

Castleford Greenway



19th September John Davis, Sustainable Transport Senior Project Leader at Wakefield Council, reported that having visited the site the previous day they have agreed to open the cycleway and bridge. Sustrans still have some fencing and landscaping work to do but the route is usable. City Connect will be carrying out a formal opening when phase 2 to Methley Junction is complete, in spring next year.

Unfortunately the sky gods seem to have different ideas and the heavens opened. We'll cope, however.

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Your chance to help medical research painlessly

Claire Wicks is a PhD researcher at the University of Essex and wishes to invite members to participate in some research that she is conducting. Her research investigates the relationship between participation in green exercise (physical activity whilst in the presence of elements of nature *like cycling*) and depressive symptoms in the UK general population. This research is important to understand if green exercise can be used as a healthcare intervention for people with depressive symptoms.

Participation in this research involves completion of an online survey *in the comfort of your own home (or pub)* which takes approximately 20 minutes. The survey asks some questions about the participant, the type of physical activity they like to do and why, and about how they have been feeling recently. The survey is completed anonymously and participants will not be asked for any information that may identify them. All responses will be kept confidential and stored securely. This research has been reviewed and received ethical approval from the University of Essex ethics committee. Further information is available at the link below.

https://essex.eu.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_6X1wHJcHRB1cYS1

(Italics added by editor)

News Roundup

Café at Anglers

The Woodland Café opened at Anglers Country Park at the end of July after several months when riders had only the limited facilities of a refreshment van and an ice-cream van. The premises look very smart, the staff are helpful and the food looks good. Contrary to rumours, they do sell fried or scrambled eggs, and bacon.



Feedback from WDCF customers so far is very positive, although I've yet to receive any reviews of the cake!

Ride Leaders' Training

An enthusiastic group of 8 attended our Ride Leader's Training Course on the 7th September at Nostell Priory, ably led by Ken Woodhouse of Pedal Ready Cycle Training. The morning talk was accompanied by a useful set of handouts and a quiz to ensure that lessons had been learnt. It was followed by a tasty and generous sandwich lunch, with a variety of cakes for pudding.

Groaning under their new weight disadvantage, trainees then set off towards Anglers, taking it in turns to lead what turned out to be a very unlucky ride. Despite the morning's lesson on checking bikes before setting off, mysteriously chains fell off, riders fell off and tyres punctured, creating new hazards for each prospective ride leader to deal with. Contrary to expectations, all got back safely.

Finally, participants were asked to complete a schedule showing which rides they would be prepared to lead or back mark. Details have been passed on to our ride coordinator, so you may see some new faces (or should that be backs) at the front.

Messages worth repeating

Cancellations

Occasionally, rides have to be cancelled at short notice, perhaps due to extreme weather or the sudden unavailability of ride leaders. We do try and send some-one to the start of the route to let riders know but strongly recommend that you **check on Facebook before you set off**, particularly if you are travelling a long distance. It may be lovely and sunny where you live, while a ferocious rainstorm lashes Nostell.

Castleford Mill

At present there is limited free parking at Castleford Mill for rides starting there, which generally take place on the second and fourth Saturday of the month. Please do not park in front of the Café, shop or other businesses on the site, all of which would welcome your custom.



Adult Cycle Training

Cityconnect is funded by the West Yorkshire Combined Authorities and works to help adults get back on their bikes and build their cycling confidence.

Whether you're looking to build your confidence, maintain your bike or master your commute, they have a course for you.

Free cycle training and maintenance courses for anyone 16+, from beginner to advanced including route planning and journey accompaniment, are FREE of charge. Participants can take advantage of up to 3 cycling sessions per level. Training takes place at one of the City Connect Cycle Hubs located across West Yorkshire, including Thornes Park in Wakefield.

Sessions are typically run in 2-hour blocks, usually with ratios of 1 instructor to 4 participants with cycle training and 1 to 7 with maintenance sessions. Bespoke and 1:1 sessions available on request. People in receipt of certain benefits may be eligible for a free bike.

Booking is required for these sessions

More information - <https://cyclecityconnect.co.uk/cycle-training> or phone **01274 753 556**



DIY Bike Maintenance drop in sessions

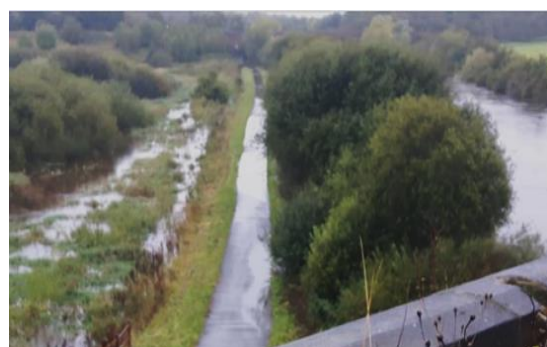
Bike Doctor drop-in sessions continue, on the third Sunday of the month. The last session this year is on 17th November at Anglers Country Park from 11 am to 1 pm.

Bike Maintenance Classes will resume in the spring on Sunday 5th April

Workgroup Report:

Spates of torrential rain have not assisted our workgroup volunteers and meetings have had to be cancelled, but nevertheless they have been busy.

On Tuesday 14th October 8 volunteers and 2 council employees spent



some hours clearing the aftermath of flooding on the riverside route adjacent to Whitwood Golf Course. There was a lot of mud thrown up by the river after the heavy rain that needed removing.



We are having some problems at the moment as we have no one with a vehicle that can transport our electric wheelbarrows, or our trailer, which we require for some of our bigger jobs. If you can help or know someone who can please let us know.

Similarly, if you know of any paths in the network in Wakefield District that you think need our attention please let us know as the workday organisers don't get around the whole district and we may be missing some work that needs doing.



Family Fun

Throughout the summer holidays, WDCF has hosted 'Holiday Wednesdays' at Nostell Priory. Children have borrowed bikes and helmets to be led on a short route through the Priory's grounds or to try our renown cycling skills course.



Members did sterling work setting up the course, assembling the array of bikes and helmets and ensuring these fitted the young riders. Our crop of balance bikes meant that even the youngest could join in. The course was manned by marshals to ensure no-one went the wrong way round the roundabout or forgot to sound the hooter to stop the timer. Meanwhile other volunteers manned the information stand to hand out leaflets, sign up new members and raise funds with the tombola stall.



Children and adults also had the opportunity to try a different type of bike.

WDCF had stalls at the galas held in Crofton, Featherstone and Havercroft, in a variety of weathers. Although the same facilities were offered at all three, skills course, information and tombola, variations in the space available meant that some ingenuity was required in setting up the skills course. At one venue we had two roundabouts and the paths crossed, so we had the additional task of avoiding collisions if the respective speeds of consecutive riders had been miscalculated. Nevertheless, a great time was had by all.



We signed up new members, sold some cycle bells, raised some money and generally spread the message that cycling is fun and should be accessible to all.

Christmas is coming



On the recent easy ride from Nostell, all attending were experienced riders and happy to stretch their legs a bit so Sandy led us on a diversion from the usual route to have a look at the recently installed pit wheel at Walton Colliery.

We followed him when he later snuck off into the woods to meet some friends from Open Country, who were taking a break from their path clearing to take some photos for their Christmas publicity.

Generously, they let us share their dressing up box, with the spectacular results shown.



You may have noticed in general that some members sport white beards and wondered if they are simply too lazy to shave or whether it is a way of keeping chilly winds off the face. All will be explained at 10am on the 14th December when our **Santa Ride** starts from Queen's Mill in Castleford. Tinsel, lights and Santa suits are all expected.

If you miss the 14th, or would like a second hot drink and mince pie, Santa is riding again on the 22nd December from Nostell Priory and you and your bike are welcome to



join

him. Both Santa rides are Easy, so young and elderly riders and reindeer are particularly welcome.

WDCF is holding its **annual Christmas dinner on Thursday 5th December** at the Queen's Arms Denby Dale Road Wakefield WF2 8ED. Members will receive an email with details of the menu, price, time and booking details soon, so if you're changing your email address or haven't yet joined, do get in touch.

Turnip for the books

The rape crop has been harvested and the path across the field at the edge of Anglers Country Park, which featured in our last newsletter, is more or less accessible.

An unidentifiable (at least by the writer) root crop has been sown and, although the plants are getting bigger week by week, they are unlikely to present the same accessibility problems as the rape.

The path has not been reinstated or resurfaced yet and not wide enough for two bikes, or a biker and a walker, to pass so mangled wurzels are anticipated in due course.



There have, unfortunately, been developments since the above was written. The root vegetables have disappeared as the farmer ploughed the field on the 22nd October and the path has been obliterated.

The Public Rights of Way Department at Wakefield MDC has already been informed and we await developments

Spread the health benefits of cycling

Family Doctors can now prescribe exercise. College Lane Surgery in Ackworth prescribe Nordic Walking and you may meet (or want to avoid) one of their GPs on the Nostell circuit. Why not take some of our ride leaflets to your local doctors' surgery and see if they are prepared to prescribe cycling? Don't forget, we have bikes for loan at Nostell Priory and Queens Mill Castleford for rides starting there.

Dennis Bell



We are sorry to announce the untimely death of Dennis Bell. Dennis was a great supporter of Wakefield District Cycle Forum. Many of you will remember him as one of our Bike Doctors and as the first to come to the rescue when someone encountered a mechanical problem or puncture on one of our rides. Here he is instructing attendees at a Bike Maintenance Course.

Dennis was a big man in every sense of the word, and he will be sadly missed.

His funeral will take place on **Friday, 8th November at 2.20 pm at Wakefield Crematorium.**



