



Suffolk Riders



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Chairman's update

October saw the end of daylight-saving time and for those of us who work, so we're now pretty much driving or riding to and from work in the dark. Cold and frosty mornings, salty, greasy roads mean that we need to take much more care with our driving but especially with our riding. And we need to get that salt off our bikes ASAP!



I received an email from RoADAR telling me about a benefits package.... Oooh! I thought, something beneficial from RoADAR? Can this be true? So I followed the link: <https://www.roadarbenefits.co.uk/> and using my RoSPA membership number, I set up a new account to log in.... Well, there's a few organisations offering discounts, so may well be worth any full members taking a look – but don't get too excited! You're not going to get 15% off your next motorbike here, but every little helps!

I spoke at the November Group-night about the impending AGM. As usual, we will be reviewing the year, albeit more briefly than before as we have these amazing newsletters to present what we've been up to in detail. We'll also have a very brief preview of what's to come (as we covered that in September group night) and we will also hold the elections for next year's committee. I have been a committee member since the inaugural AGM in December 2012, after the riders left the Bury group. I have found it very rewarding, sometimes frustrating but the positives far outweigh the negatives. The feeling that you're giving something back, aiding the running and growing of a group which so many have gained so much from and continue to enjoy being a part of is warming. I would urge any

member who feels they have something to offer the group by way of organising, managing tasks, or has any particular skill or knowledge in marketing, publicity, etc... to contact me or one of the other committee members to find out how they can help the group.

As the AGM is an official meeting for all members and requiring them to vote in the new committee, we ask that you send in your acceptance or apologies. This is for two reasons. There is a minimum number of members required at the AGM for it to be quorate, and it also aids us in ensuring we organise the right amount of food for the post-AGM social when we all stand around chatting and grazing on the excellent finger food on offer. Many members bring their partners along, which is great, so if your partner is going to attend please let us know.

As also mentioned at group night, Rach is organising the food so any offers of providing food for the AGM social would be welcomed, please email Rach on r.heathershaw@gmail.com.

If you are not attending the AGM, I wish you a very merry Christmas and a happy, healthy New Year and hope to see you in 2020. *Jon Jamin*

November Events

Breakfast Run to Wings Cafe, North Weald Airfield – 27th October

I arrived at Tesco, Copdock in good time so as to have a chat with fellow riders. Just as I was starting to think that everyone had forgotten about the clock change, Vinnie arrived on his Tracer GT. As the 09:30 kick-off arrived, so did Martin on the supercharged and 'gaffer taped', Kawasaki H2 'Millenium Falcon'. Then there were three of us.



Vinnie took the lead, along the rather congested Hadleigh Road, Sunday drivers out in full force. It was difficult to get into any sort of rhythm as effective overtaking opportunities were in short supply.

Things improved as we left Long Melford, through Foxearth, towards Cavendish, until Vinnie turned into the Nethergate Brewery Yard! Now, I know he likes a beer, but mid-morning on a motorcycle ride was pushing things a bit too far! His Garmin said to go back, which he did, but Martin's Garmin said to carry on & my TomTom agreed with Martin.

Then we were two.

We carried on at a brisk pace along the lovely flowing roads found in this part of Essex, keeping a wary eye out for wet and slippery patches under the trees.

It was a nice flowing route through Finchingfield, Bardfield, Dunmow & High Easter, but somewhere near Fyfield, we had Sat Nav Crisis No.2. I must have got carried away on a particularly enjoyable set of bends when I briefly glimpsed a Tomtom instruction to turn left. Too late, missed it, but it quickly rerouted so I carried on and Martin blindly followed.

The roads on the new route became smaller and muddier until it turned right into a riding stable! While Martin marked his territory in a roadside hedge, I replotted the route direct to Wings.



We arrived to find a smug-looking Vinnie, sitting in the sunshine, sipping coffee and awaiting his breakfast. A bit later Dave arrived on his GS.

The setting for the cafe is beside the taxiway & near a hangar, so there is always some form of aviation activity going on. Parked nearby, amongst the multitude of Cessnas and homebrew specials, was a Hurricane and a Douglas DC4. Across the taxiway, a D-day liveried Dakota DC3 sat beside an old wartime Nissen hut. All the time aircraft were taking off and landing. We watched as an unusual Rutan taxied by, the Essex Police chopper set off on a mission & then a Jet Provost took off. A fascinating place to while away the afternoon.



Dave headed off independently as the rest of us set off on a swift route back towards Sudbury, where we dropped into TTT Motorcycles, off Ballingdon Road.

This was a motorcycle shop that I hadn't heard of but was well worth a visit. Marked by a beautiful orange Royal Enfield Interceptor parked outside, we entered the massive showroom.

There were various new bikes from Mash, Royal Enfield and SWM, but also an interesting range of used bikes including an MV Agusta F4, an original Norton Commando, a couple of Benellis and some classic Kawasakis. There was also a good range of clothing and helmets and a Suffolk Riders display board. With a cafe due to open soon, it is well worth a visit. – *Steve Valentine*

Group Training Ride - Sunday, 17th November 2019

Nine Suffolk riders members turned out for this months group training ride including 3 tutors, 3 associates and 3 full members.

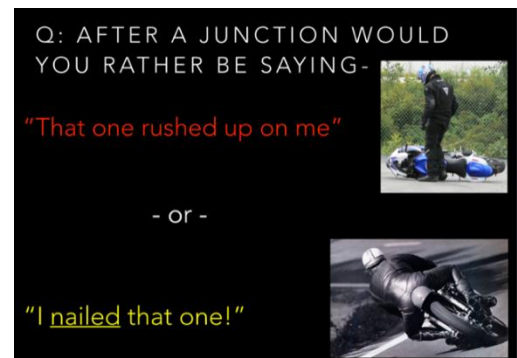
The ride took us along an interesting route to the Broken Egg Café, Harleston. Sadly we received poor service at the café, the food was okay but it was a long wait! Arrived at 11.00 am, left at 1.00 pm. – *Keith Gilbert*



Group Night – 26/11/19 – Coping with Junction – expecting the unexpected!

A good number of both riders and guests joined a Group Night on 'Coping with Junctions - expecting the unexpected!' where instead of working through sections from 'Motorcycle Roadcraft' John Morgan prompted us to draw out principles for how to negotiate junctions with better plans and less drama.

Video clips were used to examine the risks in riding real road junctions ranging from lay-bys and a simple crossroads to the famous 'Magic Roundabout' at Swindon.



We voted on how we would like to feel after junctions; and whether our method could have been viewed as 'rushed and with surprises', or 'planned and smooth'.

John suggested that we treat all junctions as learning opportunities. The session closed with a question and answer session, with old hands and recent joiners taking part, that lasted nearly as long as the workshop had done. – *John Morgan*

Been somewhere nice?

Spain trip

This time it was all Steve Russell's fault. He had said he wanted to ride round the Pyrenees and the Alps. I thought that sounded like a good idea for a trip until I realised how close the Picos de Europa mountains are to Santander, and everybody had told me how spectacular the Picos are – and they are right! So I planned a trip around the Picos, across the Pyrenees, and home via a 'little' detour across to the Alps and the Route Napoleon from Castellane to Grenoble, all based on taking the ferry from Portsmouth to Santander.

Steve, Martin Drury, and David Wood signed up to come, and Steve and Catherine Valentine said they would meet us in the Pyrenees and offered to put us up for a night at their house in Montréal near Carcassone.



I booked up the crossings and the hotels. It was all going so well. Then Brittany Ferries sent me a text to say that their flagship ferry, the Pont Aven, had suffered a fire in the engine room and so they were having to go more slowly than usual. This meant the trip would start in Plymouth, not Portsmouth – a 300-mile ride before we even got to Spain. OK, we sighed if you must.

Then the day before we were due to leave I had another text at 10.30, to say the Pont Aven's steering gear had broken, the ship had gone into dry dock, and our ferry was cancelled. We could

have our money back, but there were no alternative crossings available to Spain. Oh, bother!

It was Monday, we had a hotel booked in the Picos on Wednesday night, what could we do? Easy! We could ride. I rang Steve and Martin and explained the situation and said what time can you be ready? – and we agreed to meet at 2.00 pm. David had done the Picos so said he would meet us in the Pyrenees. Ran upstairs to pack. We left Copdock at 2.00, took the Eurotunnel, and were in Abbeville by 7.30 for supper. The next day I had tried to book a hotel near Bordeaux, but there was nothing free at a sensible price, however, I found an Ibis with rooms free in Dax, near the Spanish border.

But Dax is a long way from Abbeville! Oh well, got to be done. So we rode 570 miles that day (mainly autoroute and rather boring, but not as bad as it sounds), arriving at 7.30 in time for supper in a nice French restaurant next to the hotel.



By lunchtime, on Wednesday we were in Spain and arrived at our hotel (la Montana Magica - one of Keith's suggestions). Just as well we did, as the hotel is up a steep windy narrow track, which would have been exciting in the dark if we had arrived off of the ferry. Lovely hotel, nice people, good food, too many beers, back on the road in the morning with fuzzy heads.

I'd planned a circular tour of the Picos. 234 miles, 5hrs 26mins riding said MyRouteApp. It was all going so well until we got to a road closed sign. The roadman didn't speak any English, but with sign language, he told us to go back a kilometre and head up a goat track up the side of the mountain. We did. One of the hairpins was so tight we had to stop and kick the backs of the bikes across to get round. Never mind the sheer drop down the mountainside. What fun! We lost an hour or so and had to miss the cable car up to Fuente De. Perhaps next time. On to 'Casa Rural Zalama', another of Keith suggestions, lovely people, good food, too many beers...



Friday - Across to the Pyrenees, to stay at 'Pyrenees Motorcycle Tours' run by an English couple. I recommend it - lovely people, good food, too much wine... We had planned to cross the Pyrenees via some twisty roads and the Bielsa tunnel. 317 miles, 7hrs 13. Not a chance - much too far! By lunchtime, we were in a petrol station near Pamplona, less than halfway, and it started to drizzle. We need a plan B. Crossed over the Pyrenees by the western pass to St-Jean-Pied-de-Port, the route the pilgrims take to Santiago de Compostella. They all looked very wet and miserable in the drizzle. Then we cheated and took the autoroute. It was all going so well until Martin stopped alongside me and took his hands off the handlebars to indicate he needed a wee. Next minute there was the expensive sound of plastic hitting the tarmac. We stopped up the road and repaired his fairing with duct tape (ed - it's still there, must be good tape).

Saturday we planned to ride the Tourmalet loop that the tour de France cyclists ride. It was raining. Forget that. Went to Lourdes instead to pray for good weather. Rained all day. Lots of Catholics in

wheelchairs hoping for a miracle. Next day more drizzle. No miracles. Never mind, we rode along the Pyrenees and down to Montréal, where Steve and Catherine entertained us very well, lovely people, good food – you know the rest.

Monday we had arranged to meet Nicky and Roy Clouter, old friends and ex-members of the club, in Uzès where they now live in permanent sunshine, lucky beggars. Good lunch in glorious sunshine, one small beer, back on the road. It was always going to be a long ride to Castellane, but it promised to be a spectacular one along the edge of the Gorge du Verdon. About 50 miles from Castellane it started to rain. Then it started to pour. Twisty wet road, the edge of Gorge, crazy Frenchmen overtaking us around blind bends. We saw nothing of the Gorge except cloud and mist. Arrived soaked though. Memo to self – buy new waterproof boots before next year. The hotel had electric towel rail, hope I didn't overload mine with wet gear.



The Route Napoleon was a nice ride, nothing too challenging, except Steve and Catherine decided to go up the Alpe d'Huez (another tour de France hill climb) and down an unmade dirt track, through a road closed barriers etc. We stayed at the bottom and had lunch, IMHO good choice. That night we stayed in Succieu near Grenoble with Mary and Greg Barr, another one of Keith's finds, lovely people, good food, good wine... After that, it was a day's ride to Chalon en Champagne, and the next day up to Eurotunnel and home.

It was a very enjoyable trip, but Steve was disappointed that we only rode on the very edge of the Alps. Got to be done. So in September 2020 Steve, Martin and I are planning to ride to Tuscany via some of the famous passes like the Stelvio and the San Bernardino. If you fancy joining us, let me know. I can promise some good riding, good company, and of course good food and maybe even a few beers and glasses of wine. – *Phil Sayer*

Scotland Tour 2019

We had routes issued via the usual myrouteapp and although some would be following these, there was no need to do so. Three started together from the start point. There were pit stops for breakfast and lunch and teas etc and with others riders joining along the way such that most of us met up at the first night (halfway) hotel, most going out for dinner together for a good meal and a good time.



The second day was to get to the base B&B hopefully in good time to travel over the Cairngorm passes and high roads prior to the sun becoming low in the sky and making vision less easy. This worked a treat and included time for more stops.



The B&B was a great place with a short walk making available different types of restaurants and

venues for evening meals and had a fuel station within a couple of hundred yards. The owners of the B&B were very welcoming and offered on-site parking for our bikes, and the breakfasts were fantastic with a varied menu.

The daily ride outs were opt-in for part of or all, at will, and customised however the riders wanted to do. We visited places and sights, but mainly chose rides based on good roads with good riding and views and numerous opportunities for refuelling stops, both for riders as well as machines.

The ride back to Suffolk was split into two days (for most of us) with an overnight B&B and another group dining experience.

The weather was a little mixed, with the famous Scottish mist and rain making occasional appearances, but this did not stop the events or the fun.



We had a good mix of couples riding together and solo riders, with a range of ages from young to "mature" all adding to the enjoyment.

Keep your eyes on the group announcements in case this event repeats next year. (This is likely to happen). – *Ian Anderson*

Group Notices

Group Training Rides – Your Questions Answered

What is the point of the Group Training Rides?

The primary aim of the rides is to provide associates with additional training in a group environment where they will be able to learn from both feedback and observing other group members riding. The rides should supplement associates one to one tutored rides to give them a rounded set of advanced riding skills. They are also a chance to meet other group members.

I am a full member, are Group Training Rides for me?

As a group we also believe that training is an ongoing process, you are never the finished article, there is always something to learn. So the group training rides are also for full members who may wish to have their riding overseen by one of our tutors or just wish to ride with other full members.

I am an associate, will the rides be just like my one to one tutored rides?

No, they are not designed to be the same as your tutored rides. There could be up to two other associates in your group and each will have a chance to ride at the front of the group in front of a tutor. In normal tutored rides you can ride at the speed you want as long as it is safe and within the law. On a training ride, there could be slower riders within the group and it is necessary that the tutor keeps the group together to prevent there being pressure on slower riders to ride faster than they are comfortable with.

So what is the point of me joining the rides?

There is a lot to be gained from watching others ride as invariably people have different riding styles and approaches to advanced riding. It is also a chance to meet with other group members and have the chance to raise any questions you have. The majority of riders find the rides very enjoyable.

I am a full member and just want to have a social ride with other members, is this possible?

Yes, please do use the Group Training Ride meet up points and routes for a social ride. Just make it known to the organisers that that is your intention.

I want to attend the next Group Training Ride, what do I have to do?

About two weeks before each training ride there will be an e-mail sent out to all group members. This will ask you to reply if you intend to join the ride. Please reply as soon as you can if you want to attend. This allows the organisers time to plan the details of the groups and ensure there are enough tutors in attendance. If you want anything specific from the ride, this can also be included in your response. However, we don't turn anyone away on the day but it might mean you are squeezed into a group.

On the day, turn up fully fuelled about 10 minutes before the ride is due to start. Announce your presence to the organisers, who will be wearing Suffolk Riders fluorescent jackets. If you have any information that you think will help them sort the groups please let them know. Information such as being particularly fast or slow or it being your first training ride would be very useful.

Is it difficult to match the groups and keep everyone happy?

Yes, it is! The most difficult thing is not knowing exactly what people want from the ride and knowing which people are a good match in terms of their speed. This is why the more information people give the organisers the more likely they are to meet people's expectations.

I was on a training ride which I thought could have been organised better but didn't know who to speak to about it?

Initially talk to the organisers on the day if you have suggestions as to how to improve the running of these events. If however you don't have a chance to speak to them or would rather not speak to them about it please e-mail: training@suffolkriders.co.uk – Ian Gilder

Notifying ride leaders of your intention to attend group organised rides

This note follows a few issues on both 'Group run Breakfast Rides' and 'Group Training Rides' in recent months, whereby group members did not inform the ride leader of their intention to attend a ride, which led to unnecessary confusion and/or delays in the start of rides.

If you think you might attend a group organised ride, please let the ride leader know of your intention to join the ride by following the link in the invitation email or any other form of direct communication. I completely understand that we are all busy and might not be able to 100% commit to rides but an email along the lines of ***"I intend to attend this ride, but due to [work commitments/family commitments/concerns about weather conditions] I may not attend."*** is better than nothing. - Chris Patten

FireBike Advanced Machine Skills Course

I'm Karen, and I own a 1975 Z1B 900 and after many years riding on the road, I have joined our group of Suffolk Riders to improve my riding ability and for the social aspect of biking. After speaking with Claire at the group who owns an ER6F I had one of those eureka moments where I thought It would be a good idea to purchase something smaller to go out on and that is exactly what I did – thank you, Claire!

My instructor John mentioned to me about the FireBike course which is a free full-day course held at Wethersfield Airfield, Essex.

I signed up for the course in May this year which has a long waiting list and attended the course in September.

It was an early start meeting at Finchingfield, Essex where I was met by a friendly face and I was escorted to the airfield for registration etc. Whilst on the course I was encouraged to go completely out of my comfort zone (I suppose some of it may be the fact that I can't actually do it because I've never tried to do it!).

The team of ROSPA gold advanced trainers were patient and incredibly talented on their bikes and even mine! We rode in and out of cones, to get the feel of slow and accurate riding.

We did a turn in the road by circling in the safety of the airfield with no other traffic apart from us. We rode our bikes as fast as we dared to and engaged in applying the front brake only, whilst holding the clutch in and going down through the gearbox, it was a little scary at first but after a few goes I realised my bike braked superbly and in a straight line.

Anyone can sign up for the course and I would thoroughly recommend it.

Contact details are: - Andy Stroulger andy.stroulger@essex-fire.gov.uk

Finally, I was lucky enough to attend a short course which was put on by one of our chaps at the Jack Seeley Depot in Bury St Edmunds and I would like to take this opportunity to thank him for this. – Karen Peters

Cyclist Trainer - Bikeability Instructor

Some of you may know that I work part-time for SCC Road Safety department, training school children across Suffolk in how to ride safely on roads. I have had at least one conversation with another Suffolk Rider member (apologies, I can't remember his name) who is a keen cyclist and expressed an interest in becoming a Bikeability Instructor.

SCC have just posted an advert inviting applications to fill six Road Safety and Cyclist Trainer posts. If interested, the advert can be seen on its Jobs Direct web site

<https://www.suffolkjobsdirect.org/highways-road-maintenance-growth-highways-infrastructure-road-safety-and-cyclist-trainers-6-posts/55461.job>.

If anyone is interested and wants to know more, free to contact me. Also, for information about the national scheme, see <https://bikeability.org.uk/> – David Wood

December (upcoming) Events

Important - Please note that the latest information on future events can be found on the club website's [Events page](#). You should always check there before attending any event.

Group Training Ride - Sunday 15th December, 9:30 am.

Tescos Martlesham to Jimmy's Café, Old Buckenham Airfield, NR17 1PU.

A waypoint and gpx file, **No.42** is on the club's [Routes and Waypoints page](#). If you intend to ride, please inform the Stephen's by email (training-rides@suffolkriders.co.uk), so that they ensure enough tutors are available.

Group Night – AGM & Social – Monday 16th December, 19:30

Suffolk Riders Annual AGM – Review of the Year, membership update, training update, upcoming events, voting in of committee – followed by Buffet social.

Venue – Needham Market Community Centre, School Street, Needham Market, Ipswich, IP6 8BB

Breakfast Run – Twixt Christmas and New Year – Saturday 28th December, 9:30 am.

Breakfast Run to Iron Horse Ranch House, 2 High Street, Marking Deeping, Peterborough, PE6 8EB.

Soon there should be waypoint and gpx file on the club's [Routes and Waypoints page](#). If you intend to ride, please contact [the organiser](#) to let him know when the reminder email is sent out.

The usual caveat: the onus is on the individual to decide whether or not to participate if the weather is inclement. There will be no follow-up emails cancelling the run beforehand so make your own mind up whether you feel the conditions are suitable.

Next Year

Phil's Suffolk Riders Trip 2020

Italy via the Alps departing on 7th September - update

I had a chat with Ray Spreadbury recently, and we concluded that the Dolomites would be a much more interesting destination in Italy for the trip than Tuscany. The Dolomites has some great riding roads and is also somewhere I've never been but have long wanted to visit. I've also been doing lots of research on Alpine passes!

So far there are 3 definites and 3 possibles for the trip. Here's the current plan. If you have any questions or are interested in joining us, please let me know on phil.sayer@btconnect.com.

Day 1. Leave Ipswich about 7, take Eurotunnel, ride to the Ardennes in Belgium (somewhere around St Hubert/Bastogne). Around 200 miles from Calais, autoroute for first 100 then cross country to the Ardennes.

Day 2. Ardennes to Baden-Baden, via Luxembourg. All on twisty roads. 235 miles.

Day 3. Baden-Baden to Innertkirchen in the Swiss Alps, via the famous B500 through the Black Forest (especially for Martin), Sursee and Panoramastrasse. 255 miles. A short section of autoroute in Switzerland, otherwise lots of panoramic roads.

Day 4. The 5 pass figure of eight and then on to Lake Como. The Susten, Furka, St Gottard, Grimsel and Neufenen passes. The Neufenen at 2478m is the highest paved road in Switzerland. Couldn't decide which to cross so let's do them all! About 200 miles hope for good weather!

Day 5. Como to Cavalese in the Dolomites, riding along the side of Lake Garda. Some autostrada



between Como and Garda but then all the interesting roads. 208 miles.

Days 6 and 7. Three nights in Cavalese. The days are up to you. Rest days or ride the Dolomites! I've got three circular rides of varying lengths, and they all sound great:

- the Sella Ronda "possibly the most scenic days ride in Europe – on some of the best mountain roads".
- 'Rolle, Rolle, Rolle' "every bit as spectacular as the Sella Ronda, but with half the tourists. Just fabulous"
- Karersee. "A relaxed ride to Lago di Carezza taking in the Passo Sella, Passo Gardena, and Passo di Giau – some of the most beautiful riding in all of Italy. The title of most spectacularly beautiful and best-to-ride pass in the Dolomites is hotly contested, but for us, it's the Passo di Giau" (Ride Magazine).

Days 8. Cavalese to Brugg via the Stelvio Pass. Read all the books, they all say it's got to be done! 75 hairpins, 48 on the northern slope... Ride it early in the day before all the tourists get there... Brugg is 250 miles, some autoroute once down out of the Alps.

Day 9. Brugg to Chalons en Champagne. North along the Rhine valley to Strasbourg between the river and the Vosges mountains, then hang a left across to Metz and Chalons. A 300-mile day with some autoroute.

Day 10. Chalons to Calais. 200 miles - up to you – either autoroute all the way or half and half. Early afternoon shuttle back to the UK. – Phil Sayer



Berlin trip with BMW Factory tour - Update:

Prices are approximate and include: Ferry each way (Harwich – Hoek), 4 nights B&B and factory tour fee. The prices do not include Food, Drink, Fuel.

- Per person sharing a cabin & room - ~£490,
- Per person with own cabin & room - £770

(ferry prices are based on group pricing which gives approximately 50% discount.)

Date of ferry out is Friday night 24th April 2020, return ferry is Weds night 29th.

To get the rates above I need around 20 people and I have to book ferry & hotels before the prices go up and/or availability wanes.

If you want to go on the trip please email (chairman@suffolkriders.co.uk) me as soon as possible. I will need a deposit before I part with any money. – *Jon Jamin*

The Last ~~Laugh~~ Word

Well, that's issue 4 completed...I hope that I have managed to keep it to the high standards that Colin had set for issues 1, 2 and 3 and that you have enjoyed the read.

For this newsletter to have sustained longevity, it requires the ongoing and continued support from 'you' our members.

- Do you have something interesting to share?
- Have you been somewhere that you want to recommend?
- Are you planning a trip away?

Why not write an article for a future edition and submit it to that month's editor. This leads me on to a huge question - ***Do you want to be the editor for a month?*** - if the answer is a 'maybe' or a 'YES – I would love to' then please contact either Colin or myself or speak to us at the AGM (we will be awaiting the hordes of emails and the queue at the AGM offering your services).

Our stock of 'Suffolk Riders' merchandise is running low and as a result, we are looking to ordering some new items soon. To help us to order the right amount of each item please get in touch with a member of the committee if you wish to order/purchase any of the following items:

- Long-sleeved 'Suffolk Riders' polo - £15.50
- Softshell 'Suffolk Riders' jacket - £35.00
- Hi-Vis 'Suffolk Riders' vest - £8.00
- 'Suffolk Riders' badge - £3.00 each or £5.00 for two

I look forward to seeing many of you at the upcoming AGM (Monday 16th December), but if you are unable to attend, I am going to take this opportunity to pass on my Christmas wishes to you all.

Happy riding... - *Chris Patten*