



The day I got caught in a motorcycle crash scam



Blind spot: Corners like the one on Leslie Road are a favourite spot for accident scammers

Reader Valerie Teague wants to send out a warning to fellow drivers about a scam where motorcycle riders deliberately ram cars to claim on their insurance policies. Valerie fell victim on her way home in East Finchley.

I have been driving home down Leslie Road for the best part of 36 years, always under the 20mph limit and I slow further at the right angle bend. That day last July there was absolutely no oncoming at the corner, but as I began to turn a motorcycle appeared out of nowhere (he later said "I couldn't see you as I was behind a car"). Although I was sure there was enough room for

him to pass safely to my right, in the few seconds available, I moved further to the left but he drove determinedly straight into my offside radiator grill and bumper, smashing both. The bike was still upright afterwards, the driver still seated and his front tyre still fully inflated. I leapt out to survey the damage, but when my back was momentarily turned he put his bike on the ground rather than on its stand. Having

rushed around taking multiple photographs, the rider picked up and remounted his bike and rode away, not entirely in keeping with his subsequent claim of personal injury and a damaged bike.

Constant worry

When I mentioned these points my insurer referred the case to their Fraud Department and later appointed solicitors to represent their and my interests. Nevertheless I had three months of constant worry about the lack of witnesses, which could have led to a 'his word against mine' situation, until the crash investigation interview finally took place in mid-October.

My view of the ample space was endorsed when I showed photos taken by the one post-crash witness who had come out of her house to offer assistance to both parties. I hadn't had my phone with me. While it is not yet over, I have been told not to worry at all and the incident is clearly being regarded as one of the many scams. My insurance company is sending a 'letter of repudiation' to the claimant.

Right angle bends and T-junctions appear to be favoured crash sites. The City of London Police are now working with Trading Standards officers to identify rogue businesses repairing damaged mopeds and scooters.

Links are being established between garages suspected of being used by fraudsters and services and individuals believed to be profiting from the crimes. Last June, a combined operation seized bikes believed to have been used in crashes and hundreds of number plates used to disguise bikes.

But as my experience proves it can happen anywhere and to anyone. So, lone drivers beware!



In training: Brittany Jones pounds the streets ahead of the London Marathon

Brittany 'hopes to finish' the marathon for the foodbank

By Lynn Winton

Describing herself as "Californian by birth but a North Londoner by choice" Brittany Jones is gearing up to take part in the 2025 London Marathon on Sunday 27 April.

As a dedicated volunteer at Finchley Foodbank and also the chair of their management committee her ambitious target is to raise £50,000 to help support the 800 weekly clients reliant on the charity to feed themselves and their families.

This is her first marathon and Brittany, who admits to being in "late middle age" laughingly told me she'll be thrilled just to get to the finish line, without also predicting how long it might take. "I'm really motivated to run this race," she said, "because it's a great opportunity to talk about the Foodbank.

"I hope to raise awareness of the work we do and highlight what an amazing organisation this is. We have some of the most wonderful, generous and enthusiastic volunteers imaginable: kids, busy working people, mums and dads, as well as retired people.

We are all there, united by the wish to do something for our community, but we all get even more back.

"Everyone chips in and works really hard, but I know I have a great time. So in this race I am really motivated to grow the resources to keep doing this important work. The need, unfortunately, also continues to grow. I hope the community can continue their kind generosity in supporting my run, and the work of the Finchley Foodbank."

You can play a large part in helping Brittany to reach her target by donating using the QR



code here, or go to 2025tcslondonmarathon.enthuse.com and search for Brittany Jones.

From The Archer archives...

By Jane Marsh

**10 years ago:
April 2015**

The fight to save East Finchley Library continued and was highlighted in the national press. With a general election on the way, supporters of the campaign were urged to sign the petition against cutting Barnet's Library Service, to write to their MPs and to raise the topic at local hustings.

**15 years ago:
April 2010**

The Archer team received a civic award from Barnet Council, in recognition of the major contribution they make to community life in the borough. Diana Cormack collected the award on behalf of the whole team from the Mayor, Councillor Brian Coleman. The citation stated that the award was given "in recognition of all the dedicated volunteers who produce and deliver The Archer newspaper".

**23 years ago:
April 2002**

We reported on the installation of a new zebra crossing making it safer to cross Fortis Green at the bottom of Durham Road, N2. Despite a long campaign by people living nearby, it had taken the tragic death of a local resident to persuade Barnet Council to install the crossing. Mrs Maria Bussandri, of Summerlee Avenue, had been taking a present to her new baby granddaughter when she was hit by a motorbike.

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