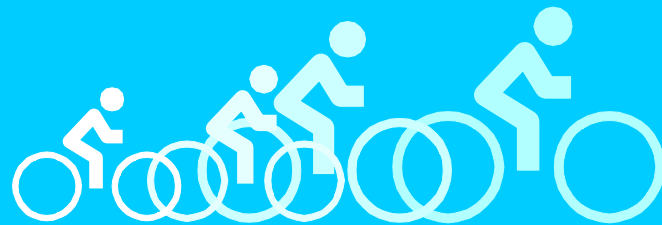


CYCLING Wakefield

Newsletter of Wakefield District Cycle Forum

Promoting and campaigning for cyclists



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| November 2016



Autumn a nice time to cycle, so Get Cycling & Keep Smiling

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Another busy year

Annual Dinner

In the last few years we have held our annual dinner and awards' night in December. This year it will not be a 'Christmas Dinner' but will take place on:

Thursday
26th January
Holmfield
Thornes Park
Denby Dale Road
Wakefield

If you are interested in attending please email

info@cycling-wakefield.org.uk

Basic Cycle Maintenance

Our bike doctor team will be running a basic cycle maintenance class this month

Sunday 20th November
1pm till 3pm
The Classroom
Discovery Centre
Anglers Country Park

To book a place on the course email us at info@cycling-wakefield.org.uk

DIY Bike Maintenance Drop-in Sessions

DIY Bike Maintenance Drop-in sessions:

The very popular sessions run by our Bike Doctor team will now continue over the winter on a monthly basis. The third Sunday of the month is the regular time and the classroom at the discovery centre in Anglers Country Park is the regular venue. Each session last for two hours from 11 am.

The coming sessions are:

Sunday 20th November, Anglers Country Park, 11 am till 1 pm

Sunday 18th December, Anglers Country Park, 11 am till 1 pm

Sunday 15th January, Anglers Country Park, 11 am till 1 pm.

Booking is not required for these sessions.



Join in the fun with Santa

Once more the Cycle Forum will be hosting Santa Rides this December. A free mince pie and hot drink will greet all riders at the refreshment stop.

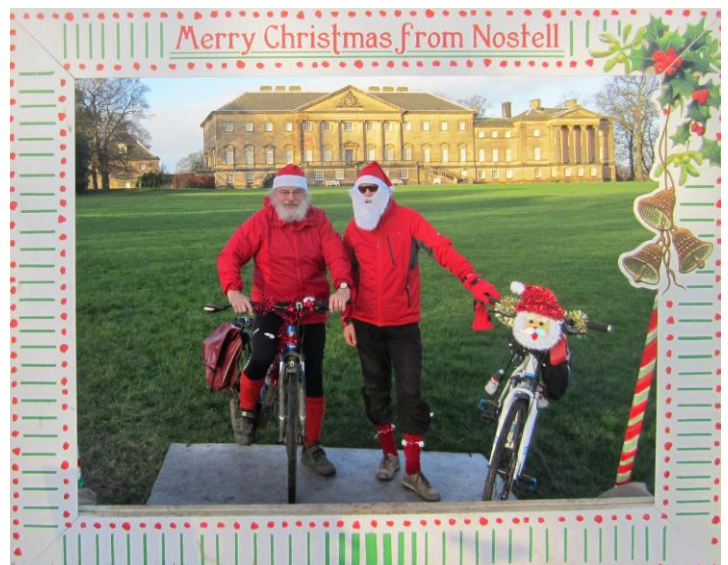
Sunday 11 December Pugneys Country Park.

This is a charity ride on behalf of Wakefield Hospice. An entry fee of £6 for adults and £4 for children will apply and you should book your place at www.wakefieldhospice.org.uk. Registration for this ride begins at 9 am and the ride will leave at 10.30. This is a steady ride and will be about 16 miles.

Sunday 18 December Nostell. Meet at 10.15 am

This is the usual easy Cycle Forum ride from Nostell meeting in front of the house at 10.15. There are a limited number of bikes to borrow. There is no charge for borrowed bikes but they must be booked in advance at info@cycling-wakefield.org.uk

Why not dress up your bike and yourself in seasonal garb and join us on these festive rides.



Castleford to Wakefield Off-road Path: completion in sight

Those members with long memories will know that the completion of a cycle track linking the waterfronts of Castleford and Wakefield has been at the top of Wakefield District Cycle Forum's wish list for all of our existence (and before). From the beginning of the century, in fact. We even made it as far as having the missing section of the route, Meathley Bridge to Fairies Hill, put on the 'to do' schedule for council projects one year, with a full budget committed. Unfortunately it was withdrawn as council officials were frightened off by Japanese Knotweed. A couple of years ago, however, the council resurrected the project and make it a priority in its quest for funding, which was acquired in 2015.



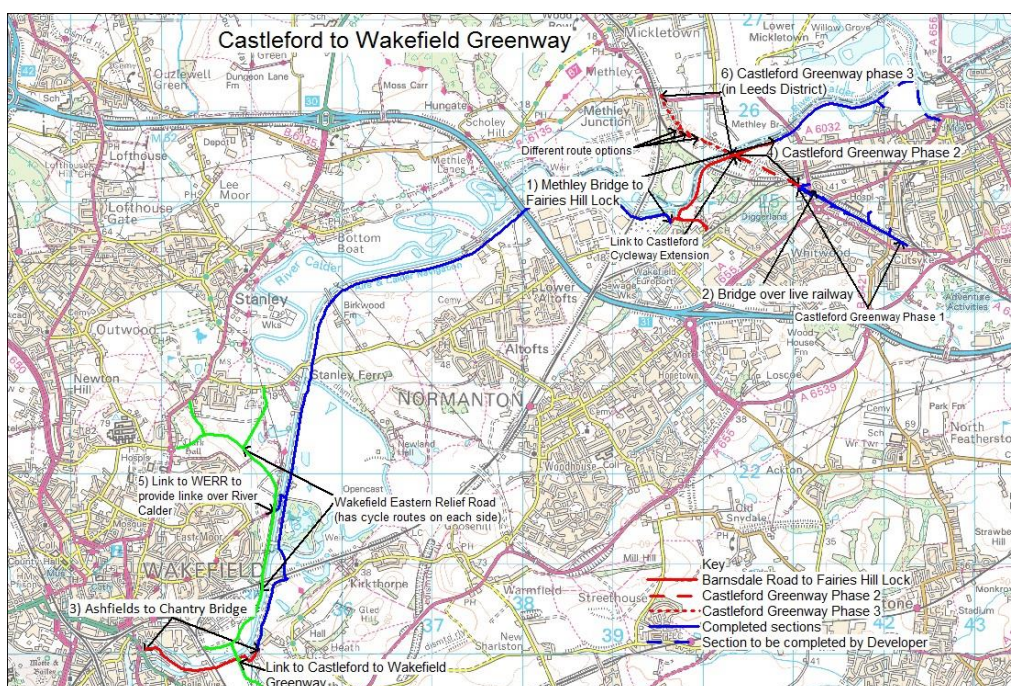
The up-to-date status of the project is outlined below by John Davis, the council officer in charge of the project.

'Public consultation on the Methley Bridge to Fairies Hill Lock section took place in July (see <http://cyclecityconnect.co.uk/projects/wakefield-to-castleford/>) with 95% of respondents supportive of the scheme. Detailed designs for this section are now complete and a planning application was submitted at the end of September, with a response expected at the end of November. We are looking to start on site early next year with completion due at the end of July 2017.

We are currently exploring how the Castleford Greenway extension (phases 2 and 3) can be delivered but don't anticipate any significant issues. A feasibility study on providing a bridge over the railway at the end of the current Castleford Greenway is nearly complete, initial findings suggest it is deliverable and affordable within the budget available. If additional funding can be found, then we will look to connect the Castleford Greenway to the Trans Pennine Trail towards Wakefield at Methley Junction.

There are two possible developments between Ashfields and Chantry Bridge that could potentially deliver this part of the project. However, one development (on the former power station site) is more likely to be developed within 5 years than the other. We may therefore provide a temporary surface on the site closest to Chantry Bridge and wait for the power station site to deliver the other section.'

The plan (below) of the route shows the various stages of the project.



John Harvey: Man for all Seasons

John Harvey's introduction to the Cycle Forum was not an auspicious one. He turned up to a summer evening ride from Pontefract. The weather was not summery. He never fails to remind our Chair, Sandy Clark, that he took flight that evening to the comfort of his living room while John soldiered on through torrential rain to the bitter end.

Amazingly this first experience did not dampen his enthusiasm and John became a regular fixture at nearly all of our rides that year. It was not long before John graduated from ever present participant to one of our busiest ride leaders. He now, with David Leigh, leads our team at the Mill in Castleford and helps out at all of our other venues when called to do so.

John is an electrician by trade, a fact not missed by our vice-chair, David Keighley. David lost no time in putting John's skills to use at our storage facility at Nostell and he has subsequently taken on the responsibility of looking after our storage facility at the Mill. Given his willingness to help in any way he can it is no surprise that John is now in charge of the gear we use for our workdays and is a constant helper on these days.

All of this is only a fraction of what John contributes to the Cycle Forum so it was fitting that he was our Volunteer of the Year in 2014, and two years running received the special Faceless Trophy, jointly with Richard Denbigh in 2015 for organising our workgroup.

What would we do without John Harvey?



2017 Rides and Events Leaflet Out Soon



2017 will see a new format for our Rides and Events Leaflet as for the first time it will cover a full year programme.

Unlike the early years of its existence, when our rides were mostly in summer, we carry on a full rides programme throughout the year. Now the only ride that we drop in the winter is our Pedal in the Park, which will return at Nostell from April till October. This is a very short ride designed so that the most timid of potential cyclists will feel able to participate.

As well as our regular rides programme a lot of ad hoc rides are being added to the calendar these days so we advise everyone to keep in touch with these through our web site and Facebook. The 2017 programme will be on the shelves in December so look out for your copy.



Cycling in Canada

Our secretary has just returned from a visit to Canada. Here are some observations about cycling there:

Canada, like the UK, has seen an upsurge in urban cycling in the last decade.

Given the vast distances in Canada and the almost total lack of rural buses and trains, the car is king outside the cities. However, in cities such as Vancouver, Toronto, Ottawa, Montreal and Quebec City, cycling is a serious option for many who live less than around 10km from Downtown (the City Centre).

There are extensive networks of on and off road routes often running beside canals, rivers and lakes and in a few cases on old railway lines. The greater space and wider roads make achieving a network somewhat easier than in Europe. Road crossings in some cases have separate traffic light phases exclusively for cycles. Visitors to the cities are encouraged to cycle through highly visible bike hire outlets and extensive maps and other publicity. Cycle parking facilities are widely provided.

Cycling, coupled with very good urban bus and occasionally subway and light rail networks (all municipally owned – no deregulation in Canada!) mean that traffic congestion is being tackled. Most buses have racks to take bikes on the front. Flat fares and Oyster Card type systems are universal. Congestion does however still plague many cities, especially Toronto, where the crack smoking Mayor vetoed a plan to radically address congestion around five years ago.

Part of the rise in cycling has been driven through “gentrification” of the mainly nineteen and early twentieth century housing close to the city centre. These areas were, for the period since world war II, generally populated by the less well-off and immigrant communities. These groups are now moving to the outer suburbs to be replaced by young professionals and retirees seeking to downsize and be nearer facilities.

My son lives in such an area of Ottawa. I was surprised to learn that none of his friends, all of whom are in their early thirties, own a car, television or a house. Virtually all of them commuted by bike.

Mark Beswick



Successful summer of rides and events

As always the Cycle Forum was out and about this summer spreading the word about the joys of cycling.

As well as our regular ‘Holiday Wednesdays’ at Nostell we attended village events at South Kirkby and Crofton and the Liquorice Festival in Pontefract. Over 1,000 people, mostly children, enjoyed the challenge of our skills course and we took 80 people on short rides around the park at Nostell. These events have become so much a part of the summer activities at Nostell that we now have lots of people coming especially on a Wednesday because they have enjoyed our activities in previous years.

A new feature of our offer this year was provided by Richard Denbigh who taught around 60 people, mostly children and young people, to ride a bike. This was a hugely popular addition to the programme, which we hopefully can continue next year.

Our activities are of course dependent on our volunteers and over 20 contributed to these events over the summer months.

Our guided rides also continue to be popular and although the average numbers are slightly down on 2015 we are still attracting an average of over 15 riders. In the year to the end of October participant numbers were over 1800, with over 400 people coming on our rides. 265 of those were new to our rides this year, so we are still attracting people back to cycling, which is of course our main objective. It is also good news that around 43% of these people are women. This is a huge improvement on the 20+% in the early years of our rides programme.

Again, we are indebted to our volunteer riders and helpers without whom this programme would not be possible.



Why not join our team of volunteers? Just email us at info@cycling-wakefield.org.uk