

## **Chester and North Wales CTC CTC Caer a Gogledd Cymru Annual Report October 2011**

### **Introduction**

Chester & N Wales CTC members have once again had a busy year with members riding as part of their local groups and as well as travelling further afield. If there are omissions in this report it may be because most members prefer riding their bicycles to producing end of year reports (the secretary included!). This report includes sections on the local groups, events run by Chester & N Wales, the Link magazine, the website, campaigning, membership, welfare and development as well as plans for next year.

### **Group reports:**

#### **CTC Two Mills**

A highlight for this year was the nomination of the group secretary Janet Gregory for CTC national volunteer of the year award. Nominations came from CTC members and member groups, the winners were selected by CTC Council and the awards were presented at the Annual Dinner on 14 May 2011 in Weymouth. Janet must be congratulated on gaining second place in the National Awards.

The group has enjoyed a full programme of activities throughout the year, including:

- A led cycle ride every Sunday, usually from Eureka café and ranging from the occasional harder A grade, to the easier paced C. We have visited new venues and welcomed new leaders.
- Bicycle Belles rides for women once a month on a Saturday morning. The popularity continues as does the funding. This year, we were very pleased to receive a grant from the Rural West Area Partnership Board which is funded by NHS Western Cheshire and Cheshire West and Chester Council. In June, 6 Belles travelled to Clun, Shropshire to spend a weekend cycling with the Fabulous Ladies of Chester
- Tuesday Evening Cyclists who met every week from beginning of May through to end of August in ever increasing numbers. The summer rides operate as a separate group affiliated to CTC.
- Treasure Hunt held on the evening of 21<sup>st</sup> June in poor weather but still attracted 30+ participants including several visitors from North Wales
- Early Season Tourist Trial held 17<sup>th</sup> April.
- A short cycle ride held 21<sup>st</sup> August, designed to encourage newcomers and returners. Our own catering team served an excellent picnic in the grounds of a farm at Guilden Sutton.
- Evening meal held 5<sup>th</sup> March at the Grange, Thornton Hough. Lunch held on 27<sup>th</sup> March at the Cheshire Cat pub, Christleton.
- The group has promoted cycling and CTC at events throughout the year – Chester Cycling Demonstration Town, Wirral Bikeathon, Liverpool Chester Bike Ride, Health and Wellbeing promotions at Ellesmere Port and Neston. We have invested in a large flag to fly at our stall and leaflet dispensers.
- Semaine Federale at Flers in Normandy, 31<sup>st</sup> July to 7<sup>th</sup> August. 18 members made the annual trip to France. Unfortunately, we had a poor campsite and days and days of rain. The DVD records a happier rally experience.

Throughout the year, Two Mills has supported the wider activities of Chester and North Wales. In June and again in August, Janet travelled to London to meet with other CTC group

representatives and officers. We are working to improve national structures and policies. Our group has submitted responses to local issues affecting cyclists; for example, Wirral's Speed Review and the Local Transport Plan.

At their AGM Two Mills agreed an area CH41-CH66.

### **Informal Group Reports**

#### **Anglesey – Ynys Môn**

Anglesey group has increased slightly to five being out regularly twice a month, weather permitting. We have supported the parent group in their events with a full turn out on most occasions.

Also all 5 went to the birthday rides and enjoyed the event which was blessed with good weather and was very successful, being well supported.

### **Chester Touring and Mountain Bike Club**

#### **Eryri Cycling Group**

Our year has been rather slow mainly because of the unsettled weather. We try to have rides once a fortnight and have an average of five riding; we also meet for a social get together on the first Thursday of the month.

Members have once again helped man the checkpoint and refreshments at the Severn Bridge to Menai Bridge Brian Chapman 600k audax event.

In April members enjoyed the White Horse cycle Rally based in Yatton Keynell Wiltshire and organised by Chippenham Wheelers

Members have ridden the C & NW CTC 50 mile trial and also attended the Presidents ride.

Members support the annual sponsored ride held on Anglesey in aid of local charities. For various reasons it has been a difficult year we hope for improvements in 2012.

Our Annual meeting is on November 3<sup>rd</sup> at the Snowdonia Parc pub Waunfawr when hopefully we will find a new representative to take the group forward when Doreen Lindsay stands down. Many thanks are due to Doreen for her hard work over the years.

#### **Mold Informals**

Please forgive my mention of sections and DA – old habits die hard....

The section has continued in good form, attracting the club's more adventurous riders who are content over hilly and rough terrain. Numbers have remained fairly constant despite some travelling far and wide on tours to Albania and France.

We have consistently supported events, including Audaxes, both within and outside the DA, at the Welsh Festival of Cycling and at the Shropshire Highland and Wild Wales Challenges.

Section members continue to participate in the DA's wider activities, often joining other riding groups at weekends and Tuesdays or Thursdays too.

Highlights of our busy calendar included superb routes in Bala, the Peak District and over Milltir Gerrig on an atrociously wet ride where it didn't stop raining all day. As last year, we had a trip over the passes near Llyn Ogwen – what a brilliant day out that was! And of course Tony Small's convoluted circuit of Runcorn Widnes which is now a permanent fixture.

Thanks as always to everyone who's joined in with the fun and occasionally in the discomfort and exhaustion.

#### **Watson's Wanderers**

The group continues to meet every Tuesday with a turnout of between 10 and 25 riders.

#### **Wednesday Riders**

The Wednesday Riders continue with a full programme of rides throughout the year, although severe weather conditions in the winter prevented many from riding to the lunch venues on occasions. The annual Christmas Lunch at Trafford Hall was well attended and a considerable sum was raised for the Claire House charity.

Again, one of the problems in planning and organising rides for, in some cases, more than a year ahead is having to change the lunch venue at short notice. These are difficult times for the licensed trade, and pubs close down or cease to serve food on weekday lunchtimes, often with very short notice. With a large membership spread over a wide area, notifying our riders in advance of last-minute changes can be a problem.

Winter 'make-your-own-way' rides attract probably the largest numbers to the lunch venue. Several car-assisted rides have, as usual, taken place enabling visits to areas just beyond the reach of normal day rides and a number of our older riders (our oldest active member being 81) find car-assistance on 'normal' Wednesdays enables them to maintain their links with the rest of the group.

### **Wrexham Reivers**

The Reivers have continued to meet at the Espresso Cafe, Gwersyllt on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturdays of the month where the day starts with mugs of tea or coffee. Many of the riders meet at the same venue on the remaining Saturday and on Tuesdays to ride as the Cafe Hoppers. This year the group has split the ride on several occasions to allow for the different speeds preferred by the riders and the fact that some prefer longer/hillier rides than others. As usual members have ridden in many of the Chester & N Wales events and also taken part in the Birthday Rides & the Welsh Festival. There was the usual holiday (training camp?) in the spring and people have completed Audax events (ranging from 50km up to 400km) in all kinds of weather. Thanks are due once again to all of the members of the group who have contributed to a successful year with many memorable rides.

### **Events 2011**

#### **New Year's Day Meets**

Thanks are due once again to Arthur Miller who organised the lunch at McCleans Pub in Pentre and Dave Hill who arranged the lunch at the Carden Arms in Taltson. In spite of cold and icy weather many people rode out to events. 36 attended the Carden Arms where Mike Cross presented the new Tourist Trophies to Andy Polakowski and Lowri Evans who had gained the most points in the Tourist Competition.

#### **The Spring Tourist Trial 17<sup>th</sup> April 2011**

The Spring Tourist Trial took place on Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> April, 2011. The Two Mills group organised the event on behalf of Chester and North Wales. The course was the usual 50 miles starting from the Scout HQ in Higher Kinnerton. There was a record turnout on the day of 166 riders, each aiming to complete in either 4 or 5 hours and eat the generous soup and sandwich lunch provided at Overton village hall. The fine weather and very many volunteers helping with the arrangements made it a great day of cycling. It was a good opportunity to display the new club banner and encourage participants who are not members to join CTC.

#### **Map Reading and Treasure Hunt Competitions CTC Cymru 30<sup>th</sup> April 2011**

This year's competitions were held from the Espresso Cafe in Gwersyllt, where rides were able to enjoy a glorious spring day.

There were 23 competitors for the Treasure Hunt of whom 15 competed as individuals. There was a tie for 1<sup>st</sup> place between Mike Batchelor from West London and Andy Polakowski from Chester & N Wales, Darryl Porrino was beaten into 3<sup>rd</sup> place by half a mark. Glennys Hammond and Annabel Dickson won the team event with Janet Gregory and Sue Booth second and Anne and Glynn Jones third.

In the afternoon 13 people competed in the map Reading Competition. Once again Mike Batchelor gained 1<sup>st</sup> place; he was closely followed by Mike Gilbert 2<sup>nd</sup>, Darryl Porrino 3<sup>rd</sup> and Andy Polakowski 4<sup>th</sup>.

Thanks are due to everyone who took part in the events, to those who helped out with checking the scores and to Pam and Mike Cross for coming over to present the prizes.

## Ladies Cycling Weekend 17-19<sup>th</sup> June

### Bob Clift Memorial Cheshire Cycleway Rides 12<sup>th</sup> June

In spite of the wet weather and initial slow entries there were good turnouts for the rides; 7 rode the 25 mile event, 19 the 100 miles with the remainder of the 120 strong field opting for the 50 mile event. Thanks are due once again to Dorothy Clift and Hazel McDougal for organising the event, and to their band of volunteers.

### Bert Bailey Memorial Veterans' 100

The ride was graced with glorious weather throughout the day and enabled the seventy riders to enjoy an excellent social day out.

The route was considerably different from that used for the past few years, starting and finishing at Duddon War Memorial Hall and with less of the return legs being run as a return of the outward legs. It was the first time in the history of the ride that the distance was exactly 100 miles. As the route seems to have met with general approval it will be used in next year's event.

David had arranged that motor homes could park at the hall overnight, unfortunately they had a very disturbed night due to the antics of the local hooligans who chased around the car park, shouting and banging on the side of the motor homes till well gone midnight.

There was one accident caused by a pot hole near Waverton. Brian Crook later had to retire from the ride; he was taken to hospital in Shrewsbury by ambulance and found to have two hairline cracks in his pelvis. He was very grateful for the help he was given by other riders in the event and for the good wishes from Chester & N.Wales CTC.

There were many favourable comments regarding the ride and the catering, for example "I have never had such good food on a cycle ride anywhere in the country".

Thanks are due to David Ackerley for organising the event and to all of the stalwart volunteers and the group leaders without whom this event could not take place.

### President's Ride 11<sup>th</sup> September

Over 40 people booked to attend the President's Lunch in Neuadd Eleanor, Llanfair D.C. Mike Cross, the Chester & N Wales President had prepared 3 routes of varying lengths and gradients to try to ensure that all of the riders could leave St Asaph together and arrive at Llanfair at 1pm. After a photoshoot at the Cathedral in St Asaph the Mike led the ride out to Trefnant where groups split off. After an excellent sit down lunch Mike Cross presented the President's trophy to Roy Spilsbury -for once Roy was lost for words! Thanks are due to Mike Cross for organising the routes and catering.

### Momma Audax Rides 18<sup>th</sup> September 2011

"Pystyll Packing Momma" 206k. 19 riders completed this event in times from 10:27 to 13:40 (4 minutes inside the time limit). There have been favourable comments about the route and organisation such as "just about the most impressive 200 I've done----3000metres of hard climbing but who cares in such scenery. There were 2 Chester & N Wales riders.

"Momma's Mountain Views" 134k. 24 riders completed this event in times from 06:53 to 10:12. There were 8 riders from Chester & N Wales. Dave Matthews met the riders at Cross Keys control and they all seemed to be enjoying a good day out.

"Momma's Leafy Lanes" 50k. 26 riders completed this event in times from 03:05 to 05:24. There were 8 riders from Chester & N Wales CTC including a number of ladies. This ride is rather short for an audax but provided an excellent introduction to this type of riding. A number of experienced riders took their partners out for a spin and we had one tandem stoked by a 10 year old. Seed corn for the future!

All the controls coped admirably on the day and events were very successful. Thanks to Dave Matthews for organising the events, Sue Booth for the original idea of the 50k and the route sheet; Ray Stigter for checking out the 206k and 134k route sheets; Vicky Payne for assistance on the day.

## **Llysfasi Hill Climb and Freewheel Competitions 1<sup>st</sup> October 2011**

The events were held on the hottest October day on record.

### **Hill Climb**

There were 17 competitors this year. The overall winner and 1<sup>st</sup> Vet was Steve Heaney with a time of 7.26. Janet Gregory continued her winning ways to come in 2<sup>nd</sup> overall and 1<sup>st</sup> Lady in 8.10, with Ian Mason a close 3<sup>rd</sup> at 8.14. Dave Statham in 12<sup>th</sup> place was the 1<sup>st</sup> SuperVet.

### **Freewheel**

There were 18 competitors. Due to a tail wind record distances were reached. Dave Statham took 1<sup>st</sup> place followed by Gerry Machell, Roy Bunnell and Graham Gadd. Sue Booth had a convincing win to retain the Ladies title with Lowri Evans in 2<sup>nd</sup> place.

The events were followed by a friendly meal in the Three Pigeons, Graigfechan and the prize presentation by Arthur Miller the Chester & N Wales Vice-President. Thanks are due to all competitors, and to everyone who helped with the organisation and running of the event.

This year £12.80 was raised towards the RNLI as the Llysfasi College had asked for donations towards the charity for use of the car park.

## **Clwydian Audax series 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2011**

We were blessed with excellent weather---sun and blue skies for the series of three events organised by Dave Matthews.

**The Clwydian 212k** 3500m ascent 12 riders completed this gruelling course in times from 09:45 to 12:35. 2 riders from C&NW CTC completed the ride; Joe Jord and Geoff Mason. We used the Royal Oak pub in Corwen as a finishing control for the first time; they proved very accommodating and laid on sandwiches especially for the returning riders.

**The Clwyd Gate 138k** 2250m ascent 25 riders completed this ride in times from 07:35 to 09:40. 7 riders from C&NW CTC completed the ride.

**The Bala Mini-Bash 60k** approx 1000m ascent (provisional figure). We had a good mix of experienced and new riders for the first edition of this introductory event, including a sizeable contingent of "Fabulous Ladies" and a junior rider Jake Gaskell. 28 riders, including 11 from C&NW CTC, completed the course in times from 02:40 to 04:47.

Thanks to Vicky Payne for her assistance on the day and allowing the organiser space to ride the 60k and to Mike Cross, C&NW CTC President who visited the control at Pensarn to meet some of the riders.

## **Club Communications**

### **Website**

The website has been run once again this year by John and Glennys Hammond. John is the webmaster who deals with the technical side of the site and Glennys edits and sorts the content. Visitor statistics show that 6,100 absolutely unique visitors made 12,396 visits to the site during 2010-2011, a very slight decrease on the previous year. This still represents a steady access to the site. Most visited pages are those of CTC Two Mills who post regular reports and who introduced detailed Garmin routes of their rides this year. These routes may be useful to other groups for route planning. Clearly, as well as the usual essential information the website provides, members like to read about their own activities. The site has also shown on occasion to be useful to visitors from outside the Chester and North Wales area.

Thanks are due to Glennys and John for their hard work in ensuring that members can gain so much information about rides and events.

## **Link Editor's Report**

The first year of my editorship has proved to be a rollercoaster experience. It will be seen from the attached accounts that the magazine achieved a respectable profit of £134.89, but this was not quite what it seems.

If we exclude donations to CNC CTC, the profit becomes a loss of £36.11, but this is not the whole story, since the printing costs invoiced for the first three issues are greatly below what they should have been due to a monumental error in pricing by the printers. The printing (By a different firm) costs for the September issue are realistic. Had this figure of £338 been applied to every issue the increase in the overall loss of the magazine would have been £105 to a total of about £142. This is despite the fact that we have secured generous sponsorship to the value of £90 per issue from The Bike Factory and The Eureka Café and Cycle Sports. I hope that all members will give these firms a chance to quote for any cycling products they may require.

Bearing in mind that the committee has decided that The Link must not lose money, it agreed that from 2012 the annual subscription be increased to £10. Because 61 subscribers have already paid for their 2012 subscription at the old rate of £6, it will be 2013 before the magazine reaps the full benefit of the increased subscription rate, particularly as the magazine will be subject to inevitable cost increases in postage, stationery and printing all of which are beyond my control. Because of this it is going to be difficult to remain in surplus this year unless subscriber numbers remain as they are or, better still, increase. My attempt earlier in the year to get each subscriber to sign up one other reader proved to be a resounding flop. Spread the word that we need more subscribers; don't lend the magazine to non-subscribers-tell them to join up and subscribe.

For the convenience of members the committee has decided that they should be able to pay by standing order and information containing the necessary details will be sent to all those whose subscription expires at the end of this year. I should emphasise that a standing order DOES NOT mean the club is able to take money out of subscribers accounts willy-nilly; the members will retain full control over their subscription as their banks will only pay the money out whilst the standing order is in being, and subscribers can cancel it at any time should they wish to do so.

I should like to thank all those who have contributed to the magazine for their help and enthusiasm in preparing their articles. It takes time and trouble to do it, but without their input the magazine would not be the chronicle of cycling life in our club that it is, and life for the Editor would be dull!

### **Development**

Sue Booth has continued to act as development officer producing eye-catching posters for events. She has also attended the Chester Cycle Sale to promote the Club, and with Janet Gregory and Peter Williams has ensured a Club presence at several other events.

### **Right to Ride**

Another frustrating year in so far as working with CWaC. Chester Demonstration Town status finished at the end of March, as did the committee that had been set up for CDT 3 years previously. Communication with CWaC is still difficult. I still attend Chester Cycling Campaign meetings monthly and through them we are trying to influence the Chester One City One Plan to incorporate cycling.

Since the end of March, the Road Safety department who we deal with has been cut drastically and no replacement structure seems to have emerged.

I continue to work with Sustrans, as a Sustrans volunteer. Peter Foster from Sustrans replies to my emails and keeps me informed. Sustrans also struggle with CWaC

As far as Wirral Borough Council is concerned, it is a different picture. They have a Cycling Forum which meets 4 times a year and is well led by Mandy Keenan, their Cycling Officer. She works well with all departments in WBC and optimises all grants available, including LSTF. This results in many cycling schemes and improvements.

I will continue to work on Safety for Cyclists on the A540 and have a meeting with another CWaC officer next Tuesday, which looks encouraging. I am also trying to improve the local NCN route 563 from Deeside to the Waterways Museum, Ellesmere Port; as it passes the new M&S store; with the aim of better links to the NCN route 5. I am receiving good messages about NCN route 89, as it crosses Burton Marshes but nothing concrete. Hopefully, we will have a better year in Cheshire West next year. Peter Williams.

In Addition Roy Spilsbury is continuing his work to ensure cycle access to Llandudno Promenade.

### **Club Jerseys**

Chester and North Wales Club Clothing is now available directly from Impsport. For details please see the Club Clothing section of the Chester & N Wales website.

### **Chester & N Wales Committee**

The committee has met five times since last year's AGM. Committee members have been kept busy organising events, publicising the group, working with other organisations and campaigning. Janet Gregory, and Brian Lowe have both attended steering group meetings in London as member representatives looking at CTC structure, local groups and insurance issues; feedback has also been given by Lowri Evans responding to consultations with National Office

### **Report of the Awards Committee-2010-11.**

The committee has met three times during the year, with the main items for discussion being as follows;

- 1). The committee supported Bob Witton's nomination of Janet Gregory for the award of Volunteer of the Year for 2010 for the NW Region, and is delighted that Janet's hard work on behalf of CTC Two Mills was recognised by winning this award.
- 2). The Awards committee recommended that The Bike Factory be awarded a Certificate of Commendation for services to cycling. This was agreed by HQ, and arrangements are in hand for the presentation to take place on a date in November which has yet to be confirmed. There will be a small reception at The Bike Factory for this presentation at which up to 50 CNW members may attend. Entrance is by ticket only and details will appear on the Club's website.
- 3). It was agreed that Roy Spilsbury be awarded the President's Trophy for 2011, and this was done at the President's Lunch held at Llanfair DC on 11<sup>th</sup> September 2011.
- 4). The Tourist Trophies for the leading riders from CNW CTC in the CTC Competition were presented to Lowri Evans and Andy Polakowski by the club's President, Mike Cross, on New Year's day at the Carden Arms, Tilston.
- 5). This is a reprint of a section of last year's annual report:  
***Almost since the inception of the Awards Committee, it has had great difficulty in understanding the rules that govern the various awards that can be granted by HQ's Awards and Appointments Committee. In the experience of CNW's Awards Committee, HQ's Awards and Appointments Committee does not follow its own guidelines in this matter, hence several of CNW's AC's very worthy recommendations have been turned down for inexplicable reasons. A meeting with the Chairman of HQ's Awards and Appointments Committee to discuss this matter was requested on 03.08.10, but so far no reply has been forthcoming.***

The meeting referred to was eventually held and a long and detailed discussion took place with David Robinson acting on behalf of HQ's Awards and Appointments Committee, though he was no longer its Chairman. As a result of this meeting a letter was received from the new Chairman, Peter Mathison which did nothing whatever to alleviate the concerns of CNW's Awards Committee. This is very disappointing, but your committee will continue to press for its recommendations for awards to very worthy members of CNW CTC to be accepted.

Nominating Members or Organisations for Awards.

The Awards Committee would like to remind members they can submit individual members of Chester & North Wales CTC, or suitable organisations, for an award for their services to cycling

and/or cyclists. For assistance with submitting a nomination, contact the Chester & North Wales CTC's Awards Committee either by  
 'Phoning 01829 770 224  
 Or by email to: vega27@btinternet.com

### **CTC Cymru**

The Welsh Festival returned to Rhosgoch in July for another very successful event. Several Chester & N Wales members attended and enjoyed the rides and the company. Next year's event will be held in Ruthin.

### **Tourist Competition**

Chester & N Wales won the Team Tourist Competition in 2010. The team members were Andy Polakowski, Dave Statham, Alan Mort, Ifor Jones, Darryl Porrino and Lowri Evans. Four of the team went down to collect the award at the CTC National Dinner. Lowri Evans also gained the Lady's Award. Congratulations to the team once again.

At the time of writing the team is once again in the lead (by 161 points) although the line up of team members hasn't yet been finalised as we have 7 riders in the top 20 places. Currently Peter Dilworth is 2<sup>nd</sup> with Andy Polakowski 3<sup>rd</sup> here but there are still 120 results to come in.

### **Looking Forward**

The calendar is already being prepared for next year; the proposed events are shown below:

<b>Date</b>	<b>Event</b>	<b>Organiser</b>
1 <sup>st</sup> January	New Year's Day McCleans Pub	Arthur Miller
1 <sup>st</sup> January	New year's Day Carden Arms	Dave Hill
1 <sup>st</sup> April	Spring 50 Tourist Trial	Janet Gregory
	Ladies Weekend	Sue Booth
17 <sup>th</sup> June	Bob Clift Memorial Cheshire Cycleways	Dorothy Clift / Hazel McDougall
1 <sup>st</sup> July	Bert Bailey Memorial Vets 100	David Ackerley
	Welsh Festival in Ruthin including Audax ,	CTC Cymru
16 <sup>th</sup> September	Mama Audax Rides	Dave Matthews
30 <sup>th</sup> September	Presidents Ride, Annual Lunch and Trophy Presentation	President C & N Wales
6 <sup>th</sup> October	Hill Climb & Freewheel	Lowri Evans
4 <sup>th</sup> November	CH&NW CTC AGM	Secretary

As the Welsh Festival will be in Ruthin it is hoped that Chester & N Wales members will want to attend the event (and that some will volunteer to help). It is planned that a set of Audax events and the Treasure Hunt & Map Reading Competitions events will be moved from their usual place in the calendar to fit in with the festival.

### **Thanks**

Thanks are due to all of the members who have supported events either by taking part, volunteering to help or by running the events. This is also true of all of the volunteers with in the groups and on the Committee who work hard to ensure the continued running of the Club. I would like to give particular thanks to those who have helped me as secretary, and who have been very patient as I try to get to grips with the task!