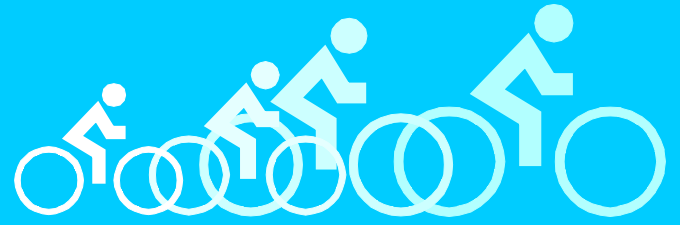


CYCLING Wakefield

Promoting and campaigning for cyclists



Newsletter Cycle Forum

Edition Winter 2009



STORY TITLE HERE

Christmas arrives a little bit late this year

Sandy Clarke accepts a cheque on behalf of WDCF

Updates on cycle routes and latest improvements

David Keighley sets out to explain the changes

Why I cycle

Roger Talbot describes how he rediscovered cycling

Health Rides need your support

John Matthews outlines our Health Ride policy and explains how you can help

Update on our membership

Gill Ross reveals the situation on membership

WDCF Sitting Committee

Left to right David Keighley (Deputy Chairman) Sandy Clark (Chairman) Roger Talbot (Health Rides Co-ordinator) John Matthews (Secretary). Seen here cooling their saddles on the Spen Valley Greenway

This is our second edition of the newsletter and you may have noticed that the previous logo for the WDCF has changed. Inside this publication Sandy Clark explains how these and other changes are to be brought about by the Award for All grant.

1. The Award for All presentation, what it means the WDCF can do as a result
2. What has changed around the District to improve things for cyclists
3. How a return to cycling has changed one man's life
4. Development of the Health Ride programme and where we hope it might develop further
5. Upcoming events such as Bike Week
6. Help wanted – projects we hope you will help us with
7. Cycle training how can we improve this for adults in the District
8. Membership issues

The Awards for All Presentation, what it means the WDCF can do as a result (by Sandy Clark)

In the second week in January the Wakefield District Cycle Forum received its biggest boost yet with the arrival into our bank account of £9,507 from Big Lottery Fund Awards For All. In these dark, damp days of winter when frustration, if not depression, sets in from lack of cycling a cash award of this dimension was a great boost to the spirits.

We were able to use the 'presentation' of the cheque to get some publicity for the Forum. The 'cheque' was officially presented to us by Jon Trickett MP on the new cycle track at Halfpenny Lane in Featherstone and a good group of members turned up for the presentation. Coverage of the event appeared in the local press and the Big Lottery Fund will also be carrying an article and photograph in their publications.

The grant will provide the Forum with new exhibition material, which to date we have had to borrow from the Council, Sustrans and other friendly organisation. We will be producing a booklet with some information on cycling in the district including information about the Forum and Forum membership. I hope you have already had a look at our new web site and the new Forum logo. The reaction to both has been very positive so far so I hope you like it.

A major portion of the grant will be spent on publicising two cycle routes in the district developed by our Vice-Chair, David Keighley. The Wakefield Wheel is a route of approximately 40 miles circling the City of Wakefield. A Places of Interest route, of about half that distance, can be joined from a number of railway station in the district and will visit Anglers Country Park, Nostell Priory, Chantry Bridge and Pugneys, to name but a few. We will be producing maps of these routes and information boards, which will be place at a number of places on the routes.

Your committee continues to look at other funding possibilities that might help boost cycling in the district but this first success should maintain the excitement, and workload, for the rest of 2009.



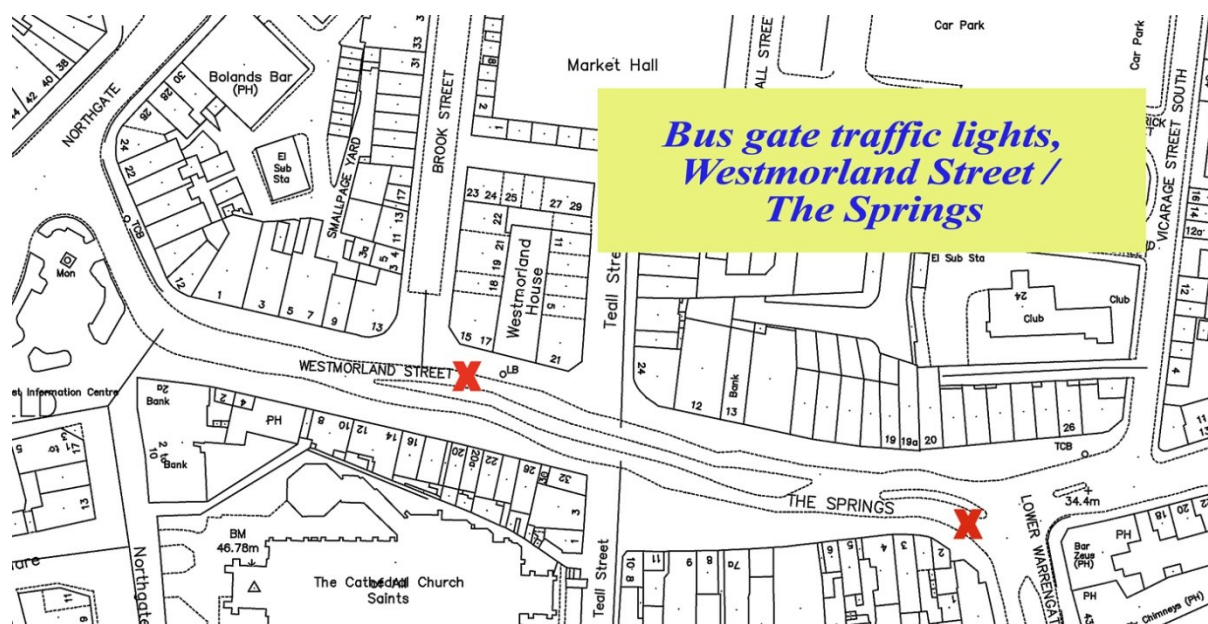
Cheque presentation ceremony

Changes around the District to improve things for Cyclists (by David Keighley)

New off-road cycle track from the Trans Pennine Trail, using the recently renewed Clay Royd Bridge, over the disused canal into Haw Park Wood and on up to Squires' tea rooms.



Bus gate traffic lights have been installed in Westmorland Street / The Springs with a cycle bypass at the side, allowing safer access for cyclists to the city centre.



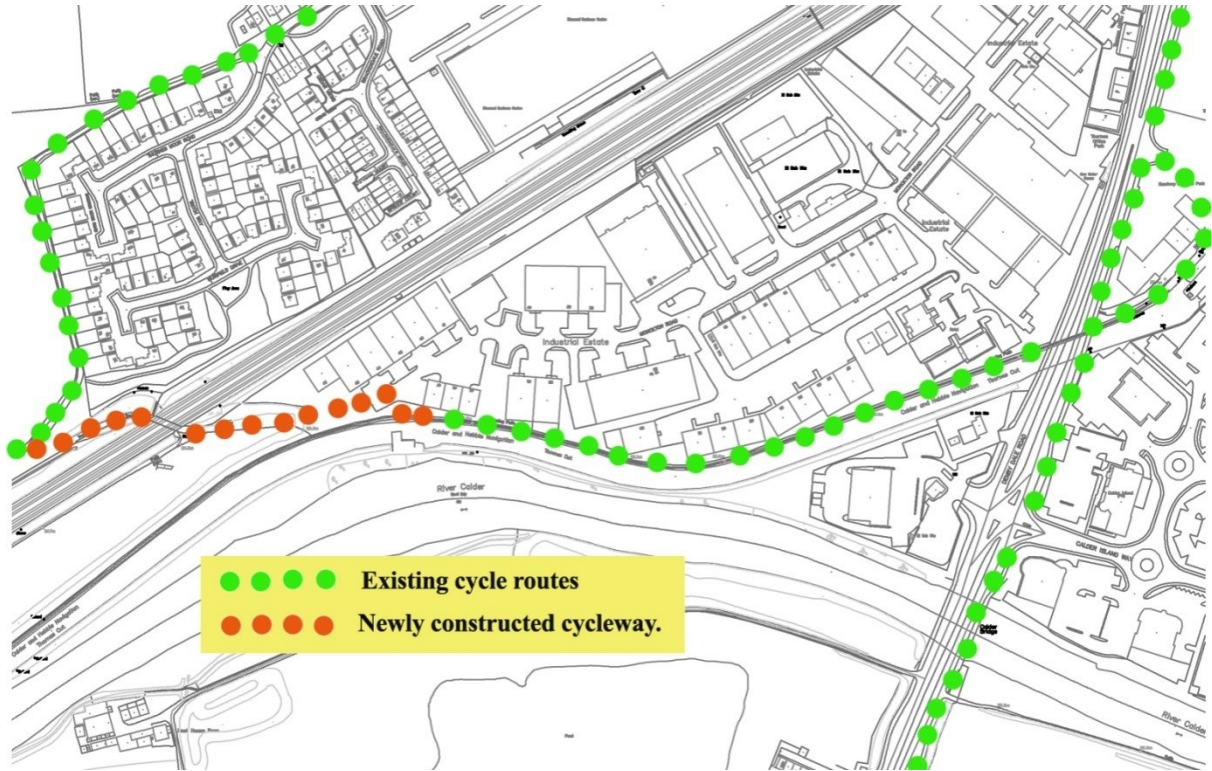
Secure cycle lockers have been installed at Pugneys Water Park, opposite the reception entrance and Thornes Park at the side of the sports stadium. If you would like to use the lockers please call at the reception of the appropriate location.



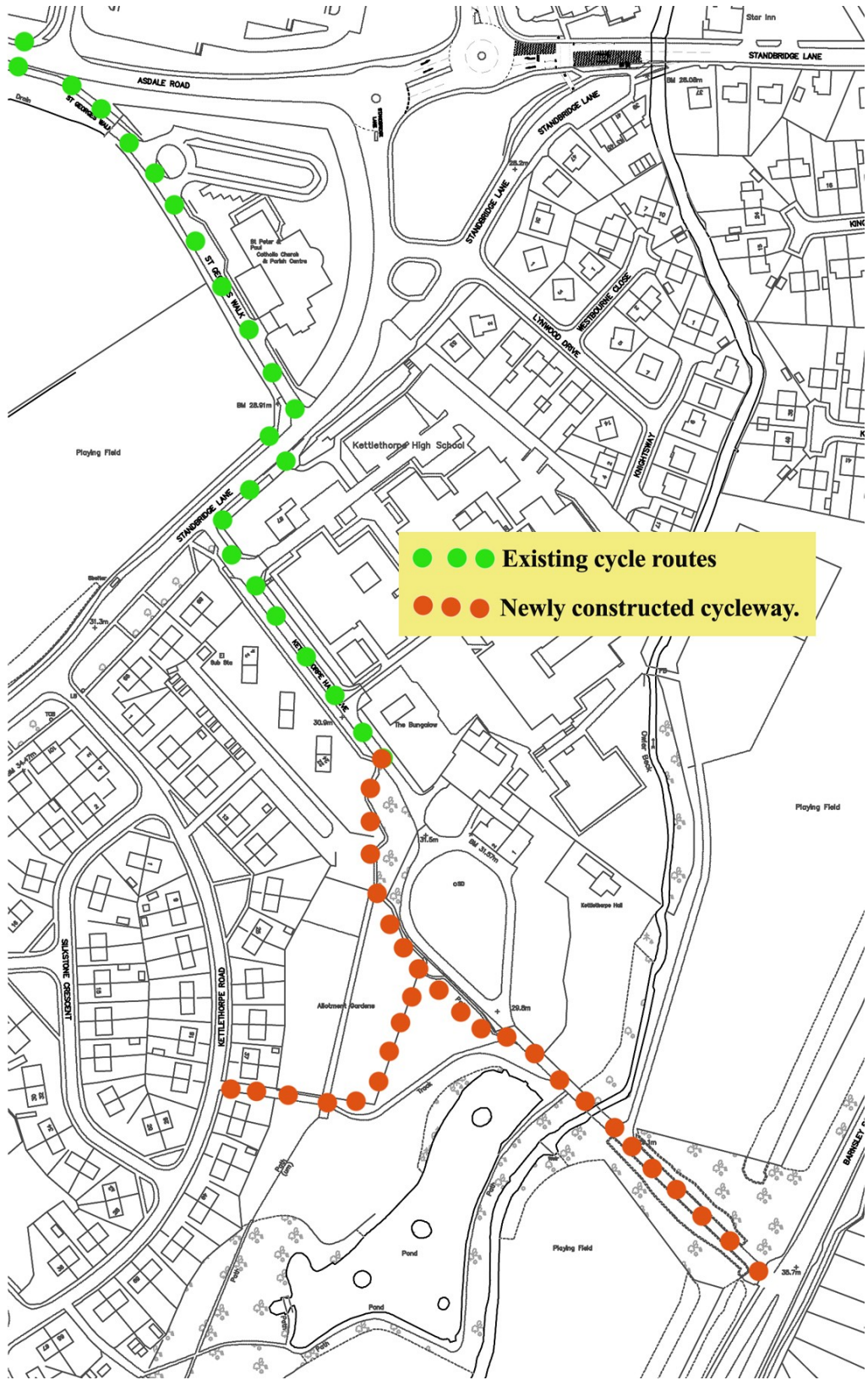
Cycle lockers at Pugneys Water Park. Art work by pupils of Kettlethorpe High school

The road works at Chantry Bridge at the junction with Barnsley Road and Doncaster Road are now mainly complete, with some provisions for cyclists, not perfection but hopefully better than they were before.

New cycleway link from the Horbury cycle route, under railway, linking into Monkton Road, with cut through to canal tow path route to Denby Dale Road



New cycleway links from Kettlethorpe Hall Drive to Barnsley Road, and cycleway link into Kettlethorpe Road.



Why I ride a bike (by Roger Talbot)

Like so many other people in my generation I had learned to ride a bike as part of growing up. I am not so old that there were no cars on the road as I learned to ride, but there were plenty of children like myself who cycled around to get to places or just as a form of playing. At nine years of age, having past a cycle proficiency test at the school play ground set by our local bobby, I was allowed to cycle to school,. On arrival at school the bike was placed in the cycle shed and padlocked up, whilst it may not have been the best school in the world, there was always enough of my bike left to ride home at the end of the day.

Christmas 1955 saw me helping to deliver the post for the Royal Mail and I received one shilling and sixpence (about 7.5 pence in today's money) per day for the use of my bike, the same happened the following year.

During 1957 I left school and started to work for a living, so it was that I took my bike each day to the railway station where it was left in the left luggage office for the day, at a cost of two shillings a week (10 pence).

The following year saw me and three of my friends take the train to Clacton-on-Sea for a holiday with our bikes. At that time each train had a guards van attached and so it was easy enough to get all our bikes onto the train without any hassle or restrictions. After cycling around much of Essex we decided to cycle home, stopping over night at youth hostels. The final part of the journey entailed cycling through London; this being my one and only time of cycling in the city.

Forty nine years then elapsed before I put my back side on a saddle again, and this came about by pure chance. I was walking my son's dog down by the river Don at Sprotbrough when I read a notice advertising the Trans Pennine Trail (TPT). The whole idea of cycling again excited me so much that the next day I purchased a new bicycle from Don's cycle shop in South Elmsall, and I was off cycling.

The year 2007 saw me complete the whole of the TPT on a sponsored ride and cycled a total of 2784 miles most of which was done around the Yorkshire area following the A-Z map using all the trails that are shown on the map. . I also found details of the local health rides which at the time were run by Wakefield MDC. With 250 Kilometres of bridle paths, old railway tracks, and cycle paths, there is always somewhere different to travel and observe the wild life en route, so there are not many days when I am not out cycling, weather and health permitting.

To day I still feel the health benefits of riding a bike and I am actively trying to encourage another generation to get out of their cars and join the world of cycling starting off with 5-7 mile health rides



Roger busy planning more Health Rides

Health Rides (by John Matthews)

Riding a bike is **fun**, riding a bike is **good for your health**. Those are the key messages we should try to get across to all those people who have yet to ride a bike, or only have memories of riding a bike as a child. Up and down the UK, cycle group such as WDCF put a lot of effort into organising cycle rides for members of the public in an attempt to get people to start riding and hopefully then develop it into a habit of riding.

The aim of our health rides is not to attract those cyclist who regularly ride competitively with clubs and groups (their speed and fitness probably outstrips us anyway). Rather it is for those who are just starting to ride and don't yet know where they can ride, those who want to go in a group or with their family and want to be mostly off road for a leisurely ride.

We try to be welcoming to all and to lead a ride which is supportive rather than competitive, the speed of the ride being determined by the slowest riders. Sometimes grandparents turn up with their grandchildren and the ride might need to change to reflect this, we ask for support as we try to meet everyone's needs.

Our rides are advertised in a number of places and now that we have our own website, more information on the rides will be offered there. We try to make the rides as informal as possible and there is no need to pre-book but this brings its own difficulties as last minute changes forced on us by poor weather can mean that we have no way of notifying people of a cancellation of the rides. This is under review at the moment but we are trying to keep it a non bookable event to encourage its spontaneous nature for as long as is possible.

This summer we are looking again at the rides we do and trying to find new routes which include as big an off road element as possible, along trails which novice riders might enjoy. We are also interested in being able to offer rides in different parts of Wakefield District. So if you have any ideas for possible rides please let us know.

Any of the health rides needs a minimum of two people with one leading the way and one riding at the rear of the group, as a tail end Charlie, just in case anyone in the party suffers a puncture or any other form of mishap. If you would like to help please get in touch, we would be delighted to have you join us, and we can plan to include you in our health rides programme.

Over the summer we have some extra rides which are a bit further and more demanding which might suit some of you better. Keep an eye on the programme and hopefully join us on the event.

What I would like to suggest is that you try to come on a ride this summer with us and if possible think about bringing a friend or family member who does not normally ride. We are happy to see our numbers grow even if it is only very slowly.

If you are able to help us out on any of these health rides or you have a question about them you might like to get in touch with Roger Talbot by phone on 01977615300 or send him an email on rodgertalbot@btinternet.com

Summer Shows & Galas

Friday 24th April Wakefield City centre, 10am to 4pm cycling information stand

Monday 4th May. May Day Gala, Thornes Park. Wakefield. Time 10am to 4pm Cycling information stand, Bike Doctor, cycle obstacle course, Bygone Bikes display, guided rides, join us there for a fun day of cycling.

Sunday 17th May Annual Cyclothon. Sponsored Bike Ride Start & finish, The Prince of Wales Hospice, Pontefract. Choice of three scenic routes 25miles, 45miles, 60miles (approx). For further information please contact Fundraising office Tel: 01977 708868
E-mail : reception@pwhp.org.uk



Challenge the Dragon V Long distance weekend ride from Holyhead to Chepstow, approximately 250 miles. If you feel your up to it, for further details contact Graham West on 077515 376924. Dates yet to be confirmed but expected to be in June 2009

BIKE WEEK

Sunday 14th June, Bike Fun Day Anglers Park, 10am to 4pm **Fresh air miles**, sponsored off-road bike ride for Sustrans. Cycling information stand, Bike Doctor, cycle obstacle course, Bygone Bikes display, Join us there for a fun day of cycling.

Saturday 20th & Sunday 21st June at Nostell Priory & Parkland, Doncaster Road, Nostell, nr Wakefield, **Bike week Spectacular with FREE entry.**

Saturday, 11am to 4pm Sunday, 10am to 5pm cycling information stand, Bike Doctor, cycle obstacle course, Bygone Bikes, guided rides, Fathers Day challenge, Bike Bits table, refreshments. So why not join us there for a fun day of cycling

Sunday 28th June, 11am to 4pm Green Living Day, Anglers Country Park, Haw Park Lane, Winterset, Wakefield. Cycling information stand, Bike Doctor, guided rides

Sunday 12th July, 11am to 5pm Pontefract Liquorice Festival, Pontefract Town centre. Cycling information stand, Bike Doctor, Bygone Bikes display, guided rides,

Sunday 9th August, Sponsored Bike Ride for Wakefield Hospice Start & Finish, Pugneys Water Park, Asdale Road, Wakefield 'Fun Ride', 20mile & 40mile circular routes available. For further information please contact Helen Rowlands at Wakefield Hospice on 01924 213900 or email: Helen.rowlands@wakefieldhospice.co.uk

Bike Doctor :- Free bicycle safety & health check.

Dust off your bike and bring it along to one of the events where the bike doctor is advertised and he will give it a checkover and you will be ready for the summer cycle rides.

Obstacle Course:- Practise your cycling skills.

Open to all ages. If you feel like a challenge come along to one of the events where the obstacle course is advertised and have a go. Bring your own bike or borrow one of ours.

Cycling information: - Leaflets and advice.

Wakefield District Cycle Forum members and Sustrans rangers will be manning a stall with cycling information, maps, leaflets and advice.

Health Rides :- Guided rides for all abilities.

The Health Rides are for all ages and abilities. They last approximately one hour, cycling a distance of between 5-7 miles on traffic free routes and some quiet roads

Help wanted – projects we hope you will help us with

Spare parts

Are you one of those people who buy bits and pieces for your bike, use it for a time and then find out that it does not really fit your bike or your style of riding? If so then you, like very many people, are likely to have a drawer or even garage, full of bits and pieces for your bike that you will never use in future.

No one likes throwing away “things” which still have some useful life in them.....so here is your chance.

How about donating those unused spare parts, or accessories to WDCF? We could put them onto a stand at Nostell Priory during Bike week and sell them onto fellow bikers who could then get some more use out of them. Whatever we make in the way of revenue we will put into WDCF account so that it can be used to further the interest of cyclist in the Wakefield District.

What a joy to get rid of those “too good to throw out” tyres or saddles which just sit there in the garage taking up space and gets in the way as you try to find gardening equipment in the garage or shed.

Bike Week

We are hoping to put on a number of events around Bike week and these events do not organise or run themselves. Much of the planning is done and some of the arrangements are made but there is still plenty to be done and we would be very grateful for help from volunteers on the day.

WDCF is an organisation made up entirely of volunteers and in this day and age it seems that many people are prepared to sit back and hope that others will do the work on their behalf. Without being patronising, here is your chance to get on your bike and help us.

We can't flatten hills or improve the weather, nor can we engineer out head winds for people, but there are still loads of reasons that people should ride a bike and we want to make people think about the fun of riding a bike during Bike week. Will you help us?

If you can spare some time and would like to get people to see the benefits and fun of riding a bike, will you spare some time to help us make a success of Bike Week.

Please give Roger Talbot a call on 01977615300 or send him an email on rodgertalbot@btinternet.com

Cycle Training – how can we improve

cycling skills for adults in the Wakefield District. (by Michael Selway)

Cycle training has been recognised as an important element in increasing the number of journeys made by cycle, the number of people cycling regularly, and the enjoyment people get from cycling. One of the reasons given by people for not using a bicycle is that the roads are seen to be too dangerous. To improve road safety in the district and to promote cycling, Wakefield Council has undertaken to review speed limits and junction design, to improve cycling facilities, and to provide Bikeability training in schools.

What about the many adults (some of whom we've met at the WDCF stalls this past year) who remain hesitant about using their bicycles on the busy roads?

In 2005 I qualified as a National Standards Cycling Instructor. This meant doing a four-day course with the City of York Road Safety Team. Most of the participants were experienced cyclists including road safety officers and people who had taught Cycling Proficiency in schools. Everyone found that looking at this new training scheme helped them to improve their cycling and have better strategies for planning their cycling.

National Standards Training (now marketed as Bikeability) starts with basics: choice of clothing, choice of bike, basic maintenance, how to get on and off, starting and stopping, using gears, steering and balancing skills, demonstrating the ability to make rearward observation and to give signals. This leads to a level one certificate

Level Two

- takes you onto quiet roads and includes procedures when wishing to turn left or right at junctions, looking for hazards and obstructions (such as parked cars) and how to deal with them.

Level Three

- takes you out into the traffic and includes route planning. It is very safety conscious and geared to individual needs. It uses a four-part strategy which is applied at each stage of the journey: Where do I want to go? What do I need to know? What do I need to do? Should I get off and walk?
- Level Three training will include fast traffic, busy junctions, multi-lane roads, roundabouts, and using cycle facilities such as advanced stop lines and toucans. It does not tell the cyclist what to do but gives them confidence and skills to decide how to tackle each element to suit the kind of cyclist they are.

In Sheffield, the Cycling Officer obtained funding to provide a free two-hour cycling lesson to any resident. Some people started from scratch and then paid for extra lessons to complete the three levels. Others were experienced cyclists looking for advice on planning and completing particular journeys such as "I cycle on Sunday mornings but am thinking of using my bike to commute." Occasionally we had sessions with a family who wanted help riding as a group.

If we're serious about reducing pollution and traffic congestion, and improving people's health, then a small investment in cycle training is well worthwhile. An instructor training course costs around £400 (bursaries are available); funding is available to set up Bikeability schemes; and it's a legitimate use of LTP money (what's the point of cycling infrastructure that people don't know how to use). It could also be a valuable follow on to Health Rides.

Membership issues (by Gill Ross)

Thanks to all of you our membership numbers have now grown to 70. We have seen a steady increase over the months since the last newsletter in September which is great. The 'not so great' issue is that there are only 14 of those 70 who are women! We need to encourage far more female interest in cycling and this needs much more thought on how we go about attracting women onto bikes. The healthy rides programme should be a good start in attracting women and families. The ever increasing off road routes should also help those with young children and those who are less confident on the roads.

Our membership is fairly evenly spread throughout the whole of the Wakefield District but we still need to capture the interest of all those people that we see on bikes every day on our travels within the area? There must be hundreds of them out there! Perhaps you know some of them so please help us to recruit new members.

Updates from Forum meeting on 19th March 2009

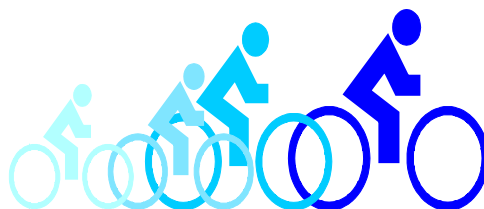
There was a reasonable turn out at the Forum to hear John Wilcox begin the meeting with some information on how the Forum and Wakefield NHS have common interest in cycling, where the NHS saw the benefits of exercise for people rather than the furtherance of cycling as an end in itself.

The Chairman's opening remarks and that of the Secretary then reflected on the work of the Forum for the year 2008.

Election of Auditor -	Rob Wright agreed to carry out the function of auditor.
Election of officers -	<u>Chairman</u> Sandy Clark
	<u>Vice Chairman</u> David Keighley
	<u>Secretary</u> Michael Selway
	<u>Treasurer</u> Gill Ross

Roger Talbot then outlined the Health ride programme which was followed by a number of member's questions.

The meeting was formerly closed at 20.45 hours



Cycling Wakefield the newsletter of your campaigning Forum