

View from the East

September 2019



Holidays over!

Back from holiday and straight back at it for me. Since my last newsletter we have had 8 road deaths in Cambridgeshire, 3 of those within 24 hours.

I had a brief TV appearance following a Coroner's Jury Inquest in Huntingdon, fame at last.

The busy test season for motorcycles has kept my bike and me very busy, seeing some familiar faces and some new ones too, which is great news.

Bikesafe (the Police led motorcycle safety initiative) has closed for another year. 4 workshops run, with 100 people taking up the challenge, learning and being assessed under the watchful eye of myself and colleagues, a great year and some super feedback.

Under Pressure

I have had my annual Police Motorcycle Assessment. Believe me when I say I know how you all feel when it comes to test day. The rigorous process I go through under the scrutiny of Tony Gabb (some of you will know as one of the Regional Senior RoSPA Examiners) is very intense. Not only because I need to get it right and keep my permit to ride, but, there is a huge amount of personal pride involved. I love motorcycling and riding to such a high standard really is an achievement, with fewer Police riders than ever.

Tony and I set off on our trusty marked BMW RT1200RT P's (P being police spec) for Norfolk. As is tradition in Police driver and rider training, we never take the direct route. Tony led to start off with to set the bar and pace for the day.

We met up with the Advanced Car course at morning coffee, they were heading for our landing point, Posh Pigs café just outside Beccles (other Café's are available).

We followed the Advanced Car team briefly on the A1101 (they demonstrated the BMW 5 series motorcycle washing facilities by continued use of the screen washers, RUDE), before we picked up our own route (did not want to embarrass the car team with their lack of overtaking ability).

We arrived safely at Posh Pigs with the A143 Beccles and Bungay bypass being a bit of a blur.

After a break and a bacon sandwich we were back at it heading for Huntingdon. 6 hours in the saddle (now that's a test) and 240 miles covered (direct it would have been short of 200). We were quite lucky with the weather, we had dry and sunny roads in the morning, and then picked up wet damp roads in the latter part of the day, but never actually got rained on.

All in all a great day, with a cracking result, and I can continue to ride for another year!

Date: 01/10/2019



Excess Speed fortnight.

For two weeks in August the UK joined the Europe wide speed enforcement campaign. It was disappointing to see that so far this year Cambridgeshire has seen an increase of nearly 1000 prosecutions compared to the total for 2018, and we still have 3 months to go. That is against the backdrop of fewer Roads Policing resources to catch them. It is no surprise that as it stands at the end of September we are likely to see an increase in fatal and serious injury collisions, as we are already ahead for this time last year.

Back on the streets.

To bolster Roads Policing shifts in the summer months I have had several days out on patrol enjoying what I love about policing, meeting people and making our roads safer.

Wednesday late shift, 13.00 to 23.00 hours. Crewed with an experienced colleague we headed North as the Peterborough/A1 M car. My colleague had paperwork to do for the first hour or so, so we did not hit the road until 14.30 hours.

We arrived back at HQ to book off duty and file our paperwork at 22.30 hours.

Our statistics for the day were (or 6 hours active patrol work):

6 vehicles removed from the road: 3 for no insurance, 1 provisional licence holder unsupervised, 1 non-licence holder and 1 for no tax.

1 Drug driver arrest having failed a drug wipe test, with blood taken for analysis. The result will decide the next action, but going by the manner of driving and his demeanour he will almost certainly be prosecuted and disqualified from driving.

1 x three vehicle minor injury collision.

Thursday and another late shift, this time we were the floating resource so had free reign to head where we thought our skills would be best utilised.

Our statistics for the day:

2 vehicles removed from the road, both for no insurance.

1 x two vehicle serious injury collision dealt with.

As we headed south to HQ to go home, we were flagged down in a village close to the A1M where a member of the public out walking his dog had almost been run over by a female driver who mounted the kerb. He gave the correct registration and description and we quickly located the vehicle parked in the local CO-Op just up the road, and when I say parked, I mean abandoned.

We hid just around the corner out of view to intercept the car as it left for the home address which was only $\frac{1}{4}$ mile away.

Before we got the chance to pounce there was an urgent assistance call from an off duty police officer at the CO-OP who had detained a lady for drink driving. Should have seen the look on his face when the big police 5 series BMW whipped into the car park seconds later! We had to assist the lady out of her car and I removed the keys. I held her up whilst my colleague administered the breath test...the result.....186.....yes 186.....the limit is 35.....any normal person would likely be unconscious with that kind of reading.

When presented to the charge desk at the Police Station she had to be seated as she was incapable of standing for any length time unaided.



Sadly when we arrived at charge desk we were in a queue behind our colleagues in the other Roads Policing car covering Peterborough that day, they too had a drink driver, he had blown 184 at the roadside.

Our dark humour comes into play at times like these, celebrating our success for the higher result, but we were out done, as their driver was able to stand unaided.

Our lady received a 5 year driving ban (her second in 3 years) and a suspended jail term. As is customary for me to quote when I deliver any driver or rider training "You are sharing the road with these people". Be careful out there!

Resources

Please remember the free RoSPA e-newsletter covering all safety matters including road-safety for all RoADAR members.

RoSPA's premier health & safety newsletter brings you the very latest safety news, expert views and advice.

Every issue includes news on road safety, workplace, home and public safety, also details of events you will find interesting! When you sign up you'll receive access to an exclusive collection of e- books covering a wide range of health and safety topics.

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Catch up with some of you soon.

Simon.

Simon Burgin
Eastern Region Co-Ordinator

