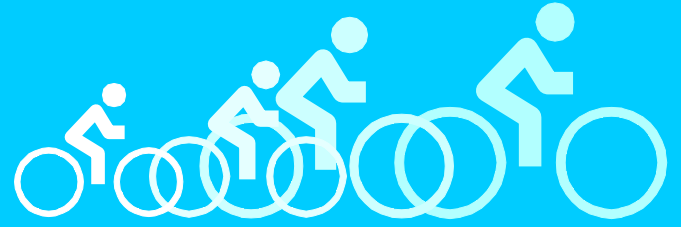


CYCLING Wakefield

Promoting and campaigning for cyclists



Newsletter of the Wakefield District Cycle Forum

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Chevet Branch Line Bridleway Grand Opening

The Grand Opening of the new Bridleway took place on a cool but dry day on Saturday 8th March. The ribbon was cut by local MP Jon Trickett, a keen cyclist, and David Dagger, Cabinet member for Sport and Culture on Wakefield Council. 45 cyclists joined us from our monthly ride from Anglers (see photo above).
(more photos page 5)

Basic Cycle Maintenance Course

Saturday 17th May
10 am till 1pm

Wakefield One (council offices),
Wakefield

This is the next in our very popular maintenance courses run by our Bike Doctor, Graham West. If you wish to attend email your request to info@cyclings-wakefield.org.uk

The course is free to members.

Cycle Path Workgroup

We have had an excellent response to our volunteer workdays which are running in conjunction with Sustrans. Ian Hookham, Sustrans coordinator for Wakefield, is doing a great job in organizing the days and David Keighley has been busy sourcing materials for path improvements.

Ian sent us this report:

Many thanks for everyone for their support for the workdays which have now been running since the beginning of the year. The turnout has been as little as three and as many as 11, but on all occasions the willingness of all people involved has been excellent. The amount of work carried out in a typical two hour workday has been very rewarding for all concerned. At the time of writing we have had 9 workdays with an average attendance of 7 volunteers who have completed 96 hours of labour.

The projects the teams have undertaken have been in three main areas

Trans Pennine Trail - South of Sykes Road Bridge

This section of the trail annually suffers from a buildup of mud and leaves coming down from the embankment. In two Saturday mornings over 300 metres of the path had been cleared, improving the trail for all users



Nostell Estate - Foulby Farm

Improvements to the Wakefield wheel path were carried out in two stages. Firstly, plantings were laid to create a path from the t-junction near the wheel route adjacent to Doncaster Road. This now ties in with the newly laid path leading to Crofton. The second part of the project was to clear the existing path of vegetation and restore the path back to its original state. This was very difficult work in some areas but the finished result is much improved



Nostell Estate - Other Improvements

Other parts of the Wakefield Wheel and other trails used on the Nostell ride were also worked on. Sections under the railway bridge were improved with further work to improve the drainage still to be completed.

Future Projects

We have other plans to improve the trails used by the forum as well as Sustrans/NCN trails. However we are also keen to hear ideas from members to improve the network. If you have any suggestions or wish to contribute to the workdays in any way please feel free to contact me.



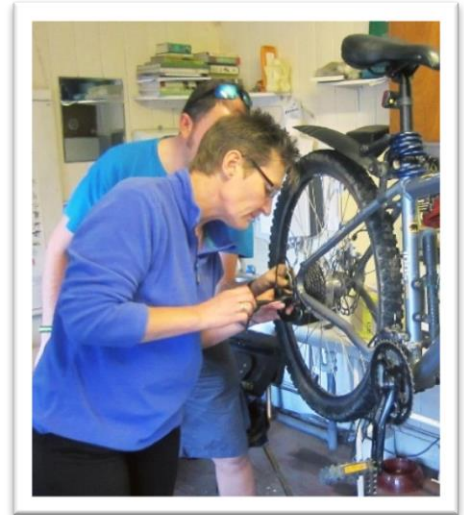
DIY Maintenance Days

DIY maintenance Nostell Priory.

Service your bike while being supervised by our Bike Doctor.

**Sunday 25th May, Sunday 27th July
between 2.30 pm and 3.30pm**

No need to book just come along



Nostell Priory will also host a Basic Cycle Maintenance Course on Sunday 27th July from 10 am till 1 pm. To book a place email info@cycling-wakefield.org.uk

Cycle Path Fund gets off to steady start

At the beginning of April members received a request to contribute to Wakefield District Cycle Forum's Cycle Path Fund, which was established at this year's AGM, and which will be used to develop new and improve existing cycle paths in the district.

This fund is aimed at continuing and improving the work that the Cycle Forum has undertaken in the last year to enhance the provision of cycle paths in the district with a view to developing a continuous network of traffic-free cycle routes. We intend to do this by filling in 'missing links' in the existing network, which have been identified by Cycle Forum members.

The most striking example of our work so far is the completion of the Chevet Branch Line, which created over 5 kilometres of new all-weather cycle path to the south-east of Wakefield City. This was achieved by the Cycle Forum committing a small amount of the funding, £3,000, as 'match funding' in order to secure a grant of over £85,000 towards a total project value of just under £100,000. Elsewhere in this newsletter you can read of the excellent work our volunteer workgroup is doing in maintaining and improving existing cycle paths.

The fund will be used both to support the work of our volunteer workgroup and to provide match funding for grants to secure major path projects.

The fund appeal has got off to a steady start with contribution at the time of writing from 10 members totalling £660. One contributor wrote 'May I say what a great job you have made of the Chevet Branch Line. Please accept our small contribution to your path fund and many thanks for your hard work'. Our most generous donation so far is for £500. This member recognised 'the work the forum as a fine example of what can be done with limited resources and has allowed cyclists to get off the road onto safe paths. Long may it continue'.

We know times are hard for many people but we hope you can still give us a donation, however small. Send your cheques made out to Wakefield District Cycle Forum to **Sandy Clark, 16 Beechwood Avenue, Pontefract, WF8 4ED**. Alternatively hand your donation to Sandy or David Keighley at any of our rides or events.

Thanking you in anticipation of your support.



Spring/Summer programme successes

Wakefield District Cycle Forum have already been out and about in the district this year with our summer leaflet, Bike Doctor sessions and the skills course.

The first opportunity to distribute our Cycle Rides and Events Programme for the Spring/Summer season was at the Wakefield Rhubarb and Food Festival at the end of February. We gave out leaflets and advice on cycling to more than 100 people over the three days of the festival. 27 people joined the forum and overall it was a successful weekend's work.

As you can see from the photo it was a sunny day and great fun was had by all.

Our chairman (he is the one on the right), could not resist the Chef with the outsized fork.

Our Bike Doctors have been busy at three events already in our Spring/Summer programme and have given around 70 bikes a health check. Two of these events were run by other community organisation in Outwood, where the theme was the 'Grand Depart', and Lupset, where St. George's are running a cycling project to encourage families to become more active through cycling. At these two events our skills course proved very popular, particularly with children of all ages.



We are repeating our successful series of 'Holiday Wednesdays' at Nostell Priory on each Wednesday of the school holidays. The first event was during the Easter holiday. As you can see from the photo the skills course was very popular with more than 40 children joining in on the fun. The bike doctor

was also busy and we hope to make his presence a more regular event at 'Holiday Wednesdays in future

As we have reported in previous newsletter our rides programme took a leap in its popularity last year with around double the number of participants of previous years. This year there is no sign of that popularity dropping. So far in 2014 the number of participants has increased again by around 35% on the 2013 numbers

We have a lot of regular participants who obviously like the social occasion as well as the bike ride but the main reason for our ride programme when we set it up was to provide a setting where people would feel safe to return to cycling and build their confidence. With all these participants in mind the programme of rides which we run now includes 'easy', 'steady' and 'challenging' rides. This we hope will allow participants to build both their confidence and level of fitness sufficiently to see their bike as a regular means of transport.

For the Spring/Summer programme we have added an extra 'easy' ride at Pugneys Water Park and Anglers Country Park to supplement the 'easy' rides already run from Nostell Priory. This seems to be proving a success with over 20 participants on the first two of these rides. Overall this year so far we have seen over 130 people on our rides who are joining us for the first time.

All of our rides are run by our willing group of volunteer ride leaders who do a wonderful job of controlling some quite large groups of riders in a friendly and inclusive way. Fortunately we have managed to recruit a few more leaders in the last few months which will mean our rides programme will continue as a major part of the cycle forum's activities. But as always we could do with more volunteers so if you would like to help email us at info@cyclling-wakefield.org.uk

Below riders leave from the April Sunday ride from Nostell Priory on a 'cool' spring morning.



Chevet Branch Line Grand Opening

The Arrival



The Ceremony



The Celebration



MARIE'S CYCLING STORY.

Wakefield District Cycle Forum does not advocate cycling as a means to a sylphlike body, you just need to look at our Chairman to put an end to such an idea but Marie's story shows that it can help.

Not so long ago if someone had suggested that I should try a bike ride my reaction would have been "What me ride a bike - no way, you get can get on your bike". As I saw it, if I needed to get from one place to another, then the transport I would use would be my car and if I wanted exercise I could ride my horse. That was the end of my thinking about bikes, they were just as attractive to me as an exercise bike.

The truth is that even if I had an interest in riding a bike, at 22 stone I could not have managed it. I was just too big to ride and if I am honest I was also too big to do most other things as well. My size dominated my life. I hated looking at myself in mirrors or those photographs where I was always the largest person in the photograph, I felt terrible and my health was suffering badly. So I decided that I just had to try and lose weight.



I was waiting for an operation for a Gastric bypass which is a type of weight loss surgery that makes your stomach smaller and your digestive system shorter. However just before the operation was to take place I decided surgery was too drastic a measure and I should try and lose weight by my own efforts.

Having made that decision I joined Slimming World and was delighted to find that by eating sensibly my weight soon dropped. This weight loss was great and the excitement lasted until I had lost 4 stone and then.....nothing. I just stopped losing weight. I was still eating sensibly but not seeing a weight loss when I stood on the scales. How to get the thing working again? Exercise? At my previous weight I

was not fond of exercise and the idea of being a lonely jogging did not appeal in the slightest. So what might I do to get exercise and a bit of company in the process? My husband rode a bike to work daily and seemed to enjoy riding, so I thought I might just go out with him for a short ride.

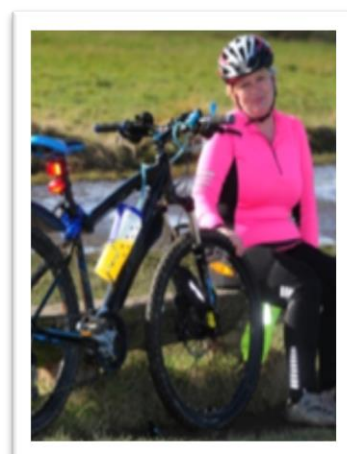
I kept up the exercise on my bike and as if by magic the weight started to drop off me again and I found that I was some 8 stone lighter. The bike had been a means to an end, but the more I went out on my bike and met all sorts of other people riding, the more I seem to enjoy it.

A pleasant ride along a trail, a chance to sit in tearooms with a cuppa and a chat before setting off for home, this was a new thing in my life and I really enjoyed it. Once I had met a few cyclist on my jaunts I realised that the Wakefield District Cycle Forum offered organised rides which gave people like me the chance to take part in social rides. I was very nervous about whether I could manage the speed or the distance I thought I might embarrass myself.

Fortunately not a bit of it, I was able to keep up and I choose rides which were not too long and I really enjoy the exercise and feeling of being a part of a group of people, all out for the sheer enjoyment of bike riding.

Now I feel that I want to carry on with the rides, but I should like to put something back into the Forum.

So this Summer I will be helping with short rides around Anglers for other people who like me lacked the confidence to get on a bike and ride. If we can just give people the little start they need to get them riding a bike around the lake in a traffic free



environment, then perhaps also like me they will find that riding a bike is real fun and with a good group of people they might get to enjoy their cycling and all the health benefits which flow from it.

