

WHEELS



**The Journal of the Norfolk and Norwich
Group of Advanced Motorists**
affiliated to IAM RoadSmart

Autumn 2026



Tim Clelland, 50 years a member



NNAM
1966 - 2026



IAM
1956 - 2026

Norfolk and Norwich Group of Advanced Motorists
Affiliated to the Institute of Advanced Motorists Ltd.

A look back over 60 years



We make better drivers and riders



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Secretary's Desk

Neil Spinks

Welcome to the Autumn edition of Wheels Magazine

What an eventful year this has turned out to be – it is a bit like the swan moving gracefully down the river without seeing the effort being made underwater.

You will be aware from the Summer issue of Wheels that Elke has now stood down as Secretary of NNAM. I know many of you would probably like to join me in offering her our very best wishes for the future and to thank her for the time and effort spent helping the group. I will do my best to assist with the role of Secretary in her absence whilst still holding down the position of Membership Secretary. I do still of course hope that we might have an offer of help from someone within our membership at Committee level.

The 60th Anniversary Celebration held on 10th June was a great success and thanks to all involved in the organisation and preparation for the event. Thanks also goes out to Martin Woodhouse for his presentation to those present remembering many of the individuals and events which have shaped the history of the group over the years. The guests on the evening included some members who have been involved from the outset and who were featured in the presentation.

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NNAM are proving to be the popular choice in Norfolk for those who wish to achieve Advanced Motoring/Riding status. As a result, our faithful Observers are busy trying to keep the wheels turning to keep up with demands. Our thanks go out to all of them for providing the support and help necessary for New Associates to make the necessary progress.

I do hope to see many of you at the up-and-coming social events which are held most months – details of dates and speakers can be found in each edition of Wheels. For any readers who have not been before, do come along to one as it can make for an interesting evening and it is always an opportunity to meet fellow members.

NEW ASSOCIATES

Mrs. Vicky Reeve	Watton
Mr. Andrew Holmes	Ringland

NEW ASSOCIATES

Mr. Chris Riches	Thetford
Mr. Ian Edrupt	Wisbech

TEST SUCCESSES OBSERVERS

Gareth Thomas	Ian Slater
Angela Lawry	Terry Vincent
Jeremy Russell	Paul Chittock
Beverley Giles	M.Stacey / K.Smith
Kelly Morrell	Pam Medlock



Bob Tash Associate Training Coordinator

I am writing this sitting in my office at home in North Norfolk and two miles away the emergency services are dealing with a major field fire. I now hear that there is a major and similar event with flames engulfing Dunwich Heath in Suffolk. I live in an old cottage and two yards away is an extensive corn field that has just been harvested leaving huge amounts of tinder dry straw trails. I didn't set out to report climate change news for the magazine but it just shows one how the world is changing. I shall be keeping my garden hose ready. Oh no, that's been banned. God forbid the UK ends up like France or Spain at the moment!

Well looking on the bright side, the sunny weather is encouraging people to attend outdoor events around the county at which Keith Mace takes along our Mobile Display Unit. You will read more about

this elsewhere in the magazine. These events are bringing in a steady trickle of new Associates wanting to take the Advanced Driving Course.

We are also gathering data from new Members, including where they first heard of the IAM, so as best to target our recruitment.

Our small band of National Observers are more than fully occupied with training Associates. We will hopefully be able to add to their numbers soon with a couple of new Observers.

At the moment the waiting list for the full course is twelve and seven others have requested IAM Free Tasters or one-off check drives which unfortunately we have had to put on hold for the time being.

If your car, like mine sits outside in full sun and gets so hot that when you get in you burn your hands on the steering wheel and come close to igniting other more delicate parts of your body then here is a good tip to cool off your vehicle.

Open the far window: Roll down a passenger or rear window on the side opposite the driver.

Fan the driver door: Pump your driver door back and forth quickly to push out the hot air and draw fresh air through.

Start the A/C right: Turn your air conditioning on and set it to pull *fresh outside air* rather than recirculate.

Target the floor: Direct your bottom floor vents downward so the cooler air forces the remaining heat upward and out.

Close up and switch: Once the cabin temperature drops, roll up your windows and switch your A/C to *recirculation* mode.

I tried this and found it worked pretty well. Only problem was I was too hot, sweaty and exhausted by the time I had finished all the door flapping; I had to go back indoors!



Warmest congratulations to all the above Associates and their Observers on successfully reaching the high standards of The Institute of Advanced Motorists.

All New Associates and New Members are welcome to come along to our Group Meetings, we have some interesting talks lined up.

Associate Coordinators: Bikes: Paul Southwell: Cars: Bob Tash

DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT
EDITION OF "WHEELS" IS
1st November 2026

NEWS

And other bits

Vernon Clarke (Editor)



Scan the QR
code to navigate
directly to the
NNAM website



A big congratulations goes
to Steve Silcocks (our
Chief Observer) in passing
his Masters Test and
gaining a Distinction.

Well Done Steve.

A note from our President

What a very enjoyable evening at our 60th Celebrations.

We had a decent attendance & it was nice to talk to members that do not attend very often.
To all of you who went the extra mile well done.

A special thanks to the producers of the buffet, better than when I did it.

An extra special thanks should go to Caroline, she is not even a member but did so well
providing hot drinks.

I have put the date of the Groups 70th birthday in my diary.

Kind regards to you all

Martin

DISPLAY UNIT

Our display unit will be in Swaffham, at the Classic Car Fayre and Family Fun Day on Sunday,
August 30th, 2026, which starts at 10am. Come and say Hello.

Also our display unit will be at King's Lynn Heritage Open Day, taking place on Sunday,
13th September 2026, featuring free public access to historic sites. Another chance to show
yourself and should you wish to give a hand for an hour or so please give Keith Mace a call
on: **07889049591**



Chairmans Chat

Ian Cain

As I write this it's been a long hot Summer leading to the inevitable hosepipe ban. I don't live very far from the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in King's Lynn where they've just started work building a new multi-storey car park as the first major step towards the new hospital being built. The first stage of the car park build is digging a huge hole for foundations and the removal of what must be hundreds of tons of earth. There's certainly a large number of tipper trucks taking it away. It's been quite breezy the last few days and the dust from all this digging has left a covering on nearby roads and my car has a fine covering of it as well. But there's a hose pipe ban so I can't wash it. I keep the windscreen clean using leftover washing up water but to remove the dust without scratching the paintwork needs a good rinsing with a hosepipe. So the car stays dirty. Bit of a first world problem I know, but I really like my car to be clean.

Our 60th anniversary event was well attended and it was good to meet so many members. I was especially pleased to meet Tim Clelland, one of the founding members of the Group. He had some interesting tales to tell, and of course we had an exceptional buffet. I think every member of the Committee had an input to the organising of this event, so thanks to all of you.

Ian

ROAD SAFETY WEEK

Road Safety Week will take place from Sunday 15th to Saturday 21st November 2026, beginning on the World Day of Remembrance for Road Traffic Victims. BRAKE are co-ordinating a week of raising awareness, remembering road victims and taking action to prevent road death and injury.

This year's theme is Safe People on the Move – and we'll be exploring the safe road users pillar of the Safe System approach. Whether we walk, wheel, ride or drive, we all share our roads whenever we are on the move. However we travel, we all have a shared responsibility to use our roads safely, and those with the potential to do the most harm must have the greatest responsibility to protect those people who are more vulnerable on our roads.

To get involved go to www.brake.org.uk/road-safety-week

Graham Feest Consultancy

GROUP MEETINGS

Cringleford Pavilion, Norwich. NR4 6XF

The Speaker events take place on the second Wednesday of every month at 19.30 at the Cringleford Pavilion, Oaklands Road, Norwich, NR4 6XE apart from August, when there is a break for holidays and January when we hold the AGM.

It is easy to get to and there is plenty of parking. I would ask you all to support this activity as much as possible and please feel free to bring along friends and relations.

We even supply tea, coffee and biscuits at the end!

When attending meetings, photographs may be taken and you could be in view and may be published in our magazine or on our other media platforms



9th September - Norma Howell - Medical Dog Detection

The video presentation highlights the work of both Bio Detection Dogs and Medical Alert Assistance Dogs at the Medical Detection Dogs charity (founded in 2008) and the ways in which they are trained to do life-saving work with non-invasive detection of the odour of human diseases. Our Bio Detection Dogs detect for cancers from clinical samples. The charity's aim is that its Bio Detection Dogs' pioneering work with Universities and NHS Hospital Trusts will help scientists and clinicians to diagnose in a faster and cheaper way that will continue to save lives.

14th October - Neil Haverson - Ink in My blood

The history of the Eastern Daily Press from its launch in the 19th century with a look at my 50+ year career in the newspaper industry and the publication of my memoir "Ink in My Blood."

11th November - Neil Marshall - RNLI and my retirement

Neil, has worked as a partner manager in the financial crime compliance industry for 17 years. Upon his retirement, Neil set sail for six months in his 29ft sailboat to attempt a circumnavigation of Great Britain raising money and awareness for the RLNI and British Heart Foundation. Having survived a heart attack 11 years earlier, he was keen to take on his personal challenge. Neil's talk will encompass the RNLI, the circumnavigation of these beautiful isles and some of the brave selfless RLNI volunteer's he met along the way.

9th December - Hayden Charles - Rope Making, a lost Norfolk trade

Local roperies were once common providing rope, twine and other cordage for shipping, fishing, agriculture and anyone who needed to tie down a load. From the raw materials, to how rope is made, including a demonstration the talk will move to highlight rope making in Great Yarmouth and Norwich. The trade flourished until the end of the nineteenth century before disappearing leaving few traces in the twentieth century.

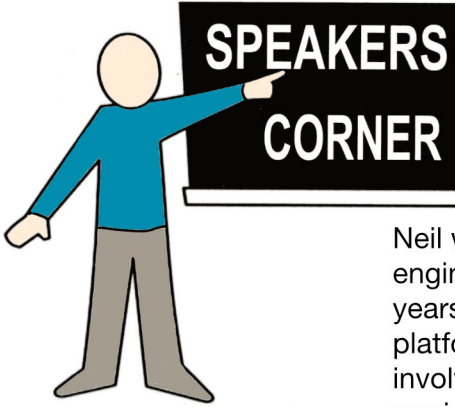
From Norwich :

From the Ring road take the Newmarket road out of Norwich. Take the slip road down to Eaton. Over the traffic lights, follow the old Newmarket Road (From Bluebell Road turn right at the lights). Over the bridge, take the first left (Intwood Road), in about 280yds turn left (Oaklands Road) and down to the end. Turn left to the Pavilion car park .

From the A47 :

Take the A11 towards Norwich. Just before the flyover take the slip road signposted Cringleford. At the 'T' junction turn right over the flyover. Turn left at the next 'T' junction and follow the road round a slight right then slight left. Take the first right - acute right (Intwood Road), in about 280yds turn left (Oaklands Road), down to the end and turn left to the Pavilion car park.

What You missed



Neil Spinks gave us a talk about the Cross Keys Bridge which allows us travelling from Norfolk to cross the River Nene to Lincolnshire. The River Nene starts in Northamptonshire, is tidal and can accommodate vessels up to the port of Wisbech.

Neil was operations manager for the river engineering company for seven and a half years, working on the bridge from floating platforms. Close to the bridge he was also involved with the installation of a new marina. Piling was driven into the bank to form Sutton Bridge Marina for smaller craft.



The bridge has had many changes and modifications in its life time. The first bridge was built in 1831 by Rennie and Telford. In 1850 the bridge was re-built, this time by Robert Stephenson but as a swing bridge, this also carried trains on one side and traffic on the other. The present bridge was built in 1897 by Allen McDonald, it totalled 95 metres long and a swing of 50 meters.

In 1959 the Kings Lynn / Spalding line closed because of issues and the repair would be too expensive. This gave rise to the two lanes of traffic we have today.

The bridge was operated by steam in 1897 but by 1936 the mechanism was replaced by electric pumps pressurising water, and in 1987 this was superseded by a hydraulic system.



The timing of vessels using the river is critical as the River Nene can drop as low as 1.3 metres deep but with a spring high tide it can rise to 7.5 metre in depth. Obviously the vessels cannot stop very easily so the bridge has to be opened in good time which is all computer controlled now. There are approximately 15,500 vehicles cross the bridge each day.

Celebrating Six Decades

New faces, old faces, what an excellent turnout to our 60th Anniversary Celebration's. The catering was superb too, with plenty of choices to suit everybody's taste,

We started the evening with a short presentation from our President Martin Woodhouse giving us an general history of the group, from it's humble beginnings in 1966 to the present day.

The MDU was on display too for those who have never seen it or had the opportunity to venture near it.

It was great to see Tim Cleland in our mist, he's been a member right from the very beginning of the groups inception, which was formed on October 1st 1966. A meeting held at the Volunteer Public House on Earham Road where around 75 enthusiastic people attended. Hence the Norfolk and Norwich Group was born and formed part of the Institute of Advanced Motorists.

Martin, our President, joined the group and passed his advanced test in 1976 before becoming an observer and committee member in 1978.

It was good to see so many appreciative members attending on this special occasion. Here's to the next 60 years.



Pete Goodrum once again talks about the history or memories of Norwich, this time through the 1970's. This is a time when the roads of Norwich were widened or changed completely. An example being the inner ring road. Norwich has always suffered with traffic congestion. The idea of an inner ring road is not new by any means even before the war the idea was taking shape. Plans had been drawn up by 1944 taking a similar route to the present inner ring road of today.

Grapes Hill, where some of the old houses had not been repaired after the war were flattened for the purpose of a dual carriage way. A proposed roundabout at the top of Grapes Hill was laid out slightly differently then with the idea of a central underpass up Grapes Hill making it easier for traffic to go straight through to Chapelfield, which would lighten the traffic load using the roundabout.

In 1972 the flyover across Magdalen Street was finally opened. All of this took more traffic away from the centre of the city.

The city has changed in many ways. Do you remember - Sovereign House or the HMSO building in Anglia Square (which published all government papers) eventually closed and moved back to London.

We now had self assembly furniture for the first time and Hygena Kitchen units.

Jerry Parish brought to Norwich the American style of buying furniture called Queensway. they also started the craze of Boxing Day Sales.

The government were telling us at the time that coal was the fuel of the future. I think the future has been and gone !

We had Woolworths on Rampant Horse Street (can still be found in Australia); The historic family owned department store Garlands (founded in 1862) burnt down on 1st August 1970: Remember C & A on the Madder Market or Hovell's for wicker baskets ?

Did you wear flared trousers and were you a man with a perm?

Norwich Union (a job for life); The Pointer Motor Company on Aylsham Road had a restaurant called The Horseless Carriage and was also the starting point of many local rallies; Norwich even had a swimming pool at St. Augustines but was built one metre short of an olympic size pool.

There were many many more interesting facts about Norwich in the 70's but too many to mention here.

SMARTWATCHES

We are always trying to find something new to challenge our use of technology and its legal and safety focus and now we have Smartwatches which occupy a unique legal grey area.

The legislation governing mobile phone use while driving makes it an offence to simply touch a mobile phone while in control of a vehicle but what constitutes 'use' of a smartwatch is less clear. In theory, clearing a notification while driving could be classed as using a smartwatch and could be covered by the offence of using a handheld phone. While the law does not yet clearly define how the offence of using a handheld mobile device or similar applies to smartwatches, drivers with the devices told the RAC they interact with them in a variety of ways. Some 13% admit to using a smartwatch by touching it, while 12% use voice commands only – 9% do both, but without further clarity these drivers cannot be sure whether they are committing an offence.

More than half (56%) of drivers with smartwatches use their devices on at least 'most' journeys with the remainder using them 'every now and then'. When it comes to what drivers use them for, checking the time is clearly the most common action (81%), while viewing notifications (50%), checking their location (42%) and making or receiving a phone call (40%) are also popular. The RAC's research also shows that 40% of motorists who drive at least once a month currently own a smartwatch, rising sharply to 73% among 17 to 34-year-olds.

If a smartwatch clearly distracts someone while driving, the individual could still be guilty of not being in proper control of the vehicle.

Graham Feest Consultancy



Ian Slater Chief Observer

Using the System to Stay Safe in Bright Sunshine

Summer driving often means dry roads and longer days, but it also brings hazards that demand careful observation and planning. Bright sunshine, strong glare and the constantly changing patches of light and shade beneath

trees can all reduce your ability to identify hazards early. Applying the IAM RoadSmart principles and the System of Car Control can help you stay safe.

One of the greatest challenges is low sun, particularly during the early morning and late afternoon. Glare can make it difficult to judge speed, distance and the position of other road users. A clean windscreen, inside and out, is essential, while suitable sunglasses can improve comfort and visibility. However, remember that sunglasses may become a disadvantage when moving quickly between bright sunshine and deep shade.

Tree-lined roads present another subtle hazard. As sunlight filters through the canopy, alternating bands of bright light and shadow can disguise pedestrians, cyclists, motorcyclists and even horse riders. A vulnerable road user wearing dark clothing may blend almost completely into the shadows until they are much closer than expected.

This is where the System of Car Control proves its value. Good observation should identify areas where visibility is reduced and prompt an early adjustment to your speed. By positioning your vehicle to maximise your view, selecting an appropriate speed before entering shaded areas and maintaining a safe following distance, you give yourself more time to recognise and respond to developing hazards.

Always look well ahead, but continue to scan the areas where light and shadow meet. Ask yourself, "*What could be hidden from view?*" This mindset encourages anticipation rather than reaction and helps prevent surprises.

Remember too that other drivers may be looking directly into the sun and could struggle to see you. Don't assume you've been seen; use clear signals, leave generous safety margins and be prepared for unexpected actions from others.

The best advanced drivers are those who continually adapt to changing conditions. By using the System of Car Control and maintaining effective observation, anticipation and planning, you can enjoy summer driving while reducing risk for yourself and those around you.

Drug driving offences overtake drink driving for the first time

- Drug driving endorsements in the UK exceeded 30,000 for the first time in 2025, surpassing the 29,769 recorded for the equivalent drink drive offence.
- Drivers aged 17-24 account for almost a fifth (18%) of drug driving offences.



DVLA data obtained and analysed by road safety charity IAM RoadSmart* shows that the number of drug driving offences (DG10s) added to individual licences in 2025 stood at 30,707, a sizeable 28% increase on the 23,981 recorded in 2022. Meanwhile the figures for drink driving offences (DR10s) in 2025 stood at 29,769 licence endorsements, a welcome 17% reduction on the 35,976 recorded in 2022.



The figures also suggest young drivers aged 17-24, despite only making up around 6% of all licence holders, received 18% of all drug driving licence endorsements in 2025, showing the scale of the problem among new drivers. In 2025, the youngest age group (aged 17-19), accumulated more than 1,100 drug driving endorsements, more than double the number (464) recorded for all drivers aged 60 and over.

The findings will add weight to some police officer views that drug driving has now overtaken drink driving in terms of prevalence**. Previous research published in January 2025 by IAM RoadSmart showed that roadside drugs testing conducted by police were returning a 50% positivity rate***, far higher than the 16% recorded for drink drive tests. Separate research found that nearly half of drug-drive offences (44%) are committed by a reoffender, according to Government data.

Impairment by drugs as a contributory factor in a collision resulted in 149 fatalities in 2023, significantly higher than the 78 recorded in 2015. It's illegal to drive if either you're unfit to do so because you're on legal or illegal drugs or if you have certain levels of illegal drugs in your blood (even if they have not affected your driving).

It's also illegal in England, Scotland and Wales to drive with legal (prescription) drugs in your body if it impairs your driving. Penalties may include a minimum 1-year driving ban, an unlimited fine, up to 6 months in prison and a criminal record. Drug driving endorsements also remain on a licence for 11 years. The maximum penalty for causing death by careless driving under the influence of drugs is life imprisonment.

Police forces have more tools at their disposal now, with roadside swab tests able to confirm if a suspect is driving under the influence of cannabis or cocaine. Suspects are then required to provide a blood test, though delays in the laboratory testing means these individuals can still drive pending the results which can take several months.

In May 2026**** two forces (Hampshire and Isle of Wight Police and Thames Valley Police) began trialling the world's first Nitrous Oxide (laughing gas) breathalyser as forces fight on all fronts to curb the dangers of drug driving.

The findings have led to calls for radical action to curb the growth of drug driving, including a rehabilitation scheme, similar to what is already provided to convicted drink drivers*****.

IAM RoadSmart Director of Policy and External Communications, Nicholas Lyes said:

"It's becoming clear that the UK is mired in a drug driving epidemic, to the point where it may now be more of a threat on our streets than drink driving. These figures demonstrate the need for radical action to support police forces and reduce harm to all other road users.

"The UK Government's road safety strategy clearly outlines the intention to tackle drug driving, but we need to start seeing action soon before more lives are needlessly lost.

"Educating people about the misconceptions of the impacts that drugs have on a person's ability to drive is a start, but police should be given powers to suspend licences at the roadside for failing a drug swab test. In addition, it's vital that we establish a national drug drive rehabilitation programme. Research has consistently shown similar courses can prevent drink drivers reoffending and there's every reason to believe a similar approach would reduce drug driving, change behaviour, and benefit road safety.

"Drug driving ruins lives and unless we start approaching the issue with the seriousness that it merits, we risk allowing a public safety crisis to worsen."

IAM Roadsmart

Membership matters



Neil Spinks

We continue to have an encouraging flow of New Associates to the group all wanting to develop their driving skills.

Ahead of someone becoming a New Associate, there is sometimes the opportunity for me to help the prospective applicant with some information about the group. This is usually explaining the system we have and what is entailed in preparing for and achieving the level of Advanced Motorist. During this time, I also like to ask about the reasons why the individual concerned wants to undertake such a quest. As you can imagine, there is quite a wide range of answers to this question but still, the over-riding sentiment is to become and hopefully then remain a safer more competent driver/rider.

We are all facing the challenges of developing technology and need to remain confident that we can embrace new safety features and devices in our daily driving.

Occasionally however, some of these devices can cause less able drivers an even greater challenge to safe driving. I refer here to Satellite Navigation Systems or Satnav's as they are commonly known.

Now there used to be a saying that a certain type of driver couldn't see beyond the end of their bonnet. I personally feel that this saying could now be referred to as not seeing beyond their Satnav!!

I am sure there are any number of Satnav related disaster stories out there with many drivers ending up in completely the wrong place. Those may be the more obvious cases, but what is often not seen is the basic loss of concentration on the road ahead and the inability to react to changing circumstances – too much time spent looking at and listening to the Satnav.

The art of good driving is to embrace such technology where required but not to totally rely upon it. Sound route planning will always be an important part of safe driving/riding.

So, to all the New Associates who are on their individual quest to become a safer user of the road – here is wishing you all an enjoyable and fulfilling experience.

Lastly, a further request to all of you Full members as the situation hasn't changed -

NNAM NEED MORE COMMITTEE MEMBERS AND OBSERVERS **ARE YOU ABLE TO HELP US?**

<< DATA PROTECTION >>

As part of your membership contract with the Norfolk and Norwich Group of Advanced Motorists (NNAM), we will contact you with information on training, committee, and social events, together with newsletters/magazines relating to the Group and road safety.

Pictures, videos and written updates of NNAM events such as training, committee, and social events at which you may be in attendance or referred to will also be regularly published on social media sites such as Facebook, and group newsletters/magazines and group related websites.

NNAM also shares information with IAM Roadsmart in order to administer membership activities.

You have the right to withdraw from receiving or participating in any of the above by contacting the Membership Secretary by email at membership@nnam.org.uk giving your name and membership number.

Your personal details will not be shared with any third party other than IAM Roadsmart and will be held securely by the Membership secretary. Your details will be deleted when you cease to be a member of NNAM.

Fen Riders

Ride Out Calendar 2025

2nd (short) and 4th (long) Sunday of month
March to October 9am start, Nov to Feb 10am start

All photos in the following articles are the copyright of Fen Riders

2026

Month	Date	Destination
July	12th	Alby Tea Rooms, Aylsham
July	26th	Harbour view Cafe, Grafham Water
Aug	9th	Parlour Cafe, Binham
Aug	23rd	International Bomber Command Memorial, Lincoln
Sept	13th	Blue Sky Cafe, Cromer
Sept	27th	Anderby Creek Cafe, Skegness
Oct	11th	Whitwell Station, Reepham
Oct	25th	Norfolk Tank Museum, Long Stratton
Nov	8th	Vine House Cafe, Deeping St.Nicholas
Nov	22nd	Kingfisher Cafe, Walcott
Dec	13th	Wells Beach Cafe
Dec	27th	TBC

26th July Grafham Water

13 riders turned out for our ride to the visitor centre on Graffham Water near West Perry. Another member joined us on the route near Wisbech.

As we stood chatting in Sainsbury's car park, our regular meeting place, it started to rain quite hard so we all took shelter in a nearby shopping trolley shelter. I think we'd all forgotten what rain feels like. But it was a blustery day so the rain soon cleared away and we set off in dry conditions with damp patches on the road in places.



I tried to plan our route avoiding minor Fenland roads since they can be quite hazardous because of subsidence, but we still came across a closed road and had to divert through March. There were other closed roads that we passed but none of them changed our planned route. We rode through a village called Holme and over a railway crossing near the Admiral Wells pub. I understand that this is the lowest pub in the UK, some 3 metres below sea level. This must also be the busiest level crossing in the UK, my previous record of waiting here was 5 trains, but we waited for more than that today. I stopped counting but one of our group said he counted eleven trains before the barriers lifted.

After all that Fenland excitement it was nice to get onto the B660 as it climbed off the flat Fens and into rolling countryside. This is one of the attractions of this ride, a rolling road with enough bends to make it really interesting. It runs through some really attractive villages, not unlike the area around Rutland water. Must be some thing to do with reservoirs. ➡



As we got near to West Perry we passed through Kimbolton with its magnificent school. Very impressive.



The car park at the visitor centre has a system where you take a ticket on entry, pay at a machine near the cafe as you leave, and put your ticket in another machine to raise the barrier at the exit. Bikes can often ride around these barriers, but I thought I'd do the right thing and pay. But when I put my ticket in, the barrier didn't lift, so I rode round it anyway.

Our journey back was uneventful except for the very blustery winds across the exposed Fenland roads. I was being knocked about by the wind quite a bit and had to really be ready for it when leaving any sheltered areas. I think this is one of the worse conditions when riding a bike, you feel at times you are leaning on the wind to stay straight.

Thanks to Soji and Euan for leading a group each and to everyone who turned out.

Ian



12th July **Alby Tea Rooms**

In contrast to our last ride when only three of us turned up, 12 riders met at Sainsbury's for a more local ride. Alby Tea Rooms are North of Aylsham on the Cromer road and the site also has craft and gift shops.

We split into two groups for a pleasant ride across mostly B roads via Fakenham and past Blickling Hall into Aylsham. I was surprised by the French appearance of Aylsham market place, people sitting outside cafes in the sunshine and a few

traders doing business as well. Perhaps this is a bonus of our increasingly better Summer weather.



Alby Tea Rooms were surprisingly quiet when we got there, so plenty of room to sit outside by a racey life size statue of a young lady. Nice tea, coffee, and cakes in good company with interesting conversation. Not only do we get to ride our bikes on these



events, we also get a chance to sit with friends and chat on all sorts of topics. I don't think anyone mentioned football at all

As usual we all went our own ways home, some alone and some with other riders. The advantage of these local rides is that we get home by early afternoon and enjoy some family time.

Thanks to Steve Silcocks for leading a group and to everyone else for their company.

Ian



28th June **Foxton Locks**

After the extreme heat of the previous few days, it was refreshingly pleasant when 3 of us met for a ride to Foxton Locks near Market Harborough in Leicestershire.

Maybe the hot weather had put people off but I was surprised that only three of us turned out.

Foxton Locks is a listed site and home to the longest staircase flight of locks in Britain and is well known to canal enthusiasts but also a busy tourist attraction. More importantly for us there are a number of places to eat and drink on the site so a perfect destination for a ride.

We rode along the boring Fen roads to Bourne via Spalding. Once out of Bourne we climbed up onto really interesting and well kept roads through to Corby Glen. On the way we passed Grimsthorpe Castle who were holding some sort of sports car event. They seem to hold quite a few motoring related events at the castle, it certainly made the roads busy as we passed. Beyond Corby Glen we headed to Colsterworth and crossed the A1 before heading towards Oakham via Wymondham which has a windmill and cafe, another popular destination for us.

Towards Oakham most of the villages are made of local stone which makes the look very posh, and beyond Oakham we skirted Rutland water to Uppingham with its large fee paying school. Then down a B road towards Market Harborough. Another lovely road having an almost Alpine descent with hairpins at the start.

At Market Harborough it was a quick spell on the bypass (the A6) before our final run to the locks. We sat outside the Foxton Locks Inn for cake/sausage sandwich and coffee before setting off for home. One of our group was going to Wellingborough to visit friends so two of us set off back via Rockingham, Uppingham, and the A47. A boring ride once past Peterborough but quick and easy. According to my phone app we covered 165 miles at an average speed of 37mph. Not as quick as you might think.

Ian

14th June Burnham Deepdale

Our ride today was not to the advertised destination but instead to the Nest Cafe at Burnham Deepdale on the coast of West Norfolk. This cafe was shut for a while but has reopened with new owners and is on a site with a few interesting shops as well.

It was a pleasant day for a morning's ride but I didn't expect 17 (yes 17) bikes to turn up. I think this must be a record. It was nice to see many faces that we hadn't seen for a while, maybe since it was a local ride they were more inclined to come along. Whatever, we certainly took up a good chunk of Sainsbury's car park, although we were gone before it got really busy.

Our route took us across West Norfolk on country roads including the longish climb up to Bircham and Docking. The road to the coast from Docking gives a spectacular view of the sea and beaches just before it drops down to Brancaster where we turned right along the coast road to Burnham Deepdale.

The cafe was busy when we got there and there was a queue to order food that extended out of the door. Some of us went into the posh grocery store next door to get a Costa from their machine, much quicker but we couldn't get a venison sausage sandwich there.

The cafe, shops, and good weather made the whole site busy. Plenty of space to park though.



A good catch up with everybody over food and drinks then the usual departure in different directions as everybody headed for home. Thanks to everyone who turned up, and thanks to Dave C and Dave P for leading a group each.

Ian

24th May Old Hall Cafe, Southwold

Nine expectant bikers met on a glorious Sunday morning for a ride to Sunny Suffolk. One group of four and one of five, which I was leading.

Elke had kindly posted the route on the WhatsApp group and I had diligently loaded it on to my Satnav, fingers crossed that the satnav would behave itself. For anyone who knows me well, I have had more than my share of Oh ****t satnav moments.

I needn't have worried as we were soon whizzing along on a mixture of sweeping A&B roads, some familiar but most unfamiliar to me. No gravel or grass growing up the middle of the roads (unlike most of my routes).



That's the good bit!
Now the not so good bit..
. being unfamiliar with our destination, I missed the turn for the cafe and being totally

unaware, carried on. In my defence I was still following the route on the satnav. Eventually we could go no further, the North Sea was before us!



A cracking ride and one I'd definitely do again.

Thanks to all for joining us on a great day out.

Steve Silcocks



10th May Fring

Our planned ride on the 10th May was to the Skylark Garden Centre near March. Unfortunately the roads in the Fens can be really bad, sometimes verging on dangerous for motorcyclists, so we planned to take a scenic route to Bircham Windmill.

However, there is a new cafe, The Old Stores Bakery and Cafe, in Fring which is only a stones throw from Bircham Windmill, so we decided to give that a try. Fring isn't a big place, you don't pass through it on the way to anywhere else, but the cafe is superb. Modern, nice outdoor area, waiter service, and best of all, enormous tasty cakes.



Compared to the previous few days Sunday was quite chilly but twelve riders turned out with another joining us on the way. So, three groups of four riders set out to follow mostly B roads towards Fakenham, and then more quiet, sometimes single track roads to Fring. People complain about the state of the roads these days, but the ones we rode were generally in good condition and really nice to ride. Not much traffic either. I can't take the credit for planning this route, Steve Silcocks, our Bike Chief Observer, led an Associates ride out on it a few weeks ago.

At the cafe we were served with decent coffee and tea in proper cups and saucers, and the previously mentioned cakes. Al Bland normally has a breakfast on our rideouts, but this was a posh place so he had to make do with a croissant containing bacon and cheese. Not impressed eh Al?

After refreshments and discussions on various topics we all set off on the short journey home. The cafe is on a crossroads but whichever way you turned, it led to decent roads. Thanks to Steve and Ewan for leading groups and to everyone who turned out for an enjoyable morning.

Ian

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