

Sunday, April 15, 2018

Wheel Easy Ride Report 619

Medium Ride

My first Wheel Easy Ride as Ride leader and I am very happy to say I didn't lose anybody and all back safe and sound with only one small meltdown moment when I couldn't decide on 1st or 2nd right but Paul saved the day thank you. Unfortunately visibility for views today was hampered which is a shame when it takes so much effort to get up some of the challenging hills (for me anyway as not a great hill climber I admit) we did however have the pleasure of getting up close to the Ilkley Classic car rally which bought some memories back of the ones we owned in our youth and the two or four stroke smell of fumes pouring out YUK! We stopped at Sophie's in Hampsthwaite and I telephoned before setting off with numbers and they had our tables ready, tea and coffee was served promptly followed as always by scrummy food. Thank you to everyone who joined me, great company and enjoyable day. Julie



Long Minus Ride

Mark and Julie defected from the medium plus group and joined the long ride with a view to turning back at Masham. It was only after we'd left Ripon that we discovered that they were going to Middleham not Masham so we stayed with them until Bedale then turned South towards our target together with James the optimist (he'd packed suncream) and Andy the pessimist (he wanted to be home by 3 as he was convinced it would rain). After 38 miles we arrived at Johny Baghdads for our well- earned snap. From Masham we headed due South via Grewelthorpe, Winksley and west of fountains abbey to follow an undulating route back to Ripley and then on to the Greenway. The sun tried but failed, the suncream was surplus to requirements and nobody got wet.

58 miles, 3000 feet and 14.1 mph. Julie E.

MediumPlus Ride - Helen's Group

It was a dull but slightly warmer start than usual and about 20 medium plussers were keen to head for Lotherton Hall. Recent intelligence had indicated that Burn Bridge was still

closed so we opted for the Church Lane, Pannal route out. As we were a group of ten, we eventually settled on a five five formation to avoid irritating other road users and this worked pretty well, most of the time. It was good to have new member Sue with us on her second Wheel Easy ride, together with Sue C, Debbie, Maris, Monica, Mike, Jeannie, Chris and our one and only EG Peter B.

By the time we reached Lotherton Hall we all declared ourselves a bit stressed out with motorway traffic noise and busy roads and settled down for a good grumble in the cafe. The service was very quick, efficient and well organised. There were plenty of tables outside that had been speedily cleared and someone had been round with a damp cloth to wipe all the Weapons Grade Plutonium off the surface so we could resume leaning on the table without getting sticky elbows. There's nothing worse than sticky elbows is there? Keith's group arrived soon afterwards and they too had found the roads a bit uninspiring, so this route may not appear again any time soon, except on special request!

We continued towards Sherburn in Elmet and beyond and that too seemed to have become busier, possibly due to the huge expansion of the industrial estate out of town. Anyway, mustn't grumble, we eventually turned off towards Biggin for a pleasant bucolic interlude round quiet lanes all the way to Church Fenton, or Leeds East Airport as it is now known. From there it was an easy roll along to Tadcaster, Wighill and the cycle route to Wetherby. By popular demand we did not continue to Spofforth on the railway track – something to do with shiny new bikes and not wanting to get them covered in mud. I then felt like a rest, so Mike lead us through the Sandbeck Industrial Estate to pick up the A168 cycle path to Walshford then home via Little Ribston, Spofforth and Follifoot. 55 miles on Garmin. All in all, not a bad day in good company with a convivial lunch. Particular thanks to Mike for helping me keep things under control and for letting me idle around at the back at the end – I really enjoyed that! Helen T

Medium Plus – Keith's Group

It was a great honour to lead the final Wheel Easy Ride to Lotherton, Sherburn in Elmet and Church Fenton in the company of Alison, Liz, Peter, James, Kevin and Colin. The route certainly makes you look forward to the scenic undulating roads to come in North Yorkshire. We managed to use the Burn Bridge route to Kirkby Overblow which is a first for some time. The route to Linton, Collingham and Jewitt Lane to Bramham has also been little visited recently.

The real beauty though was the route from a very satisfying Lotherton Hall lunch to Sherburn in Elmet and its environs on our way through their industrial estate to the Biggin turn off for Church Fenton. We inspected the recently rebranded Leeds East Airport with no hindrance from the RAF sentries and celebrated by singing our version of "There Were Six German Bombers in the Air", with appropriate method acting (see photo).

The remainder of the journey was relatively uneventful until Peter had a puncture at the top of the hill in Follifoot. He urged us to leave him but in the true Wheel Easy tradition, we stayed to either assist him or generously offer useless advice and intimidation. Our reward came when the heavens opened and drenched us as we stood our ground. What fun we had!

Perhaps not a route to be repeated but a terrific day out in truly great company. Keith T





Long Ride Report

A mixed group of 9 riders opted for the long ride, including Mark and Julie from the medium + fast group - well, that scuppered the chances of a gentle meander! The only consolation being that the group of 4 quick riders, were talking of leaving the ride early and taking a shortcut to Masham. Somehow, due to a navigational error on my part, we all ended up in Bedale. Here the gentle meandering group carried on to Newton le Willows and the faster group left us for a second time heading towards Masham.

After our lunch stop, a pile up was narrowly avoided when a group of 9 hares was spotted cavorting in an adjacent field. A full on emergency stop was required to view the spectacle although Richard steamed on unaware of the display.

The charming stretch of road between Middleham and East Witton didn't disappoint, as we headed for a second café stop in Maham. Unfortunately 2 heavy showers marred the return to Harrogate but, they failed to drench the spirit after an excellent 75 mile, mostly gentle, meander. Phil



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Short Ride

A good group of 10 riders set out for a not-so-short ride to Kirby Overblow and Wetherby. On route there was little sun but it was still great to be out riding. At [Wetherby 6](#) riders opted to stop for coffee whilst I rode with the remaining four back to Harrogate using the Harland Way cycle track to Spofforth, on to Follifoot and finally splitting for home at Crimple Lane end. Back for midday lunch, after 20 mile ride... lots of birds singing incl. a years first - willow warbler. PB