

Wheelrights

Notes of AGM meeting on 10 November 2008 in Environment Centre, Swansea

Present: Don Ashman, Tony Barratt, Martin Brain, Eddie Callaway, David Callaway, Ruth Callaway, Claudine Conway, David Croxall, Bob Cuthill, Helen Davies, Rhian Evans, Colin Fielder, Eifion Francis, Nick Guy, John Haynes, Phil Jones, David Judd, Llau Kreppel, Neil Leleu, Mike Lewis, David Naylor, Des Radford, Alice Saville, Lynda Shuker, Rob Wachowski, Colin Williams, Ian Williams, Geoff Wood, Veronica Wood.

The meeting was chaired by Nick Guy.

Minutes of last agm (on 22 October 2007)

Acceptance of these was proposed by Eifion Francis and seconded by Rob Wachowski. Matters arising were covered in the reports presented at this meeting. (See below).

Reports

The following reports were presented and are included as Appendices:

- Secretary's report (Appx A)
- Treasurer and Membership Secretary's report (Appx B)
- Chairman's report (Appx C)

Officers

There being no other nominations Nick Guy, David Naylor and Geoff Wood were confirmed as respectively *Chairman*, *Secretary* and *Treasurer and Membership Secretary*. Proposed by Des Radford, seconded by Eifion Francis.

Nick Guy reported that David Judd was pleased to fill a new post of President. He (DJ) left the room while Veronica Wood spoke briefly about his qualifications for this role and proposed that it be confirmed. Rhian Evans seconded the proposal.

Nick Guy proposed that a new post of *Publicity Coordinator* be created and that Claudine Conway (who was prepared to take it on) fill it. This was seconded by Martin Brain.

AOB

None

Campaigning Matters

Using powerpoint David Judd spoke about the benefits of cycling, what needed to be done to make it more acceptable (comparisons with Italy showed that we have a long way to go) and how to campaigning effectively. He ended with a number of local case histories (many of which were examples of what should *not* be done!)

A lively and wide ranging discussion followed.

Bikes and bits sale

This followed a refreshment break. A tandem was sold for £50 and other bits and pieces fetched a further £32. This money will go to support *Wheelrights* activities.

Notes prepared by David Naylor (Secretary)

Secretary's report for *Wheelrights* 2008 agm

This report covers the period from the previous agm on 22 October 2007.

It has been a year of expansion with various new initiatives and a major increase in the membership. (See Membership Secretary's report for the numbers.) We have continued with our Adult Beginners classes and both good attendance and a high success rate have been maintained. A new venture has been the introduction of the evening series of *Explorer* rides for, primarily, beginners but also for more experienced riders glad of a short ride with a pub stop. In addition we have been working with both Sustrans and the CTC campaigning for better provision for cyclists in and around Swansea.

A summary of our activities follows. Our newsletters and the notes of our evening meetings can be viewed/downloaded from the *Various* page of www.wheelrights.org.uk.

Adult Beginners classes

These took place from 9.30 to 11.30 in the Civic Centre East car park on the following Saturdays: 19th April, 14th June, 12th July and 20th September.

Explorer rides

Nine rides took place during the summer, the first on 7th May and the last on 30th September. They were all between 4 and 8 miles except for the 15 mile North Gower ride on 16th June. This was *Wheelrights* traditional mid-summer circuit via Penclawdd and back over Welsh Moor with a pint at the N. Gower Hotel. (Except that we managed an additional pub stop in Crofty.)

It rained on nearly all the rides. This, at last in part, explains a poor turn out. Despite the bad weather none were cancelled; We did attract a few beginners.

We plan to provide these rides again in 2009.

Evening meetings

Our regular bi-monthly meetings took place in the Marina Yacht/Sub-aqua club on the following Monday evenings (attendees in []): 26th November (2007) [14], 18th February [13], 21st April [13], 9th June [12], and 1st September [8].

In addition we had a public meeting on 20 March when Gordon Gibson of *Sylfaen Cynelfin* gave a talk entitled: *Living Streets and Swansea City Centre*. Unfortunately only about a dozen attended this thought provoking meeting. A report on it is provided on p.4 of *Wheelrights Newsletter* No. 4.

Conferences and workshops

European Boulevard. I attended a workshop about this on 30 January in Swansea and report on it on p.4 of *Wheelrights Newsletter* No. 3.

CCN/CTC Conference. This took place on 10 May in Cambridge. I attended and report on it on p. 4 & 5 of *Wheelrights Newsletter* No. 4

Walking and Cycling Conference. This took place on 25 June in Cardiff. I attended and prepared a brief report on it¹.

Regional Transport Plan. Following a workshop in 2007 we submitted our views on what it should contain in a document dated 5th December 2007¹. A further workshop took place on 9 September to consider the latest draft of the RTP. It was attended by Veronica Wood. Not being able to attend myself I had previously prepared briefing notes (RTPnotes.pdf¹). These have been distributed to the City and County of Swansea and SSWITCH.

Connect2

We supported Sustrans in their successful £50m Lottery bid (in December 2007). The money will be spent on the Clydach and Afan Valley projects. See *Wheelrights Newsletter* No. 2 for details.

¹ Available from me on request.

North Gower path

Some Wheelrights members had taken part in Sustrans work camps in both 2007 and this year on the construction of a new section of path near the *Sea Gardens Restaurant*. (A report on this year's work is provided in *Wheelrights Newsletter* No. 4). This work was completed in the autumn to link up with the existing path to the west to provide a continuous 1½ miles of off-road path to Penclawdd.

On 4 October there was a ceremony at the site of a bench carved from an oak by the side of the path in memory of Wheelrights co-founder Bob Burn to both dedicate the bench and mark the completion of the path. An article in memory of Bob fronts *Wheelrights Newsletter* No. 5.

Campaigning

While the following actions have been carried out in the name of *Wheelrights* we have been careful to ensure that they are supported by both Sustrans and the CTC.

Civic Centre access. Swansea's new Civic Centre was opened in March. A CCS press release had described the access provision for cyclists. We found this unsatisfactory and communicated our concerns to the Council. There were three issues: 1) access from the City Centre, 2) to the new café from the foreshore and 3) from the foreshore path west of the Civic Centre.

We first raised issue 3) with CCS in 2007, requesting that 400m of the existing footpath along Oystermouth Road be widened to shared use. While agreeing that this is needed CCS are not at the moment prepared to fund the work but suggest it be done (at some unspecified date in the future) as part of the Oystermouth Road redevelopment.

Nor have they made any concessions on the other two issues. It turns out however that these are not a problem as there is adequate cycle access from the City Centre provided the planned circuitous route is ignored(!) and the café can be accessed from the foreshore albeit by not using inconveniently located bike stands.

Sidings Bridge. This bus/cycle bridge across Fabian Way was opened in November 2007. We identified a danger spot where NCN 4 crosses the bus lane just west of the bridge. Visibility of an approaching bus is poor for east bound cyclists. We promptly reported this and a site visit attended by CCS, *Sustrans* and *Wheelrights* representatives took place on 24th April. It was decided to install markings and/or signs to warn path users. This has not been done at the time of writing.

Amazon Roundabout. The enlargement of this roundabout on Fabian Way to provide an additional link to the new Amazon warehouse was completed in the Spring. NCN 4 crosses the five slip roads on it's north side. I and others perceived this as dangerous, particularly for east bound cyclists. On 28 April I prepared a report drawing attention to the need for measures to make the crossings safer, I sent this to the Neath Port Talbot Cycle Officer. It can be viewed/downloaded from the *Various* page of www.wheelrights.org.uk. Sustrans are also pursuing this matter. At the time of writing nothing has changed.

City Centre Ride. A cycle ride round the City Centre organized by Wheelrights for Councillors and senior CCS staff members took place on 22 September. Participants included Reena Owen (Director of Environment) and four Councillors. Their attention was drawn to both good cycle infrastructure recently provided in the City Centre and to various points requiring attention. The weather was excellent. The positive response from these influential people gives us cause for optimism.

Wheelrights Flier

The 2007 version has been substantially revised and 1000 copies printed for general distribution.

David Naylor (Secretary)

Treasurer and Membership Secretary's report for *Wheelrights* 2008 agm

We have 89 members, including 32 from the cycle training. Most of them use e-mail, so this makes contact easy and saves money in printing and postage.

The balance on November 10th 2008 is £262.12. However, there are outstanding bills for membership flyers (£107) and rental for room (£24), so the actual balance is £131.12.

INCOME

Brought forward	237.61
Membership	93.00
Training (4 sessions)	181.50

TOTAL

512.11

Bank balance	210.11
cash in hand	42.01
chq in hand	10.00
TOTAL	262.12

EXPENDITURE

CTC membership	75.00
Environment Centre	42.50
Environment Centre	24.00
CTC	50.00
Affiliation CCN	16.00
First aid kit	9.99
Copying and Postage	32.50

BALANCE

262.12

TOTAL

512.11

Geoff Wood (Treasurer and Membership Secretary)

Chairman's report for *Wheelrights* 2008 agm

THE TIMES THEY ARE A CHANGING

(acknowledging Bob Dylan)

At last cycling in Britain – and this includes Swansea – appears to be increasing significantly. In London there has been a more than 80% increase over recent years. In Swansea there appear to be a lot more cyclists on our roads and, significantly, on our pavements!

This increase presents *Wheelrights* with several challenges and opportunities: in particular how do we best promote the case for more cycle-friendly provision in the Swansea Bay area?

Proposed priorities for 2009

1. Council's Cycling Review

We should all fully engage with this Review and Consultation, and should

- Encourage friends and other cyclists to complete the Council's *questionnaire*².
- Ensure a positive, fully funded **Action Plan** as the outcome.

2. Network of cycle routes

We should work with Swansea and Neath/Port Talbot Councils to produce a network of Cycle-Routes which represent desire lines, in particular:

- Improved links to the existing National Cycle Network (in conjunction with *Sustrans*)
- On-road cycle routes: eg signed routes on quiet roads.
- Fast commuter routes.

3. Swansea Cycle Map

Work with Swansea Council on the production of a Swansea cycle map. A proposed *Wheelrights* input would be to recommend roads suitable as cycle routes for marking on the map.

4. Cycle Training and *Explorer* Rides

Continue and expand these to build on our experience and successes. In particular we might consider on-road training (using quiet roads).

5. Publicity and Campaigning

- Appoint a publicity co-ordinator.
- Promote *Wheelrights* by means of our new **flier** with its map showing key existing and proposed cycle routes and the photo of the lady learning to ride.
- Encourage and coordinate letters to Councillors from members
- Engage the cycling public (eg by a petition)

6. Public meetings in 2009

John Grimshaw (retired *Sustrans* CEO) and Jane Davidson (WAG Minister for Environment) have agreed to give talks. These are planned for respectively April/May and September.

Nick Guy (Chairman)

² Visit www.swansea.gov.uk and enter "Cycling" in the box top left.