



Let us begin

Over 30 members attended the meeting to discuss the future direction of CycleWight at the end of March. It proved to be a most informative and enjoyable evening. Tim Thorne, acting Chair, outlined the point of the meeting. It was agreed that there should be five broad areas to which the group should address. There was then an opportunity for each of the members attending to contribute ideas or make salient points by visiting tables around the room that had large pieces of blank paper to write upon. Each table had a committee member present to encourage discussion. This proved to be a successful idea as it was nearly impossible to encourage people to return to a more formal setting. To close the meeting there was further opportunity to discuss issues and points raised. At the end of the evening there had been 45 points made on the sheets of paper with many fresh ideas as well as some of the more perennial problems arising. Some of the issues and points raised appear elsewhere in the newsletter.

Events

There is to be a Family Bike ride organised by CycleWight from Medina High School to Cowes on Sunday 24th June. This is to be done in collaboration with the Council. They have been organising a series of events linked to encouraging more people to ride. This Sunday is to be the culmination of this and is part of a bigger event linked to Bike Week. The Police will be there encouraging people to get their bikes registered to discourage theft. There will be also other demonstrations and bike shops in attendance. The event runs from 10-3, with the ride beginning at 3. Please come along and support the group. It is a wonderful opportunity for a ride that is more or less totally off road so bring along someone who does not ride very often. It is also an excuse to have some exercise then to eat a big ice cream in Cowes. **More detail overleaf.**

Riders on the Easter bike ride

QuickTime® and a
Photo - JPEG decompressor
are needed to see this picture.

Stay Bike Safe

The Isle of Wight's Safer Neighbourhoods Partnership is staging the event between 10am and 3pm on Sunday, June 24, in the grounds of Medina High School. The first 500 cyclists attending the event who register their bicycle on a searchable database and have it tagged with a special security band will receive either a set of bicycle lights, a bicycle alarm or a £10 voucher. The voucher can only be used towards the cost of buying a piece of security or safety related bicycle equipment. A number of cycle shops will have stalls at the event. They are The Bike Shed, Bikemech, Extreme Cycles, Tav Cycles, Wight Mountain, Halfords and Wight Off Road. A bicycle repair and restoration service, called Re-cycle-D will also be attending.

Isle of Wight Police's Community Safety Inspector, Mark Bell, said; "If stolen bikes are registered, they can be more easily returned to their rightful owner. We would encourage people to use www.immobilise.com which is a searchable database used by our officers."

Other features of the show include:

- CycleTraining
- Cycle Skills
- Island Youth Cycling Club
- CycleWight (of course)
- Police and Paramedic cycles

March meeting further details.

As may be remembered from the last newsletter the main trust of the group was to be put into five areas, which were:

- Policy campaigning & consulting
- Connecting routes through towns.
- Cycling friendly routes over the Island.
- Cycle Safety.
- Promoting Cycling

The group now has some identifiable targets to work towards One of the most important elements of the plan is to try and encourage more members to become involved in the activities of the group. There are more details in various places in the newsletter. The group feels it would be more effective if more people would become involved as it shares the load as well as makes the point that it is just not a few individuals to the various bodies we deal with. It also means there are fresh ideas and solutions to issues.

Committee Meetings

It is hoped that more people will attend these meetings so as to get a flavour of what the group is doing as well as voice views and ideas. They are very informal and provide an opportunity for us all to let off steam as well as laugh. The dates are below.

- Tuesday 17 July, 7.30, cycling meeting, White Lion Arreton.
- Wednesday 5 September, 8pm, meeting, Castle Inn Newport.
- Thursday 11 October, 8pm, meeting, Castle Inn Newport.
- Friday 23 November, 7.30pm, AGM, Scout Hall Newport

The idea of meeting in a local pub is so more people can come than at someone's house. We have held two meetings so far at the Castle Inn in Newport High Street and it has proved to be a most pleasant venue. In our wildest dreams if too many attended on a regular basis we may have to think of elsewhere. There are cycle racks outside and Drill Hall Rd Car Park is around the corner. With ban on smoking coming into force on July 1st this is one more reason for you to come out and have a good time

As part of encouraging people to attend the next meeting will be slightly different as it will be at the White Lion at Arreton and start slightly earlier in the hope that some people will ride as a group. It is close to the Newport to Sandown Cycle track.

Cycle Training

For many of us we can remember the days of doing our Cycling Proficiency. It is good to report that is still going and that some of the training is now done actually on the road. Matt Archer, the Assistant Road Safety Officer also highlighted the scheme that is has been introduced for people who would like to return to cycling. These courses that cost £25 and last an hour cover, bike and helmet check as well as riding on the road and being taught appropriate strategies.. As part of the course participants are also made aware of the various cycle groups. At the present time 5 people have completed the shorter class with others expressing an interest. If you know of anyone who would wish to take advantage of this training please call Matt at County Hall.

For Sale Trike adult. Modern design. Basket on back. 3 spd hub gear 24/26 inch wheel. In store at the moment £175 ono Jack 854403.

Cross Newport Route.

This is an issue that is on going to stay the learnt. It may be remembered that in local legend that even the French invaders in the Middle Ages only got as far as Node Hill before they stopped. It is good to report that it is now back on the agenda. Island 2000 has become involved in the project and has identified some funding streams for upgrading parts of the route. CycleWight, Island 2000 and the Council have looked at some of the more problematic parts of the route and discussion have now begun. There have been some site visits too. This is an issue that will take a long time to resolve one suspects. Have you got any ideas or solution? Please forward them to Val Ayling or George Wilks.

It was worth the wait

The new bridge has been finished on the Cowes to Newport stretch. It is very impressive with a carriage way which makes it easy for converging cyclists to pass each other rather than before where it needed the accuracy of the Red Arrows to pass each other without crashing.

It would be good if there were some kind of recognition of the work done. (County Press?) People who do not cycle regularly have been impressed by the quality of the project when they have come across it. It is also good to report that there is some funding left to do some remedial work on the track south of the bridge.

Tip Coming from the north the right hand of the bridge is much flatter than the other two 'entrances'



Stop Press. Can you help the Island's Sustrans ranger clear some of the entrances to R 23? Work will begin in July. Equipment provided. If you are interested please ring Tigg on 527896

Owning a Brompton

Bromptons have become somewhat of a fashion item I am led to believe in certain parts of London. Since the introduction of congestion charging and the London bombings the number of cycling trips in London has increased. Brompton bikes, have led the way in folding bikes and though there are more and more competitors it is still thought by many the one of the best available. After much thought I decided to take the plunge last August. The bike has come a long way from when some of us first remember seeing them. They are now available in all manner of equipment levels and colours. The Bike Shed at Arreton has become a dealer and so with Jeff Smith's promise of being allowed to ride before you buy I went and had a ride. There are specific models but there is the ability to order bikes a la carte. I decided on buying a model with six gears, dynamo lighting, and Kevlar tyres. I worked on the principal that it is hilly and windy on the island, with lights I could be anywhere without worrying to get home on time and punctures are a pain at the best of times. The a la carte goes to the extent that there are three different ratios of gears available.

How has it been? Is it true what they say? They are fun and easy to ride and easy to fold and do make it easy to go anywhere; I have now ridden to and from Ryde and Fishbourne on my way to the mainland several times. On the Fast Cat there is plenty of room. On the Wightlink car ferry I found a nice little hole for it on the prow that keeps it out of the rain and spray, though it would be just as easy to take it up to the lounge. I have also taken it on the train several times. The first time I looked for the dedicated cycle area but since I have not bothered, as it is so small it fits by my feet or in a space close by.

The one concern though is that it is a desirable object to steal though the answer to that is to fold it up and take it with you. I took it into a restaurant and once again found a small place out of the way to keep it. Ultimately the bike is not too heavy to carry for a short while and you can buy wheels to go on the rack so you can push it along.

One thing is for sure is that many people are often amazed when in front of their eyes you unfold it and ride away. It is hard not to be smug.
Tim Thorne

School's Cycling is taking off!

Cycling in island schools is taking off thanks to a new initiative from British Cycling and provided through the Carisbrooke School Sports Partnership. Fleets of GT and Raleigh Mountain bikes have been purchased from Wight Mountain in Newport and are stored at Cowes High School and other locations around the West Wight. The aim is to launch British Cycling's Go Ride scheme in schools around the Carisbrooke Schools Partnership. The scheme aims to teach youngsters bike control skills and introduces them to the different disciplines of cycling. School Sports Co-ordinator Ian Rock, based at Cowes High School, says that the scheme is a great way to improve children's confidence and safety on bikes and is a positive and exciting way of finding talented youngsters who have the potential to be stars of the future. The scheme is being trialled at schools in the Cowes area this term and will be launched in East Cowes, Newport and the West Wight from September. For more information on the scheme, feel free to contact Ian at Cowes High School, 203103.

Looks good

At a recent Cycle Forum Meeting Mike Starke with the support of others put forward a proposal for there to be some more formal recognition of Off Road Cycle trails through the Forestry Commissions land on the Island. At this present time there are several unofficial routes that are used by enthusiasts that have been allowed to develop with the knowledge of the authorities. It has been recognised that as these trails have developed that has been done with care of the forests in mind.

There is a feeling now that this now needs to be formalised. This will allow more tracks to be developed to provide for what is obviously a demand. It is hoped that this will also attract users from the Island and visitors from the mainland. There is also some concern that walkers are using these paths and do not recognise that they are primarily for cycles. There have been a few incidents of both users being surprised by the sudden appearance of a walker or cyclist.

It is good to note that the idea received good support from all present at the meeting and the new proprietors at Wight Mountain felt that they could provide some of the labour and materials for the work.

Holes

This has come up over several news letters but it is vital for cyclists to report and dangerous road surfaces. In fact Sue Cracknell is keen for people to do it. It has now become even easier as the main switchboard at County Hall, 821000, has now the facility to record your complaint. The CTC has also now got its own web site spot <http://www.fillthathole.org.uk/> which also fulfils the same service. Apparently if the Council are informed of the hole this changes their level of responsibility towards it and makes it easier to claim compensation if in anything happens to you. It is good to report that a rather dangerous hole that appeared on the Cowes to Newport cycle track one morning was reported to County Hall had been repaired by the evening.

Events

Sunday 24th June Bike Safe

Sunday 15th July New Forest Picnic Ride. Meet at Yarmouth 8.45 for the 9.00 ferry. Picnic at Rhinefield Ornamental Drive. Onto Burley and tea stop at Homsley, before riding the Castlemain Corkscrew towards Brockenhurst. Aiming for the 4.15 ferry at Lymington. More information : John Curtis on 07970860157

Tuesday 17th July Committee Meeting White Lion Arreton

Wednesday 5 September, 8pm, Committee meeting, Castle Inn Newport.

15 –23 September Cycling Festival. There is even more happening this year. Look at the excellent web site www.sunseaandcycling.com

Could you help by leading a ride? Contact Claire Whittington from Events at County Hall

Of interest

The following link is for a report on the terrible accident in North Wales where several cyclists were killed when a car skidded on ice. Lessons to be learnt!

http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/wales/north_east/6716199.stm

Membership

In the square by this item there is a box, which if ticked highlights 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.