

Newforce 159

Winter 2021/2



Welcome to the winter 2021/2 newsletter.

As I write this, between Christmas and New Year, I'm wondering if the weather gods are having a bit of a chuckle at our expense. On the Tuesday before Christmas I went for a cross country run in the Forest and enjoyed mostly dry and mud free conditions. The Thursday's rain started the softening of the ground and by Boxing Day many areas of the county were in full on winter slop mode. Just when those of us with full time jobs were hoping to get out for a bit more riding.

And talking of Boxing Day, the annual club ride on that day is one of the few daytime club rides I am regularly available to attend. Attendances are usually lower than the fortnightly Sunday rides and this year seven of us showed up at the Happy Cheese in Ashurst to be nominally led by Penni Harrison but with occasional inputs from others along the way. Never let it be said that Newforce isn't a democratic club. Our route took us down to Beaulieu where we searched in vain for an open tea shop. The whole area seemed unusually quiet for a date that often sees people out attempting to walk off the previous day's excesses, but at least the Drift was open for myself and Mike Tomlinson to stop at for a drink and bowl of chips; just the two of us as everyone else claimed pressing afternoon engagements to get back for. As we sat in the garden in mild temperatures the sun even put in a brief appearance.....as did a bit of light rain at the same time.

This newsletter is a relatively brief one with not a lot more than the committee meetings to report and if you read those reports you will see that we have some vacancies on the committee, so if you'd like to get more involved in the running of the club there are opportunities to do so. I'll also issue the usual reminder that written material for this newsletter is always welcome as are photos for next year's calendar, so please get scribbling and snapping.

Happy 2022 to all of you and hopefully it'll involve more than a little pleasant mountain biking.

NewForce Annual General Meeting

Held remotely using Zoom at 8pm on Tuesday 14th December 2021

1. Minutes from the previous meeting were adopted as true and fair. RS; MW

2. Attendees and Apologies

Roger Shepherd (RS), Eleanor Rutter (ER), Sue Marsden (SM), Clive French (CF) and Martin Wheat (MW) attended
John and Linda Hawkins, Nick and Karen Clarke, Jack Lawrie, Steve Keith, Ian Taylor, Stuart Rogers and Pete Dobson apologised for being unavailable to attend.

3. Election of Officers

RS re-elected Chairman: Proposed MW; Seconded ER

No-one stood for Secretary: agreed to continue sharing the duties as we have for the last year

CF elected Treasurer: RS; MW

CF and Ian Taylor to arrange transfer of responsibilities.

Keith Whitten re-elected newsletter editor: SM; RS

MW re-elected membership secretary: RS; ER

.. all unopposed

In the absence of a Secretary, RS to generate future meeting Agenda

3. Committee Members

Other committee members were re-elected, subject to their willingness to continue:

ER, Steve Keith, Linda Hawkins, Nick and Karen Clarke, Jack Lawrie, Stuart Rogers

.. all unopposed: MW; RS

RS to solicit members' willingness to continue and perhaps adopt a more active role.

4. **Membership Report**

During the year:

- We resumed taking membership subscriptions when we were again allowed to ride as a club, and added 14 months to members' expiry dates – so no-one's membership lapsed during that time, probably accounting for the lower than usual dropout rate over the last two years.
- We ended the option to buy more than one year of membership at a time - the first of the 5-year memberships will expire early next year; the last in 2025.
- As many people joined as left, leaving the membership at 118, back up to the level of some 5 years ago.

4.1. **Subscriptions – charge date**

Moving everyone to the same renewal date was discussed. Concluded that as long as the membership secretary remains comfortable with a monthly set of renewals there is no reason to change and we should continue as we are.

4.2. **Subscriptions – cost**

Agreed to retain individuals' subscription at £12 and family at £18.

5. **Treasurer's Report**

As previously circulated:

The movement of the cash position over the last three years, excluding trips, saw an increase due to reducing magazine costs followed by a decrease as membership income fell due to the pandemic.

CF and Ian Taylor will agree how to manage responsibilities for the Bank and PayPal accounts

6. **Newsletter**

Many thanks to Keith for his efforts and Calendar. Agreed to continue with the current interval and format.

7. **Website and Facebook**

SM and RS have seen and commented on Jack's revised version, and agreed it should go ahead subject to the comments made.

8. **AOB**

None

9. **Date for the next AGM meeting**

Second Tuesday in December 2022 – the 13th.

NewForce Committee Quarterly Meeting

Held remotely using Zoom at 8:40pm on Tuesday 14th December 2021

1. Minutes from the previous meeting were adopted as true and fair. RS; MW

2. Attendees and Apologies

Roger Shepherd (RS), Eleanor Rutter (ER), Sue Marsden (SM), Clive French (CF) and Martin Wheat (MW) attended
John and Linda Hawkins, Nick and Karen Clarke, Jack Lawrie, Steve Keith, Ian Taylor, Stuart Rogers and Pete Dobson apologised for being unavailable to attend.

3. Rides and Riding

3.1. Review ride arrangements following a bedding in period after the relaxation of Covid restrictions.

- SM reported some resentment from other Forest users during the Dec. 6th ride, perhaps with a group size at the upper bound.
- Otherwise, current arrangements appear to be satisfactory, and will have to remain flexible to respond to any new regulation

3.2. Extend current ride list beyond 23rd January 2022

- Agreed to base the 2022 ride programme on that of 2017.
- MW to circulate 2017 rides list (now done)
- Others to add any adjustments necessary with the aim of RS finalising a list by 24th

3.3. Ride guide and advertising

- From the next meeting at the latest, the role that Ian presently fills in Monitoring Government and Cycling UK guidelines; Revising the Forum's ride guide and publishing the next ride's invitation will need filling.
- All to seek a candidate.

3.4. What 3 Words – is this working well?

- Agreed that What 3 Words works well for us.

3.5. Ride leaders - availability and spectrum.

- There remains a small core on whom most of the responsibility falls, but several others have led and more names are in the hat, all of whom need encouragement to volunteer. All to persist with that encouragement.

3.6. Trips away

- There remain a few spaces available for next summer's Elan Valley weekend beyond the 21 who have paid deposits. The accommodation is substantially more salubrious than we usually enjoy, and more costly to match. Some 'regulars' have not signed up.
- SM proposed that somebody (else) be encouraged to organise a late summer/early autumn trip.

4. **Treasurer's report**

4.1. Nothing to add to what was covered in the AGM

5. **Membership report**

5.1. Nothing to add to what was covered in the AGM

6. **Web Site and Facebook**

6.1. Review of revitalised website

- MW to send updated retailers list to JL

- JL to launch

6.2. Review of possibility of giving more weight to Facebook

6.3. Google Cloud for photographs

7. **Any other business**

SM reported that a poll of her group indicated they are happy with what the club does

8. **Date of next meeting**

March 8th 2022

Feeling a Bit Bored?

By Keith Whitten

It's winter. It's dark too much of the time. It's cold or wet and often both. You've got to be pretty dedicated to ride off road too often in the current conditions and deal with all the cleaning up and wear and tear on expensive bike bits. So what to do instead? Some of you are probably aware that there's a wealth of biking content available on Youtube but for those who have yet to venture down that alley here are a few pointers.

Firstly, Youtube is massive and there has to be a certain amount of searching find the nuggets buried in there. The (biking) content varies from grainy clips of someone's favourite trail to very professional broadcast quality creations. In fact many of the higher quality pieces are indeed professional; thinly disguised adverts or promotions for well known brands, but that doesn't make them any less watchable as the content is being focussed on a far narrower band of consumers (ie us) than any mainstream advertising could ever justify. Many of you will have seen Danny MacAskill's films but there are also a good number of enthusiastic amateurs out there who harbour dreams of being the next Stephen Spielberg, Michael Palin etc and are producing videos of riding and destinations that we could all aspire to.

The following are a few of the channels I've enjoyed watching:

The Col Collective: More road riding than off road but lots of beautiful Alpine scenery and good narration.

Gravel Humans: A couple of guys based somewhere in the Swindon area who were producing regular videos of their weekend rides in the southern counties of England. There's local scenery to identify, including a trip to the New Forest and good narration. They have been dormant for a few months now but have plenty of content for you to work your way through. Stop press, they've resurfaced with a New Year's Day ride.

NorthSouth: A couple of young guys who've documented some epic cycle tours to sometimes offbeat destinations. Heavily sponsored but good content nonetheless.

Mongrel Dog Productions: A retired Australian living in Perth, his videos are mostly outback motorcycling trips but include a handful of cycle tours of western Australia and south east Asia.

c90adventures: No bicycles involved but I couldn't resist including this one for his often very funny, warts and all tales of touring the world on a low budget riding a Honda step-through, which really isn't that much faster than a bicycle. Very high production values and no adverts.

I've also heard the mountain bike journalist Guy Kesteven's channel recommended although I've yet to view any of his videos myself.

As is the way with the internet, once you've watched a few videos on the same theme Youtube will come up with plenty of suggestions of more and you really could while away an awful lot of time watching entertaining and inspiring films (and discarding the dross). Or you could just take some inspiration from the first few and say 'to hell with the winter' and go out for a ride yourself.

Finally, if you've already got some favourites please share them with the rest of us, either on the club message board or the Facebook page.