

The AGM

The AGM took place on Friday 4th December as an online event. Around 30 people joined us. The pleasing thing was that many were new members or those who would not normally venture out on a dismal winter evening.

The business part of the meeting was begun by Stephen Dominy from Cycling UK. He outlined their new project to help groups in their campaigning; The Cycling Advocacy Network. [Further information](#). They have produced a series of materials to assist in the project as well as provide technical support. As time progresses they are hoping local representatives will meet up. George Wilks volunteered to be our local rep.

Brock Duncombe Rogers, the Active Travel Officer for the Council spoke about the Key Worker Cycle Scheme. More of this elsewhere in the newsletter.

Martin Gibson who is the Newport High Street Action Zone Manger talked about his work to improve the centre of Newport. He asked for people to participate in an online survey to highlight issues important to them.

Finally Tim Thorne, the Chair of the group gave a presentation of the very busy and strange year. He outlined some of the key issues including the council's transport response, the pandemic and the poor quality of the cycle track.

At the following committee meeting it was decided to offer a live stream of next year's AGM as well as our normal meeting. The minutes can be viewed [here](#)

Next years' committee is as follows: Tim Thorne – Chair, Jesse Garbett – Treasurer, Alex Lawson – Secretary. Committee members Steve Archer, Alan Bennett, Naomi Hyland, Val Lawson, Mike Marlow, Andy Newman, Malcolm Ross, Matthew Whittaker, Mick Watts, George Wilks, Julie Jones – Evans

Sandown Track

Some of you will have heard of the proposal to close the track at Alverstone for 6 months. This is to prevent migrating eels being sucked into the Sandown reservoir. A member of the public contacted us. After making some initial enquiries we were concerned there seemed to be little knowledge of the planned work. We asked for a quicker response, which thanks to Rights of Way we received. The work is being carried out by a contractor for Southern Water. Island Roads who act on the Council's behalf to close the cycle tracks have asked for more information from both parties.

We decided to contact Southern Water ourselves but have still had no reply. As part of the present application a diversion is to be signposted, via Adgestone Lower Road. We have said this route is not acceptable for the wide range of people who use the track. On average in the summer months there are over 150 cycle journeys a day.

Emergency Active Travel Fund

This was the Department of Transport (DfT) fund offered to Local Authorities to provide for pop up cycle lanes and routes due to the pandemic. It was to comprise of two phases. It has been recognized by IWC that Phase 1 was pushed through quickly. Normal procedures were not followed but lessons learned are being applied to Phase 2. In Phase 2 the DfT will allocate money subject to a defined set of criteria, and performance will be strictly monitored. IWC's application includes proposals at Fairlee Road, which is to upgrade the path from Mews Lane to the Riverside Centre. At the present time IWC are consulting with stakeholders including Parish Councils, The Ramblers, as well as CycleWight. This formed part of our last committee meeting. Island Roads have been asked for a quotation for the proposals, which should come in early March. It remains to be seen what these costs will be, but IWC is confident that the DfT will provide funding for their proposal.

At our meeting with IWC some members of the committee did express the view that the proposals were disappointing as the EATF was about creating new routes rather than upgrading routes that already exist. This route had not appeared in our campaign around 'Widen my Path'. This asked for people's suggestions for new route/paths. There was an acknowledgment of this but it was about being able to deliver something in a set period of time. It was felt that this improvement only made sense if a route to Wootton was part of the long term plans.

The committee asked for feedback on the Phase 1 grant. A traffic notice is in place at Little London to prevent through traffic. IWC are seeking the view of Newport & Carisbrooke Parish Council and are having further talks with the owner of the Bargeman's Rest. Unused funds from Phase 1 can be carried over into Phase 2.

Planning

A very hot topic at the moment in the local press are the housing developments around the Island: Pennyfeathers, West Acre Park, Gunville and Harcourt Sands. At present we have submitted comments on all of them apart from Harcourt Sands. This has been made easier with the government's new guidance 'Cycle Infrastructure Design', which clearly sets out the expectations of new developments.

In the past we have been asked why have we not objected to these developments. In general we do not as it is not the purpose of the group to comment on the value of individual proposals but only on the quality of the provision.

Recently we commented on West Acre Park and also sent our submission to the developer, Captiva Homes and their agent BCM. They contacted us and we had two very fruitful meetings on the design of their site. It was excellent to have such a positive response. They have made a real effort to make the development as walking and cycling friendly as possible.

Track Maintenance

This has become a long running saga. We have been contacted again in the last few days by two people concerned with the state of the track at Blackwater and Merstone,

Our latest correspondence with the Council over the contract has thrown some more light on present conditions. At present there is to be no work on paths in the Newport to Sandown track area until WightFibre have finished their work. This should end on 31st March. We did ask to walk the route with surveyors to understand better the surveying system but were told it is carried out by a third party so this was not possible. The inspections are done during the summer period; "the defects that are recorded are then calculated in accordance with the contract to achieve the individual scores." These inspections are every two years. As the scores are an average for the whole route this allows for sub standard sections to 'pass'. We have asked to see the actual reports.

The next Health and Safety audit is to be by 31st March, We will then be interested to hear from members if there are sections on the cycle paths which they consider as dangerous.

E bikes Charging Facilities

I have been riding an ebike for several years now and am aware of how having an ebike has enabled me not just to cycle again but, above all, to enjoy the exercise. Which, of course, encourages me to do more.

There are far more people riding ebikes now. However, as with electric cars, I know that a major issue is the fear of running out of power – ebikes are often very heavy making them difficult to ride without power. Identifying more places on the Island able to offer charging facilities would enable more people to use their ebikes for more journeys, which would be good for health as well as better for the environment.

Last year I realised that the list of places offering charging facilities for electric bikes was out of date so I volunteered to try to update the list. CYCLEWight was very supportive but then the lockdowns began and I had to put the plan on hold. At the beginning of this year I suggested to CYCLEWight that I have another go at updating the list and possibly add more places via an article in the Newsletter, which could also include a questionnaire. Would you be willing to allow someone to charge at your business? Can you complete the questionnaire? Here

While anyone requiring a charge for their ebike would have to provide their own charger (there are many different types of charger) all that is required to charge an ebike battery is an ordinary household socket. This will be useful for visitors wishing to bring their ebike to the IOW – when that becomes possible again. The final step would be an app. Any one?
Claire Franklin



Key Worker Cycle Scheme

Isle of Wight Council Key Worker Cycle Scheme was introduced at the start of the first COVID-19 lockdown in April 2020 to provide key workers with a safe, cheap, and healthy way to travel to work during the pandemic. The scheme had two strands. Firstly, it offered free access to a short-term bike loan to give key workers, who did not own a bike, the opportunity to try cycling to work. Secondly, where a key worker already owned a bike, the scheme offered a £50 voucher that could be redeemed against repairs and essential accessories which to help them start, or restart, cycling to work. The scheme ran under this format for the duration of the first lockdown, from April-June 2020, and continued to run in a reduced format offering bike loans to key workers for the rest of 2020, and into 2021.

681 key workers applied for the voucher to purchase cycle repairs and essential accessories to help cycling. 508 applicants received a voucher and 393 applicants redeemed their voucher at a participating cycle supplier. 163 key workers applied for and received bike loans ranging from 1-3 months to help them try cycling to work. The suppliers to the scheme were very satisfied with how it worked.



Key workers having their bikes maintained as part of the voucher scheme

Follow-up surveys showed that three unique conditions presented by the Covid-19 lockdown proved to be significant in encouraging participants to take part in the scheme. These conditions included, public transport becoming a less attractive option, health and wellbeing becoming more important and the roads being quieter due to reduced vehicular traffic levels. There was a 100% increase amongst voucher participants and a 275% increase amongst bike loan participants, which cycle to work as their main transport mode six-months after finishing the scheme compared to prior to registration.

Brock Duncombe Rogers,

IWC wants you! Urgent!

The Council is asking residents to complete a questionnaire about cycling and walking. It closes on Sunday 28th Feb. Please do it today if you have not done so already. [Here](#)

Pedallers

We could all do with a bit of cheering up and so



here it is. David and Emma Hughes who run Pedallers have not let the grass grow under their feet (or decking) during the pandemic.

They have tripled the outside area so they can accommodate plenty of outside socially distanced tables. The new area looks across the horse paddock and will be a great afternoon suntrap by the look of this picture. It would be fair to say their great enthusiasm has been a boon to the track and the Island's tourist economy.

CycleWight web site

As some of keener members will have noticed we have had a redesign of the [web site](#) to give it a more contemporary feel. It is much more simple, hopefully, to follow stories rather than, as in the past, having to scroll down the whole page to find something. Please do inform us of anything that you think would enhance the site of information which needs updating, We have paid to have more space so hopefully have more room to store have more productive site.

We would like to thank Kevan Ansell for the advice and guidance over this. We are very appreciative as he was very generous with his time. Alan Bennett, our web master, deserves praise too, for making it a reality.

Missing Links

Cycling Uk have launched a scheme called [Missing Links](#). This is very similar to our project for a couple of years ago, "Paths for All" They are asking people to look for sections of route, which could have a change in designation or have some upgrading to make it more accessible to cyclists. Rights of Way have received one suggestion from Cycling Uk already. There is a short stretch of footpath at Duxmore Farm, that with a change in status would enable a through route for bikes using existing bridle paths on either side to create a route from Ashey Cemetery to Downend. Please have a look at their web page.

Keeping going

With the pandemic and terrible weather, I decided to invest in an indoor cycle trainer. In past years I had owned a simple "wheel on" trainer, where the whole bike is mounted on the trainer and a friction wheel is pressed against the rear wheel tyre.



Problem with these is tyre slip and regular calibration that can be a bit fiddly to get right. But, if all you want is to keep the legs spinning in the bad weather these trainers are perfectly adequate There are simple Bluetooth speed and cadence sensor kits for these, for those that want to gauge progress.

I'm still a very active cyclist, So, I invested in a TacX Neo2 which is called "direct drive" this is where you remove the rear wheel and the trainer forms the base for the bike and has its own cassette. Advantages

of this system is no calibration needed and rear tyre issues are eliminated. The trainer also incorporates Bluetooth and ant+ connectivity, so it is called a "smart trainer". It



transmits power, cadence and speed for use in virtual cycling environments. Power and heart rate are great metrics for gauging calories burnt for the weight conscious.

Since my investment I have joined Zwift, an online virtual cycling community, which requires a monthly subscription. It is a very versatile and professional program that runs on all platforms. It is used by many pro cycling teams and there are events and races for all ability levels. I use Tacx trainers, but there are other makes available on the market. I recommend visiting a review site to help you choose what is the right one for your needs. Simple wheel on trainers can cost as little as a couple of hundred pound, where a smart trainer can cost upwards of eight hundred. Alan Bennett

Two new bike shops.

A sign of the times. Adrian's Bike shop is a popular place in Freshwater and so it is great news for the people of Cowes that there is to be a second branch in Medina Court, Arctic Road by the cycle track. It will "have a bit of everything" according to Adrian. It opens on 1st March. To begin with hours will be 9-5.

Newport is not be left behind. Opening on the 1st of Feb was Isle of Wight Bikes on the corner of St James Street and Lugley Street. It too is offering a wide range of services. Phone number 217500 <https://www.iwbikes.co.uk/> Run by Justin he is offering new customers a bag of Percy Pigs or a bottle of Pink Prosecco,

Membership

Membership is £5.You can apply to (re)join CYCLEWight by going to the website. To pay online using BACS Sort Code: 40-34-26 Account Number: 81855654 Please put YOUR NAME so we know who it's from or email us to let us know you have paid. This enables us to update the membership list. Cheques should be made payable to CycleWight and posted to CycleWight, Rowborough Manor, Beaper Shute, BRADING PO36 OAZ