

Rhewl or the Gladstone Library, Hawarden - 11th April 2018

The Rhewl Ride...

When I woke and checked the weather forecast it suggested the temperature would be 12-13 degrees C in the afternoon so I decided to wear shorts. My dog walk confirmed this plan. I was soon to realise the error I made by wearing shorts as the temperature throughout the day varied between 5 and 8 degrees C depending on altitude. Apart from this and the disappointing misty weather it was an excellent ride, thanks **Tony**. We did 43 miles and climbed 3450 ft. **Jane's ride** incidentally was 39 miles and 1400ft of ascent.

Rhewl ride from Chris L...



*"The **Wednesday riders** set off from **Mold** this week on a dull, damp day. There were only five of us assembled (although **Peter L** would join us just up the road).*

Welcome Breaks



Two riders were (sensibly) on ebikes for what proved to be a daunting ride. The only way out of **Mold** is up and so it proved as we started out on the first of many ascents! We had a welcome stop in **Llanarmon** when a coffee was deemed highly acceptable (and banana in my case).



Drovers Arms



There was a moment of concern not far beyond this where we'd lost our leader - **Tony's ebike** had stopped working and being rather heavy was not rideable up the hills; having disturbed his wife from her shopping as we waited for **Brian L** to take over (no one else knew the way) we then had a call from **Tony** to say he was on his way again (contacts apparently). This coincided with a long downhill section through Graigfechan with fabulous views apparently (but not today)! We arrived at the original destination only to find the café busy and full so we adjourned to **The Drovers Arms** down the road - excellent food, beer and service!

What **Tony** hadn't told us was that the hardest hill was on the return trip! We all (manual bikes) ended up walking up here towards **Bodfari** followed by the big dipper over the **Halkyns** before riding down a stream (I think there was a road in there somewhere) back to **Sychdyn**. At this point both **Tony and Brian** had left us just in time for **Marie** to puncture! **Chris S** had to get back so **Peter and myself** used the car park for the **Cross Keys** to fix this. Forty-three miles roughly - thanks very much **Tony** (I'm still in recovery).

Jane's Ride to Gladstone Library - comments from Brian J...

We expected a low turnout at *Eureka*, believing most would opt for the more challenging alternative - so we were very surprised that upwards of twenty opted for *Jane's* outing to a brand new venue, the *café at Hawarden library* (titled "Food for Thought").



Gladstone Library

Jane promised a route out that circled around *Higher Kinnerton* up to and over the *A5104* and over the *A55 footbridge* to descend, rather than ascend through *Bilberry wood*, thus

approaching *Hawarden town centre* from the south, rather than having the tiring and steep upwards ascent through little *Mancot* that we often struggle up. We lost *Charlie* soon after setting off when he realised he had left his bag on the table at the café but we pressed on, in two separate groups to assist with traffic management, but following fairly closely with *John F* nobly volunteering to lead group two even though he didn't have the official route to follow. *John* showed me his new "won't leave home without it, accessory" a large screwdriver, in order to lever recalcitrant chains from bottom brackets, in view of last week's unfortunate incident with his own bike. I was to have cause to thank him for this later on in the day.

The *library* was adjacent to the *church*, where bell ringing was in progress to mark our arrival, and the library was revealed in all its glory - and what a find. Baronial and imposing with wood panelling and grand *Victorian* portraits on every wall.

The café was warm and inviting and big enough to enable the whole group to sit at one table and still leave plenty of room for other diners. The café was fairly busy and our meal deal of sandwiches and soup (not chips for a change!) was soon put out for us and was certainly generous and tasty (carrot and coriander if you're interested....). The return journey was uneventful, apart from one missed turning



(*Upper Aston Hall Lane*) which meant the group turning round and climbing back up a hill we had just descended, I was at the back with *John F* when my chain derailed and lodged, stuck

*firm between cassette and bottom bracket, bringing me to a full stop. In a matter of seconds **John** had deployed his magic screwdriver and we were back on the road before anyone else was aware of our mechanical problem. Chapeaux to **Jane** for an interesting ride with some less frequented lanes and a new lunch venue that eminently deserves a repeat visit. 39 miles in all with 1400 feet of climbing"*

Also this from John F

***Jane's ride** that was designed to take the "few" people that didn't want to take the main ride listed above, rather dauntingly, had twenty people on it with only **Jane** having the route. We split into two groups of ten and managed not to lose the front group as they rode 500 metres ahead. Our venue was the **Gladstone Library** in **Harwarden**. Jane had arranged a £5 sandwich and soup deal. They were by far the best sandwiches that we have had on any ride this year! Thanks **Concertina Jane** for an excellent route and venue. I will certainly be going there for lunch again.*

Like Brian J I was surprised how many people opted for **Jane's** easier option. Was it the weather, the start location, the hills which made the difference? Four people who did **Jane's option** recorded the ride on Strava and three of these rode considerably more miles than we did including their ride to the start, so it wasn't the mileage that made the difference. Feedback would be welcome, to assist with next year's ride planning.

Chris Smith