

Appendices: CTC Oxfordshire AGM Reports 2015

1. Officer's Reports (including Accounts)

Chairman's Report – Steve Swanton

Overall I consider that CTC Oxfordshire has had a good year. A real highlight has been the formation of CTC Bicester (of which you'll hear more later). But we have organised more rides in our own right than ever before (albeit with mixed success) and started to run ride leader training sessions in support of all of the Oxfordshire groups. We have welcomed a number of new officers and members onto the CTC Oxfordshire committee, which has brought an element of revitalisation and gentle challenge, which is welcomed. Robin Tucker was instrumental in setting up the Oxfordshire Cycling Network a forum for co-operation between the local campaigning groups, and has achieved a particular success by being co-opted onto the Local Enterprise Partnership's Transport group. And James Dawton has continued to beaver away in his role as Right to Ride rep, working closely with Cyclox to represent cyclists views and interests, which is rarely a straightforward task.

We started the CTC year remembering Helen Beane, who contributed widely to cycling activities in Oxfordshire not least on our committee. Isis cyclists organised a ride from Radcliffe Square to Waterperry gardens in memory of Helen. Over 60 cyclists took part representing all of the groups with which Helen was associated. It was a fitting occasion. One of the highlights of the day for me was the lovely long chat I had with Phil and Lorna Wray, who had cycled over on veteran bikes. It came as a shock to us all to learn of Phil's untimely death in February. Phil was our Welfare Officer, a role he had fulfilled for us for a number of years, and although we did not need to call on his services often, down to earth and straightforward, he was an extremely capable person to have in that role. We shall miss him.

Cycle rides

Over this year CTC Oxfordshire has organised 19 rides: a Century ride, 4 Explorer rides, 7 off-road rides co-ordinated by Robin and 7 rides as part of our Bicester series from April to August prior to the formation of the new Bicester group (of which more anon). We have also supported and promoted a number of special rides organised by other groups including Wantage's Mince Pie Ride, the Blowingstone Audax and 3 Newbury series rides, the Helen Beane Memorial Ride organised by Isis Cyclists in October 2015 and a Christmas Special and a late Spring 50-mile ride from Wallingford.

This year saw the 6th edition of our Annual Century ride. Run in a low-key way as a led ride, we start from a different location each year. This year we returned to Eynsham, taking a route north through the Cotswolds into Warwickshire to Wellesbourne for lunch and back again. The ride continues to grow in popularity with a record 25 riders completing the whole course with another joining us for just the northern half. With increasing numbers come increasing logistical demands, however. Our first stop at Cotefield Nurseries at Bodicote (just South of Banbury) worked well. However, due to a combination of depleted kitchen staff and an influx of visitors following a flypast by the last Vulcan bomber (which my group saw as we rode into Wellesbourne), despite our booking, most of us were unable to get the hot lunch we were expecting at Charlecote garden supplies cafe. This was the first time I have had to eat cake as both main course and dessert. Some decided to try their luck at the Touchdown cafe just down the road on the airfield; fortunately they were successful. This led to some significant delays and further splitting of our two riding groups into 4, with one well-fed group being sent on

ahead to reserve our place at Wyatts Farm, our tea stop. However, with the rest of us struggling to get to Wyatts before closing time we had the very good fortune to find a warm welcome and some spare roast potatoes at the Norman Knight PH in Whichford. Suitably refreshed we completed the ascent of the Cotswold escarpment and there then followed what were for me the most glorious 25 miles of cycling of the whole summer. Under blue skies with fluffy clouds, we rode through Cotswold scenery lit by golden evening sunshine; there were fantastic views and lots of downhill to enjoy. So despite the hitches it was overall a fantastic day and a great route. Next year, we'll try to organise something more efficient for lunch.

We started our series of Explorer Rides in 2014, and in common with last year they have enjoyed mixed success, without really fulfilling one of their main purposes as joint rides for all of the Oxfordshire groups. Each ride has been hosted by one of our groups, but invariably few from the others have joined them despite cross-county publicity. The most successful of all has been the ride from Bicester in March, a gloriously sunny Spring day, when 8 riders set off from Bicester, met up with a large contingent from Oxford City for coffee and at least 16 riders continued on to lunch at the Bull and Butcher in Ludgershall before we went our separate ways (19 riders in total). Patrick Hardiman led a ride to Stonor from Wallingford in May, which attracted 4 riders; Martin Casey's ride from Chinnor in August attracted just 2, but they did make up for it by doubling the distance to 80 miles. The fourth and final ride from Witney to Coln St Aldwyns in September led by Neil Tigwell attracted 6 and was something of a West Oxon re-union.

For these types of rides to be successful in the future requires buy-in and ownership from the member groups. This is a key consideration for our strategy for future years. One of the challenges we face is how we interact effectively with other cycling groups in the county. Both CTC Wantage and Oxford City have decided that they no longer wish to dedicate an individual to the role of being CTC Oxfordshire rep. We need to explore with both groups how we maintain strong and co-operative interactions going forward.

It's also interesting to note the number of CTC-affiliated clubs in our area has greatly increased. When I was Registrar in the late 1990s there were 3 or 4, now there are over a dozen. It has been a particular pleasure this year to work closely with members of Bicester Millennium and British Cycling in developing our Bicester rides. This has been a model for productive co-operation.

Strategy Review

So what should our main objectives be as a group? As Peter will report we also have a lot of money. Are we doing what we should with it to further cycling and the CTC. Following discussion within the committee we are intending to undertake a Strategy review. There has not been time to start this before the AGM, but it will be a key activity over the winter months.

I believe that there is a place for a county level group that can take a strategic overview, which includes developing new CTC groups and campaigning activity (not pursued by many CTC member groups, despite CTC's long history of campaigning). As Robin will say, we play a role in supporting the other local groups and putting on larger events that bring cyclists together. We are also the only group that is actively trying to communicate with all CTC members in our area of operation. We thank Andy Ellis for managing our membership lists so that we can do this. .

Thank yous

Finally, I must express my thanks to all those who have helped with the running of CTC

Oxfordshire and the organisation and running of events throughout the last year. It has been a pleasure for me to act as Chairman and I thank the CTC Oxfordshire committee for their friendship and support.

Secretary and Publicity – Robin Tucker

I'm pleased to report that CTC Oxfordshire has had another very successful year in its role as a hub for CTC and cycling in the county. Last year, I talked about the four main areas of our activities and they provide a good way to combine my reporting both of Secretary and Publicity roles.

These four areas are:

1. Helping cyclists to find rides
2. Helping the local groups to thrive
3. Working for cycling more broadly
4. Our own programme of rides and events

1. Helping cyclists to find rides

I have been busy on the emails again through the year, sending an email to just over 1000 CTC members roughly once a month. These have included Oxfordshire events, events from the other groups in the county – for example CTC Wantage's Newbury series, and occasionally events from outside CTC. This has been made much easier, I'm happy to say, by Andy taking on the Registrar role, including maintaining the email list.

Sometimes the last of these causes me some angst as I receive messages about many organised rides. The principle I have adopted is that they must be of interest to you, the CTC Members in the county, and that there must be some sense of benefit rather than just being commercial events.

I also get a few calls and emails from cyclists who have found our contact details, and I point them towards the rides best for them, and give them advice on pace, equipment, etc.

And of course, there is my Chit Chat column in Peter's Oxfordshire Cyclist magazine. As well as listing the rides, I do provide a bit of, well Chit Chat that I hope is entertaining. Somehow, a week before the deadline I have no idea what I am going to write about, and then as if by magic an idea appears.

2. Helping the local groups to thrive

The big development here has been in Bicester. Based on a series of conversations that started about this time last year, Steve and I made contact with several cyclists in Bicester who were interested in leisure rides. At first we were concerned that this might compete with the existing Bicester Millennium Cycling Club. But actually, getting in contact with that group, they were very enthusiastic about the idea and helped to set up a series of rides.

After 5 Sunday rides, from April to August, with an average of 17 riders, it was clear that the idea had legs. I have to thank Monica Mehers for being a strong organising force, and also Lyn, Marcus, Mel, Paul and many others for promoting and leading rides. In the process, Steve and I, and sometimes our wives, have discovered a whole new range of routes and coffee stops. On the 9th September, we held a meeting in Bicester to plan the

future of the rides and agreed to form a new CTC Informal Member Group. Thus CTC Bicester joins CTC Wallingford and CTC Witney in our little collection of groups.

We've helped various groups to promote their rides as well. In addition to the email I've already mentioned, we have helped Bicester and Wallingford to print leaflets and posters, and hosted information about the group and their rides on our website. I have also added our rides, and Bicester and Wallingford rides to the national CTC website.

One point on our website while we are here. Jo Munt, who developed our website is finding it harder to find the time to keep it updated. Thus, we are looking for a new webmaster and a bit later will ask if there is anyone who would volunteer, or suggest someone.

3. Working for cycling more broadly

Our work for cycling this year has focused on Oxfordshire County Council, who are responsible for most of the roads in the county. James will cover most of this topic later. I have also been involved myself, through the Oxfordshire Cycling Network – a forum for information-sharing and cooperation between campaigning groups. Graham Smith, gets involved in a lot of this as well. He will be stepping down from his role as a CTC Councillor, but I'm pretty sure he will remain active in local campaigning.

By working together we managed to lever someone – me – on to the Local Enterprise Partnership's Transport Group, sitting alongside senior figures from the LEP, the Council and Bus and Rail companies. There I have made some progress in landing key points about the value of cycling – including in economic terms – and the way it has been short-changed by the planning process and by the council's programmes. I can't point to any new and brilliant infrastructure as a result of this yet.

But, there is some progress on two items I put forward in the OCN response to LTP4. 100m of verge is marked out east of Milton Interchange that I'm hoping will turn into a filled 'Missing Link' between two cyclepaths. Also a study of Didcot as a possible mini-Holland has been commissioned, from our friends at Sustrans.

Looking forward to 2016, I think there may be space to do a bit more support of cycling among the general public. For example by doing more to support local events like Bicester Bike Day and national ones like Bike-to-work Week. These will of course depend on people stepping forward with ideas and time.

4. Our own programme of rides and events

Steve has talked about our Century and Explorer rides, and we'll here more about rides from Bicester, Wallingford and Witney later. That just leaves the off-road rides for me.

We've had seven weekend off-road rides this year, from the 'Novices' ride in April to Richard Pethybridge's Newbury ride in October. Attendance has been variable, sometimes just two of us, up to eight for Richard's ride. The great thing about off-road riding around the Ridgeway or the Chilterns is that, given a bit of trail knowledge, the length and difficulty of the ride is easy to tailor to the group. So that is exactly what I and the other leaders have done. Sometimes it turns into a short easy spin, sometimes we have stretched it out a bit further.

Our main social event this year was the Pot Luck Supper. This was held for the second time at my house in July, and again we had a great collection of people, food, drink and banter.

We are starting to think about our plan for 2016 – what rides and other events shall we run? 2016 is a Tri-Vets year, and it would be great to put together another Century ride for Veterans like the fantastic event we ran in 2013. Maybe that should inspire us to another 200 mile ride? Maybe we'd like Explorer rides in different places – away from Oxfordshire? Mountain Bike Trail Centres? We will have an open discussion later to collect your ideas. Not just for rides, but for social events as well. Should we change the format of the Pot Luck Supper? Some have suggested a pic-nic instead, which sounds a great idea. A slightly competitive treasure hunt, or navigation challenge? Start thinking now, and we'll come back to this topic later.

Treasurer – Peter Hallowell

The accounts for CTC Oxfordshire have been sent to the auditor and will, I expect, have been audited before this meeting.

As usual our main source of income has been the grant from CTC National Office which this year has been supplemented by a grant from Wallingford Council.

There has been the usual routine expenditure associated with running the group, namely website and 2014 AGM expenses. In addition we have donated towards the printing of Cyclopaedia. Money has also gone towards supporting both the Wallingford informal group formed last year and the formation of a new informal group based in Bicester. As you will note from other reports both groups are flourishing and we are pleased with the effectiveness of the money spent. During the year we held a one day meeting on ride leadership necessitating the hire of premises. The only other outgoing was the cost of our 90th birthday celebrations, a liability outstanding from 2013-4. As usual the cost of this year's AGM will appear in next year's accounts.

This expenditure has resulted, before allowing for depreciation, in the small surplus shown in the accounts.

Accounts of CTC Oxfordshire
Period 1/10/2014 to 30/9/2015

	2013/14	2014/15	
Income			
NO Grant	£ 464.37	£ 464.37	
Sales	£ 82.00	£ -	
Interest	£ 3.36	£ 16.15	
Wallingford Council		£ 100.00	
Tri-Vets	£ 7.00	£ -	
	<u>£ 556.73</u>	<u>£ 580.52</u>	
Expenditure			
Postage & Stationery	£ 97.00	£ -	
Cyclopaedia		£ 100.33	
Web site	£ 82.13	£ 80.98	
Bicester Leaflets		£ 72.00	
Wallingford Leaflets		£ 59.99	
AGM	£ 41.99	£ 33.80	
90th Birthday		£ 199.82	
Ride Leader Meeting		£ 30.00	
Gazebo	£ 149.99	£ -	
	<u>£ 371.11</u>	<u>£ 576.92</u>	
	<u><u>£ 185.62</u></u>	<u><u>£ 3.60</u></u>	
Assets:			
CTC Oxfordshire:			
Cash	£ 115.82	£ 112.02	
Current Account	£ 139.07	£ 28.00	
Deposit Account	£ 3,490.85	£ 3,609.32	
	<u>£ 3,725.74</u>	<u>£ 3,749.34</u>	
Outstanding Liabilities			
90th Birthday Expenses	£ 199.82		
	<u>£ 199.82</u>		
Total	<u><u>£ 3,545.92</u></u>	<u><u>£ 3,749.34</u></u>	
Fixed Assets	£ 271.65	£ 203.65	Depreciation
Stock	£ 195.35	£ 195.35	Sales
	<u>£ 467.00</u>	<u>£ 399.00</u>	
Total	<u><u>£ 4,012.92</u></u>	<u><u>£ 4,148.34</u></u>	

Registrar – Andy Ellis

The Registrar role involves keeping track of CTC Members in the Group’s area of operation. Our area, as CTC Oxfordshire covers the county plus some adjoining postcode areas towards Swindon, Newbury and Reading.

Date	Members	Emailable	New	Relocated	Notes
Oct-15	1849	1111	77	5	Last 90 days New & Relocated
Sep-15	1838	1076	68	5	Last 90 days New & Relocated
Apr-15	1819	1077	65	6	Last 90 days New & Relocated
Mar-15	1804	1043	62	7	Last 90 days New & Relocated
Feb-15	1799	1049	48	9	Last 90 days New & Relocated
Jan-15	1804	1046	62	7	Last 90 days New & Relocated
Dec-14	1791	1055	4	4	
Sep-14	1816	1075	13	2	
12 mo change to Sept 2015	22	1			
	1.2%	0.1%			

Growth in member numbers is small but as of October a further 11 members have joined and the number now included in the email list has risen significantly to over 1100 members, which is 60% of the total and up by over 3% since September 2014.

Welfare – Paul Thompson, Nothing to report.

Publicity – Robin Tucker, covered with Secretary’s report

Right-to-ride and Planning – James Dawton

One of the CTC's remits is to campaign for better cycling conditions. In Oxford/Oxfordshire, the County Council is the highway authority, the City Council has little power over what goes on on the roads. While the county do fall somewhat short of “getting” what is needed to encourage cycling on our roads, they are moving in places in the right direction.

In Oxford City, campaigning is done in conjunction with Cyclox – more hands make less work. Often the Oxford Civic Society do great things on consultations as well, almost out doing the cycling groups in its excellent and detailed submissions.

LTP4 (Local transport Plan 4).

Every few years the county council have to review their transport plan. CTC, Cyclox, Oxfordshire Cycle Network all participated in the LTP4 consultation last spring. The policy was approved by the County Cabinet later in the year. LTP4 reads quite well, makes all the right noises. There is however quite a bit of wriggle room when it come to cycling. It is the wriggle room that has helped with inadequate provision for cycling in all previous LTP policies. Time will tell.

Wolvercote and Cutteslowe Roundabouts

The plans for these junctions were consulted on in the summer, with a joint CTC/Cyclox response. After the consultation the plans for both roundabouts were changed slightly (said to be as a result of further traffic modelling rather than the consultation). The cycle/pedestrian plans for Wolvercote are now a bit better, as all crossings are now round the perimeter of the roundabout. This requires fewer signalled crossings than previously when all crossings were via the centre of the roundabout (like the roundabout by the BMW factory). In terms of world leading cycle facilities, we're not near there yet. What they are now building is better than what is being replaced, but something better could have been done.

Westgate development

Now under construction, with a cycle hub (shop/repair shop) as part of the plans.

Frideswide Square.

This is now nearing completion. Shared cycle/pedestrian space between the roundabouts on the foot way, cycle lanes on the roads approaching the square, but nothing on the roundabouts themselves.

Our/Cyclox's concerns were also shared with the County's own safety audits. In documents released under an FOI request by the Oxford Mail, the stage 1 safety audit raised the issue of how cyclists would get from the entrances to the square to the off road cycle provision in the central section. A reply to this concern was that the councillor responsible for transport (David Nimmo Smith) would be willing to consult further on cycle provision on the edges of the square. This never took place. On the other stage 1 safety audit concerns, stages 2 and 3 audits listed the concerns as "still outstanding".

The Plain Roundabout

This is a Cycle Safety City Ambition Grant project, aimed to improve cycling – most of the funds come from a DfT bidding process. The "cycle benefit" part of the £1M cost is rather thin. We fought the removal of the right turn cycle lane across the St Clements left fork lane. It was reinstated in the plans, to be in "easily removed" paint, in case it did not work out. When built, they used the same paint as every where else, which I take as a good sign, or sloppiness working in our favour. A surprise benefit of this cycle lane is how many more vehicles signal left when heading towards St Clements, and they are a lot more careful in making that manoeuvre. I have even seen a bus stationary, signalling left, waiting for a gap in the never ending 5 pm stream of cyclists before turning left (I took pity on him, blocked the cycle lane and waved him on).

Botley Road Consultation.

The Botley Road will one day be a Cycle Super Route as per LTP4 plans. There are no specific plans as yet, but in September the County Council had a drop in consultation on what users did/did not want/like about the Botley Rd.. Each table had a stretch of the Botley Rd on a map, with a sheet with 4 columns (public transport/pedestrians/cyclists/other). Although it was not a cycling

specific meeting, the cycling columns were completely filled up, the other columns were mostly empty! Hopefully they will get a message from that.

Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP).

With various cycle scheme plans deemed poor use of money by the cycling community, Nicola Blackwood was approached to try and improve things. She brokered a meeting with OCN/Cyclox/Oxfordshire/Oxfordshire LEP (who now decide how large chunks of transport money get spent locally). A surprise outcome of this was that Nigel Tipple of the LEP offered Robin Tucker (of OCN) a seat on the LEP transport subcommittee, which is a good place to have a voice.

Cycle City Ambition Grant 2 (CCAG2) £3.5M grant

The County applied for £3.5M of this fund, for a route seemingly from the University Boat House to the Fishes pub in North Hinksey, with the purpose of improving access to the new Oxpens development. Included in this is a £1M + bridge over the Thames, which is within 150m of an existing wide bridge over the Thames (the old railway bridge at St Ebbes). Cyclox were asked to give approval to this plan (with only 48 hours notice), but declined on the basis it was a poor use of money. A meeting is being sought to try and improve this situation – probably won't come to much, a letter (prompted by the cycling community) by Nicola Blackwood on the matter said the plans could not be changed due to restrictions on how the funds were spent

Hythe Bridge Street traffic lights

As works associated with the Frideswide Square works, this junction was refurbished and completed just before Christmas. To cut a long story short, cyclists heading straight from Hythe Bridge St in George St on a green light were on a collision course with traffic from Beaumont St which had a simultaneous green light. This arrangement was defended by the officer concerned, when questions were asked in the county cabinet, a statement was read out defending the junction (ironically based on an e mail I had sent the officer saying why it was so bad...). After 6 weeks the county came up with a workable solution with the painted cycle waiting area you now see in the middle of the junction. What may have helped was a circulation by e mail to members asking for them to report this junction on the County's Fix My Street website – soon it was difficult to count the reports submitted, as the 24 or so flags on their map overlapped so much.

Although the junction was extremely dangerous (3 or 4 cyclists were knocked off, no serious injuries), the junction passed 3 safety audits without this getting a mention.

Oxford Parkway Station (by Water Eaton P&R)

The station opened in late October. Prior to this, Cyclox did ask that the existing cycle routes alongside the main road were improved (lack of maintenance) the vegetation cut back and the route be signed. The county's reply was that we should have asked 5 years ago in the planning stages (when they were not consulting...), they were negotiating with city works about vegetation trimming, and there was no money for cycle route sign age. This on a prestigious transport project. So we have some way to go with the County getting up to speed.

Training – Ian Murray

With the help of Steve Swanton and Martin Casey we put together the basis of a comprehensive session on leading a successful ride. The first training day was held at Islip village hall back in March. Four members attended and judging from the feedback found it interesting and useful.

Steve talked on the CTC's official requirements and responsibilities of ride leaders while I spoke on the practical side of organising and leading a ride. The session being divided into sections with a short Q & A session after each section. After a pub lunch Steve conducted a short ride with participants putting into practice what they had learnt.

We will stick with this format as it seemed to work well.

The second training session took place in Wallingford last Saturday. 7 people attended, 4 from Wallingford and 3 from Bicester. Unfortunately, because it was very wet and windy, we cancelled the on-road part.

Another ride leader training event will be held in the Bicester area in the new year.

2. CTC Oxfordshire Informal Member Groups

Bicester – Monica Mehers and Paul Thompson

This has been the first year of what we originally called the Bicester Social Cycle Rides, now organised as **CTC Bicester**.

Following a 'prologue' ride organised by CTC Oxfordshire and CTC Oxford City, our regular ride programme started on the 3rd Sunday, in April.

Over 25 riders arrived at the Bicester Sports & Leisure Centre, immediately giving us our first challenge. We decided to split into 2 groups and to head for our planned stop at the Green Dragon Eco Centre, at Hogshaw.

The ride was a little bit chaotic, as we didn't expect such a good turnout, we did not have enough ride leaders and sweepers prepared, but the response was overwhelmingly positive!

Following Sundays have seen us continue this two ride approach, but with a deliberate plan for one longer, slightly faster ride and a slower shorter one.

In most cases we have managed to be at the same coffee stop at the same time, and we have not lost anyone yet.

We advertise and promote our rides and events via our Facebook page and a weekly Newsletter delivered via MailChimp.

We have averaged nine riders on the shorter rides and eight on the longer ones – so 17 each Sunday, with about a 50/50 male to female gender balance.

What has been good is that we have attracted riders from Banbury, Thame and surrounding areas.

More recently, we have linked up with rides from Oxford City, when they have a foray into our area. This has helped to promote both groups and creates an opportunity for riders to get to know one another and supports networking.

In, December, we are hoping to bring several riders along to the Wantage Mince Pie Ride on the 6th and a week later, on the 13th, we will hold our own Xmas Ride, to Quainton, with Mince Pies provided by our group.

At an evening meeting on 9th September, 10 of us agreed that continuing these social rides was a good thing, and to do that as CTC Bicester to take advantage of the CTC's insurance, resources and structures, while keeping any administration and cost to a minimum.

We also agreed to expand the rides by adding a 'First Saturday' ride, aimed to be an all-day ride, although starting shorter this winter and gradually growing as riders get fitter and more confident over next year.

Also, in addition to our planned ride program, we have had members arrange short notice, ad-hoc rides, at both weekends and mid week, these again are communicated via our FaceBook page, and the response has been good.

At the recent Ride Leader Training event we had 3 members take part, and another event is planned to be held in Bicester, in the New Year.

To end this report, all I need to say is our new group has been formed and all the signals are green!

Finally, I would like thank you to the help and support from Oxfordshire CTC, namely Robin Tucker & Steve Swanton, that have really helped us to get the new group up and running, in a good way ☺

Wallingford – Alison Smart and Patrick Hardiman, via Cliff Bellis

Summary

Another successful year for the Wallingford group.

25 rides organised by 7 leaders, with some new leaders. 1 ride cancelled due to bad weather.

11 'easy'-paced and 14 'medium'-paced rides. Most rides were on Sunday afternoons, there were also 3 'medium' day rides.

The CTC Oxfordshire Explorer day ride only had 4 riders. Ride in National Bike Week only had 3 riders, possibly due to moving a day earlier to avoid Wallingford Festival of Cycling (racing-focussed, non-CTC event).

54 different riders took part (1 under 16), 77% were CTC members. 5 riders have joined CTC, at least partly due to riding with the group.

Average attendances:

Overall – 6.8

Easy rides – 7.2

Medium rides – 6.6

Gender balance (male/female):

Overall – 67/33

Easy rides – 62/38

Medium rides – 71/29

Witney – Neil Tigwell

We continue to be a small but steady group in Witney. Planned rides are monthly with others added on an occasional basis. I would say we have something going on two Sundays in a month, mainly on road with occasional off road rides added. That adds up to about 28 rides over the last year.

Numbers are usually quiet, averaging 4 or 5, which small which suits the type of roads we ride on and cafes we visit.

It remains a fairly informal group which tends to arrange quite a lot of its runs at short notice or deciding where to go depending who has turned up, which way the wind is blowing and how enthusiastic we feel.

3. Other CTC Groups in Oxfordshire

Oxford City – James Dawton

We have continued to have a well supported range of rides running through the year.

The joint monthly rides with ISIS continue to be particularly well supported, often adding interesting routes on the way out of Oxford, where as the regular Sunday rides often ride straight out of town. As well as a lead ride back from coffee on Isis rides, a couple of other Sunday rides have had a lead ride back from coffee. We also had one fast ride back from coffee as well.

Normal Sunday rides have continued with good numbers, in the last year we have broken our record for numbers at lunch for the 2nd year running.

August saw our first Explorer Ride, starting from near Lewknor up in the Chilterns. There was an excellent turn out. It got us out into new territory, which we discovered was pretty much the hilliest ride we'd had for years! Despite the hills, 2 members managed some 1-legged cycling, 1 due to mechanical failure, the other out of sympathy for (or to take the micky out of?) the first.

Our late spring bank holiday weekend away was deferred as the camp site was fully booked, and we went to Northleach on the August bank holiday. Four camped, including a surprise guest appearance from Ray Miller, formerly of the city group, but now from the “other place”. We had a flexible approach to riding, so some rode to lunch on Saturday with the campers, but then rode back to Oxford. Some members drove out to Northleach on the Sunday, so we had a 12 or so riding to Snowhill and Broadway. As the rain was deemed not radioactive, Broadway Tower saw a retreat from the rain into the cafe, and not the radioactive fall out shelter that is open to the public.

The planned group riding out on Monday to meet the campers on the way back was rained off.

Dave Whitaker planned a long week in Holland, which saw 3 campers and 3 B&Bers meet in a rain soaked Harwich for the night ferry to Hook of Holland,

with the worst hill of the week encountered with in the ferry port en route to getting on the ferry. A very enjoyable holiday for all. Reducing it to numbers, the figures 27 and 336 spring to mind (27 Euros for the 3 campers in Amsterdam, 336 Euros for the B&B for the 3 B&Bers, though on this occasion, it was only "B", as there was no breakfast included.....).

We have had some more members become new registered rides leaders which not only spreads the load on the existing leaders, but also adds more ideas for rides. Always room for more rides leaders.

Thanks to those who have led rides during the past year, along with the often over looked sweepers who do a worthy job too.

The website continues to be a good avenue for communication, with an 8% increase (members + non members) in sign up for our e mails.

Isis Cyclists – Ellen Lee and Lucy Wright

Introduction

2014-2015 has been another successful and busy year for Isis Cyclists. It has continued a programme of five regular rides per month:

1st Saturday = short and steady ride (<10 miles)

2nd Weekend = medium ride (~15 miles)

3rd Saturday = long ride (20-30 miles)

Monthly midweek = Stop & Stare ride (<10 miles)

Final Sunday = Joint ride to coffee with Oxford City riders (20-30 miles)

There were also regular monthly evening social rides in the summer between May and August and occasional other rides, including a 50 mile challenge ride in early September. In all, Isis Cyclists ran 57 rides during the year. A total of 118 women rode with us during this time, a 5% increase on the previous year. Of these, 59% (70) had ridden with the group previously and a further 41% (48) were new to the group.

Highlights

This year, Isis Cyclists celebrated its 7th birthday with a tour of modern architectural "diamonds and carbuncles" in Oxford followed by a picnic (including bicycle themed cake!) on Port Meadow in glorious June sunshine. We have continued to enjoy joint rides with both Oxford and Wantage CTC members groups. Three Isis leaders took part in a workshop in March organised by CTC Oxfordshire with the aim of thinking about and swapping ideas on good ride leading practice. During the summer, our programme of long rides again centred around preparing for our 50 mile challenge which took place in early September. Nine riders enjoyed glorious late summer weather and a pleasant ride to Burford.

Regular Rides (October 2014 – end of September 2015)

This year, Isis Cyclists ran 47 regular rides with another 2 falling victim of weather. There were also a total of 10 summer social and other rides. The average number of riders on each type of ride is as follows:

Short rides: Average of 10 riders (total of 11 rides) – increase on last year (9)

Medium rides: Average of 11 riders (total of 10 rides) – same as last year

Long rides: Average of 12 riders (total of 12 rides) – same as last year

Joint Isis/Ox City rides: Average of 8, Isis only (total of 9 rides) – same as last year

Stop & Stare: Average of 6 riders (total of 8 rides) – same as last year

Administration

The Isis leaders group has met three times this year in order to organise the programme and to attend to other business. This year we have gained two new leaders, Lilia Bonacorsi and Liz Weekes which brings the number of active ride leaders to 10.

Regular monthly email newsletters and occasional other mailings have continued to be delivered through our Google Group to approximately 330 women, an increase of 55 over the year. Rides and other events have also been promoted via our website and facebook page and by the Broken Spoke Co-op. Photographs taken on Isis rides are made available via a Google+ site.

Our thanks go to everyone in the leaders group for their enthusiasm, creativity and efficiency.

Midweek Group – Martin Casey

The attendances have kept up varying from 23 to down to about 6 but generally 10 or more. Throughout the course of the year we have continued to pick up new members.

Rides, as usual, cover all 360 degrees of our territory, from Wellesbourne (Stratford upon Avon) to Hungerford, The Chilterns to Northleach. All rides start from Eleveses and average between 35 - 40 miles. Although on some days we run twin rides (including a shorter route), using the same start, lunch, and finish.

Overall it has been a very good year, with excellent rides to varied to destinations, many of which are recorded in the Oxfordshire Cyclist and on our Website.

In addition the vibrancy of the member's support has been more than adequately demonstrated with the following "Special Events"

- 19/8 Was a run designed Andy Ellis for the International Cycling Group he was hosting at the Hill End Centre, Farmoor. This was supported by the Midweek Group.
- 5/8 The Vineyard "Run" organised by Denise Santilli. This involved Oxfordshire Vineyard Visits with lunch and wine tasting at Denise's Vineyard.
- 2/9 Mike Mahoney's Birthday Ride.

Also worth a note is that the recently elected Midweek Publicity Team are looking into creating a Facebook Page.

Wantage – Neil Warner

Overall, this has been another good and encouraging year for CTC Wantage. Similar headlines to last year apply - we offer more rides than ever before and those rides cater for a wider spread of experience and fitness levels than ever before. We have had more riders than the previous year, which gives us the second biggest total ever. As before, the general feeling is that reasons for our success include a combination of the demographics and the varied geography of the local area, the continuing good publicity for cycling via British sporting success and our own good publicity locally and particularly via the website. In any event, all is generally well and the club is thriving.

Thanks as always go to our rides leaders and helpers at rides and events across the season. Essentially, all we really do as a Club is offer bike rides to people. The quality of those rides is almost entirely dependent on the quality of the ride leading. On the road, special rides have featured strongly again this year, with particular highlights including the now well established Tour d'Isle of Wight, the CTC Oxfordshire Century ride and the Blowingstone Audax. Many of the group also rode the excellent Harlequin Hack Audax, the last one to be run by the long-standing organisers. John Talbot and Nick Dunton have hatched an enthusiastic plan to reconstitute it next year under their auspices. David Smith and Ursula Hallam led a very enjoyable and innovative series of Newbury-based rides. The varied Tuesday evenings programme has continued to go well, with the various ride levels very ably overseen by Steve Swanton, John Talbot and Andy Cowan. Turbo training and night -time roads fill out the winter road programme. Off-road, there has been fresh innovation from Robin Tucker et al with midweek day and night-time rides and some great specials. A special mention for Chris Walters who has stood down as Secretary after many years on the committee.

At this years AGM, sadly, in this members view, Wantage chose to reduce its interaction with Oxfordshire citing sufficient links in place for coordination of ride programmes, etc and removing the post of Oxfordshire Representative from its committee. It was voted through by the membership so this will be the last meaningful formal Wantage input to the greater Oxfordshire for the foreseeable future.

**CTC Councillor, personal report – Graham Smith
(CTC Councillor Southeast, 2012 – 2015)**

Issues:

1. Governance Review
2. Government and Cycling
3. Equality
4. Membership
5. Policy
6. Campaigning
7. Elections

Governance Review

1. There has been concern at CTC council that a large council, with many representatives from the regions, makes for an inefficient managing arrangement. (At the same time it also enables some democratic contribution however distant this might be from some members.) As a result a Governance Review has been in preparation with a remit to modernise the CTC governance in advance of presenting to the membership in 2016. Mention of this has been made in Cycle magazine. In brief this considers
 - a. Reducing the size of the Council,
 - b. The Nations – how they will be given appropriate priority if no specific trustee positions for each Nation
 - c. Appointing ‘Ambassadors’ to ensure some added measure of reporting from the members to Council, Councillors have expressed concern about what it will look like, will it be taken seriously, will it be effective
 - d. A nominations committee to seek a broad representation from candidates for Council. This is a challenging task. Councillors have expressed concern that this may result in loss of control by Councillors/trustees

Personally I have some concern that these things may be wrapped-up a bit too quickly for the next national AGM as they need to be absorbed and understood by us all.

National Government and Cycling

2. There was some hope in the last parliament that a ‘Cycling & Walking Investment Strategy’ had been added to a transport bill. It was intended that some equality of funding would result, but currently the Chancellor has decided there will be £50bn for road and the CWIS looks like its laying on barren ground. CTC and others are hard at work seeking to get something into the Chancellor’s autumn statement. There is some concern that Department of Transport projects, such as the recent ‘Big Bike Revival’ which CTC handled, might be rolled out nationally. It seems to me that helping people to ‘*get air in their tyres*’ ... is a good thing. But, without infrastructure change, the road environment remains the same once those who have been ‘put back onto bikes’ get out into the roads and find that it’s a threatening place to be. There is some discussion about a body to look after cycling – but ‘it mustn’t be seen as a Quango or like ‘Cycling England’ of twenty years ago’!

Equality

3. Council is working to have an Equalities policy in place, after some years of little happening. I note that some Member Groups treat the Welfare Officer post as straightforward and others regard it as unnecessary. This is an area which is at last developing. It is being led by Councillor Lizzie Rather.

Membership

4. Seems to be gently positive around 67,000. A renewed vitality in National Office seems to be effective. The point is often made that BC's high figures are a reflection of a wide range of offers. I am also reminded that CTC's insurance offer is in fact better than other offers in that there is some cover if an incident arises between people on a ride.

Policy

5. Roger Geffen and Cherry Allen are now in a 'Policy & Research' team. They are working successfully at a national level; the divided nations create issues which they seek to respond to, with other national officer/campaigners. A 'Communications and Campaigns' team has been created led by Matt Mallinder, with the Road Justice officers and other outward looking staff. Tony Upfold is a professional journalist leading on communications and he seems to be effective and fast. Send him info! Duncan Dollimore is the 'road safety' officer with a legal background. I believe that National Office is still too weak on helping with local campaigning, although how best a national organisation can be really helpful locally needs people, locally, to make their views known.

Campaigning

6. I find a quite varied response to 'Campaigning' at AGMs. There are some who welcome the efforts whilst others (or some in others) say things like 'we are not a campaigning group' in other words 'we are cycling ...' but I would say that CTC has always been a campaigning organisation as well as a being collection of people cycling. How do we make it easier to campaign without taking too much of any member's time? I hope that the new people at National Office will be dragging our support and media forwards to aid this. It might be worth mentioning that according to a 2013 CTC study only 7.8% of CTC members ride weekly in group rides, 3.94% ride twice or more each week but 35.62% never ride in a group. Campaigning and Insurance are attractors here.

Elections

7. All three standing southeast Councillors failed to win re-election. A complaint about process has been filed.

These words are my personal report. They have not been pre-drafted nor edited. Apologies for omissions and bias.