Walthamstow. South of Springfield we started playing leapfrog with a cyclist from Hackney, out on her first bike ride in ages. Andre was very good at giving her directions and advice, and may have made another LCC recruit.

All in all a good morning and early afternoon out. Good weather, good company, good scenery, good food (in terms of taste if not health). Particular congratulations to Tracy and Charlotte for riding further than they have done before.

Matt

Please check the Wheelers Website for latest on rides. If you have an idea for a ride, a long/short weekend or an upcoming cycling event please email:

newsletter@towerhamletswheelers.org.uk

Treasurer
David Allison
Rides Coordinator
Steve Collins

www.towerhamletswheelers.org.uk

Ride Report Saturday 20 Jan. Green Bridge - Waltham Abbey

Five of us assembled at the Green Bridge - Waltham Abbey just after 9:30am - Wheelers regulars Tracy and Carl, Newham cyclist Andre, Charlotte, who’d been out on a Wheelers Kent ride, and myself, on machines ranging from ladies shopper to chunky mountain bike, via hybrids and a tourer.

The after-effects of last Thursday’s storms were everywhere, twigs and branches lying across paths. At Tottenham we had to get off our bikes and push then gingerly along the one narrow section of towpath not blocked by an enormous branch. We were glad that the wind was at our backs as we set out. The downside of this was lots of puddles and mud - my bike looked like I’d been riding cyclo-cross - and the inevitable slog back into the wind later.

I shouldn’t really have been surprised when the National “Cycle” Network signs through Victoria Park directed us into a permanently locked gate, with no alternative route directions.

We kept a good medium pace going north along the Lea Valley cycle path, but were still able to enjoy the scenery. Between Springfield Marina and Tottenham locks we saw more swans than any of us had ever seen in one place at one time. Ornithologists may know why this may be? We didn’t know the cause but we enjoyed the sight.

We reached Waltham Abbey just after 11am. There’s always a sense of satisfaction in escaping from the M25 under your own pedal power. It was the first time that Tracy and Charlotte had done this. I chose, out of the many cafes in Waltham Abbey, the one furthest away from the canal, but I reckon the tea and the bacon butties were worth it, plus an enormous plate of chips.

After our tea stop, Carl left us to ride on to his grandparents’ in Sawbridgeworth. The rest of us headed back south along the Lea Valley. This was when we properly noticed the headwind, although more irritating was the low sun reflecting off the canal and the many puddles. These things plus a few mechanical problems slowed down our return journey. Tracy left us at Tottenham Hale to meet up with friends in...
Apparentley, construction begins in April on the adjacent site marked with a “D” and cycle up and down the ramp only just wide enough for a bus or use the underground roundabout. The route for pedestrians appears to use the footway under an office block but its not clear. Apparently, construction begins in April on the adjacent site and river wall. The three months of closure so far was for “site during the long development period. The growth of Canary Wharf has undoubtedly brought jobs and wealth to the area. Such growth facilities should also have regard to local users and residents, would remain very low. Mr Partrington signs his letter recognising the riverside walkway. Such is the price of progress.” Surely, its only a matter of mutual respect to their own users and tenants undergound deathtrap. CWG closed the path without notice, a path which had been used and enjoyed regularly by a great many people. Perhaps when you are a large wealthy landowner, such common courtesies towards local communities including the people that they need to pay “the price of progress” are unimportant? Ralph Withers (THWheelers)

The Back of The Ride

By Leigh Andrews

Welcome to the first edition of The Back Of The Ride brought to you by Two Cake Productions. With me today are 7 men built like whippets on bikes made of something light and very expensive. I’ve got no chance of keeping up blessed as I am with the body fat of a Krispy Kreme doughnut and a bike made of something heavy and cheap. Do I care? Do I buggerly!

I’m not here for the glory. I’m not here for the testosterone fuelled duals. I’m here to savour the advantages of the back of the ride offers. If you fear joining a ride ‘cos you’re worried you’ll be last - take heart, this is the best bit! Here’s why:

1. Broken glass / nails / horse’s head in the gutter? You won’t suffer. Everyone up front will have ridden over it first and sworn loudly. This highly developed human instinct will alert us pooodlers at the back that it would be a really good idea to change lanes!

2. It’s a great place to meet people. Wheelers in common with many cycling groups has a ‘No-one Gets Left Behind’ Policy. The role of back marker is often shared between speedier cyclists. They will keep your morale high and your legs spinning and you get to chat to lots of different people.

3. Everyone will know who you are. When you’re at the back everyone waits for you before changing direction. Looking to impress someone in the crowd? Freshen up before the bend and sail into sight looking fabulous.

So if you’re hesitant about joining us, don’t worry. Pick one of the ‘easy’ paced rides from the Wheelers calendar and cheer for the rear!

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