee stops etc). Lost entrants with sat-nav can then re-unite with the group.
  - f. Include petrol stations en route
8. Money. The aim should be for the event to break even. You should set out a budget when you plan your event. Your main expense will be fuel for your route checking/proving. The road book should cost about £4 including a plastic folder. You should be able to recover your costs within a reasonable entry fee, e.g. £10 per car. This should be collected with each entry form, together with any charges for pre-arranged coffee stops, museum entry etc.
9. Signing in. Entrants should, on arrival, sign a check-in sheet and give a mobile number and confirm that they comply with this: *It is the entrant's responsibility to ensure that their vehicle is roadworthy. All entrants will be required to have a valid MOT test certificate, driver's licence and insurance cover and a warning triangle.*
10. Road Book. All entrants should receive a Road Book on checking in. This should include:
  - a. A welcome note with a brief summary of the Tour
  - b. What to do after arrival – parking, meet in the bar, time and location of dinner etc
  - c. Full route instructions (as in 7 above)
  - d. Route-marked maps are good (Can be done with Google Maps)

- e. Entrants' and navigators' names and car Series, colour and reg numbers. Maybe mobile numbers.
  - f. Tickets (coffee, museum etc) if required
  - g. Organiser's contact phone number
11. Briefing. Often called a 'Drivers' Briefing' but it is really for the Navigators. A short meeting after breakfast (usually in the car park) to inform or remind people of points of interest, potential hazards, places where it is easy to go wrong, need for tickets etc. Try to discourage convoys as these can annoy other road users (and entrants who prefer to go a little faster...). However, groups of 2 or 3 are fine, especially if there are solo drivers who want to follow someone with a navigator.
  12. Reports and Publicity. Before or at the start of the Tour try to find a volunteer entrant who will write a short report for the Horn, with photos. Encourage people to submit photos to the Club's Facebook page too.
  13. On the Day. There is no reason why the organiser cannot join in the event in his/her Alpine, but it is good to arrive at stops first or early, and short cuts may be employed. It should not be necessary to provide breakdown provision, but it is good to know who on the tour has expertise and tools.
  14. AND – Don't hesitate to ask for help or advice at any stage. All the hard lessons have been learnt.

Miles	Cum Miles	Feature	Action	Comment
	0	Exit	TR	Tiverton Hotel. Exit right into Blundell's Road
0.2	0.2	RA	SO, 2nd exit	or TR for fuel at Tesco
0.1	0.3	MRA	TL, 1st exit	SP Other Routes
		RA	TR, 2nd exit	SP Bickleigh A396
0.4	0.7	RA	SO, 2nd exit	SP Bickleigh A396
				Over R Exe
0.1	0.8	RA	TL, 1st exit	SP Bickleigh A396
0.1	0.9	MRA	SO, 1st exit	SP Bickleigh A396
				Fuel on right
3.0	3.9	SB		Bickleigh
0.2	4.1	J	TR	SP Crediton A3072
2.4	6.5	SB		Cadbury
5.0	11.5	SB		Crediton
0.9	12.4	TJ	TL	Exeter A377
0.3	12.7	J	TR	SP Fordton, Tedburn - just before Shell Fuel
0.1	12.8			Level Crossing
0.3	13.2			Over narrow bridge
0.2	13.4	XR	TR	Fordton signpost, follow road to R. SP Posbury & Tedburn

Feature		Action	
RA	Roundabout	TL	Turn Left
MRA	Mini-roundabout	TR	Turn Right
SB	Sign Board	SO	Straight On
J	Junction	BL	Bear Left
TJ	T Junction	BR	Bear Right
XR	Cross Roads	SO, 2nd exit	at roundabout
CG	Cattle Grid		
GT	Grass Triangle		