

CYCLING Wakefield

Promoting and campaigning for cyclists



Newsletter of the Wakefield District Cycle Forum

Edition number 14

May 2012



An arresting group of volunteers'

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Nostell Priory Hosts Bike Week

Once again the grand setting of Nostell Priory will provide the backdrop to the first weekend of our Bike Week programme on 16th and 17th June.

This is the fourth year that the Forum has run a full programme for Bike Week and the fourth year that the National Trust has welcomed us to Nostell Priory and Parkland for the big weekend.

Make sure you are there.

Full details on page 6

Busy Start to Summer Season of Rides and Events

You may think it a bit of a joke given the unseasonal weather for us to call it our 'Summer Season' of rides and events. We even had to cancel our first Wednesday ride at Nostell Priory because of snow!! Despite this it has been a busy start and we have had a few lucky breaks with the weather

The Roger Talbot Ride

began the season and attracted 22 participants and our new Saturday ride from Angler's Country Park saw 14 riders enjoy a lovely ride to Rabbit Ings on the border with Barnsley.

We have also been busy with the Bike Doctor and in recruiting new members.

See full report on page 5

New Go-Ride Centre for Wakefield

Wakefield based Calder Clarion Cycling Club, which collaborates with Wakefield Cycle Forum's Health Rides has become a British Cycling Go-Ride Centre for young cyclists and is seeking to strengthen its links with the Cycle Forum. The club is very happy to welcome youngsters to the Thursday evening sessions due to begin in late May and indeed to anyone wishing to help.

British Cycling's Go-Ride is a network of clubs implementing best practice. Since its inception, Go-Ride has proved extremely successful with over 250 community clubs across the UK taking part in this exciting initiative. Go-Ride centres encourage young people to improve fitness, handle a bike safely, take up sport and improve their sporting talents.

Calder's Go-Ride team includes qualified coaches **Tom Butler** and **Rob Hudson** who will design and lead the weekly sessions, which provide safer, child-friendly, coaching and competition for 8 to 16 year olds. They are supported by the Go-Ride team which includes:

Corrine Pickard, the Go-Ride Contact responsible for liaison. Currently negotiating with Thomas a Beckett College to become the venue, Corrine will also be responsible for forging close links with local secondary and primary schools to encourage children to build upon their cycling experience.

Susan Hancock, Calder's Welfare Officer is qualified to supervise 'Good Practice and Child Protection'. Susan will ensure that Parents can be confident that youngsters taking part will be properly cared for.

Steve Ward and **Chris Nickerson**, both qualified Bikability Tutors, will provide coaching assistance and look at rider safety awareness. Steve and Chris are happy to look at Bikability issues with Wakefield Cycling Forum.

Ken Pickles, **John Wriglesworth** will provide session coaching assistance.

The club is able to call on the expertise from a network of Regional Cycling Development Managers and Coaches involved with Go-Ride.

The plan is to involve parents and adult visitors, if they wish, with the running and management of the sessions. This would mean undergoing training and relevant checks. If there is sufficient interest from parents we intend to provide a steady guided cycle ride on nearby cycle routes and country parks to run concurrently with the youngsters sessions and to arrive back in good time for the completion of the evenings.



Go Ride Contact Corinne Pickard has ridden on Wakefield Cycle Forum Health Rides with her boys, Jack, Harry & George.

Birth of Wakefield District Cycle Forum.

Wakefield District Cycle Forum (WDCF) is now a well respected part of the cycling scene in Wakefield District but establishing that respect has not been easy. One of the founding members of the Cycle Forum, Des Hampshire, recalls some of his experiences. Des says:

The 1980's were not a happy time for cyclists as at that time highways departments carried out road construction and alterations with little thought for cyclist or pedestrian safety.

The first attempt to change this situation in Wakefield was in the early 1990's when one of the highways engineers (Kevin Broadbent) was given the task of looking into cycle safety and cycle routes. Although he had to fit cycling in along with his other tasks and the cycle part was always the last to be done, Kevin managed

to produce the first cycle map of Wakefield detailing existing and potential cycle routes. Kevin had also gathered together a group of cyclists and organised a meeting in Wakefield Town Hall with the view of starting a bike user group and at the time this initiative looked positive with 3 members willing to take on the main posts. Unfortunately this was the first and last meeting of this group to be held, and as has been our experience on other occasions since, when Kevin moved to work for another council the initiative was lost.

In the late 1990's I was contacted by a CTC member from Bradford (with experience of cycle campaigning) to let me know a group was trying to start a bicycle user group and the meeting was to be held in Pontefract. I attended the meeting and recognised one of the cyclists from the meeting in Wakefield Town hall, but again this attempt failed to get off the ground.

It was not until 2001 that the beginnings of the Cycle Forum were laid. I was invited to attend the Pontefract Cyclists' Touring Club (CTC) annual meeting in Ackworth where on the agenda was a motion to start a campaign committee, which was to develop into a cycle forum. The proposer of the motion was Steve Kidd and it was agreed that a cycle forum or campaigning group was needed with the backing of the CTC. The founding committee was Steve Kidd, Graham Lawrence, Bill Houlder, Sandy Clark and me. The first action of the committee was to organise, with the support of a local MP, Jon Trickett, a set of rides to illustrate the good and bad points of what the council had done for cyclists. These rides started at South Elmsall, Castleford, Pontefract and Thornes Park. A participants on the first ride was a council officer, Andrew Fowler, who with the CTC campaign committee set up the Wakefield Cycle Users Forum as a consultative forum to Wakefield Metropolitan District Council (WMDC).

The initial achievements of the Cycle Users Forum were under threat when the council, in 2007, decided to axe the Cycle Officer post, which the Forum had successfully argued for, and the healthy transport team. At a demonstration organised by members of the

Forum outside the County Hall more than 20 cycle forum members turned up to protest to the cuts, but despite much lobbying the decision was not reversed. It was this action by WMDC that convinced Forum members that an independent Cycle Forum with its own constitution, volunteers and funds was needed.

One of the activities of the healthy transport team was the establishing of 'health rides'. These were not organised on a regular basis but were a step in the right direction to promote cycling in the district. It was only after the healthy transport team was disbanded and these rides were taken over by Roger Talbot, by then an active member of WDCF, that the 'health ride' became a regular feature of the cycling calendar in Wakefield District. Even Roger's programme, however, now seems minimal compared with the weekly programme organised by the WDCF this summer.

Things have not been easy for the stalwarts of the forum, and thanks must go to Sandy Clark and David Keighley, along with the many other volunteers that have seen the forum through some hard times.

New Cycle Parking at Angler's Country Park

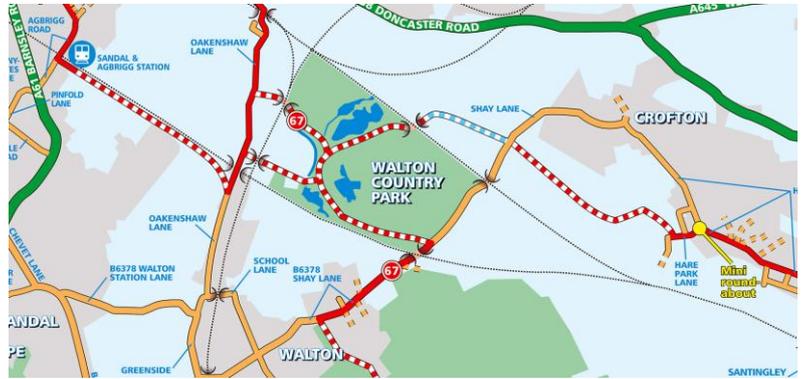
In the last newsletter we reported the installation of new cycle parking at Angler's Country Park. Below is a photograph of the 'cycle parking' on the day of one of our 'health rides' from Nostell Priory. Clearly a few more racks are needed.



Campaign Update

Crofton/Walton Path

As reported in earlier newsletter Wakefield District Cycle Forum (WDCF) has been campaigning over the last couple of years to persuade Network Rail and Yorkshire Water to open an existing path between Shay Lane, Crofton and Walton Colliery Nature Park to cyclists and pedestrians. Up until now it seemed that these organizations were adopting a strategy of ignoring us in the hope that we go away. As you will know by now, go away is not something that WDCF does very well and we have been rewarded for our persistence by a request from Network Rail to meet with us and the council to try and find a solution to the issues raised by them. Hopefully in the next newsletter we can report further progress not just with Network Rail but also with Yorkshire Water.



Membership

The success of our events and rides so far this year is reflected in a big increase in our membership. In our fifth year of existence as an independent voluntary organization we can now boast over 500 members. Not only is this good for the future of WDCF but it reflects the growing interest in cycling among the general public. It is to be hoped that this will also be reflected in the attitudes of politician and public officials in the way they view transport infrastructure.

Captions Please

One of our volunteers, Des Hampshire, took this photograph on a recent holiday in Fort William. He says:

'Do you think that the council in Fort William has found another use for the Sheffield stands and shelters? I found it very amusing'. And he invites you to send in suggestions for captions to attach for the next newsletter.

If you have any photographs or stories you think we could include in future newsletters please send them to info@cyclings-wakefield.org.uk



Rides and Events

The spring has not been too kind to us with weather conditions being very unpredictable. While the end of March brought weather that encouraged a very good turnout on the Roger Talbot ride the following week we had to cancel our Nostell ride due to snow. Despite this over 80 riders attended our April rides with a lot of new faces joining us for the first time. Some of these new participants can be seen in this photo of the 'April Fool' ride from Pugneys.



A very successful stall in the Cathedral Precinct in Wakefield attracted a lot of attention from passers by and a visit from the local police, as you can see from the photo on the front page. In addition to giving out information about our summer programme volunteers managed to recruit over 40 new members to the forum.



Our stall in the Cathedral Precinct

As more people become aware of our activities we are seeing more people making use of the Bike Doctor. At our first even at Pugneys Water Park, on the 1st April, he must have been exhausted as he checked and repaired 24

bikes. As you can see some of the tasks he carries out are a little unusual.



As well as running our Bike Doctor sessions Graham West, with the help of Robert Clegg, has also been running basic bike maintenance courses. Four courses have now been run with over 40 people having taken advantage of the free sessions. If demand is still there we will run more courses so let us know if you are interested.



Sally and Warren have a break from running the skills course at a sunny Nostell Priory event in March



Bike Week Programme

Once again the Cycle Forum is involved in a busy week of activities to celebrate Bike Week. Do try and attend and if you can help with any of the events please let us know by emailing info@cycling-wakefield.org.uk

Saturday 16th June: 9am - 20/30 mile ride starting at the Fox and Hounds, Newmillerdam

Saturday 16th and Sunday 17th June: Cycle Festival at Nostell Priory

A fun weekend of cycle related activities including guided rides, skills course, fun relay race, Father's Day challenge, Bike Doctor, Bygone Bikes and much more

Tuesday 19th June: 6pm – 18 mile ride with pub stop starting at Carleton Community Centre.

Thursday 21st June: 6 pm – 10 mile ride with pub stop starting at Kirkgate Station, Wakefield

Saturday 23rd June: 10.30 am – 15 mile ride from Anglers Country Park to Southern Uplands

Sunday 24th June: Green Living Day at Anglers Country Park, Winterset

Lots of stalls representing 'Green Living' including Cycle Forum plus skills course, bike doctor and guided rides.

Press and Publicity

At our AGM in March a new position on our steering group was created when Richard Denbigh volunteered to take on the job of Press and Publicity Officer. He has not wasted any time in helping to raise the profile of the Wakefield District Cycle Forum (WDCF) with his first press release about the Wakefield Wheel. Richard tells us:

'On Tuesday April 17 a group of WDCF volunteers met with a photographer from the Wakefield Express at Anglers Country Park. They created various photo's to be used in an article about the Wakefield Wheel Cycle Route. The photo's were completed just in time as the next rain shower came over Anglers before the photographer could get back to his car. Our volunteers made a quick retreat to the visitor centre to avoid getting a soaking.'

Subsequently an article written by Wakefield Express Reporter Charlie Bullough appeared in the Wakefield Express. 'Hopefully this will contribute towards the



WDCF's aim of encouraging cycling in the Wakefield District. It may also contribute towards raising awareness of the WDCF and our activities among residents of the Wakefield area' says Richard.

WDCF has also been featured in the National Trust (NT) publicity for the opening of the renovated stable block at Nostell Priory. At the official opening on 18th May WDCF was present on posters, video presentations and speeches as one of the NT's partners involved in broadening the appeal of Nostell Priory and Parkland, particularly to the local community.

