

Cycle Forth

Newsletter of the CTC Lothians District Association
Number 22 April 2006



Club Rides

SATURDAY - meet at the Commonwealth Pool* at 10:00. During the summer, runs normally last all day, stop outside to eat a piece at lunch-time and often stop for afternoon tea on the way home. Some people haven't that much time and a breakaway group will sometimes take a shorter route and get home earlier.

WEDNESDAY - the meeting places are as listed in this newsletter on the last page. Meet at 10:00 and the arrangements are like Saturdays after that. There will be a couple of Car-Assisted-Rides during the summer season.

TUESDAY EVENING - meet at the Commonwealth Pool* at 19:00 for a prompt start. The runs are partly tailored to the amount of daylight and partly to the riders' ability and enthusiasm. Some are quite short and easy. Others might be quite hilly and longer. We will often stop for a pint if there is a suitable place on the route. Always bring lights - it sometimes gets dark quite quickly.

SUNDAY - There will be short rides on the **third Sunday of the month** (2-2.5 hours). These are specially suited to those who are not regular riders and want to try out a club run. It gives people a chance to weigh us up, and for us to make recommendations as to how they might progress. **There will be no organised CTC rides on other Sundays.**

WE DON'T LEAVE PEOPLE BEHIND ON ANY RUNS

Sunday Alternatives

On the last Sunday of the month, Try Cycling in Edinburgh has a ride definitely for beginners. These have been running now since last August, and the regular monthly rides are getting a following. Each time there are a few new people and some returners. Numbers have ranged from 10 to 29. The rides have ranged from 6 to 14 miles at a very leisurely pace. A few CTC members have been helping. Details of meeting places, distances and destinations are at www.trycyclinginedinburgh.org.uk.

For another social ride - SPOKES has rides on the first Sunday of each month (10:00 from the Usher Hall). These tend to go at a pace only slightly slower than the average CTC ride, but they do stop for a long pub lunch. Normally there are about 6-9 CTC members there.

** see page 4 for phone numbers and email address of contacts, and also for details of meeting places for rides*

Hut

There is a new hut-guardian. Marion Lawson* will take bookings. The charge is now £4 per person per night and £2 for children (aged 5-11), under 5s go free. We don't have a permanent repairman, but ask any members who have motors who might be able to fit in a visit and do odd jobs to volunteer to Marion. **The hut does need to be used more.**

The Hut is not the obvious place to turn into a Conference Centre, but it's going to be used for a meeting in March. This is a meeting of the Birthday Rides Organising Committee. Some 4 of the members live in the Dalbeattie/Castle Douglas area, one in Dumfries and one in Edinburgh. We have had the majority of meetings in Dalbeattie, and a couple in Edinburgh. I pointed out that the hut is almost exactly half-way, so we will be able to take two cars and meet in the middle. Perhaps we should start having Committee Meetings there.

The hut also gets an annual airing in mid-March as a refreshment stop on the Dave Harris Memorial Audax.

Why not take a few friends and have a night there? There is a requirement that at least one person must be a CTC member, but you can take non-CTC people.

Take Pot-Luck

It's a winner for everyone, and a minor miracle. With almost no organisation, by some completely incomprehensible process a date and venue is announced and at the appointed time about 30 people or so turn up carrying a strange collection of bags and boxes, and a few minutes later a complete meal for about 50 people is sitting there waiting to be eaten. There are always savouries and sweets (and the last two suppers have been in an establishment with a bar so drink has not been a problem - until the wine runs out). Of course seeing it's cyclists who are there, food for 50 is just about right for 30, so it always ends up with just about everything being eaten. Some people have had time to prepare their favourite dish (even if they can't remember what they put in it), others have gone out and bought something ready-made. Either way there is always a good choice and good quality. In terms of a good return for a small outlay it's very good value.

For three years now we have had a Pot Luck Supper as a part of Bike Week. The first time the Secretary made the mistake of advertising it as being open to those who had been on a Bike Week event and some people thought that it was ONLY for those, but anyone is welcome. This year we had an almost impromptu one on Feb 3rd - arranged so late that word of mouth was the only advertising it had (or needed). We are telling you now that there will be another on the Friday of Bike Week. The venue is likely to be, as the last two have been, at the Waverley Lawn Tennis & Squash Club at the top of Suffolk Road. Check with the Committee or Anne Carter nearer the time.

Down your Way

Do you have a favourite local route? Do you have any good photos of groups of cyclists using it? You will have seen the article in the Feb Issue of Cycle which is the first of a new "Down your Way" series. It was decided that for DAs to write about their DA would be pretty boring, but that an interesting local route would be attractive. DAs have been invited to submit articles, so if you have a route you think we should tell people about, let us know.

Routes

There is some discussion going on at the moment about provision of routes connecting Edinburgh with neighbouring towns, especially to the west and south. Some of the roads, especially going to West Lothian are not cycle-friendly and what is needed are routes which are safe for cyclists but not circuitous so that commuters can usefully use them as well as leisure cyclists use them to get in and out of the city. A consultant has been appointed and already had meetings with councils and cyclists.

**THIS IS THE
LAST CYCLE
FORTH WHICH
WILL BE
AUTOMATICALLY
SENT TO ALL
MEMBERS**

**READ ON THE
NEXT PAGE
WHAT YOU NEED
TO DO TO GET
FUTURE COPIES**

www.ctclothians.org.uk

SECRETARY'S CORNER

Cycle Forth started in January 1998 and the plan was that it would have only 6 issues - three a year for two years - to see how effective it was in promoting the Club. After the two years it was decided to continue it, but it has been a severe drain on our reserves and in time. We have talked about financing it with adverts, but have not been able to make any progress on that line.

For the moment a paper copy will be produced twice a year as at present, but it will be sent ONLY to those who write and ASK for it. Depending on the number who request this service, we may have to make a small charge. We will decide this once we have your information in. So please don't wait until the autumn to write – do it now!

ON PAPER

If you wish to receive a paper copy, you will need to write and ask for it. Send a letter or postcard to Mike Harrison, 11 (2F3) Stead's Place, EDINBURGH, EH6 5DY with your name & address.

We will still produce flyers for our special promotional events (like Bike Week ones), and we will hand out cards (as we do already) with the list of Wednesday meeting-places.

The alternative (and what we would *prefer* for those who do have email and internet access) is for you to sign up to receive a simple email either directing you to the copy on the web, or simply telling you important news or information. This will be a short message which will not fill up your in-box. It's the way that CTC gets out news between issues of Cycle. At present there are over 10000 subscribers to Yannick Reed's weekly NewsNet. I'm setting up a similar system for our mailing.

ON-LINE

There are two ways to sign up (only use one!)

Either

1 Send an email with the word 'Subscribe' in the subject line from the email address you want to use to LDAnews@CTCScotland.org.uk. Please include your name & address in the body of the email. If you want later to get taken off the list, just send an email with 'Unsubscribe' in the subject line.

Or

2 Go to our web site (www.CTCLothians.org.uk) and on the front page you'll find a button that will let you subscribe.

YOU CAN SIGN UP NOW, DON'T DELAY. Do it before you lose this copy of Cycle Forth!

Please note – if you signed up some time ago, it will be a lot simpler for me if you will do it again now (especially as I am using a new system to manage it!). You may already have received an email inviting you to subscribe. If you have responded to that and had an email acknowledgement, then you are on the new list.

Vote of Thanks

The distribution system for Cycle Forth has built up over the 8 years. It started with a few people who used to meet in the Clubroom to stuff envelopes and then take a few that they fancied delivering to their immediate neighbours. Now it's a complex cascading system where fairly large packages are sent by post to remote places or by hand within Edinburgh to my 'sub-postmasters' who then break them down into smaller 'rounds'. The result is that about 220 get posted with a second-class stamp. About £12-15 is spent on posting the larger packages. In all, CF is delivered by hand or post to about 750 households. Further copies are supplied to libraries in the Lothians and to bike shops in Edinburgh and in the local towns where Edinburgh rides go to. Copies are handed out at Bike Festivals and at Try Cycling rides. The print run has been 2000 copies per issue.

This is the place to thank the many distributors who rarely complain when a bundle of up to 50 copies of Cycle Forth arrives with the expectation that they will be hand delivered within a few days. Without you we would have had to stop production some time ago, as the cost of posting 750 copies of each issue would have been prohibitive.

With the new system, it will all be done 'at the touch of a button'. In my former existence as a teacher of computing, that was the answer pupils were always giving to describe the advantages of using a computer – anything could be done at the touch of a button. They never experienced the hours of work that has to go in before touching the button actually does anything useful, so pardon me if I'm sceptical, I guess that I have hours of work ahead of me.

AGM

We managed to get only 20 members to the AGM in October. Membership in our area remains steady at about 960 – as it has been for six years. The Wednesday runs continue to attract the largest numbers, and they are generally larger in the winter when people are not gadding about on holiday. Normally they are in the high twenties. Saturday runs are stronger than they were, and the rota system for leaders seems to be working well. The Christmas Lunch, a Pot-Luck Supper and the Day-Out at Athelstaneford in Bike Week were the social highlights, though some would say that every Wednesday lunch-stop is a social highlight.

We did make a small change to the local DA Rules which has just been approved by CTC Council. This enables us at next year's AGM to concentrate on getting a strong team for the Committee and to make sure that the jobs we need to do get done, rather than focussing on appointing people as Secretary for this and that. Many people are put off taking on such a 'post'. It doesn't have any cachet or status and does rather imply that that person will deal with all the issues concerning Social Events, Runs, the Hut or whatever. Much better to have a team and make sure that every job is matched to the best person at the time. In practice for many years several people have done more than one job, and with the old rules it did restrict appointments to the Committee. On paper it reduces the numbers of Committee Members by one or two, but in practice will make no difference. For an organisation which has about 1000 members, but only about 100-150 actively involved locally in runs and social events we don't need a huge Committee. Note this is not implying that the other 800-900 members are inactive – it's just that they don't or can't make it to the Edinburgh runs or Socials.

Local Group Consultation

At the AGM in October this was mentioned, but not discussed. Some DAs spent a lot of time on it. The main issue was that, as with our DA, the bulk of people live in or near Edinburgh, but there are significant numbers of members in several other towns e.g. Galashiels/Melrose/Selkirk. Where there are a number of active members in an area, they sometimes form a Section formally. One of the ideas floated in the consultation was that there needed to be a way in which these groups could have some kind of 'status', and also to deal with the fact that at the moment allocation of members to DAs is based entirely on postcodes. In many areas of the country, people live on the edge of several DA areas, but they have no choice in which DA they have a vote. The revised system would allow people to select which DA they wished to have a vote in. So our friends on the banks of the Tweed, whichever side of the Border they live on, could select the Lothians or Newcastle DA.

Equity

I think that we are meeting targets for gender balance with about one-third of the Committee being female, and also we now have both a female President and Chairman. Most runs have a significant number of women. However, for other equality issues (e.g. race, disability, social deprivation, age) we are not doing very well. In that we are not much different from a lot of other CTC groups around the country.

MIKE HARRISON

Weekends

The Committee has decided to have some more weekend rides this year, but to find out about these you will have to come along and meet other members or remember to look on the web. Mike Bonar has agreed to keep a list of phone numbers and email addresses of those interested in these.

Mike Bonar's October Weekend is now an institution. This year the dates are September 30th-October 1st and the base is not yet fixed (suggestions to Mikem please) As last year, it's easier if people make a firm booking early. Please contact Mike* if you want to go on this.

Coldingham YH is the suggested destination on Saturday June 17th for an overnight stay. Again, early booking makes organisation easier. Contact Mike Bonar* on this.

Women's Weekend (CTC UK-wide) June 3-4. Stay in the Hut overnight. Ladies of the Committee will be running this. For more details contact Hilary Maxfield*.

Other Scottish events are of course notified in Cycle Talk, but there's no harm in repeating them here.

Grampian Rally 26-31 May

Bookings for this are now being taken. Phone Cindy Blackmore on 01224 484891 for details and form, or get from www.ctcgrampian.org.uk

Birthday Rides - July 29th to August 5th

Booking is now open for the Birthday Rides. You can get the Booking Brochure by hand from a member of our Committee, or download it from the web (www.CTCScotland.org.uk/br2006) or phone CTC Membership on 0870 873 0061 and ask for a copy to be posted to you.

* see page 4 for phone numbers and email address of contacts, and also for details of meeting places for rides

Issues

CTC, mainly through the Right-to-Ride network, campaigns for cyclists in all kinds of ways - monitoring plans and activities of the Parliaments (UK & Scottish as far as we are concerned), the Scottish Executive, local Councils and Transport Operators. It participates in consultations, and tries to rebut some of the wilder pronouncements of the media. As well as the designated reps for each council area, it relies on the ordinary member also making the view of the 'normal' cyclist known.

There has been a lot of discussion locally in Edinburgh recently about red paint and cycle lanes, with a campaign spearheaded by Spokes against the decision not to use red paint on cycle lanes within the World Heritage Site. No doubt many of the comments made to the Council came from cyclists who are also members of CTC, though CTC has not taken as rigid a stance on this matter as Spokes. A part of the problem seems to be that some thought that the intention of the Manual for Streets was to improve the visual impact - not only dirt and shabby street furniture but the clutter of legally-required signs stating the obvious and the masses of multi-coloured paint used on the roads. Others thought that the main purpose of the Manual was to improve the function of the streets. Obviously function and visual impact are not 100% compatible, but neither are they 100% incompatible. Inconsistencies in the Manual do need to be resolved, and the purpose needs to be clarified. Personally I would be happier if the streets had surfaces so that one did not have to weave all over the place trying to find a way through the bumps (it's a lot more difficult with three wheels across the way rather than two wheels in line astern).

Bike Week 17-25 June

Sat 17	Ride to Athelstaneford, some will continue after lunch for Youth Hostel Weekend, probably to Coldingham
Sun 18	return from Hostel
Tue 20	Evening Ride - please bring along a non-member that night
Wed 21	Bike Breakfast (City of Edinburgh Council, managed by Spokes) 0800-0930
Wed 21	Ride starts from City Chambers
Thu 22	Women's Ride from Commonwealth Pool* at 19:00 - bring a friend along
Fri 23	Pot-Luck Supper No. 4 (we are getting good at these! See details elsewhere)
Sat 24	Ride from Commonwealth Pool* at 10:00
Sat 24	Lepra Ride from Edinburgh to St Andrews
Sun 25	TCiE (Try Cycling in Edinburgh) Ride (details of start, distance & destination on www.trycyclinginedinburgh.org.uk)
Fri-Sun 23-25	Bicycling Film Festival organised by TCiE

Recruitment

Most of your friends probably know that you are a cyclist. A lot of them will also ride a bike, but say that they couldn't ride the distances or at the speed or with the frequency that you do. Have you ever suggested going out for a ride with them? You might both be surprised! Do you actively tell them of the benefits of CTC membership - you could start with the third-party insurance, the legal advice service (not 'legal aid'!), the more comprehensive bike insurance than most people get through their house insurance, and then go on to the more intangible things like companionship, even enjoyment. You could introduce them to a CTC ride (carefully selecting it so that the first one they come on is not a ride to the Hut with a return via St Mary's Loch). The Third Sunday rides are an excellent introduction, and some of the Tuesday evening ones can be too.

For those who feel insecure even going on the road, the Try Cycling in Edinburgh Rides on the last Sunday of the month are not beyond the capabilities of anyone who can go fast enough to avoid falling off. Tell your diffident friends about these. Details of meeting places, destinations and distances are at www.trycyclinginedinburgh.org.uk. And what about children? Do you do anything to encourage them to ride other than 'messaging about on bikes in the street' which may be fun, but doesn't help to encourage good habits of transport choices?

We really do have to work hard to get people (of all ages) out of the culture that cycling is dangerous, that riding a bike on the road is the last thing anyone sane should attempt. If you don't have a CTC membership leaflet, tell them where to find the CTC website (www.ctc.org.uk in case you didn't know!). Our membership is now recovering from the blip caused by problems with the membership fulfilment company in 2005, but it's still not much above 50,000. Lothians membership is fairly static, fluctuating monthly between 950 and 1050 depending largely on the actual state of renewals.



This is a bit of pavement at Seafield often used by cyclists who can't get across Seafield Road where the Esplanade ends and don't like using the path between the railway line and the sewage works. It's a continuation of the shared-use bit, though unsigned. However

boards like this do make it difficult - and what about the partially-sighted (though it's likely that they would see this one).

A letter to the Council with this photograph resulted in it being removed within a few days. Photographs of other infringements as well as holes in the road with a detailed location description often produce good results. You can all help with this kind of action.

Wednesday Runs - Summer 2006

DATE	START	DESTINATION
Apr 05	SV	Blackness
Apr 12	F	West Linton
Apr 19	FH	Yellowcraigs
Apr 26	RP	Culross
May 03	SV	Muiravonside
May 10	KX	Cademuir
May 17	[CAR]	BERWICK-on-TWEED
May 24	RP	Falkirk Wheel
May 31	RP	Innerleithen
Jun 07	KX	Rumbling Bridge
Jun 14	RP	Cockleroy
Jun 21	SV	Whiteadder
Jun 28	FH	Dawyck
Jul 05	KX	Tynninghame
Jul 12	FH	Longyester
Jul 19	FH	Heriot Water
Jul 26	[CAR]	AUCHTERMUCHTY
Aug 02	RP	Cairnpapple
Aug 09	F	Dunsyre
Aug 16	FH	Seacliffe
Aug 23	RP	Lochore Meadows
Aug 30	KX	Manor Sware
Sep 06	FH	John Muir CP
Sep 13	SV	Muiravonside
Sep 20	FH	Stenton
Sep 27	RP	Becraigs

for latest information check

www.ctclothians.org.uk

www.ctcscotland.org.uk

Rides

We don't normally use cafés for our main stops. So if you are coming out for a ride (apart from the Third Sunday short rides) bring your sandwiches, snacks and drink with you.

As the summer rides often stay out later in the afternoon (sometimes into early evening) there is very often a stop at a café or garden centre for afternoon tea. If you are coming out for an evening ride, bring lights.

Carry a basic repair kit – if your bike needs spanners to take off wheels, don't rely on someone else having the right spanner. A spare tube is a good idea – normally if there is a puncture we change the tube rather than trying to find the hole and putting a patch on.

Oxenfoord

In November we paid our final visit to Oxenfoord Gardens. **Bob Jeffrey** has retired (though he and Jean are continuing to live in the cottage beside the garden). We have always enjoyed our visits there, the warmth of being under glass or beside the stove, to say nothing of the warmth of the welcome from Bob and Jean – almost always with an abundance of home baking.

We have since had another visit to the area, but this time we used the Village Sports Hall in Pathhead, and Bob and Jean were able to be there with us.

We have added other Halls to our winter destinations. The Saturday rides have been using halls this winter, and we now use Harburn, East Calder, Low Port (Linlithgow), Eddleston, Pathhead, Temple, Bolton, North Berwick, West Linton and Athelstaneford.

MEETING PLACES

DESCRIPTION	GRID REF.
CP Commonwealth Pool, seats in Dalkeith Rd near traffic lights	NT267725
F Firrhill (Colinton Rd / Colinton Mains Drive)	NT225699
FH Fisherrow Harbour car park	NT335730
KX Kingston Crossroads (Gilmerton Rd / Mount Vernon Rd)	NT280700
RP Roseburn Path (on bridge) at Wester Coates Terrace	NT232733
SV Slateford Viaduct (where Lanark Road crosses Water of Leith)	NT221706

Saturday, Sunday and Tuesday runs ALWAYS start from the Commonwealth Pool.
Sat: & 3rd Sun: 10:00
Tue: 19:00 (Bring lights! On a fine night it may be dark before you get home)

[CAR] - Car-Assisted-Runs

Please contact Peter Martin* about these, either to offer a lift or to request a lift. At the time of writing the exact meeting-places have not been fixed, so you will need to talk to him to find these. It's a good chance to get in a bit of cycling away from the home ground for a day.

Runs Contacts

Sunday: Anne Carter*
Saturday: Neil Brearley*
Wednesday: Peter Martin*
Tuesday evenings: Mike Harrison*

*Anne Carter receiving the Zoller Trophy
from President Evelyn Law at the
Christmas Lunch*



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