

Monks Eleigh woman hit with drink-driving ban

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A Monks Eleigh drink-driver, who was “astounded” that she was over the limit when tested by police, has been hit with a one-year driving ban.

Angela Smith, 42, of Lower Byfield, admitted the charge, dating from September 3, at Bury St Edmunds Magistrates’ Court on Friday.

Lesla Small, prosecuting, said police had received information from a member of the public that Smith may be over the legal limit and had stopped her in the car park of Waitrose in Bury St Edmunds at around midday.

“She was the only person in the vehicle and was getting out of the driver’s side as police arrived,” said Miss Small.

“When speaking to her, officers stated that her eyes were red and glazed and they could smell intoxicating liquor.”

Smith, who had no previous convictions but had received two fixed penalty notices in the past, recorded a positive roadside breath test, but as there was a large difference between two tests, blood was taken.

The lower reading of 99 milligrammes of alcohol in 100 millilitres of blood was recorded, the legal limit being 80 milligrammes.

Sally Dale, mitigating, said: “She is extremely remorseful and embarrassed about her actions.

“She had been drinking the night before at her next door neighbours’ house, where they were having a party. They had provided Pimms and lemonade in jugs and kept topping everyone’s glasses up.”

Miss Dale told the court that Smith had left the party and was in bed by 11.30pm.

“It did not occur to her that she may be over the limit – she had no feeling that she was in any way influenced by alcohol,” she said.

“She was pretty astounded when she gave a positive reading at the roadside.”

The court heard that Smith has elderly parents in Bedfordshire, both of whom are suffering from terminal illnesses, and was unemployed after recently losing her job as a carer.

“Her biggest concern is the loss of her licence,” said Miss Dale.

“The disqualification itself will be a massive penalty.”