

Wirral Cycling Group

Minutes of the 2023 Annual General Meeting

Held on Monday 6th November 2023 at the Lever Social Club, Port Sunlight

Present:

David Collinson, Sonia Oldershaw, Steve Whittaker, Robert Holmes, Neil Ross-Jones, Angela Price, Ken Fearon, David Brewer, Andy Goodwin, Jill McNamee, Janet Coventry, Una Keane, Mary Ritchie, Ian Ritchie, Ewan Wilkinson, David Williams, Barry Roberts, David Branch, David Hill, Noel Schorah, Sheila Coetzee, Mike Elkins, Peter Williams, Charlotte Mackenzie, Graham Henry, Simon ETTY, Mark Burrows, Tony Wright, Barbara ETTY, Carmel Wright, John Hampson, Paul Malloy

Apologies were received from:

Phil Egan, Julia Young, John Garner, Harry Coxhead, Sue Hughes, John Chambers, Richard Giles, Anne Lear.

The Chairman, Peter Williams, opened the meeting with welcoming remarks.

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These were accepted, proposed by John Hampson, seconded by Peter Williams. There were no matters arising.

Chairman's Report

Peter thanked all club members, all the committee members and all those who volunteer as Ride Leaders, Back Markers, FaceBook contributors, and in so many other ways to keep the club running smoothly and enjoyably for all.

Over the past year the club has been active in many ways, including:

- Supporting the NHS 75 years' birthday celebrations at Arrowe Park Hospital and raising £120 for the NICU
- Raising an Xmas donation of £240 to support the Birkenhead Wheels for All initiative
- Providing input into the Wirral Cycling Development Group
- Supporting the Cool Heswall Environmental Awareness Day
- Supporting Energise Cycles (a charitable organisation) in various ways
- Supporting the Wirral Bikeathon
- Organising a Training Workshop for Ride Leaders and Back Markers (developed and led by Peter Williams and John Hampson)
- Organising a very successful and enjoyable Club Weekend Away in the Shrewsbury area in August. Thanks to John Hampson for masterminding this
- A few members enjoyed a cycling trip to Spain courtesy of Harry Coxhead.

Peter said that he had been honoured to be the Chairman over the past two years and thanked members for their support over the past two years. He has though decided to stand down as chairman as from today, but will be happy to remain on the committee.

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Treasurer's Report (presented by Peter Williams, as Richard Giles was unable to attend)

The Treasurer's Annual Statement was shown. In summary, the subscriptions from our 106 members are our only source of income.

For the year from September 2022 to September 2023, our income was £510, our expenses were £968, leaving a balance of £2,050.11 at the end of September.

The committee had decided that this year the membership subscription would be raised to £10 per annum, mainly to ensure that the club can continue to fund First Aid training courses for members.

Election of Officers

The positions of Chairman, Treasurer and Secretary are currently vacant. Nominations were invited from the floor.

The following persons indicated interest in filling these roles:

- Chairman, Andy Goodwin, proposed Una Keane, seconded Sonia Oldershaw
- Secretary, David Branch, proposed Sonia Oldershaw, seconded Andy Goodwin
- Treasurer, Ian Ritchie, proposed Ewan Wilkinson, seconded Dave Branch

The above members were duly elected, unopposed.

Election of Committee

The following members will remain on the committee: Steve Whittaker, Mike Elkins, Anne Lear, Peter Williams and John Hampson, proposed by David Brewer, seconded by Mike Elkins.

David Brewer indicated his willingness to serve the committee as a representative on the Wirral Council Cycling Development Group, proposed by John Hampson, seconded by Charlotte MacKenzie.

The outgoing chairman wholeheartedly thanked all those who have been elected.

Booking System

John Hampson explained that the system sets a maximum of 16 people per ride, allowing for two groups of 8. Ride leaders can set a lower maximum number for their own ride, if they wish.

Currently, because of illness or other reasons, we have lost the services of five ride leaders. That means that for the period January to March 2024 we will only be able to schedule one ride on a Wednesday and one on a Sunday. The club needs to have at least two more Ride Leaders to support two rides on Wednesday and one on Sunday.

In the past year there have been 186 rides: 27 at Grade B (mostly thanks to Neil Ross-Jones), 106 at Grade C or C+, and 44 at Grade D, with a total of 2,030 attendees.

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Una Keane asked “Why do rides have to be on Wednesday and Sunday?” and in the subsequent discussion, it was felt that there is an advantage to having set days so that people can plan their week around those days, but that Ride Leaders can change the day of their ride, for example, to avoid bad weather or for personal reasons. There is certainly scope to consider this idea. Andy suggested that any members who would perhaps prefer a different day could volunteer as a Ride Leader, be given some training and mentoring and lead rides on those days.

Una also asked about mentoring for any new Ride Leaders and John explained the “buddy system”, where an experienced ride leader will be assigned to any new ride leaders to help them do any reconnoitres, add ride details to the website, and accompany the new ride leaders on their first few rides until the ride leader feels confident enough to go solo.

Carmel Wright thanked all the Ride Leaders for doing a brilliant job, and Ewan Wilkinson thanked John Hampson for setting up the Ride Leaders website.

Mike Elkins suggested rides dedicated to eBike users.

Andy Goodwin asked if the boxes on the booking form could be populated automatically. John explained that the boxes would be populated with the same details as were entered previously if the person was using a PC or an Android phone, but that feature was dependent upon the device being used, not the website. Andy was using an Apple iPad.

Una Keane suggested that the emergency contact box should be a mandatory field, but John reported that the committee had decided that at their last meeting and it was now mandatory.

John reminded the meeting that, rather than having to reconnoitre new routes for every ride, there is a database of more than 180 past rides (on the web page labelled “[Routes](#)”) that have been plotted as GPX files and can be used by ride leaders .

Next Year’s Weekend Away

Two years ago the annual trip was a linear route from Morecambe to Bridlington organised through Cycle Active, but this year in order to make the trip less expensive and more flexible (as people could ride for just one or two days) we tried a “hub and spoke approach” based on Shrewsbury.

The hub and spoke approach worked well and this year we were able to cycle in two different ability groups. Una Keane suggested that with a hub and spoke we could consider three groups possibly incorporating a D grade ride.

Next year we are considering a possible organised trip from South to North Wales at around 200 miles over four days, or four days based on a different location. Dave Brewer commented that the positive aspects of this year were that some club members could join for just a day or two, and it was nice not having to worry about moving luggage each day.

Organisers are needed now for next year. Ewan Wilkinson acknowledged that a significant amount of time goes into the planning of routes, stops and reconnoitring.

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Any Other Business

1. Ewan Wilkinson wondered whether there was any interest in a cycle touring trip of 60 to 70 daily miles? If so, contact him.
2. Dave Hill led a discussion about our Facebook page. There are currently 730 followers on Facebook. Anyone is able to join, providing they don't advertise. Sonia said the rules should be that a post must be bike-related and no advertising.
3. Dave Brewer suggested a bigger venue for next year's Xmas lunch, as it filled up very quickly this year.
4. Dave Brewer asked if there was any interest in evening social events? Scope for a social secretary perhaps. There was a general view of Yes.
5. Peter Williams said that there was £272 of Didoo stock remaining. No more will be ordered for the time being. Una Keane suggested the membership secretary could put stock available on the Facebook page.
6. Peter Williams asked if anyone was interested in bike marking by the Police.
7. Peter Williams said that our current First Aid certificates run out in May, so we need to start planning First Aid training now. Anne Lear has offered to lead on this. Sonia Oldershaw has details of cycling specific training that she will forward to Anne Lear.

Before the meeting closed, a vote of thanks was offered from the floor for all the work that has been done by the chairman and the committee.

The meeting closed at 9 pm.