

NEWENT CYCLING GROUP AGM 2022 - MIKE'S REPORT

Structure of the committee and conduct of business

At the committee meeting on 9th March I suggested a change to how the group runs its business. The intention of this is to try and balance the attention of the committee on the riding activities of the majority of members and the campaigning activities for infrastructure improvements which are the current focus of the majority of the committee. My hope is that this would encourage more riders to get involved with the committee and reconnect the committee with membership.

Under the current constitution the committee can form sub-committees which report back to committee. No change to the constitution is required.

My thinking was that sub-committees could be created (for example) to pursue the Newent to Gloucester Cycleway and to plan riding activities which report back to quarterly committee meetings. The elected committee would continue to control club funds.

It should also mean that detailed discussions about ride planning or campaigning matters are held in sub-committee which would be a better use of people's valuable time.

Review and update of the constitution

Reviewing the current constitution of the group when considering the use of sub-committees, it became apparent to me that the constitution put in place when the group was formed is in need of revision.

I was surprised to realise that the only formal positions defined are Secretary and Treasurer and there is no provision for a chairman to be appointed by the general membership, it is the committee's gift (8.1). That seems very odd to me! I also don't think that the purposes of the club stated in the constitution really reflect the current situation – do we really report to Transition Newent? And do we only encourage and support recreational cycling in line with Government and County policy? I would like to propose that a complete revision of the constitution is undertaken in the next year to be presented at the AGM 2023 (or if possible an earlier General Meeting) for member approval. A sub-committee should be formed to progress this and I would suggest must include a representative selection of the membership both campaigns focussed or active riders. I am willing to be involved in this review.

Newent Cycling Group's Web Presence

In March 2021 the committee agreed that we should have a website for the club and we registered the domain newentcyclinggroup.org.uk soon afterwards. The initial version of the web-site was made available by the 2021 AGM about a month or so later. With input and help from many others the web-site has developed and most, if not all, of our new members have joined the group 'on-line' using the membership application on the web-site.

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank Peter for his help with the graphics on the site, Tish, Linda, Martin and others for the NCG history, and all those who have provided feedback. Keep it coming!

Future plans are to add a News section so that the web site becomes a place to catch up with what is going on. We would like to make committee (and sub-committee!) minutes available to the

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membership via the web-site but need to decide how to do this as unless we have a members-only area they would be visible to the general internet public which may not be appropriate.

The web-site was primarily intended as a 'shop window' for the NCG but it can be one way of improving communication between the membership and the committee. In committee we have discussed creation of a newsletter that can be emailed to all members (and distributed in paper form at rides) and addition of a members-only forum to the web-site. We already make extensive use of WhatsApp which I think has become the primary method of communication for the majority of active members. WhatsApp is not really suitable for sharing large documents but could be used to provide links to documents on the web-site.

Email is the mechanism used by the committee for communication with a mail group committee@newentcyclinggroup.org.uk set up with current committee members. Similar mail groups can be set up for the sub-committees to increase the relevance and reduce the amount of email in people's in-boxes. A mail group for All Members would be one way to distribute a news letter but it would be necessary to allow an 'opt out'.

Spond has proved to be very effective for organising rides. It would be possible to use Spond to provide access to pdf files (like we do for ride routes as gpx files) but I don't know if this would be the best way to distribute a newsletter.

The Newent Cycling Group Facebook page is mostly used for small posts about our Wednesday rides with pictures and links to the new web site if more information is needed.

I would be interested in feedback from the membership on what their preferred method of communication would be – each takes some effort and if we have multiple ways of communicating we create extra work and run the risk of one channel not being sent important information.

The Newent Loop website www.newentloop.org is looked after by David Price and currently links to the groups Facebook page.