

CASE STUDY

Kop Hill Climb

EVENT SIZE

15,000

ATTENDEES ACROSS 2 DAYS

REGISTERED CARS

800

PER EVENT

TEAM

100%

VOLUNTEER RUN

SERVICES

WEBSITE & BESPOKE
BOOKING SYSTEM

Context

Kop Hill Climb is a quintessentially English hill climb, held annually on 'Kop Hill' in Princes Risborough, Buckinghamshire. Originally established in 1910, Kop Hill Climb ran as a competitive motorsport event until 1925. After an extended pause the event returned as a timed non-competitive event in 2009 and now attracts some 15,000 visitors every September.

Run entirely by volunteers and operating as a registered charity, the event raises money for local good causes while bringing together car and motorcycle enthusiasts from across the country.

With around 800 vehicles taking part in hill runs over the weekend the logistics of registering, parking and grouping vintage vehicles are complex.

Harry Bounden, who is an IT Director for a major international gaming company, took on the responsibility for the event's technology infrastructure over 10 years ago — and has been quietly building systems to keep everything running smoothly ever since.

Challenge

For several years, Kop Hill Climb relied on a bespoke booking system built and maintained by a trusted partner who was deeply embedded in the event's community. When that partner retired and wound down his business, the team faced an urgent decision: find a

commercial off-the-shelf system (none of which were designed for car events of this type), commission something entirely new, or find a technology partner who understood the unique demands of the event.

The requirements were far from simple. The booking system needed to:

- Handle a large volume of applications and manage a structured selection process
- Allow entrants to upload vehicle photos and manage their own entries
- Support the allocation of hill run numbers and paddock spaces (managed via .csv data export to PowerBi).
- Utilise exported data to generate tailored reports for a range of teams, from gate staff to commentators, and produce paddock passes that were clear and easy for stewards to use on the day;
- Integrate with data tools to allow the IT team to create and reuse custom reports

Critically, as a charity run by volunteers, the solution also needed to be cost-effective, reliable, and straightforward for participants to use — many of whom are not particularly tech-savvy.

Approach

Harry approached Alan and the Pentangle team with a clear brief and tight timeline. Working closely together, they built a bespoke booking and event

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We're a charity, we're not paying the earth — but that actually creates a really nice relationship.

We were Alan's testbed in the best possible way. He could develop something genuinely useful, and we got a system that really works for us.

HARRY, IT DIRECTOR,
KOP HILL CLIMB



pentangle ★

CASE STUDY

Kop Hill Climb



“Tom has been fantastic. When I send something through, it gets picked up and sorted. The system is so much more user-friendly than what we had before — and when there are occasional glitches, the team are always willing to jump on them.”

HARRY, IT DIRECTOR,
KOP HILL CLIMB

management system from the ground up, designed around the specific workflows of Kop Hill Climb.

Over several iterations, the system evolved to include:

- An intuitive online booking portal for vehicle entrants, replacing a clunky predecessor
- A selection and acceptance workflow, with real-time visibility of available spaces
- Automated paddock pass generation, pulling together hill run numbers, row allocations and vehicle details
- A live CSV data feed, enabling Harry to connect directly to Power BI for flexible, reusable reporting
- An API integration to collect vehicle data from the DVLA

The website — which had previously crashed under traffic in the week before the event — was also rebuilt and hosted by Pentangle, providing a stable, scalable platform that handles the annual surge in visits without issue.

Tom, Pentangle’s lead developer on the project, worked directly with Harry throughout, translating complex operational requirements into practical technical solutions. When legacy code issues were discovered — including hardcoded dates introduced by a previous contractor — the team worked through them methodically to ensure long-term stability.

Outcome

The new system has transformed how Kop Hill Climb manages its entries and operations — saving the volunteer team significant time every year and giving participants a much smoother experience.

Key outcomes include:

- A user-friendly booking portal that participants find easy to navigate, reducing the volume of support queries
- Real-time reporting dashboards that give the organising team immediate visibility of acceptance numbers, payments and outstanding actions

- Automated paddock pass generation that previously required significant manual effort
- A reliable, high-traffic website that hasn’t gone down once since Pentangle took over hosting

A scalable Power BI reporting setup that will continue to save time in future years as more reports are built

The relationship between Pentangle and Kop Hill Climb is one built on trust, flexibility and a genuine shared interest in making the event a success. Harry has been particularly positive about the responsiveness of the team and the practical, no-nonsense approach to problem-solving.

“We now have a system that genuinely helps us run a better event. Given that we’re all volunteers, the time savings are invaluable.”

— Harry, IT Director, Kop Hill Climb