

CTC West Surrey Group

Annual Report 2015

Definition

CTC West Surrey Group is the local representative body of the CTC covering the postcode areas GU1-10, 12, 15-16 and 18-27, KT7-8, 10-16 and 24, and RG45. Total CTC members in these areas in October 2015 were 1214 with 49 of these joining in the last three months.

Organisation

The committee consisted of the four ex-officio posts of Chair (Mark Waters), Rides Secretary (John Murdoch), Secretary (Nick Davison) and Treasurer (Arthur Twiggs), plus three additional members, John Child (Website Organiser) Laurie Mutch and Roger Philo. Dane Maslen continued as Editor of the magazine and received minutes of committee meetings. Committee meetings were held in November 2014, March, July and October 2015.

Members elected to honorary posts at the last AGM in recognition of their long support and services to the Group were Chris Juden (President); and Rico Signore (Vice President).

Events were organised by Nick Davison with assistance from Bob McLeod and Peter Hackman (Stonehenge 200, Danebury 150 and Elstead 100 audaxes), Don Gray with assistance from John Murdoch and Louise Gagnon (Tour of the Hills audax and Tour of the Greensand Hills), Roger Philo (35 and 50m Reliability Rides), and Mark Waters (Bicycle Icycle and Century ride). Thanks go to them and to the volunteers who assisted them.

Midweek and Sunday rides

In addition to groups starting primarily from Woking, Guildford, Godalming and Farnham, other groups have operated from variable start points to give the widest scope for rides. Several of the groups have also included a selection of train- and car-assisted rides in their programme. All groups had rides scheduled throughout the year.

Wednesdays has seen a weekly programme of full-day rides from locations around Woking by the **Woking Midweek Wayfarers** and monthly full-day rides from Farnham by the **Farnham Wayfarers**. Both groups have continued to be well attended, the former usually splitting into three groups (Grades 2, 3 & 4) of differing speeds en route to the coffee stop and thereafter to lunch. With new ride leaders there has been a resurgence in the Grade 3 group (formerly intermediates) such that it has often been split into two or more "packets" on busy roads. A separate group has gone to meet the **Paragon Lunch Group** for those members who like to socialise but do not want a long ride. Another opportunity for our less active members has been the **Evergreens** ride on the first Thursday of each month along the tow-path from Brewery Road Car Park in Woking to the Cricketers in Pirbright for lunch. Additional ride leaders have recently come forward to assist with the Grade 2 rides on Wednesdays.

An extensive programme of rides has been on offer on Sundays: weekly full-day rides from Elstead, Farnham, Godalming or Guildford by the **Sunday All Day Riders**; weekly morning rides from Woking by the **Woking Sunday Riders**; fortnightly full-day or morning rides from Godalming or Guildford by the **Guildford and Godalming Wayfarers**; monthly morning and monthly full-day rides from Farnham by the **Farnham Wayfarers**; and full-day rides once or twice a month from a variety of locations by the **All-day Sunday Intermediates**. These have provided members with opportunities for rides ranging from 15-20 miles at about 8mph (morning rides by Farnham Wayfarers) to 60-90 miles at about 14mph (Grade 4 Sunday All-Day Riders).

The Farnham group have annual extended rides in the New Forest and Test Valley and the Midweek Woking Grades 3 and 4 visited the Chilterns. The Isle of Wight is a popular train-assisted ride for Woking and Farnham groups.

Evening Rides continued this year and were organised on alternate Tuesday evenings during summer months from either Guildford or Godalming. Six rides were organised on Tuesday evenings from May to August. Unfortunately we had poor weather on a number of the dates and attendance generally was poor even when the weather was good. For some rides only the leader turned up; the best attendance we had was four. It is a great shame as there is a special magical quality to a ride on a balmy summer's evening. Due to the poor attendance rate, it is doubtful that we'll offer the rides again next year.

Events

Thanks to the dedication of the various organisers and the willingness of numerous members to act as helpers and marshals the Group staged its regular programme of events.

Seven West Surrey CTC riders turned out on 15th March to ride the Bicycle Icycle, the same number as last year despite the weather being much better last year. This year, it was cold and damp. No riders from other groups came to ride the event, probably as a result of a lack of effective activity in the CTC Tourist Competition, which in previous years often resulted in several riders turning up from other local groups. Owing to performing commitments, the organiser is having to re-think the dates for next year's event, which may require the word 'Icycle' to be temporarily removed from the title of the ride.

Our new feather flag was hoisted for the first time outside the Elstead Village Hall on Sunday 31st May for the **three Elstead Audax events** organised by Nick and Marion Davison, Peter Hackman and Bob McLeod. The day started with steady rain and strong winds but forty six riders on the Stonehenge 200k, Danebury 150k and Elstead 100k braved the elements as they headed out to Whitchurch and Overton for the first coffee stop. Luckily the weather brightened up in the afternoon and the returning riders were rewarded with sunshine and tail winds as they headed back from Alresford. The last two riders finished at 9.15pm just as it was getting dark. We had some impressive riders taking part: two riders on the 200k were due to take part in the PBP in August and another two were training for a race from Belgium to Turkey this summer. Another rider in his 60's will be taking part in an organised ride across America from Los Angeles to Florida. A possible change for next year may be to extend the 200k route to within sight of Stonehenge and also avoid the busiest roads near the army camp - this may call for a start beyond Farnham to maintain the distance.

Mark Waters organised the 100 and 75 mile Reliability Rides this year, owing to Roger Philo's unavailability which, however, did not stop him turning out at the finish to welcome riders back. The rides had a new start and finish point this year owing to the closure of the golf club in Pirbright. Rokers in Worplesdon is the new venue and they proved to be very welcoming and helpful, even baking special cakes for us. The weather for the ride on 19th July couldn't have been better and it was a pity that more people weren't willing to accept the challenge. As it was, seven started the 100 and three the 75 and all but one completed the route. It's a most attractive route which perhaps needs a little tweaking so as to include a stop in Midhurst as a part of the main route, not an optional alternative. Otherwise, look out for the event in 2016 with hopefully a few more entries, if we can get some effective marketing organised.

This year's 50 and 35 mile rides were held on 12th April and started outside the Jack Phillips pub in Godalming and finished, as always, at the Kings Head, Holmbury St Mary. Three riders completed the 50 mile course and 8 the 35 mile course.

Entries for the 2015 **Tour of the Hills** were a little down on last year, (108 total, 13 on-the-day and 9 postal), probably due to PBP starting at the same time, and the arrival of a new local sportive attracting some riders. As usual, there were a few no-shows and some found the ride sufficiently testing to 'pack'. 93 riders finished. The Event made a profit in excess of £850. One of the many

factors that make the TotH so popular is the 'double loop' nature of the route. This returns entrants to Shere Village Hall at the midway point and gives those finding the event very tough a chance to rest, dine well and continue, or to decide that they have had enough and retire. The event received universal praise from the riders, especially for the Marshals and Catering. Louise and her team continue to provide excellent, nutritionally relevant food in quantities sufficient to satisfy even the hungriest rider. The nature of the TotH route requires many marshals, without whom the Event could not run. John Murdoch and his team gave encouragement to all, especially those riders who were finding the Event perhaps rather tougher than they had anticipated! All riders really appreciated this friendliness and encouragement. Finally, the Event was rated by a number of riders as 'the best Audax event they had ever ridden'. A fellow Audax organizer has spoken glowingly of the TotH as 'the long running and well-regarded grimpeur', and a number of riders again rated the event as the best Audax event they had ever ridden.

Other Activities

New Year's get-together in Seale: many members rode to Seale Craft Centre on 1st January where the tea room, ever popular with our members and many other clubs, opened especially for cyclists to celebrate the New Year. A collection for a local hospice charity was made. This traditional New Year's Day gathering on Friday 1st January 2016 will now be at Squires Garden Centre in Badshot Lea as Seale Craft Centre (under new management) will be closed.

The club dinner was held at the Mill, Elstead on 28th February with our President, Chris Juden, as the guest speaker. It proved to be very successful (55 attended) and it is planned to repeat this next year on March 5th at an alternative venue. Sincere thanks go to John Murdoch for organising the dinner.

A short tour based at Settle in the Yorkshire was organised by Derek and Anne Tanner over the May Bank Holiday. They also organised a tour further north in the previous week. An eight day tour in the Haute Savoie region of France was organised by John Murdoch in June with 11 riders taking part – this year they were based in a ski chalet at Samoens. A day ride in the New Forest was organised by John Sadler in June with Derek Tanner leading the return ride to Farnham. Pat Daffarn and Hilary Stephenson provided advocacy by sitting on the local Guildford Committee which monitors the safety of infrastructure for cyclists. Right to Ride: We currently do not have a Right to Ride representative. If anyone would be willing to take on this role, please contact the committee.

This year has seen some remarkable rides undertaken by club members from the Midweek Wayfarers;

- Tim and Debbie Richards are participating in the American leg of the Race The World Event from Los Angeles to Miami are due to finish on the date of the AGM. They will be covering 200-300km a day for two weeks on a variety of road surfaces with special cross bikes provided.
- John Gilbe, completed the Paris-Brest-Paris, the true classic long distance Audax event covering 1200 kms, in well under the maximum permitted time of 90 hours.
- John Weatherburn participated in a Ride Across America, the Transam, organized by the Adventure Cycling Association of America which started in Williamsburg, Virginia and finished at Eugene, Oregon – 85 days covering 4200 miles. He raised over £2000 for the Cancer Research charity.
- Don Gray participated in the Marmotte a grueling sportive which includes the some of the major climbs in the Alps: 174kms and 5200m of climbing.

Ride Leader Training

Thirteen ride leaders and back markers attended the **West Surrey CTC Ride Leaders & Backmarkers Workshop** on Saturday 9th May and enthusiastically engaged on the three main topics: a roundtable discussion on experience and best practice, the management of roadside incidents, and “in case of emergency (ICE)”. Human sign posting was also covered.

There were a number of recommendations:

The register of all participating riders should be completed at the start of each ride rather than at the coffee stop

It is important to split into well separated, smaller groups on busy roads;

“Human sign-posting” facilitates extended distances without stopping but riders should re-group from time to time;

In the event of a mechanical problem, at least one other experienced rider should stay with the delayed person to provide support;

All members should carry ICE information with them at all times. With a view to encouraging this, the Committee has agreed to fully sponsor for regular riders the purchase of a pack of 3 small cards from a leading supplier, One Life ID.

Three of our ride leaders participated in the **inaugural CTC Ride Leaders workshop** held on Saturday 19th September. This was the first of a series of free all day workshops to be held country-wide. The West Surrey representatives shared our local experience and riding guidelines.

Eleven ride leaders participated in the WSCTC sponsored **First Aid course** held on Saturday 16 May 2015 and run by fully accredited Signa Training. All the ride leaders passed the written and practical exam, are now registered with the CTC and insured. The course was thoroughly enjoyable and considered to be of great value. This was proven the following day when one of our newly-qualified ride leaders assisted in a serious cycling incident.

Club Items

Club Clothing: A new design was implemented this year with the removal of the Surrey Hills Logo. A full range of clothing manufactured by Owayo has been advertised and orders were taken by John Murdoch in October. The committee decided to provide some subsidies in order to encourage more people to wear the club colours.

Magazine, ‘The West Surrey Cyclist’, is produced quarterly as a paper magazine and continues to reflect the wider activities of the club and is also posted on the website. Distribution this year of the paper magazine was 47. The magazine continues to receive support from the club funds. With Dane Maslen retiring as Editor and no volunteer coming forward, the last edition will be produced early next year, unless the position can be filled. See a separate Magazine Editor’s Report. Phil Hamilton distributed the magazine by post, and also informed all coffee shops of when we would be visiting their premises.

Website [westsurreyctc.org.uk] The website has received several improvements this year with the rides calendar being produced and a means of downloading to mobile phone calendars. Also, there is a facility for ride leaders to post up last minute changes to rides on the website. The website is central to all the club’s activities and communications and John Child, our webmaster, continues to do an excellent job.

Feather Flags: two feather flags with the club colours and logo were procured earlier in the year and provided a smart advert for the club at the Elstead Audax in June.
