



**FROM THE EDITOR**

**GETTING AWAY** by bike is a great way to recharge your batteries. Your own, that is. Those of any devices you take with you seem to deplete faster than ever. For although battery technology has improved, the batteries have shrunk and more is being asked of them. Colour screens and GPS have a cost.

This power-point anxiety didn't exist in the past. On my first tour, the only battery I had was in my watch, and its life could be measured in years. The AA cell in the tiny radio I took after that kept on going like the bunny in the advert, and was easily replaced when it died. Even my first iPod, used judiciously, would last for several days.

Today's smartphone often goes flat within a day.

I suppose I could leave it at home but it's so useful! On my last tour, its GPS put us back on track whenever we lost our way. Its access to the internet found us places to eat and trains to catch. It could 'speak' foreign phrases. It was a jukebox and a library. It took photos. And, of course, it was a phone.

While it would be frustrating to leave the smartphone at home, its wall-socket dependence, which left me fretting about where its next hit of electricity was coming from, was frustrating too. It undermined the sense of freedom and self-sufficiency that touring brings. As a temporary fix, I've taken to carrying a backup battery. But there's a better solution, as Richard Hallett makes clear on page 44...

**DAN JOYCE**  
Cycle editor



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Clockwise from far left: Alamy, Charles Stevens, Dan Joyce

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