

December 28th 2024

This is the beginning

Throwing everything together, learning Django and getting ready

Right then, let's get started. It's always daunting taking the first step, but sometimes it feels best to do it consciously. Calling it out as a new beginning...

Of course, preparations have been ongoing for a while now, but it's time to start taking it a bit more seriously. I fly to Vietnam in 8 days (Yikes!) to begin what will hopefully be a long and involved adventure (How exciting!). They'll be chance to get into the itinerary and details later, but for now it's time to learn Django!

What is Django, you may ask? And why is that the point of focus, don't you need a visa or something first? So, as we are doing here, I plan to write on the travels. Sort of like a blog, or a record of the journey. And the plan is to host these writings on my personal website as PDF files. Django is a Python based web development framework. Actually, I've been meaning to learn it for a while now; Grant was at some point encouraging me to pick it up during the PhD. I kept neglecting to learn it, but now seems like a prime opportunity.

There is also a web app that I'd like to build. It's called "Office Hour OK", and it will be a platform for people to arrange paid meetings with one another. More on that later. But the bottom line is that it will also require Django.

Anyway, yes, so learning Django is the current focus. I've found a series on YouTube tutorials, and made a rudimentary start. Best to just get on with it.

But what about the trip logistics?

There have been a few important things to sort out in preparation to leave. Things like

- How to take the bike on the plane
- Getting to the airport with the bike
- Insurance
- Visas

Much of the work is done with a notable exception in the visa for India, but all in good time! I'll bring the bike on the train to London the day before flying on the 5th (after new years and a few days in Leeds with Roy and friends). The Airport thankfully has a bike boxing service, which happens to be a stones throw both from the terminal and the hotel for the night. All being well, there should be no issues — just so long as China Southern air doesn't try to charge me the box's weight in gold to take it on the plane. There is also the minor concern of flying over Russia. But probably best to just sit tight, hope for the best, and not spend too much time looking out the window for oncoming ground to air missiles.

Training rides

Since being home for Christmas I've been on a couple of short training rides and one that was 65 km. The primary focus is conditioning my knees which have experienced some pain on very long rides without training.

One of the short rides was coming back from the pub in Egremont at 1am. Here's a picture from the beach on the way back.

The first short ride was only a trip to the end of Wastwater and back. It was supposed to be longer but there was a freezing hail storm and I got soaking wet, so headed home early.



On the longer ride to Ennerdale water, my knees felt pretty good, just a little bit of pain towards the end, but nothing really to worry about. I think I'll just need to ease into the riding a bit rather than trying to cover huge distances from the get go.



Youtube and Instagram

Without getting too attached to the potential outcomes, I plan to record some of my travels in the form of Youtube videos, and Instagram posts, with a new private Instagram account also serving as a means of communicating and networking with people met along the way.

So far, I've dipped my toes into iMovie and CapCut with a half done practice Youtube video from some old footage. When I get the chance, I'll finish this off and post it to Youtube.

Until then, it's high time I began to instantiate some discipline; and time I learned a way of dedicating time to these projects in a consistent routine manner, rather than haphazardly in the impulsive way I've been doing so far!