

Vale Royal Abbey Arms, Delamere - 18th April 2018

Chris L on the main ride...

Roughly twenty-eight cyclists assembled outside the *Eureka* this week, *Brian L* had twenty, split into two groups of ten *Colin* and with *Chris S* covering the second (faster) group *Brian J* leading a shorter-routed group of eight. It didn't take long for *Colin's* group to pass us whilst *Brian L* took us on a pleasant route which included rising up *Yeld Lane* (first time for a while) arriving at the pub after everyone else (they had to wait for us in order to get the prearranged soup and butties (soup and chips was great, butties very average).

Return was via *Eaton, Beeston* etc. The sun shone all of the way and there were regular stops to take off coats, drink etc. Nearly everyone was in shorts for the first time this year. Thanks for the ride *Brian*, great route.



Also this from Brian J...

Just a short piece about the "alternative" shorter, easier, flatter (allegedly) ride to the *Abbey Arms* that I led.

We began with eight, which soon became nine when Mike *Maxwell* joined us on the *Greenway*, hoping (and expecting) to join *Brian L's* group, but opting to come with us when it became obvious that he'd missed them. Nine became eight again when *Roy* decided he wasn't fit

enough to make the whole route and bailed out at *Duddon*, opting for lunch at the *50p Shop* instead. We thought he had done very well to get that far in first cycle ride in over six weeks.

We were the first group to arrive at the pub, closely followed by the other two groups on a perfect day for cycling - perfect *Cheshire* lanes, warm breeze and sunshine. What more could you ask for? I can't comment on the lunch as we opted to sit outside with our



own sandwiches in view of the weather, but it looked good.

An uneventful journey back - almost flat (apologies to my group, I forgot about the short but very steep **Dark Lane**, but that did give you the chance to do the long swooping downhill of **Sugar Lane**, leading on to **Manley Mere**). Surprisingly this was my first time descending it, as far as I recall. I lost count of the number of ascents we've done over the years; that hairpin part way up is a killer. An enjoyable day out 42 miles and 1250 feet of ascent. (And in **Sue S's** absence I remembered to take the jelly-babies!)



Colin's group wasn't selected to be faster, it just worked out that way although it wasn't all hard work! On the way back we decided to stop for an ice cream at the **Ice Cream Farm**.



However, after finding our way through the huge and almost empty café and out again we located the ice cream counter, but after seeing the queue retreated to the **Marina** over the road. Here we were advised to ring ahead if we called again, and asked to take off our shoes, before enjoying some excellent cake and coffee. From here we (or at least some of us) rode to **The Harp** for a beer before wending our way home tired after a hard day! Good to see some new riders this week, and a welcome to **Richard** back riding after his injury.

Chris Smith

Photos Chris L

