

Chester and North Wales CTC CTC Caer a Gogledd Cymru Annual Report October 2012

Introduction

Chester & N Wales CTC members have once again had a busy year with members riding as part of their local groups and as well as travelling further afield. If there are omissions in this report it may be because most members prefer riding their bicycles to producing end of year reports (the secretary included!). This report includes sections on the local groups, events run by Chester & N Wales, the Link magazine, the website, right to ride, membership, and development as well as plans for next year.

Sadly several members have died during the year; we offer our condolences to friends and families. Jim Skelding was a founder member of Chester & N Wales CTC and had also held the posts of President and of Secretary. He worked hard for the club and was guest of honour at the President's Ride in 2011. He died in December following a series of strokes.

Alan Mort was killed whilst cycling on the main Flint road. He had ridden with several Chester & N Wales groups and had been a member of the Chester & N Wales Tourist Competition team. At the request of his family, club members rode as part of the funeral cortege and formed a guard of honour. We await the outcome of legal proceedings against the driver involved.

On a brighter note congratulations are due to Glennys Hammond who has been presented with a CTC Certificate of Merit for her years for hard work of Chester & N Wales CTC; a richly deserved award.

Janet Gregory has been elected to CTC National Council for a three year period from 1st January 2013. She will represent members across the North West together with Welna Bowden who has been re-elected. Congratulations to them both. Thanks are due to David Robinson who is standing down as Councillor after 6 years of service. During his period of office he was Chair of Council; he devoted considerable time and energy to the post working, for cycling in general as well as the North West region.

Group reports:

CTC Two Mills

CTC Two Mills is a recognised member group. Our postcode areas cover the whole of Wirral including Neston, Ellesmere Port and parts of Chester. We do have individual members outside of those boundaries.

- Members of our Sunday group have led a ride almost every week.
- The Bicycle Belles encourage women to cycle once a month on a Saturday morning; they welcome newcomers each of whom receive a hi-viz drawstring bag. We have purchased a new supply printed with CTC logo. The bags contain a bell, puncture repair kit and lots of information leaflets about local cycling activities.
- Many of our members help to lead the weekly summer rides on Tuesday Evening.
- There is a blog of the weekly rides on the Chester & N Wales website. The web hits show that it is read by a wide audience. We use the club's Garmin to record the route used and share it through the blog. Thanks to Glennys Hammond for prompt upload to the website.
- Congratulations are due to Peter Williams who was awarded our group's first '*Personality of the Year*'.
- Two Mills once again ran the superbly organised Spring 50 Tourist Trial.
- Janet Gregory was pleased to receive the Chester and North Wales CTC President's Trophy for 2012 at the annual lunch in Tilston 30th September.

- Two Mills members have joined-in: CTC Birthday Rides held at Ellesmere, North Shropshire; Welsh Festival of Cycling, Ruthin; Semaine Federale, Niort Chauray in France; Wild Wales Challenge ride; Eureka Anniversary ride; Bert Bailey Vets 100; Merseyside CTC Tourist Trial
- Our group has had a regular input into Chester and North Wales committee meetings, articles for the *Link* magazine and website. Janet Gregory has travelled down to London twice during the year to work together with other CTC group representatives and officers on improving national structures and policies.
- Over the past year, Two Mills has made donations to both Chester and Merseyside Cycle Campaigns. Peter Williams and Janet Gregory attend meetings regularly. We also represent you at the quarterly Cycle Forum organised by Wirral Council.

A big thank to the many volunteers who have helped over the past year.

Informal Group Reports

Anglesey – Ynys Môn

The Ynys Môn-Anglesey Informal Group still exists and consists of 5 riders who turn out twice a month on the 1st and 3rd Sunday. If the weather is bad we do not ride, although that has not happened many times in the last 12 months.

We start out from Llanfairpwll at 9.30 am and usually ride to Gaerwen stopping in Stermat for coffee and then decide where we go; sometimes to Llanerchymedd but more often towards Trearddur and occasionally to Holyhead. Our rides are mainly on Anglesey although we have crossed the Britannia Bridge into Gwynedd in the last 12 months. When we go into Gwynedd we usually go through Caernarfon and stop at the Gallery for coffee, and then decide where we intend going next.

We have supported the rides put on by the parent group sometimes all 5 of us, sometimes not, depending on our riders' situation. Two of us supported the Welsh Rally at Ruthin and 3 the York Rally. One rider went to France on a Strauss tour organised under the umbrella of the CTC.

All 5 went to the Birthday Rides held at Ellesmere College on the outskirts of Ellesmere.

Thus although we are a small group we have been very active, supporting many events put on in the name of cycling.

Chester Touring and Mountain Bike Club

The Chester group have continued to hold regular rides throughout the year as can be seen from the Fabulous ladies report below:

Chester Fabulous Ladies

The Fab Ladies started the year with the usual numbers and miles, but as 2012 continued we saw a rapid increase in turn out, leading at the end of the year to the introduction of a 'Further Faster' group leaving on the same day and heading to the same place, but going a bit further, and therefore faster. A small number of us took part in the annual events such as the Spring 50, Cycleway rides, audax and Presidents Ride; and Chester (and beyond) evening rides and Sundays (and Wednesdays) has seen an increase from the Chester Ladies. We even had a go at a Sportif, not to everyone's taste. Earlier in the year we designed and ordered our new club strip, and are currently looking into a winter top to complement it, and stand out among the greenies! The blog continues to be read far and wide, and I think is fair to say brings a few riders our way, and is a good point of reference to new enquiries. We also have a facebook presence and I started Tweeting earlier this year. Next summer we will be 5 years old, and I am planning to have a picnic as a celebration.

Eryri Cycling Group

The year started quite well with a good attendance at Doreen's 'retirement' lunch in November

No offers to take on Doreen's role as CTC Representative meant she offered to carried on for one more year & Dave Woods has taken on the role of organising rides.

Despite the inclement weather we have had 24 club rides with an average of 6 riders out, members have attended the Cotswold Rally in April & the Cymru Festival rally held at Ruthin in July.

Members have ridden the CTC Chester & N Wales 50 mile trial & the Wild Wales Challenge, also the Snowdon charity ride, the Charity ride round Snowdon from Blaenau Ffestiniog, and the Anglesey charity ride.

We are trying out A & B rides as we have 'younger' & fitter members but still need to be able to accommodate our older riders, time will tell if this is going to be successful .

We have a social meeting in the Snowdon Parc pub Waunfawr in summer & in winter we meet in the Saracen pub Beddgelert .

Our AGM on November 8th is being held in the Saracen pub Beddgelert at 8.30 pm; for those that want it we are having a meal there before the meeting.

Mold Informals

The group continues to enjoy its favourite rides in the lanes and tracks of the Welsh Hills, with the occasional excursion to the Wirral and Cheshire.

We have about a dozen regular riders, the average turn out being five or six. Members also continue to support Chester & N Wales and other CTC events.

Dave Hill will be less available next year and is standing down as our regular leader. Dave has been the backbone of the Mold Section for some 20 odd years and has led us on some amazing rides into parts of Wales which even some of our Welsh residents didn't know existed. His enthusiasm, leadership, search for adventure and good companionship will be missed. Thank you Dave, from all of the riders of the Mold group past and present.

Watson's Wanderers

In spite of Harry rapidly approaching his 85th year and 690,000 miles on his bike, his enthusiasm for leading the Wanderers remains undiminished.

The Watson's Wanderers routinely leave the Plough at Christleton at 10:00 every Tuesday morning with Harry in the lead to search out new frontiers of cafe stops and pubs for lunch. Current different pub count is 597 so number 600 cannot be too far away.

Group size varies from 1 (solid ice and howling gale---but you can't stop Harry!) to 20+. There are a number of different speeds in the group now, with the faster riders being told to "Shove off you lot!" and get first in the cafe queue.

We also have two electrically assisted riders (do they dream of electric sheep?) who meet us at various stages of the ride.

In spite of the different ages, speeds and methods of propulsion in the group it is all very harmonious and we all have a great time. Thank you Harry for continuing to lead us with your well regarded skill, knowledge and humour.

Wednesday Riders

The Annual Christmas lunch at our usual venue of Trafford Hall, once again very ably organised by Pam Cross, was well attended. Proceeds from the lottery enabled donations to be made to Claire House and St John's Hospice.

A full programme of winter and summer rides has been well supported in spite of less than ideal weather conditions. Wednesday Riders have supported and participated in local events including the Merseyside Spring T.T, Two Mills Spring 50, Bob Clift Memorial Rides, Bert Bailey Vets 100, CTC Birthday Rides, Welsh Festival of Cycling and of late Mommas Leafy Lanes Audax. Our Group rides, including some challenging A rides, have been generally well supported.

Our list of regular riders seems to be a little in decline and this is probably attributable to the poor summer, illness and perhaps a generally ageing group population. In spite of this reduction, two levels of ride to suit different levels of ability have been available most weeks.

So if you are considering putting yourself out to grass remember the words of Sir Ranulph Fiennes when asked why he planned to cross the Antarctic at the age of 68 "If you still are lucky enough to be able to walk around not stooped, no crutch, no Zimmer frame, then you might as well go for it".

Wrexham Reivers

The Reivers have continued to meet from 9.00 the Espresso Cafe, Gwersyllt on the 1st and 3rd Saturdays of the month with the rides starting at 9.30. Many of the riders meet at the same venue on the remaining Saturdays and on Tuesdays to ride as the Cafe Hoppers. The number of riders has been

increasing and the group has split regularly to allow for the different speeds preferred by the riders. As usual members have ridden in many of the Chester & N Wales CTC events. This year many took an active role helping with the Welsh Festival in Ruthin. There was the usual holiday (training camp?) in the spring and people have completed Audax events (ranging from 50km up to 400km) in all kinds of weather. Thanks are due once again to all of the members of the group who have contributed to a successful year with many memorable rides.

Events 2012

New Year's Day Meets

Thanks are due once again to Arthur Miller who organised the lunch at McCleans Pub in Pentre and Dave Hill who arranged the lunch at the Carden Arms in Tilston. There was a good turnout at both venues. Mike Cross presented the Tourist Trophies to Peter Dilworth and Lowri Evans who had gained the most points in the Tourist Competition.

Tandem Slide Show 24th February

Jenny & Dan Plevey gave a very interesting slide show about their tandem travels through Nepal. A donation of £100 was given to the school in Nepal that they had been supporting. Thanks Mike Cross for arranging the evening.

The Spring Tourist Trial 1st April 2012

Volunteers from Two Mills (and their families) organised the popular Early Season Tourist Trial which this year was held 1st April on behalf of Chester & N Wales. Thanks also to Merseyside CTC for loan of equipment that allowed us to swipe riders through the controls electronically; it was much quicker. We attracted almost 200 entries, a good mix of CTC members and non-members, women and even some juniors. Two Mills shared the profits from the event with Chester and North Wales CTC.

Ladies Cycling Weekend

Bob Clift Memorial Cheshire Cycleway Rides June

In spite of the wet weather in the morning there were good turnouts for the rides; 22 rode the 25 mile event, 66 the 50 miles and 32 the 100 miles. There were 40 entries on the line; the plan next year is that all entries must be sent in advance. Thanks are due once again to Dorothy Clift and Hazel McDougal for organising the event, and to their band of volunteers.

Bert Bailey Memorial Veterans' 100

On a dull morning, full of the promise of rain, 75 of the 80 people who had entered the event, were duly sent on their way by the Club's President, Mike Cross. As things turned out, the rain was confined to a few light showers, though some riders disputed the use of the word "light". Thankfully, this year there were no accidents, though there were at least five punctures in group 6 with the leader collecting two of them. The Gil Tirrell Trophy for the Senior rider in the event was won by Harry Watson to much acclaim. The event made a profit of £399.

All the riders seemed very well satisfied with the food which added to their enjoyment of the day. Several emails and phone calls have been received, as well as many verbal comments on the day, from riders saying how much they appreciated the work of the group leaders and other volunteers who manned the sagwagon and dispensed refreshments at the start and end of the ride and at Overton. (David Ackerley, the organiser adds his heartfelt thanks, and all others would wish to thank him for his superb work as organiser).

Welsh Festival Audax Events 29th July

The Clwydian 209k got away at 8am with 18 riders starting including 4 from Chester and N Wales CTC. Fourteen finished in times ranging from 10h35 to 12h30.

The Clwyd Gate 136K got underway at 9am with 45 riders setting off including 4 from Chester and N Wales CTC. Thirty eight riders finished in times ranging from 7h35 to 10h50. Two others finished but sadly out of time although they didn't seem to mind.

The Clwyd Vale 60k set out at 10am with 29 starters and thankfully 29 finishers. There were 10 Chester and N Wales CTC riders. The finishing times were between 3h40 and 5h40 with most people opting for lunch in Rhuddlan.

Thanks are due to Vicky Payne who organised these events. They were her first events as organiser & together with help from Dave Matthews and all of the Payne family they were a great success.

President's Ride 30th September

57 people booked to attend the President's Lunch in Tilston. Mike Cross, the Chester & N Wales President had prepared 2 routes to ensure that all of the riders could leave Walk Mill together and arrive at Tilston at 1pm. After a refreshments at the Walk Mill cafe there was a photo shoot before Mike Cross led the ride out

After lunch Mike Cross presented the President's Trophy to Janet Gregory for all of her hard work for the club during the year. Then there was an additional presentation; Glennys Hammond was presented with a Certificate of Merit as recognition of her service to Chester & N Wales CTC over the years.

Thanks are due to Mike Cross for organising the event.

Momma Audax Rides from Old Ma's, Tattenhall 16th September 2012

All three events were organised by Dave Matthews

Pistyll Packing Momma; 209km; 3100m ascent. This ride attracted an entry of 19 seasoned cyclists. 15 riders set off and all completed the ride in times ranging from 10h 35m to 12h 26m. All riders commented on what a great route this is---and a few suggested that the stated amount of climbing should be adjusted upwards (potentially to 3500m). This is to be investigated prior to registering next year's event. (Now finalised at 3400m; 3.5AAA which puts it in the Audax Gold Standard climbing category)

Momma's Mountain Views; 137k; 2000m ascent. 30 riders completed this route safely in times ranging from 7h 30m to 9h 14m. The weather remained dry all day and the riders enjoyed some fantastic mountain views---especially from the ridge between Chirk and Llangollen.

Momma's Leafy Lanes; 50k. This ride is designed as an audax introduction/easy day out. The ride attracted around 40 riders of which 33 finished with validated cards. We had the usual mix of hard riders with partners on an easy day out, families and CTC groups having a social ride out in the lanes.

Llysfasi Hill Climb and Freewheel Competitions 6th October 2012

Once again the events had warm sunny weather.

Hill Climb Competition

There were 18 competitors this year. The overall winner and 1st Vet was Peter Dilworth with a time of 7.51. Janet Gregory continued her winning ways to come in 2nd overall and 1st Lady in 8.09, with Ian Mason a close 3rd at 8.14. Dave Eccleston in 11th place was the 1st SuperVet.

Freewheel Competition

There were 21 competitors in a very closely fought competition. Peter Dilworth managed an unusual double by winning this event in addition to the hill climb. Gerry Machell was second with Graham Gadd in third place. Sue Booth had a convincing win to retain the Ladies title.

The prizes were presented by Mike Cross the Chester & N Wales President, and many people stayed for a meal at the Three Pigeons Thanks are due to all competitors, and to everyone who helped with the organisation and running of the event.

Corwen Audax series 20th October 2012

Barmouth Boulevard 208km; 3450m ascent.

13 riders started and 11 finished this demanding ride in times ranging from 10:44 to 12:40.

All riders commented that this is a cracking route and may even be back for more next year. (especially as the event moves to mid June in 2013).

Brenig Bach 107k; 200m ascent.

37 riders started (9 C&NW CTC) and 31 finished this remote and hilly ride through spectacular Welsh scenery. Times varied from 5:52 to 8:20. A good turnout for this Graham Mills's (former President) classic ride.

Bala MiniBash 60k; 1000m ascent.

35 riders started (13 C&NW CTC) and 31 finished this pleasant event which circumnavigates the lake.

Thanks to Dave Matthews for organising the events and Vicky Payne for helping at the start.

Club Communications

Website

The website has been run once again this year by John and Glennys Hammond. John is the webmaster who deals with the technical side of the site and Glennys edits and sorts the content. The website has been updated regularly with club events, reports, photos and news items.

Visitors to the website have increased over the year. There were 4,166 page visits during September 2012, an increase of 36.86% over September 2011. The most visited pages were Events, News and Two Mills pages although visits to all pages have increased. There was a surge in visits during September 2012, possibly by members downloading entry forms for various events. Interestingly the most used browser was Internet Explorer 47.46% followed by Safari (the iPhone browser) 21.6% which may reflect an increase in mobile phone access. Statistics for the website are extensive and complex. Further comparisons are available if required.

Thanks are due to Glennys and John for their hard work in ensuring that members can gain so much information about rides and events.

Link Editor's Report

Judging by the comments I have received over the past year the magazine seems to have been quite well received. As usual the finances have proved to be a constraining factor since I have been unable to afford to use as much colour as I would like due to the cost of colour printing. The magazine made a small profit of £52.12 over the four issues of the Club's year. However without donations of £112.25 there would have been a loss of £60.13 despite two thirds of readers paying the new subscription rate of £10. Next year all subscribers will be on this rate and it will be essential that the numbers of subscribers is at least maintained, but more subscribers would put it on a better financial footing. The printer of the magazine stamps the envelopes for us using a discounted business rate equal to just over 20% of the normal 2nd class postal rate. In April of this year the Chancellor decreed that this service will qualify for VAT at 20% thereby almost completely nullifying the discount. Based on the current number of subscribers and postal rates this will come to about an extra £55 over a full year. Postage rates are sure to increase in April '13 and if subscriber numbers fall it will be more difficult than ever to maintain the present amount of colour printing, unless of course the committee agreed to some degree of subsidy. The club's liability at the end of September 2012 was £591.50. This is the sum of money that would have to be repaid to readers if the magazine closed before the Christmas issue was posted.

I am very grateful to all those who supply me with copy of one sort and another. They are the people who make the magazine what it is, and we should applaud the effort and skill they put into their articles. Thanks are due to David Ackerley for all of his working running and editing the magazine.

Development

Sue Booth has continued to act as development officer. Many groups have reported an increase in numbers over the year. The Chester & N Wales notice board has been set up at several events with a good display of photographs and event information.

Right to Ride

Communications with Cheshire West and Chester Borough Council have improved. Janet Gregory and Peter Williams have been part of a Consultation Exercise to formulate a Cycling Strategy for the Borough. This should be published later this year.

Peter Williams attends Chester Cycling Campaign meetings monthly and Wirral's Cycling Forum meeting every 3 months. Mersey Rail has also set up a cycling forum which any one can attend. They hope to set up a cycle hire service at 10 stations throughout their network; one of which will be in Chester.

CWac have been successful in their Local Sustainable Transport Fund bid and have been awarded £4.8 million to be spent on improving sustainable transport links in Chester & Ellesmere Port/Neston area. This will include cycling. Wirral Borough Council has received £800,000 as part of the Mersey Travel LSTF bid.

Successes or Improvements to the Cycling Network:

- Improvements to the cycle/footpath along the A5117 have been made with 4/5 toucan crossings going in at Cheshire Oaks.
- Curzon Park Bridge alternative route into Chester has been completed.
- Local Cycle Route 563 Signage has been completed from Deeside to the Waterways Museum in Ellesmere Port. (Thank you to Tricia Seddon for helping me on this.)

A540 Safety for Cyclists: A little progress has been made on safety signs. Still a long way to go!!!

Burton Marshes route 89. Peter Williams is receiving emails to say things are progressing ,if all goes to plan we should be able to do a bit of bird watching as we cycle through next year.

Peter Williams will continue to work on improving safety for cyclists along the A540. Other links and improvements to the cycling network are also in the planning stage, e.g. Greenway in Ellesmere Port, improvements from the Wirral Way to Hooton Railway Station, also a link from Burton Marshes into Neston and the Wirral Way.

Many years of campaigning by Roy Spilsbury has resulted in a trial of cycling on Llandudno Promenade. Recent reports indicate that the trial has been successful so cycling may be allowed on a permanent basis.

Club Jerseys

Chester and North Wales Club Clothing is now available directly from Impsport. For details please see the Club Clothing section of the Chester & N Wales website.

Chester & N Wales Committee

The committee has met five times since last year's AGM. Committee members have been organising events, publicising the group, working with other organisations and campaigning. Janet Gregory, Brian Lowe and Lowri Evans have attended steering group meetings in London as member representatives discussing issues such as ride leader guidance, annual return documents and the revisions to the Policy Handbook.

Report of the Awards Committee-2011-12.

The committee met 5 times in the year taking the following decisions:

- 1). That the plethora of trophies that have been presented in the past to various classes of entrants in the BBMV 100 be reduced to one; that of the Gil Tirrell Trophy for the Senior rider, male or female and from any part of the country.
- 2). That the Jim Skelding Memorial Trophy be awarded to the youngest rider in the longest ride in the Bob Clift Memorial Cheshire Cycleway Rides. This is currently about 100 miles.
- 3). That Glennys Hammond's name be put forward for the award of a Certificate of Merit. This recommendation was accepted by HQ and the certificate was presented to Glennys at the President's Lunch on 30th September 2012.
- 4). The President discussed his proposal for the recipient of the President's Trophy for 2012 with the other members of the Awards Committee. After taking their opinions into consideration he decided that the trophy be awarded to Janet Gregory. This presentation was also made at the President's Lunch.
- 5). To mark the forthcoming retirement of Mrs Olive Evans, who has provided the greatly esteemed lunches for the BBMV 100 for many years, it was agreed that some form of recognition of her services would be arranged. This is likely to be either a one-off Certificate from CNW CTC or a framed letter of thanks, along with a bunch of flowers.

CTC Cymru

The Welsh Festival was held in Ruthin for the first time and was well supported by our members. The event was very successful partly due to one of the few spells of fine weather enjoyed this summer. The event included a choice of lead rides every day; 2 off road rides, and a series of competitions (hill climb, freewheel, map reading & treasure hunt). Vicky Payne organised a set of 3 audax rides with

help from her family and Dave Matthews. Gordon Seabright (the new director of CTC) attended on the Sunday so that he could talk to CTC local CTC members.

Thanks are due to everyone who helped with the event. Next year's Welsh Festival has been provisionally booked for Ruthin at the end of July.

Tourist Competition

Chester & N Wales won the Team Tourist Competition in 2011. The team members were Peter Dilworth, Andy Polakowski, Dave Statham, Martin Thompson, Darryl Porrino and Lowri Evans. The team went down to collect the award at the CTC National Dinner. Peter Dilworth won 2nd place over all with Andy Polakowski 3rd. Lowri Evans gained the Lady's Award. Congratulations to the team once again.

Due to rule changes for 2012 teams are made up of 4 riders. At the time of writing the team is once again in the lead (by 108 points). We have 5 riders in the top 7 places. Currently Peter Dilworth is equal 1st but there are still 59 results to come in.

Looking Forward

The calendar is already being prepared for next year; the proposed events are shown below:

Date	Event	Provisional Organiser
1 st January	New Year's Day McCleans Pub	Arthur Miller
1 st January	New Year's Day Carden Arms	Harry Watson
24 th March	Spring 50 Tourist Trial	Janet Gregory
TBA	Ladies Weekend /Picnic	Sue Booth
8 th June	Audax events: Barmouth Boulevard, Brenig Bach & Bala Parade 60k	Dave Matthews
23 rd June	Bob Clift Memorial Cheshire Cycleways	Dorothy Clift / Hazel McDougall
7 th July	Triennial Veterans 100/ Bert Bailey Memorial Vets 100	David Ackerley
26 th -29 th July	Welsh Festival in Ruthin	CTC Cymru
15 th September	Momma Audax Rides	Dave Matthews
29 th September	Presidents Ride, Annual Lunch and Trophy Presentation	President C & N Wales
5 th October	Hill Climb & Freewheel	Lowri Evans
19 th October	Corwen Audax Events (Clwydian, Clwyd Gate, Bala Mini Bash)	Vicky Payne
3 rd November	CH&NW CTC AGM	Secretary

As the Welsh Festival will be in Ruthin again it is hoped that Chester & N Wales members will want to attend the event (and that some will volunteer to help). The Treasure Hunt & Map Reading Competitions events have been moved from their usual place in the calendar to fit in with the festival.

Thanks

Thanks are due to all of the members who have supported events either by taking part, volunteering to help or by running the events. This is also true of all of the volunteers within the groups and on the Committee who work hard to ensure the continued running of the Club. I would like to give particular thanks to those who have helped me as secretary throughout the year.