

Wednesday, February 4, 2015

Wednesday Rides

Poddlers' Walk

A glance out of the window was enough for me to decide that two feet were better than two wheels. So, courtesy of Caroline's message service, seven walkers set off from Hornbeam on a beautiful crisp and sunny morning. My plan was to head for Pannal, Burnbridge, up over the hill, down to Brackenthwaite Lane and thence across more fields to Leadhall Lane. While striding down the muddy bank to Pannal we spotted a couple also striding out, one of whom was waving wildly. It was Sue and George Downes. We then all strolled along to Burnbridge and started up the hill. However, Caroline and others decided it was best to have the 'drinks stop' before the hill. Suitably fortified, we were at the top and down in no time at all. Here, several of the party left to return by road. The rest of us trudged over more fields [and through more mud] to finally arrive at Leadhall Lane just as Sue and Caroline were walking up. We rounded off the morning with lovely 'refreshments' at the Downes. All in all a splendid morning! Alison N.



Poddlers' Ride

Arriving at Hornbeam there was a few intrepid riders and those who did not wish to risk life and limbs on the icy roads the walking group. After a quick discussion four of us intrepid cyclists set off for Arkendale with the promise of coffee and cake for a £1 provided by the village hall volunteers. Keith, Andrew, David and Liz set off down the icy path through the showground and down to the Low Bridge. The hardy EG's were out in force at Low Bridge and warned us of the icy path ahead. We safely negotiated this and headed out towards Farnham, up the hill Andrew had a puncture, which was fixed by the chilly roadside. Whilst Keith and Andrew finished the repair, as the cold was taking over, David and Liz took off towards Arkendale, to check the village hall was open for refreshments. A warm welcome waited us and two gentlemen were doing the honours and served excellent tea, coffee and delicious fruit cake. Now warm and refreshed we headed to Staveley, then towards Nidd village where we encountered a very large tractor, attached was a very smelly muck spreader which had coated the road in front of us, we gingerly negotiated this muck and ice. The sun was out the sky was blue and Red Kites mewed and flew above us, quite a good ride overall. We reached the Ripon Road, then down into Ripley and along the Greenway to home about 28 miles. Elizabeth F.

EGs' Ride

Unsurprisingly, following the weather forecast, Abbey Rd. was covered in a layer of white frost and potentially dangerous, so eight E.G's left Low Bridge via Waterside heading north for Ripon.

The weather continued to be very cold but at least the sun was shining brightly and encouraging further enthusiasm towards a good long ride.

At our first pause near Burton Leonard we were joined by Eric W. who reminded the leader that it was the first Wednesday in the month and food would be on hand at the Milleneum Hall at Braferton Helperby.

So off we headed, briefly stopping off in Ripon for a warming tea and teacake, or in Eric's case a breakfast (bacon etc) wrap. Wetherspoons did us proud with a very warm welcome from the early cold morning air.

Now nine, we "cracked" on towards our intended lunch halt accompanied by the usual friendly banter, having already tried to put the world to rights earlier in Wetherspoons.

Arriving on the dot at 1.00pm for lunch we were pleased to see a good crowd of diners including other cyclists. Warm creamy soup, tea, cheese & biscuits for £2.50 is a real bargain and helped to warm us up ready for the return ride.

Continuing south we headed for Aldwalk Bridge, via Flawith, taking care to not slip over the central metal tie strap running down the centre of the bridge. A brief photo call in Great Ouseburn and we were home for mid afternoon covering approx. 46 miles mainly sunny miles.

Dave W. (Hope our usual leader, Dave P., recovers from his "bug" soon.)



Green Bottles Ride

For the third week running the weather played Joker, sprinkling overnight snow after a very rideable Tuesday. This led to small numbers and the absence of the usual long ride suspects. In compensation it reunited three from south of the Wharfe with David and James from more local parts, with Ripon as the target destination.

The key factor today was the strong bitter wind from the north, so the early miles eastwards towards Low Bridge were a good move but the stretch over Forest Moor gave a taste of the chilling effect to come. Low Bridge was well populated with EGs this week, raring to go. Painfully cold hands brought about our first temporary retirements as Sarah and Angela sought coffee and warmth, regrouping for a different destination. The remaining three avoided the reported skid-pan that was Abbey Road today, heading up Briggate (steep isn't it?!) towards Stockwell Road and the road to Farnham.

Ominously straight flags reminded us of the strength and direction of the wind, causing our first discussion about the route. On towards Arkendale and its warm village-hall welcome or north to Bishop M? The latter won and soon we being swept away by the sleek peloton that is the EGs in pursuit of coffee. Plodding into the wind we caught them sheltering behind a parked lorry - very sensible.

In Bishop M we had another route conference. Favourable reports of Lister's Farm Shop cafe tempted us to think about an eastward leg towards Boroughbridge. James decided this was best

for him and we split forces with David and I heading for Ripon. Again the well-drilled EG pack swept us up, crossing the by-pass ahead of us. We had another brief route wobble: to Wetherspoon's with the EGs or to Morrison's? Morrison got the vote for a longish brunch stop. So far, the battles with cold and wind allowed only cursory glances at the sunlit views rolling past our dripping noses.

After Morrison's, all this changed with our direction of travel: the sun gave noticeable warmth on our way up to Fountains, we could shelter from the wind and take in the views. Foiled in our hope of looking round the church, we mused in the sunshine on the work of HCA and Sustrans past, present and future. With the wind at our backs and the sun on our faces cycling became the joy we knew it would be. Home via Ripley and the Greenway after 32 miles on a Jekyll and Hyde day. David peeled off in the Saints area, leaving the final green bottle to make its way back to Hornbeam. Terry S