



Contact us through the web site
www.cyclewight.org.uk

AGM report

Over 40 people came to the AGM on Friday 29th November. It was great to see so many new members attend. Four of the candidates for the general election were present.

Richard Lewis from 'Active Planning' showed what is possible with the correct support. Richard led an exercise that encouraged members to look at maps of Newport and seek solutions to travelling across and through the town. Amazingly people did come up with fresh ideas even though, as a committee, we had looked at this on so many occasions. You CAN teach an old dog new tricks. Richard then commented on the ideas using his expertise gleaned from travelling in the UK and abroad.

Earlier in the day members of the committee and invited guests had walked around Newport, with Richard, looking at issues for cyclists and pedestrians. We hope progress made in Newport will be able to be used in other places around the Island.

There was also a presentation by Chris Gregory of 'A to there' who spoke about the Access Fund.



LCWIP

The Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan has been approved by the Department of Transport. It is now with the Council for their acceptance before it comes part of Council policy. We are led to believe that in comparison to other LCWIPs from around the country ours compares very favorably

CW has not seen the final document but has seen several sections. As reported in the last newsletter the plan concentrates on the Ryde and Newport areas. Once it is published CW will update its own cycling strategy.

National Cycle Network

CycleWight has become increasingly concerned with the state of the National Cycle Network on the Island: from Ryde to Newport via Wootton and from Cowes to Sandown and Wroxall. (The Red Squirrel trail) Island Roads have the contract to look after both routes but in many places very little appears to have been done to maintain let alone upgrade. We have produced a report and after a meeting with the council have handed it over to them. The Council has agreed to look at it before meeting with IR to discuss our findings. There have been previous discussions over the exact levels of maintenance. Let us hope this time it can be resolved. It is an essential part of the lives of many people on the Island as well as a central part of the tourist offer.



Track by Blackwater

Membership

The Committee has been discussing how to encourage more people to join CycleWight. One way we think is to make joining (and staying) a member easier. We have decided to move over to an on-line system, which is just a few clicks of the mouse (yes, we know!) It has the added advantage of sending out automatic reminders for renewal of membership as well as organizing the sending out of emails and newsletters. There will always be the opportunity to continue paying by BACS or cheque. The system is not live yet but it will hopefully be up and running in the next few weeks. For the time being it is business as usual.

Membership.

£5.00 per household, Cheques to "CycleWight" and send to: Mr D Jackson, Riffles, Sloop Lane, Wootton Bridge, PO33 4HR. Or pay by BACS. HSBC Sort Code 40-34-26 account number: 81855654 Use your names as reference. Please inform us by e-mail at cvclewight@gmail.com Subject membership

The Undercliff.

The re-opening of the Undercliff as a road is now part of Council policy. They are seeking funding for an investigation. It would appear that the folly of seeking a high-risk solution is no barrier. In earlier newsletters we have reported on our campaign to leave the Undercliff as it is. CW have been told our desire to have this route designated as a cycle leisure route is to go ahead with the signs going up before Easter. The speed limit on both sides of the landslip is now 30mph, which means it will be even more of an ideal place to seek serenity. It is a great shame the money being sought will not be spent on developing a 'Green Corridor', which could attract visitors and residents.



Pot Holes and such.

Everyone's favourite topic. It is fair to say that many roads on the Island are now a very good surface. The Round the Island Cycle route is in the main part excellent. It has become a visitor attraction in its own right. BUT there are still places where for cyclists roads are grim. Cyclists as a group must report defects. The argument goes "Nothing is done so why bother." Records are kept and the pressure of number of reports will have an effect. <https://fms.islandroads.com/> is the reporting system. This is particularly true at the moment for defects on the NCN routes. If you are unhappy with the response you can contact IR by info@islandroads.com and ask for more information on your issue. A last resort is to contact CycleWight. We do meet with IR and IWC regularly and issues are raised.

At the present time IR are trialing a system based on taking a picture with an app and reporting it straight away. Too trendy for some but it may be an improvement. Hopefully you might

report an issue there and then rather than forget about it by the time you get home. (That describes the Editor but I guess others too)

Housing

This has become a regular topic on CW newsletters. The reason is that until the design of developments is of high quality it will be a major stumbling block for people to walk or cycle. The Council has announced that it is having a housing review and consultation as it feels that the number of new homes to be built set by government is too high. <https://iwightinvest.com/housing-strategy/> This provides the opportunity for CycleWight members to write to insist on higher design standards for the infrastructure. On the last page of the newsletter you will find more details on how to make a comment on the strategy.

Time after time developments on the Island are not designed to make cycling and walking the first choice even though there is plenty of guidance on how to do so. This guidance is often ignored by the bodies that are part of the planning process. The argument given to CW is that if higher standards were imposed developers would walk away.

Paths for all.

The project on converting footpaths to bridleways, for which we obtained funding, continues to move along. CW identified 10 footpaths which we believe could have their status changed to bridle paths so as to allow cycling. We presented this list to the Rights of Way team at a meeting. They have surveyed all of the routes and feel that it is possible to proceed with eight of these. RoW drew up a list of actions to be taken. As part of our on-going commitment to the project we are now approaching some of the key stakeholders to seek their support. If anyone is particularly interested in further information of this project please do contact us.

Transforming Cities Fund (update)

This is an initiative by central government to boost transport in large urban areas. This was in the last newsletter but the time of the announcement for the winning bids is at the beginning of March. Portsmouth is one of the cities selected to bid for part of the £1.2 billion and it is felt by those in the know that there is a good chance that this will be successful.

It may be hard to believe but Ryde is part of the regeneration programme. If successful the money will be to update Ryde interchange (the bus, train and hovercraft) We have been told that cycling is very much part of the plans. It is hoped for the old tram line to be transformed to become a pedestrian and cycling route to the Pier Head This



would be a big boost to traversing the Island on a cycle friendly route Let us hope for good news,

Access Fund

This government fund was due to end in March but has been extended for another year, which means there will be over £400,000 for promoting sustainable transport. Sadly it is revenue funding, hearts and minds, rather than bricks and mortar, but it does keep up the excellent work being done by the various providers.

Some of the schemes have sent CW brief reports on their work:

"Workplace Engagement Programme/Sustainable Transport Broker Programme - This is now being organised locally rather than by a national provider which is proving to be much more successful. 7 travel plans with employers have been completed in this financial year, with scope to expand next year as success of marketing increases. The establishment of a proper brand, Connect2Work has also helped the programme become more attractive to prospective businesses and other stakeholders. More and more people are making enquiries about the things we offer as the brand establishes itself further, which is excellent news. More options were taken up this year including cycle skills and cycle repair vouchers compared to last financial year, which saw no interest. People are also requesting personal travel plans, and a campaign with Southern Vectis around commuter travel is planned for next year.

Electric Cargo Bike Fund. Expect to see the project start in the next 6 weeks. (CW believe it is to be used by a gardener.)

Active Travel Officers As part of the Access Fund 20/21 the Council are recruiting for two Active Travel Officers to promote walking, cycling and public transport for journeys to and from work, and business travel.
<https://www.connect2work.info/>

The report of the Access Fund for 2018/19 has been published and can be downloaded from here <http://www.cyclewight.org.uk/access-fund-report.html> The figures are very welcome with an estimated reduction of 1,100 tonnes of carbon

Randonnée

Just in case you did not know the Randonnée will be on the first Sunday of May (3rd) as usual even though the following day will not be a public holiday. This is to accommodate the 75th anniversary celebrations of VE day. Registration has opened at cycleisland.co.uk. If you are willing to help on the day please contact <info@cycleisland.co.uk>

IOW Mountain Bike Centre

The folks at the centre have been busy over the winter and have continued to modify and improve the various routes and features at the

centre. Their opening weekend is the weekend of 28/29th March. All are welcome. You can buy season long passes or day tickets.

Going Electric

Like many people I came to adult cycling in middle age, looking for something to compliment gym sessions, and give me some fresh air. Alas being late to the party meant hills – more correctly the strength to cycle up them - were always my *bête noir*, and this was exacerbated by a knee injury in 2017 that got progressively worse.

In the middle of 2018 I started to think about going electric. TAV in Ryde couldn't have been more helpful, and I found myself the owner of a Merida electric hybrid. Best decision ever! My Fitbit tells me I burn around 2/3 of the calories I used to burn from a conventional cycle, but like many electric cyclists I find myself going further and having more confidence. * The choice of off, eco, normal and high power outputs allows adjustment for tiredness, road conditions, and gradients, and whereas cycling used to be a distinct exercise / leisure activity for me, now the bike



sometimes comes out for a quick trip to the shops, so cycling has become more functional. Dare I say it more enjoyable as well.

A question that I sometimes get is range on the battery – well it depends. On full charge the Eco setting gives a range of 60 miles, but that assumes a consistent power draw, which, of course, doesn't happen. Last autumn I rode from home in Brading to St Catherines and back, outward on the coast via Sandown, Shanklin and Ventnor, and back inland via Godshill and Whitwell. Outward the hills at Luccombe meant I used 50% battery on the first half of the ride, but the flatter homeward route only used 20%, leaving me a good reserve at the end of a 30 mile ride.

I was a bit apprehensive moving to an electric bike. Maybe it felt like cheating? However it's meant I've been able to cycle again within weeks of two rounds of knee surgery, and I've got the confidence to tackle the ups and downs of the Island. In short a decision I don't regret, and one I'd recommend to anyone else thinking about it.

Jess Garbett

*Recent research shows people who use electric bikes actually exercise as much as people with conventional bikes as they do tend to go further and use them more.

Merstone station

Just a reminder it has been given a makeover during last summer. There is a new unmanned information centre as well as a barbecue, cycle racks, more benches and a general tidy up of the area. The information centre material is about the station as well as other local features, for the modern traveler. As you can see it can be put to other uses when it rains!



Brighstone Cycle Hub

The Cowes Cycle Hub has been a great success so what better to follow on with one in the South of the Island. A message from the Rev. Clive Todd.

"Hi to all cyclists on the Isle of Wight from Brighstone Church! We know how many cyclists come through our village and so we wanted to create a space for you.

Inside the Church there are comfy seats to keep you out of the cold where you can relax and enjoy a break. There will be cycling supplies,



spare parts such as inner tubes, tyres etc. as well as gels and other essential foodstuffs for those requiring an extra boost to get you up the hills out of Brighstone Village! There will be a track pump to get those tyres up to 100psi. There will be a laminated map and information for our mainland guests.

We are planning to erect some cycling racks beside the Church soon so that you can secure your valuable carbon bike, whilst you enjoy the beauty of Brighstone Church with all your cycling companions.

Do pop in and see us as we hope to create

a great cycle hub for everyone from the novice to the elite riders whom we love to see enjoying the beauty of our island.

Please support us and help us make Brighstone Church the place to call in to on your ride across our beautiful island. Happy cycling everyone!"

Reverend Clive Todd

Isle Access

CycleWight have been involved since Isle Access launched. You may well remember that they joined The Wheels for All initiative, which is a nationally recognized programme that embraces all children and adults with disabilities and differing needs. It encourages them to engage in quality cycling activities by using specially adapted cycles. The activities are both physically and mentally stimulating and above all fun for everyone involved.

As you can see they have a day of events on March 14th. They have their new bikes for everyone to have a go on. It is a marvelous effort to have achieved so much in such a short time.

Transport for the South East

There has been a consultation issued about transport for all bodies to comment upon. This is to draw up a plan for transport in this part of the UK till 2050.

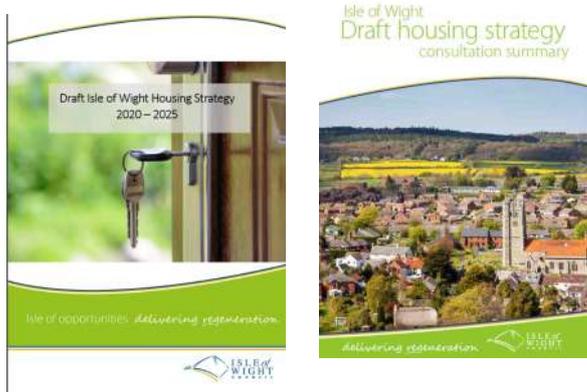
CW did take the opportunity to raise issues such as connectivity and poor urban design. Very sad to say that the present proposals for the South East will see an increase to motor traffic by 8% and a drop in cycling and walking. With a climate crisis these plans do not seem to be appropriate. It is suggested that traffic needs to reduce between 20 and 60 percent to achieve the savings needed for the carbon targets set

Ian Ward the IWC cabinet member for Infrastructure and Roads is on the board of the TfSE. We have written to him to ask him what plans the Council has to reduce car use and pollution. We await his answer.

Housing (cont)

The draft housing strategy consists of two documents: the full strategy and an executive summary. The full strategy poses questions to which it makes proposals. We would ask people to submit their views to the consultation either by making a submission on line <https://iwightinvest.com/housing-strategy/> or by writing to regeneration@iow.gov.uk The questions in the online consultation do not follow the same format as the full strategy.

Closing date Midnight 13th March.



The following points could be made. We would encourage members (and other supporters) to use their own words. Your comments do not have to be long. If completing the online survey. Q 5 would appear to be the place to make your views known.

Points you could make include:

- There needs to be clear statements and targets set for active travel.
- There is no mention of walking or cycling provision and how this would reduce the reliance on the car. Fewer cars would mean more space for people and housing.
- There must be clear statements about how careful design of new developments would encourage people to use active travel methods to improve their health and well being.
- Properly designed developments would mean less reliance on a car in an area where wages are below the average.
- Developments in urban and rural areas must not be designed in isolation to the area surrounding it. In rural areas new developments need to link to the rights of way network to discourage the use of the car.

- The Council needs to have supplementary planning guidance on walking and cycling to ensure developers provide high class walking and cycling provision.
- There is no mention of charging facilities for electric vehicles and bikes.
- There is no mention of the government's target of zero emissions and how improved infrastructure would help to achieve this.

Stop Press

Two sections of the NCN network have been improved. Coincidence or our report? Still much to do though.