

Get well soon!

The 4x4 community is just that, a community. Simon Hodder reports on a show of support by a convoy of nearly 30 assorted off-road vehicles for a young man who needed a bit of cheering up...



At 6.30 one Saturday evening in August, the peace and quiet of a residential corner of Wellingborough was shattered when a large convoy of 4x4s appeared, horns blaring, stereos booming and engines revving. They then all bumped over the kerb and parked on a small grassy area, in front of a sign proclaiming "No ball games allowed."

Curtains were twitching up and down the street even before the first

engine had been switched off; local residents obviously fearing that they'd been invaded by a large group of nutters about to have a rave, or something worse. In fact, this wasn't a group of nutters at all. Quite the opposite, in fact. They were there to cheer up a mate who has been suffering with a life-threatening illness

for the last few years.

Andi Bull – regular readers might recall his brilliant Series IIA featured in our February 2009 issue – has been having a pretty rough time of it lately. Since he last appeared in *LRe* he's been back into hospital for a stem cell transplant in a bid to reverse his disease. Following this treatment Andi has been struggling with a viral infection, an extremely serious complication, and despite his strong



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and positive outlook on life, there have been times when, quite frankly, he's had enough.

Andi works on a 4x4 web site with his good friend, Gary Anderson. On the site – at <http://elite4x4.co.uk> – they provide a focal point for all

marques of 4x4, particularly those that have been highly modified or that are extremely capable off-road. Gary, and a number of vehicles from the web site, were at Santa Pod for the Off Road Power event, but despite his best efforts, Andi just wasn't well enough to get there, leaving him feeling really fed up.

Gary decided that if Andi couldn't get to the event, then he'd take the event to him. Andi knew nothing about the surprise, which is why the cars made all the noise as they passed his house. They wanted him to be one of the curtain twitchers!

Andi was under orders from the hospital that he shouldn't be meeting lots of people. He was meant to talk to people through a window to reduce the chances of picking up another infection, but at the sight of all these magnificent cars, and loads of people he'd never met, he decided to throw caution to the wind and meet everyone properly to say thank you.

It was almost a foregone conclusion that someone in the street would call the police as a result of all the noise, and they didn't disappoint. To their great credit, once the situation had been explained the two police officers stayed for a general chat and an admiring look at the monster orange Range Rover before heading off into town to deal with the trouble-making drunks that a warm Saturday night inevitably brings out these days.

Andi was overwhelmed by this show of support from the 4x4 community. It cheered him up no end at a time when he was getting very low. It gave Mr Bull senior a boost, too.

Nice one, guys, and good luck Andi! ■

