

Sunday, November 9, 2008

Wheel Easy Ride Report No. 133



The weather forecast for today didn't bode well - windy, with rain expected from late morning. I don't know if this affected the numbers, but just 8 people opted for the long ride today. As we left Hornbeam it was still a fine morning although definitely a stiff and chilly breeze which became more noticeable as we headed out past Little Almscliffe and over towards Fewston and Timble and up over Askwith Moor. The planned route was to do an extra loop through Middleton, Langbar and Beamsley before heading back to Ilkley for a café stop. Along the way some riders had decided to take the more direct route to Ilkley missing out this loop. By the time we reached Askwith a decision was made that the whole group would take this option (although Malcolm and Phil wanted it noted that they were willing to do the original route!).

The café stop in Ilkley gave everyone a chance to warm up before heading back. By the time we left the café the rain had started and continued for the rest of the ride. Fortunately it was now a following wind which help speed our way home, but as everyone was getting soaked the emphasis was on getting home as speedily as possible. At Askwith the group split with some riders taking the most direct, but hillier route back and three continuing towards Otley. Maybe not the best of days, but it was still good to get out and do a few miles. Jill F

Bright and breezy weather made for a cheery group of 14 riders (or was it 15 - numbers seem to be elastic on my rides!) and we headed off to Pannal, across the A61 and the Southern By-Pass to Kirkby Overblow. Reforming outside the Shoulder of Mutton Dave's complaint was the smell of chips wafting through the air so we moved quickly on to go down into the Wharf valley and then head east via Netherby towards Sicklinghall.

We stopped in a peaceful spot to observe the minute silence for Remembrance Sunday, and as Sue said to me afterwards it somehow seems a little more appropriate and poignant with the sound of the wind and the leaves rustling. Then it was onwards to Sicklinghall and the café in Wetherby.

Malcolm would have been distraught if he had been with us - Costa was full! So we decamped for a tea, cakes and coffee in the "Gourmet". Dave Preston managed to get a puncture so arrived a little later at the café. All was fixed, however, for our return up the Wetherby to Spofforth Cycle path to view the efforts of the Open Country and Wheel Easy working party last Tuesday. But the rain arrived at Spofforth, so it was heads down and home to Harrogate. The underpass under the Southern By-pass is now passable, if a little messy, so it makes the crossing a lot safer at times of heavy traffic. Then it was home to a hot mug of tea. Martin W

Fourteen riders opted for the short ride. This was a higher number than usual! The group included riders who were short of time, riders returning after a long break from cycling and one recovering from flu who could not

face the distance of a medium ride. We also warmly welcomed back Michelle who, after her tremendous achievement in the 0-30 project had 'got out of the habit', and new riders Colin from Bradford who has keenly followed our exploits online for a year or more, and Mervyn who had driven from Earby in Lancashire and instantly joined.

It was a lovely cold morning with a wind, which made it harder when we were cycling into it. From the very beginning we had various mechanical troubles. Luckily Malcolm, fresh from his maintenance course at Edinburgh cycles, was available and keen to carry out roadside repairs. We progressed at a leisurely pace to Burn Bridge and Kirkby Overblow where we observed the two minute silence.

After deciding to split into two groups both continued on the Sicklinghall Road to Netherby. This is a lovely stretch with smashing views towards Harewood, Almscliff Crag and beyond. We then dropped into the valley to continue the circular route back to Kirkby Overblow and eventually home. Overall we cycled for two hours and covered 15 miles. Hopefully, everyone enjoyed the fresh air and exercise. Paul T



