



EGM

The EGM took place on Friday 4th March with over 30 people attending. It was agreed to adopt a constitution. You will find a copy accompanying this newsletter. This was done so the group can be in the position to support any initiatives that may arise in this new era of greater community involvement. The constitution was made as simple as possible to make it a document that did not constrain the group too much.

There was a good discussion about the constitution and various new initiatives. At the end of the evening there was a presentation by Access cycles about the electric bikes they sell. Several members had a trial ride round the car park; it would be fair to report that people were impressed.

LSTF

The Council has decided to make a bid for funds from the Local Sustainable Transport Fund. This was announced by Central Government at the turn of the year. Local councils are invited to bid for projects that would encourage sustainable transport. After Officers attended a briefing it has been decided that the bid is to be based on a theme of a sustainable tourism with the central theme of walking and cycling. £560 million have been set aside for England, excluding London. The funding is to be spread over 3 years. There are various restrictions on how the money is spent so it has been decided to make a bid, which will not be in excess of £5 million. The bid has to be spent in two ways; 40% capital (cycle tracks, footpaths etc) and 60% revenue, schemes to promote cycling and walking etc)

There are two overriding criteria that the bid must address; a) it will support the local economy and b) reduce carbon emissions. More information is on that of the DfT.

<http://www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/regional/transportfund/>; there is also a briefer outline on our web site.

As has now become apparent there is a large emphasis on involvement of the community; including groups such as ourselves but also commercial enterprises. The phrase matched funding is one that has become familiar to many who have become involved in this kind of thing. There is no figure set by the government but there is an

expectation that if bids are to be successful that they must demonstrate a commitment of all kinds of partners in a local community. At the present the Council has identified 4 strands to the bid:

- Public transport linkages,
- National Cycle Network improvements
- Rights of Way network
- Signage, information, publicity and advertising.

The bid itself has two parts to it. A statement of intent by the beginning of June this year and a detailed bid by Feb 2012. The government has indicated that the decisions will be made quickly so bidders can begin their work as soon as possible after that date.

We are asking all members to contact the committee with any ideas that they may have. Officers are keen to hear our ideas to show they are involving the community. The group has been in contact already with a range of people over this project making them aware of its existence and encouraging them to become involved. We have also met with the Council on a number of occasions to learn about the fund and to demonstrate our commitment to be involved as much as possible.

Mince Pie Ride

It took place as usual from Alverstone Village Hall. It was a smaller number this year due to the cold and miserable weather. The ride included a bracing stint along Sandown sea front but of course this made the mulled and warm mince pies even more appetizing.

May 8th “End to End” - off road ride. In aid of the hospice.
More details on the hospice web site.

Wight Wheels Challenge

After the great success of last year's Challenge, the Wight Wheels Cycle Challenge is being run again this year, between May 9th and May 29th.

The Challenge is a project aimed at



encouraging more people to cycle on the Island and works by getting local employers to compete with each other to see who can get the highest percentage of staff on a bike for a minimum of 10 minutes, at some point during the three week period in May. Employers sign up (for free) and then staff log their bike trips on: www.wightwheelschallenge.org.uk. The more staff that log trips, the higher the "score" the employer gets. There are five different team categories depending on numbers of staff at the organisation.

As well as being a fun way to engage people in cycling, there are great prizes to be won! Cinema tickets for "new" cyclists, a brand new hybrid bike, vouchers to be spent at cycling shops, meals at restaurants, health club memberships, even tree climbing adventures.....lots to encourage those otherwise reluctant to get the bike out of the shed.

For more information go to: www.wightwheelschallenge.org.uk or else contact Challenge Coordinator Will Ainslie at: william.ainslie@ctc.org.uk
mobile: 07590 516291

Ideas for new companies to sign up and/or assistance always welcome!

Membership

In the square by this item there is a box, which if ticked highlights that your membership is now due. Please re-join as we rely on your small membership fee to keep us going. £5.00 Per. Household. £3.00 Unwaged. Please make all cheques payable to CycleWight. Mr D Jackson, Toad

Hall, Church Rd Havenstreet, PO33 4DW

Bike to Work Scheme

Many of you will have heard of this scheme. It is now offered by a variety of employers. It allows people to buy cycles and equipment at a preferential price via salary sacrifice. It is a scheme that has government backing. Many Island employers are taking part in the scheme with a good response from a wide range of companies. The Isle of Wight Council has decided to withdraw from the scheme for its employees. The reasons cited have been the difficulties of administering the scheme and securing a new contract with the administrative body that does the work on behalf of the government.

What a shame this has happened when the Island is bidding for money for sustainable transport (see overleaf) and the launch of the Eco Island initiative.

Please write to your Councillor and ask the Council to re-consider their decision. CycleWight have written already but the more who contact Councillors and ask for an explanation – the more likely something is going to happen.

Events

There is a wide range of events taking place in the next few months.

The Hospice has decided to organise a series of events linked to cycling. The first of these is on **May 8th** with an “**End to End**” off road ride, which offers; an interesting alternative to the 7 Hills Killer.

Following on from this during **Bike Week 19th – 26th June** there is to be a whole series of rides. Details of all events in May and June are on their web site. <http://www.iwhospice.org>. If you do not have a computer I am sure they will post you a list of what is happening. There are gentle rides as well as some more challenging ones and some fun events too. The Hospice has to raise £2 million pounds a year so your support, as well as those you can encourage to come along will be very much appreciated.

The Council will continue their support for the **Cycling Festival** in September. (Hurrah) As usual they are looking for people who are willing to offer rides. Please contact Claire Critchison on claire.critchison@iow.gov.uk or 823070