

Solitary biker **Dan Campbell** continues his 2019 diary of DIY trials, heading north, south, east and west from his home base in Staffordshire. This is how he and his bike spent the rainy summer months...

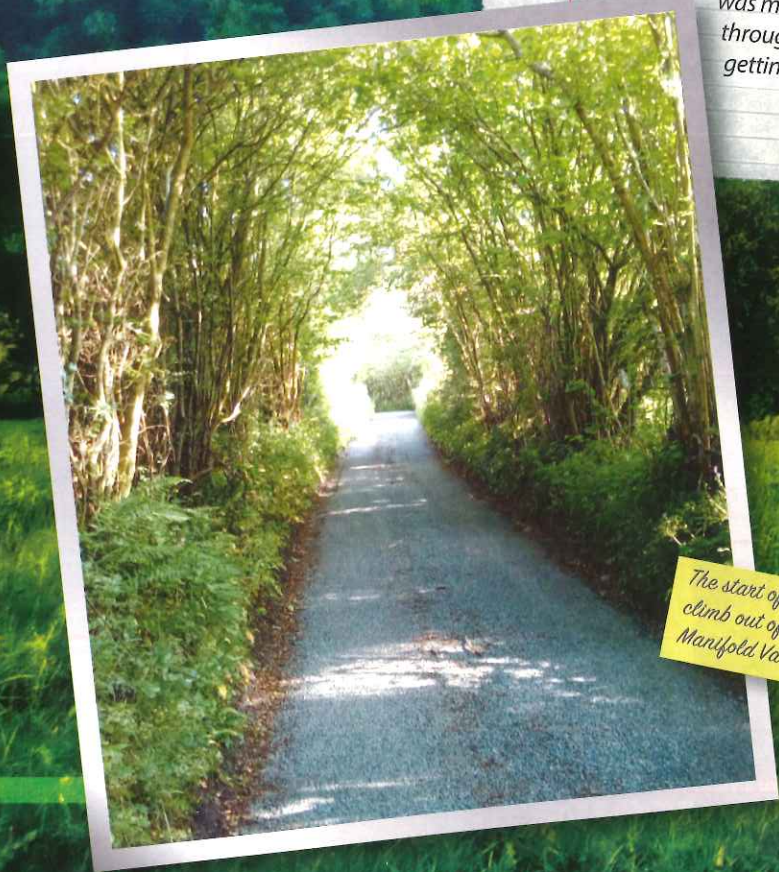
# Bulls, blustery breezes and blessed bus

**WHAT A SUMMER!** Toss a coin for rain or sun... it's usually been rain. But I've enjoyed spending the summer absorbed in all things cycling, and sharing my love of bike-riding with the students I teach, in the hope it will inspire some of them to ride their bikes.

You may recall that my primary target for 2019 was to complete the Super Randonneur with AAA points, due mainly to my love of hill-climbing, and the need to lose some weight. My continued exploration of the world of DIY Audaxing involved some old favourites and some challenging new routes...

## **ASHBOURNE & THE MERMAID INN (DIY, 100KM, 2AAA)**

*The weather forecast suggested some skin-burning temperatures so I made an early start, hoping to be home for a late breakfast. The course is a variation of my other Ashbourne route but this one provides vistas over the Roaches towards Manchester, which are amazing. The biggest achievement of the ride was making it up the cat-3 climb through the Elkstone valley without getting off and walking.*



*Looking back to Ilam from the top of the climb*

*The start of the climb out of the Manifold Valley*



#### DAN'S VITAL STATS

**Location:** Stoke on Trent

**Bike:** 2011 9-speed aluminium tank

**Age:** 44

**Weight:** Wheel breaking (110kg)

**Fitness:** broken and rebuilt

**Resting Heart Rate:** 65

**BMI:** Obese

**WHR (waist/hip ratio):** High

**Favourite food:** See food!

**All Dan's ride reports are here:**

<https://dancampbell.co.uk/audax-ride-list/>



# shelters

## THE BOSTON TEA PARTY OF 1773 (DIY, 400KM)

Although I've cycled through the Fens before, I've never ridden from home to the east coast, so I was excited to explore this side of the country. I started the ride at 7pm in the evening as this would mean I'd be home for the following evening, allowing me to have a full night's sleep on Saturday. This was the first time I'd documented a ride on Twitter and it was full of funny moments.

For example, at one service station stop I met two rather inebriated ladies who used my bike's flashing lights as an impromptu disco. One asked me where I was heading and I replied "Boston". They thought I was cycling to the USA. I found a bus shelter which provided a comfy seat and the daily papers on the bench for passers-by to stop and read. Very civilised.



*Up-market bus shelter in Boston with all the comforts of home, including the daily papers*