

CTC North Hampshire: Annual Report 2008

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1. Officer's Reports

1.1 Chairman's Report (Frank Pote)

Since being elected last year, CTC North Hampshire and its members continue to be active in participating and promoting all aspects of cycling.

I can safely say that the last year has gone by very quickly in the whirr of wheels and a clunking of gears. So I would like to thank all the committee members for their support, hard work and dedication over the year and also putting me straight on several occasions over the fine detail of CTC protocol etc.

I would like to propose that a formal vote of thanks be recorded in recognition of their work because it is due to the continued efforts of this small group that enables us all to benefit.

Turning to our activities we have held well supported, regular (weekly or monthly) road rides starting in Alton, Petersfield, Farnborough and Fleet. Our off-road rides are held regularly starting at a variety of locations. I would like to thank all our ride co-ordinators and the volunteers who lead the rides. A special thank you must go to the efforts of Bob Bending for all his work on the North Hampshire Web Site and for getting short-listed for the Hantsweb 2008 award for best 'Sports web site'.

We continue to hold DA Touring Competition events and our Audax events are attracting increasing numbers of entrants.

The committee and I would like to thank all the event organisers and their volunteer helpers for their hard work and giving up the huge amount of time that make these activities so successful.

The last year has seen a number of social events being held, included a skittles evening last November in the French Horn, the annual lunch in January, the Big Meet ride during National Bike Week and the annual BBQ in August. Additionally a weekend trip to the New Forest was organised in early September, to which some brave souls took part. Both the lunch and BBQ were very well attended and enjoyed by all. I would like to thank Janice for organising the lunch, and all the BBQ team (including Jackie, Rob, Shaun and Maureen) for their efforts in feeding over 45 people and clearing up afterwards (Stephen and Wendy)!

Cycling campaigning continues under CTC North Hampshire with our representatives making important contributions throughout Hampshire. I thank them for the work they do to raise the profile of cycling and to improve our facilities and safety.

Whilst we have a large and to its great credit a generally active membership we do have vacancies for some more structured help to carry out important activities. We still require a nominated Publicity Officer, and a Basingstoke rides co-ordinator. These positions need to be filled (especially the Publicity Officer) and volunteers are required from the membership.

I have thoroughly enjoyed the last year as your Chairman and offer myself for re-election and I hope that you will continue to support me in the future.

1.2 Publicity Officer's Report (Bob Bending)

Apart from maintaining the website, I have put links to the CTC NH website on several local information sites including:

- <http://www3.hants.gov.uk/cycling/cycling-links.htm>
- <http://events.scenesouth.co.uk>
- <http://events.dailyecho.co.uk>

I sent a total of 14 emails to the following papers with requests to publish our rides lists:

- Basingstoke Gazette (newsdesk@basingstokegazette.co.uk)
- Aldershot News (newsdesk@aldershot.co.uk)
- Alton Herald (farnham-herald@internet-today.co.uk)

I only received one response early on and that was only to say I had supplied them in the wrong format - however it gave no indication as to what the correct format was.

I have developed a couple of posters - one general information and one plain that members can use locally to raise awareness or publicise specific events. These are available for download on the website.

The website continues to be used and viewed by members. Back in the spring, I put a counter on it and since then we've had nearly 6,000 hits, though some 100 or so will have been me checking newly posted information and links.

I have had a steady trickle of photo's, news items and pleas for assistance submitted over the past year and these are gradually becoming more frequent, so the website is also becoming a useful tool in putting people together.

On the pleas for assistance, I have had some positive feedback regarding results. I hope that the website will continue to develop as a source of information and a useful tool to members and non-members alike.

On the recommendation of Janice Montgomerie I submitted the website to the Hanstweb awards and I am pleased to say that it has been shortlisted in the Sport category.

While I am satisfied with my efforts with the website, I feel I have not been very effective with publicity matters outside of it - in particular my communications with the local newspapers. It is for this reason that I will not be standing for re-election as Publicity Officer at the AGM. However, I am happy to continue as webmaster and I am willing to help with publicity (if needed) in providing artwork and advice where I can.

1.3 Secretary's Report (Andrew Heaton)

This has been my section year as secretary and I feel I'm now up to speed with the job.

My main secretarial activities over the year have been:

- Annual submissions associated with the AGM.
- Organising and contributing to the committee meetings and producing and distributing the minutes
- Replying to new riders contacts and advising them on what we have on offer and then following up
- Interfacing with HQ – seeking clarification on new policies, filtering and redistributing information, answering directly or by proxy requests for help
- Registration of ride leaders

The year has been a busy one for the committee although we need to temper what we'd like to do to our resources and there have been a couple of occasions when we've needed to decline requests for help as we've not had the time available. Please have a think about if you'd be able to help either at one our events or more regularly in the promotion and development of cycling. "The Big Meet" we held in June provided an opportunity for the different riding groups to meet all together. We were also joined by Clive Andrews (Community Cycling Development Officer East Hampshire Cycling for All) and we were able to discuss how we could work together. Clive is based at Alice Holt Forest (see <http://www.ctc.org.uk/DesktopDefault.aspx?TabID=4992>). The web provides a great way of quickly and efficiently keeping members up to date with what's going on and Bob Bending has created and maintained our website in a manner that is always fresh. This has been recognised in its short-listing in the sports category of the HantsWeb awards.

See: <http://www3.hants.gov.uk/hantswebawards/its-hantswebawards-shortlisted08.htm>

The website provides the vast majority of our new contacts. Please keep Bob up to date with any news items and check regularly. Often the site is updated more than once a week.

I'd like to add my thanks to Frank's to all those who contribute to the running of CTC North Hampshire and the events we run.

1.4 Treasurer's Report (Mark Beauchamp)

Jeff Gibbs has audited the accounts and the surplus for the year was £229.10.

Treasurer's report for the year October 2007 to September 2008

The year ended with the accounts in a very healthy state. All of our outdoor cycling events made a profit. The Phil Hampton ride raised £182.75 for the Cyclists' Defence Fund. The Audax rides continue to be popular and provide most of our income. The social events were well attended.

The skittles evening was cost neutral and we subsidised the barbeque.

Commission on sale of items bought from Wiggle via our website was a very welcome addition to our funds. Please consider using our website link if you wish to buy items from Wiggle.

For a trial period of one year, committee members may now claim a mileage rate of 20p/mile for attending committee meetings. We will not be taking up CTC HQ's offer of depositing a portion of our funds with them because it is felt that our current deposit account earns a better rate of interest. There is money available for local cycle campaign projects.

I thank all of the organisers for sending me detailed accounts and a special thanks to Jeff Gibbs who as always was very generous with his time and advice and donated his mileage allowance to the club.

1.5 Membership Secretary's Report (Sarah Gould)

This year membership information has been provided regularly up to June 2008. There has been a change in membership list distribution responsibility at CTC HQ and this has resulted in irregular provision. The data is used

to support the DA communication with our members. The October 2008 membership list, which excludes all lapsed (temporarily or otherwise) records 800 fully paid up members. This compares with 714 in October 2007.

The membership data is used to support our regular email distribution of the DA magazine. email addresses are now being provided in the latest membership data and these have proved very useful in maintaining contact with our members. I would ask all members to keep their email address information up to date using the CTC web site member's area. We have been using the membership updates incrementally to send out a printed copy of the DA magazine to new members.

1.6 Welfare (Andrew Heaton)

This is a formal welfare role required by HQ. I'm happy to say there have been no issues this year that have required any formal welfare response.

2. Ride Co-ordinators' Reports

2.1 Alton – Saturday (Janice Montgomerie)

This year has seen the continuation of the weekly Saturday rides from Alton and beyond, and they have invariably been well-supported. I'm pleased to say that we have also attracted several new members during the year, and I hope that they will continue to enjoy our rides. Club events we have supported this year include the Phil Hampton Memorial ride in March, the annual barbecue in August, and the New Forest weekend and the freewheeling and pace-judging competition in September. Some Saturday riders have attended other events during the year such as the Isle of Wight randonee, the New Forest week and the Birthday rides.

Once again this summer we advertised three 'C' rides, aimed at beginners and families, to several local fetes in July. These were organised in response to a request by Cycle Hampshire 08 who published a booklet advertising bike rides suitable for families and novices. Unfortunately, ours were not included in the booklet and I believe they consequently suffered from a lack of publicity, as no newcomers showed up on the day. However they were supported by some regular Saturday riders and their families, and provided there are volunteers willing to lead then it may be worthwhile organising them again next summer.

Thank you to all our ride leaders and I'm confident our section will continue to thrive in 2009.

2.2 Alton – Sunday (Andy Watson)

The Sunday section has been regularly supported with up to 12 riders taking part split between the faster and mid-paced rides. We have been successful in attracting a number of new regular riders. The rides have continued the established format of faster and mid-paced meeting up at the coffee and pub stops. There have been some out of area and longer rides organised by the Sunday section. Many Sunday riders have supported Audax and Sportive events and a number have completed the Land's End to John O'Groats challenge - congratulations to all of them. A number of the faster riders have participated in competitive events racing and time trial events under Alton CC.

Next year will continue to offer a range of mid-paced and faster rides, including both local and out-of-area rides. The Section will continue promote itself to riders who wish to gain experience and fitness ready for Audax and Sportive rides.

2.3 Basingstoke (vacant)

This sub-section has failed to attract sufficient interest and hence will cease. A link on our website will provide a referral to other cycling clubs in the area with which other CTC North Hampshire members ride.

2.4 Off road (Andrew Heaton)

We've had a varied programme of rides throughout the year covering Hampshire, its neighbouring counties of Surrey and Berkshire and occasionally further afield. We've had good support from riders and ride leaders. We've changed our policy on rides to request all riders pre-notify the ride leader so that in the event of bad weather we can reschedule or relocate at short notice and this has worked well. Some rides are also organised on an ad-hoc basis at short notice if you'd like to be included on the email list for these rides, then please let me know (at andrew.heaton@uk.thalesgroup.com) with the type of rides you'd be interested in. We have a group of female riders who often arrange rides on this basis.

We have offered a range of distances from 9½ miles to 43 miles with a range in the degree of technical riding skills required. These are advertised in our rides programme but range from wide chalk bridleways to steep and technical singletrack. Although we may use canal paths within our rides as links between sections, we don't run rides that are exclusively this tame.

We've set up a link from our "Off-Road" page to allow you to download our back catalogue of rides in a format that works with Google Earth so that prospective riders can gauge our routes or simply try them themselves. For armchair cyclists you can also fly through the routes in Google Earth and not get muddy.

My thanks go to the ride leaders whose local knowledge provides us with a very varied programme.

2.5 Fleet (Colin Waters)

The Sunday rides no longer take place due to lack of support although I do receive occasional enquiries from people interested but have not had enough people to re-establish the rides. I generally advise interested cyclists to think about joining the Farnborough or Alton rides.

There is a group of about 7 cyclists that rides every Thursday to the Midweek Fellowship. Three cyclists from this group recently went with Mike and Lesley Wilson on a holiday in the Ardeenes region of Belgium and enjoyed an excellent week.

Recently I was approached by Hampshire County Council and a local Hart councillor to comment on the cycling provision in the Fleet Town Access Plan and I co-ordinated comments from a group of local cyclists and advised the Right to Ride fraternity of our input to the HCC consultative document

Next year I would be interested in running a small group holiday to the Belvedere Bike Hotel in Riccione on the Italian Adriatic Coast. If anyone is interested, please contact me. I am thinking of September 2009 (as it cooler than high summer) and need a group of 11 or more to qualify for a discount. The cost, before discount, would be about 82 euro per person per night sharing a twin room for half board. De Rosa bikes can be hired (or you can take your own) and flights are extra - haven't researched flights yet.

2.6 Farnborough (Charlie Halliday)

We have held 12 easy rides during the year attracting between three and a dozen participants depending on the weather and holidays. We were surprised by snow in April but despite the poor summer, we were soaked just the once.

In June, the leaders led a ride for the Blackwater Valley Countryside Partnership along the Blackwater Valley Path as part of Cycle Hampshire 2008. We have agreed to lead a similar ride in 2009.

2.7 Petersfield (Stephen Olivant)

Another enjoyable year of rides organised on the 'last Sunday in the month' led by either Jon Asbridge, Richard Holland or myself. We kept our numbers to about ten per ride unless Spring and Summer sunshine (did it happen?) or a trip to the beer festival at Cheriton tempted our more irregular riders to join us. Our occasional off-road rides haven't proved as popular as our on-road rides. We have added to our numbers via posters in local cycle shops and the listing on the North Hampshire Group's website. I have given up listing rides in local newspapers and sending letters to local members because they didn't produced new riders last year. Other jaunts by members include numerous local sportifs and Italian Grand Fondos, cycling across France (Caen to Montpellier), Italian touring, Pyrenean Col climbing and Stelvio Pass storming.

3. Right to Ride Representative Reports

3.1 Andover & Northern Test Valley (Roger Upfold)

Because of full-time work my activities as Right-to-Ride Rep for Andover and northern Test Valley have not been extensive this last year. However, input was made to the revision of the Test Valley Cycle Strategy which informs developers, important as most of the cycle infrastructure installed in recent years has been developer funded. The Test Valley cycle user group continues to meet bi-annually (alternately in Romsey and Andover) and I try to attend when I can, but meetings are usually weekday afternoons which often clashes with work commitments.

Work on improving the southern Andover town centre area around Bridge Street has only just started after significant delays, but promises to introduce a new contraflow route to overcome a short piece of inconvenient one-

way road south from the town centre, and joining up with the new routes around the south-west of the town centre introduced as part of the new cinema/Asda supermarket development. The long awaited improvement to the path from the bridge over the railway line from Gallagher's crossing has now been complete with a sealed surface and street lighting at last providing a safe alternative route to John Hanson School and linking with other routes towards the town from the western edge. Major development at the east end of Andover is promised and I will continue to seek opportunities as and when able to influence the provision of appropriate facilities linking to the town from that side.

The main proposed development of contention ("Megashed") is at the western end of Andover, at the old Andover Airfield (where the DE&S, DLO as was is, sited), and its impact on the 100 Acre roundabout junction with the A303. Currently planning application has been refused by TVBC, and it now goes before the Planning Committee for final determination on 1 December. My main concern has been the re-design of the A342/A303 junction, with a proposed new over bridge for the A303, widening of the roundabout and traffic light controls. The initial proposals appeared to increase safety for non-motorised users between Andover and the new development (although perhaps requiring more time required to get through), but didn't adequately address the needs of cyclists and others for other routes, especially west to Weyhill. despite repeated requests I still have no further update on the current proposals for this junction and impact on cyclists.

Looking further afield a new consultation concerning Stonehenge, the visitor centre and proposals to close the A344 from the A303 past the stones has just closed and comment has been made that the existing severance caused by the busy A303 will only increase if that part of the A344 is closed without providing suitable alternatives that can be used by all cyclists and all times of the day and year. I have made contact with other interested parties from the Salisbury area, including other "non-motorised" groups, and I'm seeking a meeting with the highway authorities (both Highways Agency and Wiltshire county Council) and others to explore the issues and seek improvements for cycle access and safety.

3.2 Basingstoke (Heather Rainbow)

Major campaign issues have been the

- Closing of Sherborne road, gated off now by Everest school
- Substandard shared use cycle facilities in new build Merton Rise. Route to school involves many awkward road crossings and changes of direction in under 2 miles but the road is not a safe alternative due to many blind corners and pinch points so cars cannot overtake safely even in low level traffic conditions.
- Cycle lane up Alencon link to the station now on the planning schedule (a big victory)
- Disruption of quality cycleway along Churchill Way West due to new development
- Right turn across dual carriageway Crossing of Churchill Way west with lights of no benefit to cyclists as the crossing is needed half mile away linking Houndmills to the retail park
- A cycle map with all roads shown and categorised according to cycle friendliness. This long term project has now been approved.
- Participated in Hampshire Downs Countryside Access Plan (launch date October 2008)
- Oakley to Basingstoke cycleway (offroad) – liaison with Oakley residents

New facilities completed this year have been

- Completion of route to Cranbourne school by painting cycle symbols on the road (for what purpose), junction of path with road still not remedied and the path does not go to the school but finishes at big railings. The total cost for this white paint job is £56,000.
- Shared use facilities along Swing Swang road (difficult/unsafe crossings of side roads and path goes in front of busshelter not behind it)
- Shared use facilities from Winklebury cycle lanes to Houndmills (a valuable and strategic link)

Future Plans

Proposals from HCC are:

- An offroad link from Priestley road to the hospital
- A cycle link up Alencon link to the station (finance is mega so might not be achievable)
- Review of cycle route to John Hunt of Everest (at last meeting of BBUG they had forgotten all about it)
- Review of cycle route beside A33

I have also requested:

- Links to the hospital from North Popley
- Links to the station from North Popley
- Alternative cycle route to the A340 from Gales Garage to hospital and crossing in the dip here across the A340
- Links to station from North of Popley
- Completion of cycle route beside A33 including priority and phasing of lights on roundabout
- Completion of cycle route along A30 corridor, this would have to be mainly on the footway from Pack Lane/High Drive junction to Winchester road roundabout

Other activities have been:

- Provided detailed information for the Basingstoke cycle map
- Various letters, emails to MP and signing of petitions, lobbying councillors
- Attending meeting, sending emails, phone conversation
- Help to enquirers about cycle routes
- Cycle stand at various events
- Letters to the press

3.3 Hart and Rushmoor RtR (H and R)

Hart and Rushmoor have had five meetings since they were inaugurated just over a year ago. Sarah (Rushmoor) has now started as a cycle champion at Salesan, the private school, opposite her and contacted the HCC as well. She also promoted CTC at the local Green Global Fun Day where she networked with many other cyclists. Janet is representing us at planning meetings (Pyestock). H and R have had input into the Fleet Town Access Plan (FTAP). Most of the proposed cycle routes would not benefit cycling, but campaigners are in favour of

- 20 mph zone from Oatsheaf to the station
- a cycle way beside the A323 to connect to Aldershot
- better access to station (incl. Cycle routes)
- better cycle parking at the station
- improved junction treatment
- strategic offroad links as proposed in the FTAP
- a cycle map which categorised all roads according to cycle use friendliness

H and R were against the following council proposals:

- most of the proposed cycle routes as they did not add any benefit
- against a bridge over the canal (too expensive and not in right place)
- against a cycle route along the canal as proposed

3.4 East Hampshire – Alton (Vacant)

No report.

3.5 East Hampshire – Petersfield (Stephen Olivant)

I underestimated the amount of time and paperwork required to become a fully operational Right to Ride representative. I have not yet engaged fully with the County Highways staff and other Right to Ride reps in the County to establish a CTC presence in the Petersfield area, but I have made contact with Clive Andrews (CTC Cycling Development Officer at Alice Holt). So far, I have attended only two meetings (Buriton and East Meon), both about off-road riding issues.

I now see that being a fully engaged Right to Ride representative is quite committing, and I can appreciate that Diana Wood made a splendid job of being the previous Right to Ride representative for the East Hampshire area. Therefore, I should be very pleased if a Right to Ride representative for the Alton area could be appointed at the AGM so that future work can be shared.

4. Hampshire Cycling

CTC Hampshire cycling has been hampered by the restructuring of Hampshire County Council, the relocation of officers and reduction in personnel. Peter Savidge, the cycling officer retired in September. His deputy Steve

Willoughby may be taking over. There has been a proliferation of shared use facilities, especially in new developments.

Activities:

- Heather made a presentation at the joint campaign conference with Campaign for Better Transport (formerly Transport 2000) and Living Streets in London in March. Her presentation on how to recruit more campaigners was well received.
- Heather attended the cycle conference at Cambridge
- 4 members attended the cycle conference at Oxford
- 3 members met with a representative of HCC and registered dissatisfaction with quality and safety of shared use facilities. We offered our services in promoting safer routes to schools. This has yet to be taken up.
- 2 members attended the South east networking seminar
- Heather mentored the new Hart and Rushmoor group
- We exhibited at Nokia during National Bikeweek
- We considered hosting a cycle campaign conference
- Sue Coles continues to work promoting cycling on the Countryside Access forum
- Roger Upfold has raised concerns about the lack of recognition of the need to provide for cyclists in particular on the A344 in the most recent Stonehenge visitor centre consultation. Plans are to close the A344 altogether!
- New cycle route along the A27 (Chilworth road) is on the footway and very inconvenient
- Local reps have continued to work hard at district level
- There has been a lot of support and exchange of information through CTC-HC

Success story

Bikeability has been unrolled across Hampshire. In the past HCC has not been in favour of the national cycling standard or actively encouraging schools to offer cycle training. Schools are still discouraging pupils under 10 from cycling because of advice from the road Safety Department.