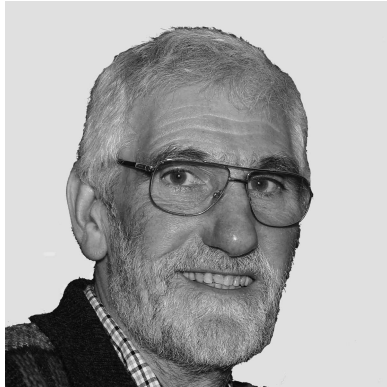


# **CYCLE CHAT**

**Summer 2016**

*The quarterly magazine of the Leicestershire and Rutland  
Cyclist's Touring Club county group of the UK's national  
cyclist's organisation*



## **Editor's Thoughts**

I write this in early May, sitting in my caravan in Minehead, Somerset, enjoying a really pleasant week of warm and sunny weather, made all the more enjoyable by the recent cold and wet spell we have suffered. What a variable climate we “enjoy”!

“Oh, if you're in North Somerset, you must have a go at the infamous Porlock Hill” they all tell me. 10 years ago, I would have jumped at the chance to tackle this brute of a main road climb, with its hairpins and sections of 1 in 4 (25%) gradient as it climbs from sea level at Lynmouth to over 1,300ft (400m) in less than 2 miles (3.2 km) up onto Exmoor. Nowadays I give it some thought before starting out; currently, I'm still thinking about it....

Alan Staniforth has put digit to keyboard and given us his views on the rather controversial name change this great club of ours has had foisted upon it. Without wishing to enter the debate, I must admit I only know one person who is happy with the name change and other things that seem to be going on at National level. What do you think? Write and share your thoughts with other readers.

The organising team for the Tri-vets Ride on June 26<sup>th</sup> is hard at work and are looking forwards to a good turn out and successful event. Will you be there? A Tri-vets ride is a 100 miles group ride, with arranged stops. They are held every three years for veteran riders over 50yrs and are relaxed rides, with speeds held down to suit. As they are intended for older riders, a 12 hour limit applies. Good fun, and enjoyable. Contact Keith Lakin for details (01530 451573).

Happy and safe cycling.

*Dave Binks*

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## From The President

**Neil Dixon**

So does anyone now know what we are supposed to call ourselves? No, me neither. ‘The Powers that Be’ want us to be known as “Cycling UK”, which I have to say is a little confusing; I dare say many will confuse this with “British Cycling”. Fortunately it still seems that the CTC name still exists, so I shall continue to regard myself in this way #jesuisCTC. More on this later.



*Photo by Ray Clay*

Of course the name change is just one aspect of the changes that are being promoted by our leaders. To hear some members speak, the world of social media has been awash with discontent. Actually that’s not true. What I see is a small number of people blowing off a lot of hot (and sometimes inflammable) air on Facebook, seeking malice in any change, postulating outlandish conspiracy theories, and generally acting as the self-appointed ‘Protectors of the One Truth Cycling Faith’. I spent a lifetime working in IT. Every couple of years some new management initiative would come along that was going to revolutionise how effectively we worked. This would always involve name changes. At the end of the day, we still ended up doing the same work as ever. Of course the management gurus usually left before the details of the changes had been implemented. I suspect the same will happen with the CTC.

So I ask myself this: “What effect has these changes made to my cycling life?”, Answer: “So far none”. I’m happy to continue doing what I do every Sunday with South Leicestershire Section, and wait and see what’s going to change that. This comes to the crux of why I’m a CTC member. Although I am a cycle-tourist in the traditional sense, the ‘T’ in CTC really stands for ‘Together’, as it’s the camaraderie

### New Members

Since the last Cycle Chat we have had 28 CTC members either join the club, or choose to become part of our Leicestershire & Rutland Group. We welcome them to the Group and hope they will join in our local activities.

These newcomers are located as follows, and full details are available from the Membership Officer to local groups of the club should they wish to invite them to join our activities.

- Loughborough 7
- Charnwood 6
- South Leics. 5
- Oakham 4
- Hinckley 2



of my fellow members that keeps me involved. HQ could have saved a whole lot of money and ear-ache if they had just changed the name to 'Cyclists Together Club'.

On a lighter note. I shall be hosting the annual President's Ride on 4th September, starting from Broughton Astley Co-Op car park at 9:15, with Naseby as the intended destination for Coffee. Lunch destination has yet to be determined but will probably be Naseby or Welford. For those who want a shorter ride, we will meet outside The Bell in Husbands Bosworth at 10:15. All are welcome, but I'd appreciate a call or e-mail in advance so I have an idea of numbers.

**Why go anywhere else ?**

**6000 sq ft of wall to wall cycling gear**

	<b>Bikes by</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>* Marin</li><li>* Bianchi</li><li>* Trek</li><li>* Giant</li><li>* Dawes</li></ul>	<b>Clothing by</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>* Assos</li><li>* Castelli</li><li>* Endura</li><li>* Pearl Izumi</li><li>* Oakley</li></ul>	<b>Expert advice on all aspects of cycling!!</b> 
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## The Secretary's View

### Ray Clay



I'm pleased to say the my knee is much improved and I hope to be back on my bike in the near future. It has been a very frustrating few months. I have been supporting the Loughborough Wednesday Cyclists by driving to meet them at their coffee stop. I'm glad that the group seems to gathering new members. The aim is to encourage novice riders to have a leisurely morning ride to a coffee stop and be home by lunchtime. Anyone interested in joining the group, please contact me.

I thought that the prizegiving evening went off extremely well, mainly thanks to Keith Lakin. The hosts at The Soar Bridge Inn, Barrow upon Soar looked after us very well and the food was very tasty and plentiful. Keith took charge of the skittles match with meticulous care and I think everyone had a good time.

We have a number of local CTC (or should I say Cycling UK?) events coming up in the next few weeks. The 30mile & 30km Meander/Freewheel – organised by Jim Gerrard (voted Clubman of the Year) and Keith Lakin: Back to the Fuchsia, organised by John Allen : Tri Vets ride organised by Keith Lakin. Details of these can be found on our website, [www.leicestersecular.plus.com/ctc/](http://www.leicestersecular.plus.com/ctc/)

Not everyone is comfortable with our new name. The national AGM is coming up soon in Derby and should provoke some lively discussion.

I'm looking forward to joining the gathering of hundreds of cyclists at Meriden in June for the service to remember the cyclists who died in the First World War 1914-18. A recent plaque has been added to the monument so that we can also pay our respects to those who died in the Second World War 1939-45. Sadly, the number of cyclists going to the event has reduced over the years. I'm told that, in the old days, the green was packed with thousands of cyclists. (See photo). Even I, as a relatively newcomer to cycling, can see the decline in numbers and miss the teashop that used to be open around the corner.

The committee has been working hard to sort out events for the year. Some are still unresolved. Traditionally, we have held a slide show/photo





competition in November. Sadly, the attendance for the film show has declined over the recent years. Consequently, the committee is considering other options, such as combining the photo competition with the AGM and a pub lunch.

The venue for our annual cyclists' carol service hasn't yet been decided. Some options are being considered.

We are also going to turn our minds to how to celebrate our 120 year anniversary in 2017. This will be on our agenda soon.

Looking around at our committee recently, I couldn't help thinking that we urgently need younger members and I would urge readers to consider joining our committee at the next AGM, probably in November.

I'm also of an age where it would be helpful if somebody could step forward to take over from me as secretary. The duties are not onerous. We do have an excellent minute taker which is a great help. If anyone out there is interested, please give me a call. I've been secretary for some 20 years and somebody to take over with new ideas would be very helpful.

# **Sulley Challenge Rides**

**Peter Witting reports on these popular rides.**

Despite some frosty surfaces and overnight temperatures of -2C (28F), 34 riders set off from Lutterworth on the traditional first Sunday in March. No doubt we would have had more riders had it not also been Mothering Sunday, which is always three weeks before Easter Sunday. We must take care to avoid that clash in future!

The largest number, 19, rode the full 100Km route. Because it was Mothering Sunday, the cafes were worried they would be swamped by cyclists. Riders now have the choice of the Greenhouse café, the Neville café, the Hare Pie café, Sweethedges Farm, Launde Abbey, and the Mint & Ginger Coffee House at Tur Langton! Some had to sit outside at the Neville Café due to lunch bookings, and Launde shut their doors at midday to accommodate their bookings. Another good reason to avoid Mothering Sunday again.

12 riders completed the 70Km route, avoiding the lumpy section via Belton, Loddington, Launde and Tilton-on-the-hill. Only 2 chose the 50Km and just Pascal rode the shortest 32Km route. All riders were back by 3pm, though some had suffered sleet showers when the black clouds eclipsed the sun.

Best story of the day?

Rieta Simmonds who was passed by a quad bike just as she was about to climb the hill out of Launde, accepted a lift on the trailer!

The refurbished Wycliffe Hall welcomed finishers with the TV showing racing from the track world championships in London.

Thanks to :-

- Keith & Jean Lakin for arranging the teas for riders,
- John Cox for dealing with the entries at the start,
- and to Dave Gair for organising the hall for our use, and for starting the riders.

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## Cycle Chat -To be or not to be?

**Eileen Johnson** gives us her opinion on the recent discussions about whether Cycle Chat should appear only in digital form, or remain in hard print.

Why do we need a printed format anyway? Just a few clicks and there it is spread out before you. I believe you can even access this whilst out on your bike, and furthermore, find out if there are any other like minded folk in your vicinity who would like to meet up for a chat and a pint in the pub

you have just come across. Ain't technology wonderful?

So YES lets have it published on the web.

Then there is the question of money - a slight loss is made each year by printing copies. Oh dear - oh dear. Mm - remind me again what these funds are for. I know how it works; Treasurers are notoriously tight fisted with the funds in their care. I am Treasurer for several organisations and defend the funds against all comers. BUT what are these funds for? What good are they if they are not being used to promote whatever the aims of the organisation are? And in any case if we run out of money we can put on some extra events and raise some more.

So yes to information on demand. Ignore profit/loss element. What else needs consideration? A few days ago I read that a person buying a newspaper enjoys reading it over several hours whilst the same person accessing the news via the web takes 10 mins. How many of you instant readers remember the information about a holiday seen in Cycle Chat on line when sitting at home in the dark days of winter planning next years adventures? Even if you have no intention of ever under any circumstances, making the same trip. Alan Staniforth and Ivan Waddington, to name but two, will never have to wait for me at the top. But I enjoy reading about their exploits. In fact, thinking about it, I shall hide behind the hedge until they have gone by. These articles are

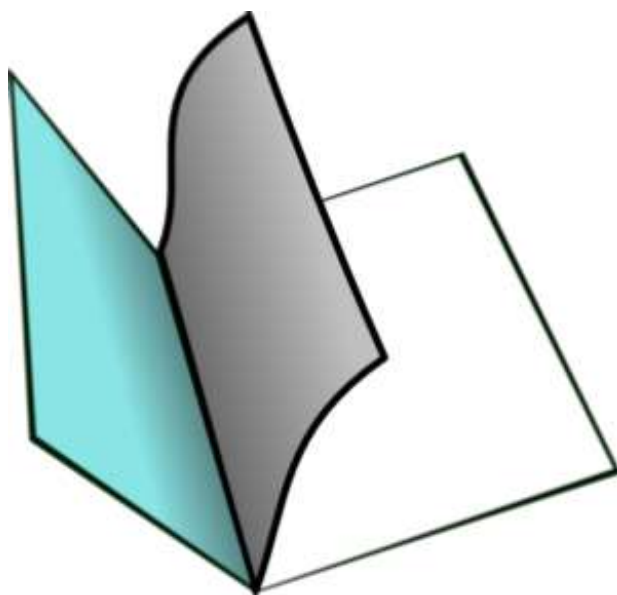
instructive, interesting and introduce ideas which would probably never have crossed your mind.

Yet another statistic shows that the sale of e-books has gone down whilst the sale of hard back and paper back have gone up. So NO now is not the time to abandon print.

Yes it is alright for me to talk as I don't volunteer to produce or distribute Cycle Chat, but I am very grateful to those who do. I don't even contribute to club funds as I don't enter events these days, but I am always glad to buy tea and cake at them and even make cakes or whatever if asked.

Do we know how many people outside our circle read the magazine? Of course we don't, nor do we know how many visit our county as a result of reading it and discover that we are not all coalmines and industry. Or how many are encouraged to get out their spider encrusted bike and venture out into the countryside. Not on a club run (too scary) but squeakily down the road. Do they join CTC? Probably not, but their children might have a go at mountain biking/off road/local clubs and even take their bikes on holiday. Sooner or later they may become cyclists and have a lifetime of pleasure.

It really is not possible to judge the impact of any method of publication. Some will prefer technology whilst others the printed word. But remember not everyone has access to technology, either by choice or inability, so keep both going whilst volunteers can be found. Above all send your **THOUGHTS, ARTICLES and INFORMATION** to the Editor.



P.S. So far the print in my copy of Cycle Chat has not disappeared nor do I need batteries to read it - although reading it in the winter might mean putting the light on.



# This Certainly CUKs

Alan Staniforth is not happy

## Apathy

I'm now very sorry to admit that I enjoyed cycling so much over the last few years that I was apathetic to the machinations of the newly emerging bureaucracy that has progressively stolen the former CTC, now Cycling UK (CUK) from its loyal members, and in doing so adversely changed the culture of a great cycling organisation.

## A member-based cycling organisation with charitable status

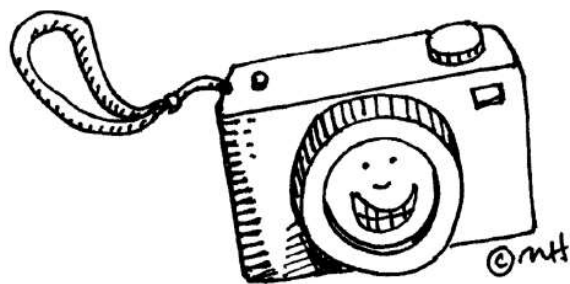
I'm certain that within the 67,000 membership today there are a significant number of people, who like me, engaged in the debate about the CTC registering as a charity believing that we were simply becoming a member-based organisation with charitable status. That charitable status would provide certain financial advantages, although we would have to comply with the regulations for charities as set down by the Charities Commissioners.

## Not a cycling charity

Fundamental to what follows below is my belief that many members view CUK as a *member-based cycling organisation with charitable status*, not a *cycling charity*. The two types of organisation are different in their key objectives. In my view, the former primarily acts in the interests of its members as directed by the majority in a traditional democratic way. The latter, a *cycling charity* is predominantly there to provide aid, help, support, knowledge, awareness etc, etc to those in need [of something].

This year's Theme for the Annual  
Photographic Competition is

***HAPPINESS IS.....***



At first I thought this was a rather awkward thing to portray, but after a few moment's thought, I already have a few ideas up my sleeve, but I'll bet you have more, better ones....

Judging will take place at the Annual Photo Competition being held in conjunction with the AGM later in the year (exact date to follow). More details of how to enter will follow later, but in the meantime, get snapping.



### **Incompetent disengagement**

My apathy continued until I received the April/May edition of *Cycle*, CUK's magazine. The last two-year's worth of my copies of *Cycle* have been unopened until as a last resort, to avoid doing some



loathsome domestic chore, I took it out of the polythene wrapper, flicked through the magazine, failed to see anything that might interest me and so opened the next one, and so on until it was clearly too late to do the chore. How could a magazine, that in years gone by, I eagerly awaited for it to arrive, could so quickly leave me uninspired and disengaged? Answer- the CTC leadership had drifted so far away from its membership that it no longer understood, in its campaigning mind-set, what its members wanted.

### **Who asked me?**

Announced on the front cover of *Cycle* was 'CYCLING UK – A NEW CHAPTER IN CTC'S RICH HISTORY'. I'd heard of this imminent name change quite by chance on ride with Jon Worters before he disappeared to his India-based training camp. I can only blame my apathy for not engaging with this fundamental change earlier.

I opened the cover and uncharacteristically read the editor's column. He was anticipating a 'flood of letters and emails both for and against the name change to CUK (only 13% of the membership were consulted on the name change). He emphasised that every member should have their say! I don't recall being asked by the National Council if I wanted my club's name to changed.

### **High-jacked by extremists!**

My personal view is that our club has been high-jacked by 'extremists'. The 'extremists' are driven by the first object of the CTC – *promote community participation in healthy recreation* (that has quite a ring about it). This has resulted in an excess of political correctness being woven into the fabric of CTC activities driven by HQ and inevitably shifting the CTC culture away from its roots. I suspect that many of the elected Council members are not wholly aware of what is taking place, given the style of modern manipulative democracy (MMD) (don't bother Googling it, it's my own concept from which I hope to one day be awarded a PhD by some hallowed seat of learning) that the

**The deadline for the next issue of  
Cycle Chat is 1<sup>st</sup> August 2016  
That edition will cover September, October, November 2016**

leadership team at CUK has deployed. The "unhelpful behaviour displayed by some councillors at Council" alluded to in an email from Dave Cox, Chairman that appears as an appendix to the Governance Working Groups Recommendations, is probably describing the gap that has develop between the leadership team of CUK and its members and their representatives.

### **Motion 5**

The high profile Motion 5 on the 2016 CUK AGM agenda that recommends major changes to governance of CUK is, in my view, a rather clumsy substitute for effective chairmanship, collaborative working and greater engagement of a much larger proportion of members than we see today. The reality is that the current leadership team has disengaged members through its politically correct, public sector philosophy towards the organisation and its members. The new governance proposals are disproportionate to the size (£6m revenues) of the CUK organisation.

### **Engagement**

The leadership team should not be focusing on governance but, member engagement as its absolute priority.

### **2.75% Engagement**

On 7<sup>th</sup> May, the AGM will take place and if last year's turn-out on voting is to be relied upon as published in the latest edition of *Cycle*, around 2.75% of the 67,000 members will vote on the 17 motions, including the contentious Motion 5.

### **Lacking integrity and ethics**

I think any leadership team with a modicum of integrity and following a modest code of ethics would acknowledge that whilst it probably does have an arithmetic majority (simple majority), morally such low levels of participation do not give the leadership team a mandate to change this great organisation further.

### **Suspend Motion 5**

It should seek advice from the AGM on suspending Motion 5 until such time as it has successfully engaged with significantly more members.

It's time for change at the top of CUK, but that change won't happen until members mobilise themselves and engage. Remain apathetic and watch your great club progressively change for the worse until it's too late to save it.

Now that the 'Foxes' have put Leicester and Leicestershire (whoops! and Rutland) in their rightful 'place-on-the-map,' maybe Leicestershire & Rutland should be the seat of the next peasant's revolt, but this time on bikes.

# We need YOUR contribution

Cycle Chat is written and edited by volunteers, not paid correspondents. Your 75p per copy hardly even covers the cost of printing and posting, it certainly doesn't leave enough to pay anyone.

Without sufficient input from our members and readers (you), Cycle Chat will just fade away. Don't just leave it to others all the time.

We need items from YOU, yes YOU!. Anything with a loose connection to cycling is welcome. Your best/worst ride; your best/worst route/cycling holiday; your favourite or worst bit of kit; a recipe that would be particularly appealing to other cyclists; tips; things to avoid; photos with a cycling content (not just views); reminiscences of bygone days; letters of praise, or complaint; requests for info; etc, etc; or anything else that springs to mind.

Don't worry about your spelling or grammar; that is easily corrected by the editor who will also do the layout and make it look really good on the printed page.

With most having access to a computer, writing a story is easy, you don't have to do it all in one go. A good technique is to write down the bare bones, then go back and gradually fill in the details over the space of a week or two, thus letting your subconscious work away in the background.

**Yes, we ARE interested in what you have to say.**

Please send whatever you have to the Editor. Address etc inside front cover.

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All contributions are welcome, send them to The Editor who reserves the right to amend copy for legal or production reasons.

Contributions should be in "MS Word" or similar, or neatly handwritten. Typed copy, CDs or flash drives are also welcome (CDs and drives will be returned). Please ensure Excel tables and PDF files are legible on an A5 page size. Photos, in .jpg format, with the photographer's name and permission are welcome.

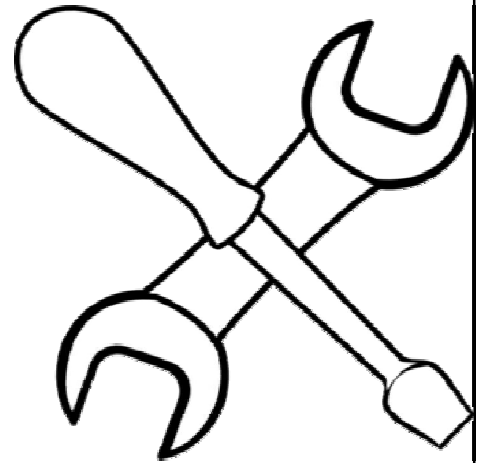
All contributions should be accompanied by the writer's name, address, telephone number or e-mail. If not stated, the photos are by the article's author. We try to acknowledge photo copyright whenever possible. If there is a problem, we apologise and ask you to contact us immediately.

Views expressed in letters, articles or editorial are not necessarily those of the Leicestershire & Rutland CTC.

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# Technical Topics

by Peter Witting



## Good News From Shimano

Do you sail uphill like Chris Froome, or maybe you plan your rides to avoid hills? If the latter, then lower gearing is probably the answer rather than new legs!

Shimano's new Sora R3000 groupset is great news for us Cycle Tourists: This groupset is aimed at us, not Wiggins & Froome impersonators!

Its long-arm rear mechanism can operate a 34 tooth sprocket on a 9-speed cassette. That big sprocket gives you the low gears you need. And that gear is operated by road levers, so you can retain your drop bars. You also have the option of using a triple chainset. The chainring sizes have not been revealed at this time, but if you chose the existing Shimano XT M770 triple chainset with 22/32/44 teeth rings, then you have the gearing to get up the steepest hills. That 22t front/34t rear combination is what I have on my bikes: That gives ratios from 105 inches down to 17 inches!

	Tyre	700*23	Inch	26.3						
<b>Cassette sprocket</b>		<b>34</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Chainrings</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>53</b>
	<b>32</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>77</b>
	<b>44</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>105</b>

Regrettably the CTC (Cycle UK) no longer has Chris Juden as Technical Officer to trumpet this news in Cycle magazine. But somebody at Shimano recognises the needs of the Cycle Tourist!

# 30 Miles and 30kms Rides and Freewheel Competition

**Jim Gerrard reports**

Sunday the 10<sup>th</sup> April saw this year's Meander rides and Freewheel blessed with fine weather again.

Without last year's threat of being coated in fresh road grit, 12 riders completed the 30 mile ride with 5 completing the 30 kilometre ride. Both routes were the same as last year.

Our numbers were increased by a contingent from the Leicester Spokes Group getting a few miles in prior to a planned tour in Scotland which will take place in the near future.

Steve Ralphs, with daughter Jasmin on a tandem, caught up with the main group at the Tibet Café at Twycross Zoo coffee stop after a mishap at home just as they were leaving. That had delayed them sufficiently to arrive at the start after I had left. As the routes were available via the web site and were the same as the previous year this was not a problem, although a few riders managed to get a few extra miles in by mixing part of an earlier route on the return round the Sutton Cheney area!

After refreshments at the various venues available in Thornton, we managed to raise the required number of riders for the afternoon freewheel competition which included Vic Baines and Tim Young, who was anxious to defend his winning run of 2 years for the event.

However it was not to be as Steve swapped his tandem for a stripped down bike which turned him into a demon descender. He was almost out of sight before he fell off! (A slight exaggeration but none the less well in front). I never thought about checking it for the mechanical doping that seems to be the forthcoming thing in competitions, though!



After trying with and without bags to no avail I seem to be slipping down the results board after every year.

The full results are shown below as recorded by Keith Lakin.

Thanks again to Keith, Jean and Leila Lakin for the well organised freewheel competition.

Thanks also to the Hillside Nursery for the use of their frontage and café facilities.

### **Results of the freewheel competition.**

1. Steve Ralphs
2. Tim Young
3. Martin Bulmer
4. Nick Tudor-Jones
5. David Spencer
6. Jim Gerrard
7. Norman Castle
8. Alan Hartshorne
9. Vic Baines
10. Jasmine Ralphs (Junior Lady)



## **George Lawrence**

**6 December 1938 to 21 April 2016 aged 78 years young.**

Tim Young brings sad news of another stalwart's passing.

George Lawrence, seen on the left of the photo (right), along with Richard Barber and Colin Fields in a picture taken at Great Walsingham, North Norfolk, in 2012, died 6 December. He had a two and a half year fight with cancer, initially of the oesophagus, later spreading to his liver and finally to his lungs. He cycled throughout his treatment, albeit not every week but always when he was up to it and only stopped riding with the groups this last Christmas and even then, he used to do shorter rides near to home because he just loved riding his bike, his motto being, "I may not be fast but I can go a long way in a long time." Truly a chap who's glass was half full!



He was a late comer to cycling, really starting to ride for health and leisure after his retirement having been a railway man and seen the transformation from steam to diesel and also benefiting from riding the now many cyclepathed railroads or tracks. A former CTC member, membership lapsed, he rode a few Coast to Coasts in recent years, was a stalwart of our Wednesday Wobbly Wheelers group and also rode with The Easy Riders. He rode The Dave Sulley rides, The 30 miles Meander and many more CTC events. He was a very popular chap, easy to get along with, I didn't know of anyone who didn't enjoy cycling along with him.

George was one of the most likeable blokes I knew. Popular, funny- a fond memory, many was the time we'd get sprayed by his breakfast cobs, he'd have the contents all round his chops and invariably would try to join in the conversation, sharing it with whomever was in range, which always made the rest of us chuckle.

George was a devoted husband, committed father and proud grandfather who clearly loved his whole family. He served his life for the betterment of his family. He didn't harp on but often mentioned his them when the occasion permitted.

Oh George, we will miss you.



## AWARD WINNERS 2015

### Photographic Competition

- Pictorial (Smith Trophy) John Allen 2. Jim Gerrard 3. Ron Johnson
- Clublife (Alex Haywood Rose Bowl) 1,2 &3 Ron Johnson
- Humorous (Sue Greave Shield) John Hartshorne, 2 &3 Ron Johnson
- Theme Wildlife (George Clowes Tray) 1, and 2 Ron Johnson. 3. John Allen
- Best Cycle Chat Article (Domont Trophy) Alan Staniforth (Judged by Peter Hopkins)

### Events

- Freewheel (Charnwood Salver) Tim Young
- Family (Bull Family Shield) The Ralphs
- Highest placed county rider in National CTC Tourist Comp - TBA
- Events medals – gold, silver and bronze – none awarded
- Best All Rounder (The Open Road trophy) – County events and group rides – Peter Witting
- Junior B.A.R cup – Jasmine Ralphs
- Ladies B.A.R cup – Judy Dawson
- Hames centenary award – lady for services to County CTC – Jean Lakin
- Clubperson of the Year (Seager Trophy) – Jim Gerrard (by ballot at the AGM)

In Dave Binks' photos, our President, Neil Dixon, presents the various winners with their awards



The Trophy Table





Jean Lakin

The Ralphs family



Judy Dawson

John Allen



Mick Gould



Peter Witting





Jim Gerrard



John Hartshorne

Keith Lakin





On the pavé (cobblestones)

## Paris Roubaix – 9<sup>th</sup> April, 2016.

By David Gair

Roger had packed a Christmas pudding. In the summer it was a tea pot and kettle, which also came on this trip, but only to be transported by car. I wondered whether the pudding was for energy supplies or part of some sort of cushioning device for the cobbles of the above event. We had ridden the route over a couple of days in the summer, but this was to all 27 pave sections (30 miles) set in the 107 mile route, plus 1000 other riders.

The organisation of the event was superb, though it meant setting off at 4.45 am to get to the buses.

This did allow a bit of school boyish pleasure of riding the wrong way around a one-way system without lights, gradually being joined by other criminal elements. There were 40 buses, each with a box trailer capable of carrying at least 30 bikes. First problem was that they were not in numerical order, but guides and mutual bikie to bikie assistance found us aboard.

By the time we had been taken to the start, reassembled and checked bikes, and queued for the loos, it was a 7.50 start for us. Cool, but dry with a following wind. About 11km in we hit the first piece of pave. Chaos. Roger and I had been before and with a bit of commonsense and forethought had no trouble with loose kit. I don't know what other riders expected, but there was a maelstrom of flying bottles, spare tubes, energy bars, clothing and other stuff including a watch and a multitool. Fortunately nobody came down. What did bring a big English guy down however, was a phenomena that was worrying. The youthful locals, trying to hold the centre line on the pave, would come up close behind, brush past, literally, and then cut back in as fast as they could. In the case of the English guy they just touched his front wheel and down he went. He seemed OK.

There is supposed to be a speed, that when achieved, allows you to float over the cobbles. We tested this theory on the descent into St Python. As Roger described it, his glasses were bouncing up and down so fast he couldn't see, aided by his cap slipping down, and everything else vibrating like a sewing machine. A bit, I guess, like approaching the sound barrier, as portrayed in films of the late forties. Needless to say we did not pass into that silent realm, and nor did we see anyone else achieve it.



On we went. Superbly marshaled and signposted all the way. Not closed roads, but with priority at all junctions. That is except one, where the young female marshal was gesticulating wildly and screaming abuse into her phone, presumably at an errant lover, oblivious to the stream of cyclists crossing the main road behind her. She did receive plenty of advice, including “Ditch him love” from the English contingent; the latter of considerable size; literally hundreds of English riders on the road.

The event is organised by a Belgian sports club, so feed stations (3) have mountains of waffles, together with delicious little honey cakes (addiction sets in), tubes of honey, bananas, other fruit and energy bars, huge tanks of energy drinks and water. Though at one point the guy in front failed to realise that a hundred gallon tank is going to generate some pressure, so I had my chainset washed with Isostar. I pray it isn't a degreasing agent as well as a drink.

The Arenbourg Trench was lethal. Big cobbles, still slick with damp under the trees, spiced with animal dung and full of sliding cyclists. I followed an ambulance in to see a guy quivering and twitching under a pile of blankets at the side of the trench. Fortunately the only section like that.

Apart from that, progress was good, particularly on the road sections, where groups worked well together, especially on the bits where the twists and turns brought us head and side winds. Brilliant riding on good roads, pleasant scenery and fine company.

At 80 miles I was the victim of a front wheel touch. It happened so fast that I hit the cobbles at speed still in riding position. The inside of the rib cage felt as if hit by a giant bell clapper. However I was able to retrieve the bike from the ditch and continue. Later I discovered an interesting cobble pattern of cuts and bruises on the upper arm (thinking of having that tattooed back in



when they fade), a wrist gouged by the watch, a perfect replica of the crossbar on the inner thigh and probably some broken ribs. As with most sports, adrenalin seems to cover for you to finish the event. Which we did, to conclude with a circuit of the famous Velodrome; this time no panniers, so up the banking, beer, medals and event cycle shirts. The Christmas pudding remains intact, possibly to be used on our planned alpine jaunt.

Journey's end, on the Velodrome

# Welsh Wanderings

by Peter Witting

Two certainties of a visit to Wales are rain and hills. Yet in my two recent trips to north Wales I've both avoided the rain and found a workaround for the hills! I tagged along when Barbara, my wife, organised a Ramblers' week this April at Llandudno. Some of our Thursday Club had explored the area in November 2014, and I wanted to spend a bit more time cycle-touring rather than chasing back wheels!

My shakedown ride started with coffee at "Y Paladiwm"; this is now the Wetherspoons in Llandudno but retains the historical interior of the old Palladium theatre. The coastal cycle route to Conwy was still partly blocked by coastal erosion, as on my last visit 18 months previously. Cables and pipes were exposed behind the homes backing onto the beach, and sand covered the cycle-path.



Conwy Castle

I picked up the path into Conwy, ignoring the "dismount" sign on the footway over the river as it was quiet, then descended to the Quay. I stopped to photo "The Smallest House in Great Britain". One bed upstairs was used for all 6 of the family! Is that a Welsh thing?

While the A55 North Wales Expressway ran in a tunnel under the River Conwy, the National Cycle Network Route 5 led from the Quay along the



picturesque  
river bank.  
Eventually the  
cycle route met  
the A55  
Expressway!  
But fear not!  
Vast sums of  
money had  
been spent to  
separate  
vulnerable  
cyclists from  
the 70mph traffic when the old road had been upgraded to dual  
carriageway.



Coastal view

The Expressway route followed the coast towards Bangor, and avoided the Welsh hills which was a big bonus! The cycle route criss-crossed the A55 at various points by specially constructed bridges, so it wasn't completely flat! I took advantage of a seaside café on the route before returning to Conwy to seek out the Albion Ale House for lunch.

The Albion we had discovered with the Thursday Club group in 2014. Camra's North Wales Pub of the Year could possibly be the UK's POTY in our opinion. Bought by 4 local micro breweries and serving their real ales, excellent Welsh cider and locally made pork pies, this is not to be missed. This Monday they were awaiting a coach load of Japanese at 3pm to experience the delights of The Albion.

My Tuesday ride took me in the opposite direction, eastwards along the wide promenade through Colwyn Bay. I had been told of a local cycle campaigner trying for years to get permission for cyclists to ride on the prom, but without success. Finally the objectionable Councillor died and permission was granted!

After 4 miles on the level, at Old Colwyn the promenade ended and I turned inland. From sea level to 265 meters in around 2 miles was rather a shock! The reward was yellow gorse hedgerows and views of snow on the hill tops. I descended to cross the Conwy near the 80 acre Bodnant





Great Orme from coastal path

National Trust gardens where Barbara had taken the Rambling group. Following the Llanrwst road towards Conwy I saw a group of around 30 racing cyclists approaching on a training ride. You need good legs to tackle these hills at their speed. And so to Conwy and the Albion Ale House: Today a group of ladies were playing their ukuleles in the back

room!

The Bwlch-y-Groes pass near Llanberis was my main aim for the week. I had failed to persuade my Thursday Club mates on the previous visit that it was passable. But I was sure it was; so time to prove who was right. I left the car at Llanberis by Llyn Padarn, and took the old slate road to reach the far side of Cefn-du. Something seemed odd about two horse riders approaching. They were riding bare-backed. I greeted them with “nice to see we’re all doing the same thing – riding without helmets”! Maybe they were pit ponies which had never been saddled?

I approached the Bwlch-y-Groes from the west, and soon had to remove a layer and leggings due to the climbing and glorious sunshine. After a mile and a half the tarmac ended, but the track surface was rideable over the top of the pass. I had seen several walkers and a cyclist when I stopped for a photo. I heard a lady’s voice, but saw no one up or down the track. A grey haired woman came striding over the grassy hill top behind me. “Have you seen my gilet?” she asked. We continued in conversation ‘til we found the garment that had fallen from her waist. Like me she had needed to adjust to the welcome sunshine.

The slate road south of Llanberis







springtime in the lanes

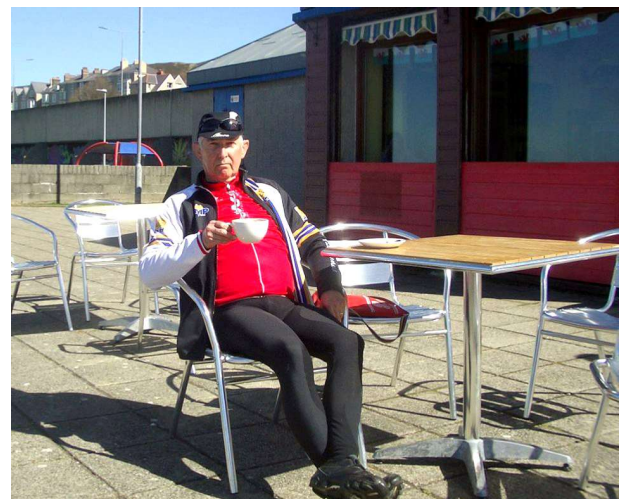
She introduced herself as Barbara James, handing me a leaflet promoting her book “Itching to Climb”. She had been a trail-blazing

woman climber in the Dolomites, the first civilian woman to train infantry junior leaders, was smuggled through Checkpoint Charlie, gained a pilot’s licence as a 50<sup>th</sup> birthday present, learned both Spanish and guitar playing from locals in the Canaries, and at 77 is still active with the local Mountain Rescue team. By the time Barbara had told me what had happened to each of her 3 husbands we had regained the tarmac, so I decided it was time to say farewell, thanking her for the warning of the gates on the descent. Quite a gal!



Starting the climb to Bwlch-Y-Groes.

Maybe my Thursday Club mates could have done with her spirit. Yes, the pass was possible by bike; but the round trip from Llanberis had taken around 3 hours so not the quickest route. So back for a final visit to The Albion at the end of an excellent week of cycling in north Wales.



Tea stop

*Cycle Chat 27*

## **Group Three and a Half**

**By Tony Davis**

Jayne and I started riding with the South Leicestershire Group in 1999 after moving into the area in December 1998. Our first few rides we were regularly off the back of the group as founders Neil Dixon and Mick Harvey plus regulars Bernard Bailey and Gill Lord set, what appeared to us a storming pace.

It didn't take too long before we settled in and were able to enjoy the rides rather than them just being a training session. Once we were able to stay with the group conversation became easier and soon we were being enthused with stories off early season "training camps" in the Spanish sunshine.

It took us until 2001 to bite the bullet and book something up. We booked onto Graham Baxter's Veterans and Ladies Training Camp based in Denia. The camp was held at Hotel Los Angeles, a 4 star hotel, a little way out of the town. The camp ran for two weeks, some people coming for just the



**Cala Bona Harbour**



John and Colin,  
San Salvador



first, some for just the second and a few staying for the whole period. It was well organised with four different level groups, with the top three led by ex-pro riders plus mechanical and masseur service in the evening.

The area gave the choice of rides along the flat coastal strip, through orange and almond groves or more challenging rides into the mountains.

We repeated our visits there over the next couple of years and came to realise that for many it was part of an annual routine.

Around 2004 Graham Baxter sold his company to Sporting Tours International and I suspect that the bigger company looked at the training camps with an accountants eye and decided to merge the Veteran's and Ladies Camp with the general training camp while moving the whole shooting match to a cheaper hotel in Murcia.

In 2005, despite the change we booked to join the camp in Murcia. There we were joined by many of the usual faces plus lots of much younger and fitter riders. Despite the numbers being greater and the spread of ability wider there were still only four groups. While I was happy riding with group 3, Jayne, Richard, Denis, Jerry and Lyn found themselves in no man's land. While they were able to keep up with group 3 they didn't find it enjoyable but they found group 4 excruciatingly slow. This was the crystallisation of "Group 3 1/2".

Cala Torta Road



*Cycle Chat 29*

Over dinner on that holiday we discussed doing our own thing the following year. We had a couple of early season trips to Puerto Pollensa, Mallorca where we often teamed up with Gill and Bernard for rides.

We fancied a change in 2008 and visited Portimao on the Algarve in Portugal. Here there was a bit of a drag to get away from the city but once in the countryside the roads were quiet and there was an abundance of wild flowers.

After Portugal we returned to Mallorca and have been visiting the same resort, Cala Bona, every year since. The accommodation on the coastal strip is good value and many hotels have excellent, well equipped bicycle sheds. In recent years most of us have given up taking our own bikes as the transport costs for getting your own machine on the plane and across the island is roughly equal to three weeks hire of a top quality road bike.

Over the years the numbers have varied depending on who was available due to work and other commitments but we have gradually gathered new members who enjoy some social riding in the sunshine. We arrange a core week and people book around that. At peak this year there were thirteen of us.

Cala Bona doesn't give easy access to the mountains of north Mallorca but there are enough hills to be able to create a mix of easy and challenging rides, combined with coffee and good lunch stops. Favourites include the



Coffee at Arta





cafes on the square at Arta, Petra, the monastery at San Salvador plus the harbour side at Porto Cristo for a lunch of tapas or sardines.

This year it wasn't quite as hot as usual but it was pleasant weather in the high teens or low twenties centigrade. At the same time the UK was in the grip of a week of winter weather.

Next year's dates are in the diary and we're looking forward to it already.

### Leicestershire & Rutland CTC Events 2016

15 May Back to the Fuchsia	John Allen
22 May Heart of England Rally/Meriden Service	
27-30 May EM CTC Regional Rally, Beaumanor Hall	
E Mids Region event	
TBA President's Ride	Neil Dixon
4 Jun (TBC) 200k/100k/50k Audax	Tony Davis
26 Jun Tri-Vets' Ride	K Lakin, Tom Bailey
TBC LCA Over 60s Reunion	Eileen Johnson
TBA CTC AGM and Photographic Competition*	Ray Clay/Keith Lakin
11 Dec Carol Service	TBC
18 Dec Mince Pie Meet, E Mids Region event	

\* The Photo Competition theme for 2016 is:- "Happiness is ....."

# YORK CYCLE RALLY



The next York Rally will be held on the 18-19 June 2016. All are welcome, and entry, parking and almost all activities and rides are completely free! Find out what's on by visiting their website <http://yorkrally.org/>

For anyone wishing to make a weekend of it, campsite bookings for 2016 are open

now and the earlier you book, the lower the prices!

For those of you who don't know what the York rally is, it's a gathering of hundreds of mostly touring cyclists from all over Britain and has been held for many years. The venue is the Knavesmire, which is the area surrounding York Racecourse and within the City limits, so shops and pubs etc are all fairly close.



There is entertainment laid on, some trade tents and some refreshment tents if you need them. A programme of touring rides around the lovely Yorkshire countryside is arranged, plus some grass track and off road racing for those with a competitive streak. It's very popular and many folks camp on the site, but York is, of course, well served for more conventional accommodation. Many Leics & Rutland members are regulars, so there will probably be someone there you know.



# Leicester Easy Riders

## Runs List

Contact is David Smith 0116 2417908

<b>Date</b>	<b>Start</b>	<b>Meet</b>	<b>Destination</b>	<b>Leader</b>
May 29	9.30	Bxr	Greenacres, Shackerstone, Newtown Linford	Bharat Daxini
Jun 5	9.30	W H S	Asfordby, Dove Cottage, Six Hills	David Smith
Jun 12	9.30	GCUP	Thornton, Shenton Station Rothley Station	Richard Bilston
Jun 19	9.30	SO	Waterloo Farm, Naseby, Saddington	Colin Field
Jun 26	9.30	SO	Medbourne, Braybrooke Church Langton	Andy Tokeley
Jul 3	9.30	GCUP	Cosby, Bitteswell, Tur Langton	Colin Field
Jul 10	9.30	SO	Hallaton, Tilton	Bharat Daxini
Jul 17	9.30	GCUP	Foxton, Kelmars	R Bilston
Jul 24	9.30	WHS	Twyford, Scalford, Goscote Nurseries	David Smith
Jul 31	9.30	SO	Mystery Ride	Norman Delves
Aug 7	9.30	HP	Mountsorrel, Pillings Lock	Richard Barber
Aug 14	9.30	BXR	Greenacres, Carlton, Rothley	Bharat Daxini
Aug 21	9.30	HP	Thrussington, Wysall, Goscote Nurseries	David Smith
Aug 28	9.30	SO	Foxton, Naseby, Saddington	Andy Tokeley

## WANTED

## Your photos

As I hope you have noticed, more photos are appearing in Cycle Chat but we constantly need more. The advent of digital photography has made taking, manipulating, distributing and reproducing the images easy these days, so there is no excuse for not giving your work a wider audience.

If you have some cycling related shots that would be suitable for publication and you would like to share, email them to [davebinks@ntlworld.com](mailto:davebinks@ntlworld.com)

Images must be in .jpg format (every digital camera does that automatically) and I must have both the name of the photographer and his/her permission to use it. I am particularly keen to see work that has been shot in vertical format because then it can be used on the front cover!

To keep costs down, only shots printed on the outer covers are in colour, but I can convert any others to black & white.





## South Leics Runs June - September 2016

DATE	TIME	START	ELEVENSES	DESTINATION	COMMENTS
4/6/16	08:00	Bitteswell		DA 100/200Km Audax	All helpers welcome!
5/6/16	09:15	BA	Naseby	Chapel Brampton	
12/6/16	09:15	BA	Stapleton (Greenacres)	Lullington	
18/6/16	00:00	BA		York Rally	
19/6/16	09:15	BA	Kelmarsh	Lilbourne	May need to bring your own Lunch! N.B. Father's Day
26/6/16	09:15	BA	Naseby	Welton	
26/6/16	08:30	Congerstone		Tri-ennial Vets Ride	100 mile ride. H.Q. :- Congerstone Village Hall. £15 entry.
3/7/16	09:15	BA	Brandon Marsh	Long Itchington	
10/7/16	09:15	BA	Hallaton	Shearsby	
17/7/16	09:15	BA	Catthorpe	Grandborough	
24/7/16	09:15	BA	Stapleton (Greenacres)	Church-End Brewery	Bring your own lunch
31/7/16	09:15	BA	Market Harborough	Hallaton	
7/8/16	09:15	BA	Naseby	Chapel Brampton	
14/8/16	09:15	BA	Tugby	Foxton Locks	
21/8/16	09:15	BA	Kelmarsh	Swinford	
28/8/16	09:15	BA	Crick	Shearsby	
4/9/16	09:15	BA	Naseby	Presidents Ride	Lunch tba. For riders wanting a shorter ride meet in Husbands Bosworth at 10:15 outside The Bell.
11/9/16	09:15	BA	Brandon Marsh	Long Itchington	
18/9/16	09:15	BA	Hallaton	Foxton Locks	
25/9/16	09:15	BA	Kelmarsh	Welford	

BA = Broughton Astley

Contact is Neil Dixon 01455 209700 mob 0789 985449

# Charnwood Runs List

Date	Start	Eleven's	Lunch	Leader
05 Jun	Car Assist Langar 9.30	Newark on Trent	Dry Doddington	Pete
12 Jun	9.00 A	Swarkestone GC	Willington	Joe
19 Jun	Car Assist Ashbourne 9.30	Wetton Mill	Earl Sterndale	Keith
26 Jun	8.00	Tri-Vets Ride		Keith L
03 Jul	Car Assist Lutterworth 9.30	Foxton Locks	Harrington	Lyn
10 Jul	9.00 H	Lichfield	Edingale	Jim
17 Jul	9.00 B	Beeston Marina	Cropwell Bishop	Nick
24 Jul	9.00 M	Kingsbury Water Park	Ridge Lane	Joe
31 Jul	9.00 W	Cosby	Shearsby	Martin
07 Aug	Car Assist Barnsdale 9.30 SK908087	Cafe Ventoux Tugby	Wing	Nick
14 Aug	9.00 A	Findern GC	Dalbury Lees	Keith
21 Aug	9.00 S	Darley Abbey	Burton on Trent	Joe
28 Aug	9.00 H	Atherstone	Stoke Golding	Pete
04 Sep	Glasgow to	Inverness tour		
11 Sep	Glasgow to	Inverness tour		
18 Sep	9.00 W	Uilesthorpe	Newton Burgoland	Jim
25 Sep	9.00 M	Fradley	Hamstall Ridware	Martin

A – Ashby Town Hall

B – Belton Church

H – Heather Church

M – DFS Measham

S – Lount X Roads

W – Bagworth Village Hall

Secretary: Keith Lakin, 12 Thornborough Road, Coalville, LE67 3TH 01530 451573

Runs contact: Lyn Gale 07779 794317

For a ride of a more gentle nature, between 20 and 40 miles, please contact Pearl on 07980 755226 or Brenda on 07837 562487



**NUNEATON****CYCLE CLUB**

Rides Secretary Chris Taylor 02476 741276

<https://www.facebook.com/nuneaton.cycleclub>[www.nuneatoncycleclub.co.uk](http://www.nuneatoncycleclub.co.uk)

Thursday rides meet at 10.30am. Saturdays 10am.
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<u>Date</u>	<u>Day</u>	<u>Venue</u>	<u>Distance</u>	<u>Contact</u>	<u>Telephone</u>
26-May	Thur	Morrisons Hinckley	Half day	Gill Lord	01455 456708
28-May	Sat	Nuneaton Library	Short ride	Anne Taylor	02476 741276
02-Jun	Thur	Dobbies Garden Centre	Half day	Eric Rowland	02476 371687
04-Jun	Sat	Nuneaton Library	Short ride	Chris Steiner	01455 213927
09-Jun	Thur	Makins Fishery	Half day	Roger Payne	07757 103139
11-Jun	Sat	Nuneaton Library	Short ride	TBA	01455 212565
16-Jun	Thur	Upton Barn	Half day	Morgan Reynolds	01455 844883
18-Jun	Sat	Nuneaton Library	Short ride	Bob Percival	07921 258927
23-Jun	Thur	Hill Top Garden Centre	Half day	Terry Pittam	02476 328748
25-Jun	Sat	Nuneaton Library	Short ride	Anne Taylor	02476 741276
30-Jun	Thur	Pingles Leisure Centre	Half day	Chris Taylor	02476 741276
02-Jul	Sat	Nuneaton Library	Short ride	Chris Steiner	01455 213927
07-Jul	Thur	Astley Book Farm	Half day	Norman Castle	01455 840164
09-Jul	Sat	Nuneaton Library	Short ride	Kath Proctor	02476 395079
14-Jul	Thur	Morrisons Hinckley	Half day	Mike Patterson	07551 805957
16-Jul	Sat	Nuneaton Library	Short ride	Ann Jenkins	
21-Jul	Thur	Dobbies Garden Centre	Half day	Eric Rowland	02476 371687
23-Jul	Sat	Nuneaton Library	Long ride	Bob Percival	07921 258927
28-Jul	Thur	Makins Fishery	Half day	John Andrews	01162 865738
30-Jul	Sat	Nuneaton Library	Short ride	Ann Jenkins	01455 212565