

EMAIL from STEPHEN OWEN (Ride Leader who joined NCG 2 years ago)

Hi Martin, Howard,

I can't attend the AGM but do value the NCG rides so here's a few thoughts for you to do with as you see fit.

I've been riding with NCG for two years now - with a bit of time off for lockdowns - and during that time rider numbers have grown steadily - it was 10-12 on a winter Wednesday, we've had 20+ out on many Wednesdays this winter. My take on this is that NCG must be doing something right.

NCG is not a competitive cycling club so I'm not that surprised the age range is skewed to the 'experienced' end of the age scale - I don't see it as an issue. E-bikes allow everyone to keep riding for longer and it's great that they are welcomed on our rides.

The multiple ride leaders development seems to be working pretty well - there's a decent range of longer/shorter and flatter/hilly rides. I'd like to extend our Wednesday ride brief to include some longer rides of around 40 miles with a single cafe stop. Your poll didn't show a general demand but no harm in offering one or two and seeing what happens - so that's what I will do as the weather warms up.

We did go through a period of splitting into faster and slower groups - it has pros and cons. It's not generally an issue as rides won't (intentionally!) leave anybody behind but equally it's no fun thinking you are slowing others down. Howard dropped out of my ride on Thursday despite our reassurance. One to watch - most of the ride leaders are 'faster' riders - I think maintaining the inclusivity is important so need to be careful - if numbers continue to grow maybe need explicit faster say 12mph moving average and slower rides, say 10.5mph average.

The occasional away day longer rides are great and big thanks to those that organise them - it's not easy or fun. I intend to offer an Avon Cycleway ride - probably in September and a few longer rides over the summer to help those interested build up to its 85 miles. For me NCG's informality works great!

Spond is working well - maybe a couple of short instruction emails for new joiners/ride leaders could be prepared to explain to people how to use it. It's settling down a bit now but I remember waiting for people booked on a ride only to be eventually told they had whatsapped somebody else to say they weren't coming. I'd be happy to put something together.

I have little interest in the campaigning side of things (except possibly road safety) but it doesn't get in the way of me enjoying the NCG rides. If it floats some people's boat then great - better a broad church than a monoculture.

OK more than enough from me. Reminder of my first point - NCG is working pretty well from a rides perspective - the numbers prove it. Thanks to all for making it happen.

Cheers
S

Stephen Owen