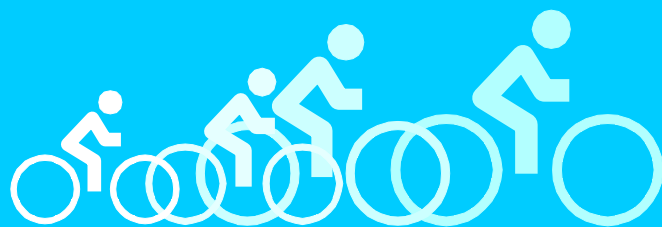


# CYCLING Wakefield

Newsletter of Wakefield District Cycle Forum

Promoting and campaigning for cyclists



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# Unique and Free

Wakefield District  
Cycle Forum is  
unique. Nowhere else  
in the country has  
such a wide vision or  
range of activities;  
campaigns, rides,  
events, path building,  
bike doctor, training.

## And it is all Free.

We can only do this  
because of our  
wonderful group of  
volunteers. Why not  
join us. See inside for  
details.

## Spring is Here?

Despite the cold weather our Spring/Summer Programme has got off to a sunny start. Even the first evening ride from Pontefract park enjoyed a sunny evening (as you can see from the photo above) for a ride along the canal to Heath village.

The full programme can be found on our website. So have a look and come and join as at some of our events and rides.

[www.cycling-wakefield.org.uk](http://www.cycling-wakefield.org.uk)

# Bike Maintenance Drop-in Sessions

DIY Bike Maintenance Drop-in sessions are now being held on a monthly basis at Anglers Country Park on the third Sunday of the month. You can come along and carry out any maintenance work under the supervision of one of our 'Bike Doctors'. Graham, Dennis and Steve can advise and help with most maintenance issues but make sure you have cleaned your bike before you ask them to handle it.

There is no need to book for these sessions, just turn up between 11 am and 1 pm. The next three sessions are:

- **Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> May, Anglers Country Park, 11 am till 1 pm**
- **Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> June, Anglers Country Park, 11 am till 1 pm**
- **Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> July, Anglers Country Park, 11 am till 1 pm**

There are no more cycle maintenance training courses planned for the near future but you should keep an eye on our Facebook page in case we are able to organise one.



## Calder Clarion and Cycle Forum Promoting Cycling

Cycling has received a huge boost in recent years with the success of British riders in the Tour de France and the London Olympics and, of course the Grand Depart of Le Tour in 2014 and the Tour de Yorkshire (with a start in Wakefield) last year.

Both the Cycle Forum and Calder Clarion Cycle Club, based in Wakefield, have built on that to promote cycling in the district. But cycling, even with the improved "visibility" of the sport can be daunting for those new to road cycling. That is why for the last two years Calder Clarion has been running a "Transition Group" to take "social" cyclists, used maybe to pottering on bridleways, and help them make the transition to cycling on the road in the safety of a group.



Road Captain and transition group organiser Mike Hopkins says, "The group has been a great success allowing those new to road cycling to start off in the safety of a group and learn the ropes of riding in a group and get fitter as they ease up in speed and distance".

**The group will recommence on May 11 at 6.30pm, Thornes Park car park, Denby Dale road.**

"We start with a ride of about 15 miles on quiet country roads and build up to 25-30 miles. Whilst cycling experienced club members help pass on their knowledge and some of the mysterious "cycling etiquette"!!" Mike continued.

Over the last two years almost all who joined have gone onto to be regular riders on the Sunday morning club runs, midweek runs and the ladies section. Everybody is welcome. Check the club website ([www.calder-clarion.co.uk](http://www.calder-clarion.co.uk)) for full details or email Mike Hopkins at [mikehopkins07@gmail.com](mailto:mikehopkins07@gmail.com)



## AGM Elects Officers

Our recent AGM elected officers for the coming year. There are a few changes but most of the 'old guard' continue to do their best for the forum.

New faces and new ideas are always welcome so if you think you can help in any capacity do let us know.

**Chair** – Sandy Clark

**Vice-Chair** – David Keighley

**Secretary** – Mark Beswick

**Treasurer** – Gary Boyes

**Membership Secretary/Statistics** – David Leigh

**Press and Publicity** – Richard Denbigh

**Newsletter Editor** – Sandy Clark

**Events Manager** – David Keighley

**Rides Manager** – Richard Denbigh

**Council Liaison** – Mark Beswick, David Keighley and Miles Roche

**Workgroup Manager** – Richard Denbigh and John Harvey

**Auditors** – Carole Gregory, Gill Ross

**Facebook Administrators** – Richard Denbigh, Carole Gregory, Sally Lee, Angie Boyd

## Membership Fee Increase

At our recent AGM it was agreed to increase our membership fee to £5. The original membership fee of £2 has been in place since we formed over eight years ago so it was due for review.

It remains a one-off payment and still the best value for money you could hope to find.

## Volunteers Needed

### Workday Group

Our workday group carries on apace maintaining, renewing and expanding the network of off-road routes in the district. We have now settled down to two workdays per month on a Monday morning meeting at 10am and usually lasting 2 hours.

The programme for the next three months is:

**Monday's, 9<sup>th</sup> May, 23<sup>rd</sup> May, 6<sup>th</sup> June, 20<sup>th</sup> June, 4<sup>th</sup> July and 18<sup>th</sup> July.**

The photos below show the 'before' and 'after' of our last day improving the surface on the TPT near Cold Hiendley. Eight volunteers turned up to do some cutting back of vegetation and laying recycled road planings delivered that morning by the Council.



Volunteers are always needed and if you think you can help please get in touch via the email address below.

If you are not able to make Mondays but would like to organise workgroups on another day(s) please also get in touch and we will see what we can do to help.

### Ride Leaders

Our rides programme is ever expanding but we are always under stress by the limit to the people we have who are prepared to help by taking on the job of Ride Leader. Our future rides programme is under threat if we do not recruit more helpers soon.

Committing to one ride per month is not a lot of commitment but it could make all the difference to the success of our programme. Why not step into the role, you know you will love it.

**To volunteer for the workday group or as a Ride Leader contact Richard Denbigh at [wdcfpressofficer@gmail.com](mailto:wdcfpressofficer@gmail.com)**



## Pedal in the Park

New to our rides programme this Spring/Summer is 'Pedal in the Park'. These are short guided rides of a few miles that, as the title suggests, take place within the park with no roads involved. They are specifically aimed at people who are still very nervous at getting back on their bikes, and family groups, who want to avoid mixing with traffic.

The two venues for these rides are **Nostell Priory and Parkland** and **Thornes Park** in Wakefield. Both venues are proving popular with family groups with the first ride at Nostell attracting 18 participants and a number of family groups.



Our ride leader at Thornes Park is Sandie Wood and as you can see from this photo everyone, had a good time on the first Thornes Park ride.



We are presenting certificates to the children on the rides, which seems to be a popular innovation.

For full details of all our rides visit the rides and events page at [www.cycling-wakefield.org.uk](http://www.cycling-wakefield.org.uk)

## 'Dusty' Retires as Ride Leader

Warren 'Dusty' Miller has just retired from service as one of our longest serving ride leaders. Here is what he says about how he came to be involved with the Cycle Forum:

'Before I started volunteering for the Cycle Forum I was a walk leader on the very successful 'Health

Walks' programme run by Wakefield NHS and Wakefield Council. We used to have an annual walk leaders get together and about 10 years ago it was at Nostell Priory. There I met Roger Talbot who used to organise the 'Health Rides'. He was running rides on the day for the walk leaders to have a go at cycling and to get an idea about what the 'health rides' were about. I was offered a mountain bike and off we went on the off-road paths to Anglers Country Park.

I always had a road bike, which I used to go to and from work in Barnsley, a distance of about 8 miles, but I had never done any off-road cycling. Anyway I enjoyed the ride out from Nostell Priory so much it inspired me to get down to a bike shop in Wakefield and buy a new Specialized Rockhopper bike so I could join the forum for regular off-road rides.

I soon agreed to become a ride leader and joined the group of ride leaders who run the rides at Nostell Priory. I have always enjoyed the rides from Nostell but in recent years my hearing has deteriorated to the extent that I don't feel it is up to the task of being a ride leader. I hope that my stepping aside will give the chance for younger people to step forward to fill the gap.'



Dusty is also a stalwart volunteer at the 'Holiday Wednesdays' at Nostell Priory and at other events in which the forum participates throughout the district where we run our 'cycle skills course'. He is in fact our chief 'skills course' builder and has proved very innovative in developing aspects of the course that test different cycling skills. Although we will miss Dusty's input as a ride leader he will still be volunteering at the skills course and we are sure we will see him around on many of our rides.

Indeed, a number of our women members have remarked that they hope Dusty continues to join our ride, especially in the summer when his short shorts expose 'the best pair of legs in the Cycle Forum'.

**Roll on the summer!!!**



# Moving On

It was in 2008 that the Wakefield District Cycle Forum (WDCF) was formed from a relatively small number of cyclists, disgruntled with the decision of Wakefield Metropolitan District Council (WDMC) to get rid of their post of Cycle Officer and their entire Healthy Transport Team.

Our main focus in the first few years was to establish WDCF, to create working partnerships and lay out a programme for ourselves, seeking funding streams to support our campaigning for cycle infrastructure improvements. This was no small undertaking. As our energies were focused on campaigning and partnership working, the business of offering rides had less importance.

However, one of the founding members, Roger Talbot, was organising and leading “Health rides” on a weekly basis. The people who attended these rides were small in number, with rides typically of just 5 -6 miles and often with the same people coming time after time.

When the local NHS Primary Care Trust (PCT) took responsibility for promoting a healthier life style, they saw the value in our small scale rides and offered us some financial assistance to help build up our programme. With money for public liability insurance and help to buy bikes to loan out for use on our rides, the programme began to blossom and take shape. Slowly the numbers of people on our rides increased in parallel with the expansion of the rides WDCF had to offer and as the months rolled by larger numbers of riders emerged on our rides and the range of rides on offer continued to expanded to match this interest.

So now the programme of WDCF rides spans a considerable mix of cycling interests; shorter confidence building starter rides, sociable rides without pressure, challenging rides (which tests the metal of participants to survive). All this seems right and proper and reflects development to match different riders’ choices. However, some riders move on to other offerings away from the WDCF badged rides, to cycle with clubs and other groups. I started riding with Pontefract Cycle Club which is a small local club offering relaxed social rides (seen here outside a favourite cyclist café at Askern).



At first I thought that perhaps such moves were a bit disloyal and reflected a loss to WDCF. Many other clubs and groups also have people who were formerly riding with the Forum. Now I think that those who decide to move on to other groups, are indeed a good reflection on WDCF, showing that we have made a difference in their lives.

At WDCF our goal has always been to inspire people to get on their bikes and ride. If people do that on the road, off road tracks, up or down hill, in the sunshine or the rain, either solo or with any group.....then we have been successful. Well done WDCF we have met our first and most important aim.

John Matthews

