

Sunday, April 28, 2013

Wheel Easy Ride Report 365

Short Ride

Today's short ride saw a nice round dozen of cyclists head out in slightly windy conditions. This 12 very soon turned into 10 as Malcolm did a quick pit stop back to their house with new rider Andy to sort his tyres out! The rest of us carried on along the cycle path along Beckwith Road, then turning in Beckwith Knowle, past Central House and Covance, heading into Greengate (with a quick stop at The Hub) and along Cardale Park, back out onto Beckwith Head Road and down towards Burn Bridge and appearing right on cue, Malcolm and Andy who was now fully inflated that is his tyres and not Andy (!) for the photo stop at the "Black Swan". Over the roundabout, we turned left towards Kirkby Overblow which was every cyclist for themselves! At this point, the two Kevin's lead an extended short ride towards Knaresborough and the rest of us continued back to Rudding Lane with final destinations of town, Hornbeam, home and Fodder Andy I hope you enjoyed your first ride with WE! Thanks to Malcolm for the pit stop and to Gia and Robin for TEC's and cycle advisors J

Hopefully, all back before the rain – thanks to you all for your company – a lovely ride!

Sue T



Medium Ride

The route was Bishop Monkton, Ripon, Studley and back via Bishop Thornton and Hampsthwaite. There were 19 medium riders and fortunately no-one wanted a fast pace. Peter set off with 10, the other 9 following.

On the route up to Ripon we encountered severe gusts of wind from the side but all managed to hang on to their bikes! My group missed out Littlethorpe so we crossed the Ripon bypass at the same time as Peter's group and then they had to wait for us as we passed them at the junction. However they got ahead of us again as they omitted the loo stop by the cathedral. The way out of Ripon was hard fighting against the headwind, not helped by Roy's bike doing its best to deviate to the Spa cafe! Dennis and Alison had rushed back home but the rest met up briefly at Fountains visitor centre for refreshments before heading homewards. Some headed straight home from the Drovers and while there we saw Martin W's group following them. Others headed through Shaw Mills to Clint where we headed off route in the drizzle to return on The Ripley Greenway via

Hollybank Lane, not forgetting to stop for a moment at Malcolm's statue. About 35 miles.



Liz

Medium Plus

(With late conversion to medium!). The wind seemed ok as we made our way down to Knaresborough but beyond Farnham it became clear that the extreme gusts were not making for pleasant or safe riding. Over coffee a revised route was agreed and we headed off from Ripon through Studley Park with a stop at the church to admire the architecture and the interior decoration (well worth a stop). Then we headed back to Bishop Thornton where we bumped into the medium ride, and onwards to Ripley and the cycle path home. 34 miles. Martin W.

Medium Plus

Less Slow Group. Eight riders left Hornbeam led by Terry on what seemed to be a reasonable morning, however due to an unhealthy mechanical noise from a rear axle we soon pulled over and were overtaken by the Medium plus slower group. Unable to remedy the problem we pressed on through Knaresborough where we reeled in the other group, only to find that on the way towards Farnham superior local knowledge had put them ahead of us again – we were not living up to our billing! By the time we reached Bishop Monkton a serious headwind was making itself felt and the ride developed into something of an ordeal for the less fit riders, yours truly included. By the time we reached Brimham Rocks light drizzle and cold had been added to the equation and the possibility of scrubbing round Yorke's Folly had been mooted by our intrepid leader - music to my ears at least! At this point we lost a rider – Steve?- who was having serious problems keeping his chain on and called his wife to pick him up. Seven of us slogged on to Teacups, where steaming bowls of pudding and custard raised the spirits temporarily and the advice of two dropouts from the Littondale ride finally persuaded even the keenest among us that Yorke's Folly would indeed be folly in such windy, damp conditions. By the time we reached Burnt Yates even the thought of Hampsthwaite Hill was too much for some of us and the group split for the last few miles. Successfully dodging dogs, kids and cyclophobes, we negotiated the new greenway. Even there we were not home and dry as Terry announced that due to his having to make serious preparations for a job related meeting, the ride report was up for grabs and identified yours truly as probably the softest touch. 45 miles (or possibly kilometres). Dave W



Long Ride (Slow)

The 4 riders met at Penny Pot island and set off for Grassington. It was quite windy, drizzle in the air and it was prudent to maintain a moderate speed to keep a comfortable temperature. The drizzle increased as we passed Stump Cross Tea Rooms and the wind had freshened. Cobblestones cafe provided refreshment. During our stay group 1 of the remaining riders arrived. Group 2 arrived as we were leaving and we discovered that there was a group 3 which was in the care of Eric. Groups 1 & 2 exuded their customary exuberance and delight in the wonderful ride. Rob decided to return via Bolton Abbey at this point. The ride to Kettlewell was pleasant at first but we could see that Littondale seemed to be in cloud and possibly rain. Dave Preston fought his dragons and resisted the temptation to do Park Rash, instead opting for a coffee in the friendly Kettlewell shop. Sarah and I researched their cakes and can say they are good. We had a positive discussion and decided on a retreat or perhaps a tactical withdrawal. The wind played with us from all points and we made our way to Burnsall, Appletreewick and Stump Cross for tea and further cakes. The remaining ride was wind assisted and we took full advantage of it but we were glad that we had taken plenty of suitable clothing and marveled at some cyclists who seemed impervious to the conditions. A lovely ride with happy people. 62-65 miles. PB



Long Ride

What a difference a day or five makes! I waited for the 5-day weather forecast on Wednesday before planning Sunday's long ride. It promised good weather - perfect for the scenic beauty of Littondale, I thought. So my plan was published to all Wheel Easy members, and the next day the sunny forecast was changed to cloudy, then in successive days, showers were added, then breezy, then the showers were changed to rain. So by Sunday there was no chance that the weather would be anything like the earlier forecast. Nevertheless an amazing 19 members set off. 4 of them were in an advance party which had met at Penny Pot Lane at 8.50am for an early start at a more relaxed pace. The other 15 set off in 2 groups for road safety reasons: the faster boys and the slower ones - with me leading from the back! Even before we reached Otley Road I stopped the slower group to let them know that if the very strong wind continued, we would have to reduce the length of the ride. Not only did it continue, it got even worse, making progress to extremely hard, and quite dangerous in some places, e.g. on the long steep descent to Dibbles Bridge. The rain started as we climbed Duck Street, so we were very wet, cold and exhausted when we arrived at the Grassington coffee stop. The advance party left Cobblestones café to create space for the faster boys to sit down. The faster boys had by now been reduced from 7 to 4 as David R, James and Roger had turned back at Greenhow. The slower ones had to find another café as Cobblestones was now full. The three groups then all took different routes. 3 of the advance party (Peter B, Dave P, and Sarah) went to Kettlewell, before starting their return journey, the fourth (Rob W) returned home alone from Grassington. The faster boys (Phil, Peter J, and Peter R) continued with the original route to Littondale. William had arrived in Grassington with the faster boys, but moved cafes to join the slow ones (Jill, Steve, Robert, Dennis, Glyn, Nick M, Dave S and Eric), who were omitting Littondale and returning home via Threshfield, Burnsall, Appletreewick, Bolton Abbey, Ilkley, Otley, Almscliffe Crag. We stopped for further sustenance at Cock Pit Farm café, by which time the rain had finally stopped, and as we were leaving the 3 fast boys arrived. The 3 groups, with mileages varying between 60 and 77, all arrived back in Harrogate around 4.30pm. Well done to all riders for completing a very tough ride. It hadn't been the wonderful ride we'd all been anticipating, so there's just one solution - we'll make another attempt on 'Lovely Littondale' in the near future, confident that the weather must be much better than today! I took no photos for a variety of reasons: it was far too wet to get the camera out, it was also too cold, wet and windy for the riders to stop and pose for any photos, and we never had all three groups in the same place at the same time. Eric