

“ PPP ”

People for Proper Policing in North Wales

3,000 bikers 'reclaim North Wales'

Sep 14 2009 by Owen R Hughes, Daily Post



Some of the Bikers at the ponderosa Cafe, Llangollen, for the reclaim North Wales bike ride BIKERS descended on North Wales in their thousands to campaign against “heavy-handed” policing.

The mass ride saw up to 3,000 motorcyclists ride through the region to display their anger at “over-zealous” officers.

Police said the day passed off well but said there were five crashes connected to bikers attending the rally.

One smash saw a motorcyclist airlifted to Wrexham Maelor Hospital by the Wales Air Ambulance after a crash on the A494 between Bala and Corwen in the village of Bethel. His injuries were described as serious but not life threatening.

The rally to “reclaim” the roads follows a campaign spurred by the magazine Motorcycle News.

Steve Farrell, from Motorcycle News, said: “The turnout has been amazing.

“It shows how strongly motorcyclists feel at being unfairly targeted by North Wales Police.”

Bikers met at two points in North Wales, the Dragon’s Rest cafe in Caerwys, and the Ponderosa cafe on the Horseshoe Pass. They then rode to Swallow Falls Hotel car park in Betws y Coed for 4pm. They were sent in smaller convoys along the A55 to prevent riders clogging up the busy dual carriageway.

Biker David Worthington, 48, from Kinmel Bay, said: “It was heaving at Ponderosa, there were thousands of bikers there. I hope this gets the message across to North Wales Police.”

Rally supporter Sue Charles said: "I am totally behind them because the police are out of order the way they are over-zealous in targeting motorists and bikers. I am just pleased someone is doing something like this."

The move came as North Wales Police continued to enforce Operation Focus and their Bikesafe initiative – both aimed at educating riders and reducing the number of road casualties.

The bikers claim 400 bikes are being stopped every weekend over the summer, with 350 of these riders not having committed any offence.

So far this year, two motorcyclists have been killed and 41 seriously injured, compared to eight deaths and 88 serious injuries in 2008, and 12 deaths and 80 bikers seriously injured in 2007.

Police say their methods, which are enforced in collaboration with other emergency services, are driving down those numbers.

Road policing unit chief inspector Gary Ashton said: "*We are pleased with how it has gone, considering the large numbers of motorcyclists coming to the region.*"

"The rally was good natured and considering the numbers here there were a low number of collisions. There were delays caused on the Horseshoe Pass and congestion at Betws y Coed just because of the sheer number of extra bikes."

For the same as story reported by BBC Wales with a video clip go to ...

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/wales/8253239.stm>

The PPP comments ... All our members report that the event was attended by around 12,000 motorcyclists from as far apart as Northern Scotland, Cornwall and Ireland. NWPF could provide a closer estimate of numbers from their Helicopter photos which would be useful as we paid for the fuel and cameras!

The mood was peaceful & friendly and the riders in general behaved well on the roads. Road and weather conditions were ideal and despite long hold ups due to the numbers of participants and tourists all were patient. An NWPF officer did a commendable job of directing traffic at the Waterloo bridge. One member saw a minor incident where a bike collided with the nearside of an Audi car. The primary cause was a police car forcing it's way through to the Bethel incident. This caused the lady driver to swerve and stop and the following bike touched the side panel. Two Police cars and an ambulance were already at the scene and the third car was an over reaction.

We know that the NWPF had plans to blitz the roads leading to the meeting points with Speed Camera vans and other Police vehicles but the sheer numbers and level of support changed their minds. In other word their initial reaction as usual was abusive and thoughtless. The pathetic short statement on their website is also a measure of their mean mindedness. See it here <http://www.north-wales.police.uk/nwvp2/en/yqlas/newsDetail.asp?sid=PR696652>

We repeat they are in Denial that the Brunstrom ERA is OVER and sense and REASON MUST prevail from now on.

Their job is to enforce the laws of the land not distort their application or make daft valued judgements about the public's interests, hobbies or ways of behaving.

The spirit of the law is more important than the letter and they should take time to read the original policing guide from 1829 (enter **principles** in our **News Article search**), the more wordy police pledge (enter **pledge**) AND the ACPO guidelines on Motorcycle enforcement (enter **strategy**). They are routinely breaking the spirit and intention of these admirable principles.

As this policy is continuing after Brunstrom's and Wofendale's demise The ACC Ian Shannon CONTINUES to be solely responsible....these onerous responsibilities are listed on the NWPF website here ... <http://www.north-wales.police.uk/nwpv2/en/about/acc.asp>

This arial shot over the Ponderosa café highlights the high turn

