

The Tempest Rally

It is with considerable regret that Sutton & Cheam Motor Club announces that the 2015 JLT Tempest Stages will be the last. This is a decision has not been taken lightly, reflecting that the event has been running for more than 50 years.

The club have concluded that protocols and procedures now required by both the governing body and the majority landowners have developed to such an extent that it is almost impossible to run an event of this kind in what is after all one of the most densely populated regions in the country.

Clerk of the Course for the last 28 years, Barry Guess, commented: "Whilst I am extremely disappointed by the demise of the Tempest, my wife and doctor will both be very happy. The workload has increased enormously over the past few years and this year took around 70% more time to organise. The new systems and protocols now being required by the governing body are all very commendable and receive our whole-hearted support.

However, they have started a chain reaction throughout local authorities, landowners and their agents, all of which demand their own interpretation of how these protocols should be applied and enforced. Sadly, I believe that an unrecognised issue for all rallies is the aging population of key organisers and unless something is done quickly to make it much easier to get involved and encourage participation behind the scenes then the sport will probably disappear within a decade.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank our sponsors and the army of volunteer officials, marshals, safety crews, radio operators and timekeepers who have all contributed so much over the years, many of whom are repeat offenders. We have been well supported by all of the local motor clubs and I look forward to seeing many of the friends I have made through the Tempest at other events over the coming years."

Ian Brooks, Chairman of the Club, said: "This is an extremely disappointing conclusion for a well-established annual event but for some years we have been worrying about the escalating burden on the event organising team. The club will continue to run and co-promote its calendar of other events and will also continue to look for opportunities to run more low-key, closed to club events."