



Recognised
Club



RALLY GUIDELINES

WHO ARE WE?

The Hills Ford Stages is a Closed Road Rally, organised by Cheltenham Motor Club, and run by a dedicated team of volunteers, under the remit of Motorsport UK, who are the national governing body for Motorsport in the UK.

Historically, rallying often took place in forests and natural habitats. However, as outdoor spaces see increased public use, rallying has adapted to minimise its environmental impact. This shift helps preserve these natural areas while offering a fresh challenge for motorsport. Transitioning to closed-road events requires community involvement, and opens rallying to wider audiences, bringing the action closer to towns and villages and creating opportunities for community involvement.

The Rally takes place once a year, usually in September, on selected roads in Herefordshire, Gloucestershire and Worcestershire and takes over a year and thousands of hours to plan.

We are part of a number of national rally championships and are sponsored by our title sponsor Hills Ford of Kidderminster and Malvern and numerous other motorsport and local supporters.

<https://www.hillsford.co.uk>

Contact details:

www.hillsfordstages.co.uk

info@hillsfordstages.co.uk

For more information please click on this QR Code



WHAT IS A CLOSED ROAD RALLY?

A Closed Road Rally is an exciting evolution of motorsport that takes place on public roads under the strict guidelines of Motorsport UK.

We operate under Section 12 (amendment 2015) of the Road Traffic Act 1988 Motor Racing Regulations 2018, which is law in England, Wales and Scotland.

We are required to work within a framework of National Competition Rules and Stage Rally Safety Requirements from Motorsport UK and the Health & Safety Executive.

Our organising team submits documentation to Motorsport UK, including plans for the rally structure, safety measures and risk assessments routes for the event, including footpaths and surrounding affected roads, Officials details, Service Park and Rally Control details, and local consultation.

There is an initial consultation period of 6 weeks, between organisers, Motorsport UK and all Parish Councils directly affected by the rally. After this a consultation period begins with the County Councils.

The Rally caters for a maximum of 150 entrants (cars) each year, a combination of historic and modern rally cars.

A series of Stages are run on the day of the Rally. A Stage is a closed section of public road on which the rally cars compete in a timed session. The road is temporarily closed to the public under an agreement from both Motorsport UK and the Highways Departments working within the guidelines of the Road Traffic Act.

Stages are usually between 5 and 12 miles long and will be run 2 or 3 times during the day.

The competitors also travel between Stages on open roads and will comply with all normal Road Traffic legislation, speed limits etc. All cars have trackers fitted and are monitored by Rally Control.



HOW DOES A RALLY WORK?

The Rally is not a race and very strict speed limits are set throughout. Each rally car contains two people, a driver and a navigator, known as a crew. Each crew has to navigate the Stage together, with the driver responding to instructions from their co-driver. Both hold Competition licences issued by Motorsport UK.

Each car, including the official's vehicles, has a tracker fitted which monitors position and speed and is closely analysed by officials in Rally Control during the rally. Each car has to pass a rigorous scrutineering and noise control process to ensure its legality and safety.

The crews are allowed a reconnaissance, known as a recce, the day before the event, where they drive the route in a normal road car to allow them to make notes. They must comply with legislation and the rules of the road whilst doing this. Recce cars also have trackers fitted to them.

On the day of the Rally the relevant sections of road will be closed from around 0600 until around 2000 - depending on the relevant County Council Road Closure Order. This allows for setting up the stage and for all the safety checks to be done.

We will facilitate resident access wherever possible at all times APART from when the Stage is live i.e. there are competing rally cars on the road.

The rally cars will be released from the Stage Start at 1 minute intervals. The cars do not race against each other directly, instead they are timed through each Stage.

Each Stage will be run twice or maybe three times during the day, usually once in the morning and once in the afternoon.

Once all the competing cars have completed the Stage for the final time we will reopen the road as soon as possible allowing for the removal of signs, barriers etc. A Stage Opening vehicle will ensure the road is completely safe to reopen, after which all residents will have full access.





SAFETY IS AT THE HEART OF THE RALLY

To ensure we reach & maintain the highest level of safety we do the following:

- Risk Assessments are compiled by our Event Safety Officer and Spectator Safety Officer teams
- We have a Safety Advisory Group, set up at the start of the year, consisting of Rally officials, Fire, Ambulance and Police Departments, and the relevant County Council Departments. This group produces a full Safety Plan for the event.
- We use a Safety Car Convoy on the day of the event.
A safety convoy comprises of a number of vehicles which travel through each stage with a specific safety role. To know more please check the hillsfordstages.co.uk website for a greater detailed explanation of the safety convoy and each vehicles roles and what goes into organising the rally.
- We have an Motorsport UK Safety Delegate who attends the whole event and assesses and advises on the safe running of the event.
- We have a Chief Medical Officer for the event.
- We have Motorsport UK registered and accredited Rescue Units and Recovery Crews with fully equipped ambulances staffed by doctors or paramedics with trained rescue personnel.
- Rally officials come from all over the UK and are fully trained and qualified for their roles and often have many years of experience.
- We have senior officials on every Stage - a Stage Commander, Deputy Stage Commander and Stage Safety Officer.
- In 2024 there were over 300 marshals, 7 Rescue Units, 10 Recovery Units, 6 paramedics, and an experienced doctor.

RESIDENT AND BUSINESS LIAISON

We have a Liaison Manager for the event and a Local Liaison Team, many of whom live locally.

We contact and work with any residents and businesses on a closed road section.

We hand deliver letters/leaflets throughout the year to anyone on a closed road and wherever possible to those nearby. The letters give contacts, rally details, updates, maps, and any other information that may be useful to residents.

We include contact details for Rally Officials on every communication.

For those on a closed road section there will be an additional and detailed Event Handbook provided prior to the event containing stage map, timings, entry/egress from their properties and how this will be managed for safety reasons.

We issue vehicle passes to enable people to safely get in and out of their homes or businesses on the day of the Rally.

We liaise with all affected Parish Councils.

We hold 'Meet Us' sessions for residents and local businesses throughout the year and attend Parish Council meetings if requested.

We have a website with full event details and will be providing live streaming of the event, allowing residents to have up to date information during the event.

We facilitate safe vehicle access on each Stage throughout the event.



BENEFITS TO THE REGION

Hills Ford Stages brings in a massive boost of well over £250,000 to the local economy every year.

The Rally is more than just cars and competition; it's a platform for showcasing motorsport's economic and cultural impact:

Tourism Boost: Events attract spectators from across the UK and beyond, spending in local businesses like hotels, restaurants, and shops.

Economic Development: Motorsport is a cornerstone of the UK economy, employing around 40,000 people and supporting countless industries.

Community Engagement: We invite the public to experience rallying first-hand, sparking interest in the sport and inspiring future generations of engineers, designers, drivers, and fans.

A Showcase of Excellence: The UK leads the world in motorsport innovation, and closed-road rallying highlights the talent and technology at the heart of the industry.

By evolving to meet new challenges, **closed-road rallying** has cemented its place as a dynamic, inclusive, and forward-thinking sport which benefits the communities it engages with.

The Rally is filmed on Special Stage TV and aired live on YouTube, getting thousands of hits from all around the world - a great tourism boost.

Residents/Parish Councils can choose to **work with Rally Organisers** to run a Spectator Area on their Stage that complies with relevant safety requirements. An entry charge can raise money for chosen charitable activities or to benefit the parish and local community.

Additionally, Parish Councils can apply to the Organisers for a donation to a chosen local charity or scheme.



THE ENVIRONMENT/SUSTAINABILITY

Motorsport is at the core of research into environmentally friendly travel solutions across all areas from the domestic car to public transport and delivery vehicles. Motorsport developments are frequently incorporated into everyday vehicles.

Motorsport led companies are leaders in the use of environmentally friendly bio-fuels and are developing these fuels for general consumption.

To carbon offset we contribute to The Severn Treescapes Project through the Gloucestershire, Worcestershire and Herefordshire Wildlife Trusts. This admirable Project aims to create a 60 mile corridor of trees crossing all 3 counties, within 30 miles of the homes of around 8 million people, and supporting a diverse collection of flora and fauna. The Rally offsets more carbon than it creates.

We work with local land trustees to alleviate the rally's impact on common land and we complete an annual environmental impact assessment after each event.



THE SPIRIT OF THE RALLY AWARD

Andy is a local farmer who knew nothing about rallying until a recent Stage ran past his farm.

He is now a strong advocate for the Hills Ford Stages within his community and is our link to all our local farmers.

In 2024 Andy was presented with the Spirit of the Rally award as thanks for all his hard work and ongoing support.



