

Wednesday, June 7, 2017

## **Wednesday Rides**

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### **Poddlers' Ride**

Too windy, but not raining and a bit of sun. Two poddlers' not electioneering, holidaying, or being slothful. To do a short ride and have a coffee was the solution. Result a gentle wind driven poddle round the outskirts of Knaresborough and Harrogate ending with too many superb cake and scone choices for two Poddlers' to choose, laced with remembered rousing school assembly hymns. Caroline G

### **Wanderers' Ride**

There was a smaller than usual group at Hornbeam this morning, thanks to the blustery weather forecast which had caused some alternative plans to be thought up. A small group of long riders were apparently heading north, a pair of poddlers were planning a poddle and coffee. That left eight cheery Wanderers. Thanks to the windy forecast, I'd dismissed plan A. Instead a visit to Lister's Farm shop seemed a better option. We had a beautiful ride via Lingerfield, Littlethorpe and Skelton-on- Ure to the coffee stop. Here, Michael and Carl choose to go back via Minskip and Staveley. The rest of us decided to go via Mount Garret. Though we were more buffeted by the wind, it continued to be a beautiful ride with the countryside at it's best. At the footbridge, Keith caught sight of a kingfisher. From there we made our way back to Nidd, Ripley and then Harrogate. A good 40 miles with the usual banter and fun. Thanks to all for your company. Alison N.





### **Wednesday Ride**

'Breakaway Ride' - To Heaven and Back

The prospect of 40mph winds had set off a flurry of e-mails to decide on a route that would mean we would not be blown to bits and it was late Monday night before the Vice-Chair James exercised his authority and said it was to be a ride to York(wind assisted!) and then back by train if the wind was too tough.

So six riders(Sue, Colin, John R, Paul, James and me) met on Rudding Lane to head off towards York. However after crossing the by-pass James had a puncture and he quickly set to work to get us on our way which, with Colin's help, didn't take too long.

The route was Spofforth, Little Ribston, Cowthorpe and Tockwith and we sped along with the wind behind us. From there we headed to Askham Bryan and the cycle path route to end up in Cycle Heaven in York.

We surprised ourselves in arriving just after 11 o'clock and couldn't decide if it was late breakfast, coffee or an early lunch and there was eventually a wide variation in food choices with no one daring to go for the Full English!

After enjoying the coffee there was an opportunity for some retail therapy and three of the group fell victim to the well stocked shop. Then came the big decision....ride back into the wind or catch the train? Sue had a prior commitment so her decision was easy but the other five were deep in discussions. Full of bravado the decision was made- we ride back!

We all set off back and Sue soon turned off to catch the train and the remaining riders mettle was soon tested as we rode along the cycle path into a gale. Undeterred we all pressed on back for home following the same route back to Askham Richard where we carried on to Wighill and then along the new cycle path at Walton into Wetherby for tea and cake; and to rest our weary legs!

After refreshments we spent a little time getting the locals to take a photo and also investigate a high pitched squeak which had been annoying everyone for miles (other than Kevin who couldn't hear it) and it turned out it was on Kevin's bike! (note: get some new batteries fitted) and everyone turned their backs as Colin oiled Kevin's jockey wheels (not painful) to save his embarrassment.

The Harland Way was chosen as the preferred route back to give us some protection so we said our farewells to James who headed off to Knaresborough.

The wind seemed to be easing as we went through Follifoot and Paul T left us at Rudding Lane to make for home and the three remaining riders tackled the traffic lights and then the Showground hill where John R 'sprinted' for home.

In the end it was a 50 mile ride with the majority of it into a headwind back to Harrogate. However, despite it being hard it was enjoyable as everyone helped each other along, there was great banter, serious shopping and, in the end, it was a good decision to ride back

(although our legs might not agree tonight). Thanks to the renegades who joined in the ride and I hope Sue made it back ok on the train. Kevin D



### **Long Ride**

Seven riders set out with one of those “organic” route plans that are necessary on days like today, with its strong gusty westerlies. We sustained some losses on the way, but none was caused by the wind, I’m relieved to say. But the gale we experienced crossing the Nidd Viaduct brought some of our party to halt and reinforced the need to keep plenty of shelter in the route plan. We reached Fountains Hall without alarms, apart from the near miss with two fledgling ducks near How Hill’s pop-up pond.

At this point, Stewart succumbed to the lure of coffee at the Visitor Centre which I imagine was very pleasant in the sunshine, provided the necessary shelter was on hand. The route plan then settled on Grewelthorpe, to see if we could locate the new cafe there – we'd tried to find it several weeks ago but failed, being misled by some (misleading) signs. Successful this time, we soon realised that we'd discovered a gem. Trading as the Hackfall Cafe from a converted Methodist chapel (see <http://www.grewelthorpe.org.uk/History/methodists>), it's a volunteer-run cafe, very well appointed and with excellent facilities and amazing opening hours (see <http://www.grewelthorpe.org.uk/Village-Hall>). Baked beans, toasted teacake and traybakes all passed the test, although the scones need some work, according to the Knaresborough judge. The venture is very worthy of support and needs our encouragement – do try it out.

Refreshed, we were able to evade the attractions of Masham's cafes and head for Bedale, our intended lunch stop. Heading mainly north, we had side winds from our left but for the most part we had shelter from hedgerows and tree belts and reached the turn to Bedale to enjoy a tail wind dash into the town. Along the way Peter had opted to leave us for Snape/Thorp Perrow: do join us again Peter. Whistle Stop cafe at Bedale station provided what we needed for lunch – it's another interesting and friendly venue.

The route committee decided on a wind-assisted blast to Exelby, which was for a time confounded by one of our number haring off in the direction of Snape. Unable to catch or phone him we reverted to our original plan in the expectation that we'd catch him somewhere on the way to Ripon. Village-hopping on familiar roads soon brought us to Ripon and during the comfort break we made contact with our missing rider, who was keen on a stop at Booths, lured by their plum yoghurt and decent coffee. With no desire for third cafe stop, three set off for Knaresborough and home leaving the ride leader to greet Richard P at Booths and enjoy some off-road sections along Whitcliffe Lane, leading to Markenfield Hall. Off-road with RP is always of interest, especially as this time the field edges were quite dry despite the recent rain – so not too much mud to clean off. It was, therefore, a straggle of smaller groups that completed rides of up to 65 miles on a day that proved that strong wind needn't be the enemy and that, coupled with sunshine and clear light, the views across to the Moors are magnificent. Thank you to all who came. Terry S



### **EGs' Ride**

The threat of high winds didn't deter eight EGs being pushed rapidly south in the direction of Tadcaster, (regrettably losing Phil enroute, - sorry Phil, we trust you managed ok alone) and arriving in record time by 11.10am.

Following early lunch, the usual high standards at the Lemon Tree, Norman, Bill & Roy headed off home on an alternative route of their choice, whilst the remaining four took a conservative route east and north to try to avoid the 40mph westerly winds via Angram, Rufforth, Hessay, and with a quick dash along the A59 to Poppleton.

Picking up the "cycle way" west alongside the river we pushed our way towards Beningborough where a short refreshment stop was called for.

The way home followed our usual tack but catastrophe beheld our leader in Ouseburn when the dreaded cramp struck and a further pause was called for at Brampton Green.

After taking on some fluids, a gel & chewing on a banana we pointed our wheels towards home, progress being at a considerably reduced rate, arriving home far later than was originally intended.

That's the trouble with cycling, once into the "swing" of things, with great company, you get carried away and end up, before you know it, completing 55 miles. Dave W