

WELLS U3A CYCLE GROUP PROGRAMME 2024

Here is a collection of the reports and photos from the Wells U3A Cycle Group rides in 2024. They are presented in date order. Rides were generally scheduled for the 2nd and 4th Thursdays of each month and details were circulated by email to the group members around a week beforehand.

All active members may be asked to plan and lead a ride during the year, and so the more members there are, the fewer runs an individual has to organise and the more variety there is. The more informal arrangement of asking for volunteers a few weeks in advance of scheduled rides has continued to be successful, and thanks are due to all members for their cooperation in organising and leading the many runs throughout the year.

The programme seemed to have been affected more by the weather this year, with several rides postponed by a day or a week but only one ride was cancelled. In addition, the frequent floods on the Somerset levels have meant that sometimes the planned routes had to be modified.

In the following reports, the leader of each ride is given after the date. Producing reports was entirely voluntary and therefore there may not be one for every ride. This is a public document, and group members are therefore referred to by their first names only (with the first few letters of their surnames to avoid ambiguity.)

🚲 11TH JANUARY 2024, STEVE C.

Despite a freezing day, 10 of us turned out from Draycott Memorial Hall in sunshine to head carefully over to Cheddar with an eye out for icy patches. A steady ride on the Strawberry line took us to Winscombe where luck favoured us as there was room inside the Pantry cafe, rather than the other larger one in the old HSBC site. (Axbridge tearoom closed until March.)

Warmed and fed we went on through Loxton and down to East Brent, going up the aptly named Hill Lane, pausing for breath to admire Ralphs Wood before going down to Brent Knoll and a warming lunch at the Fox and Goose.

After a leisurely meal we went out into the cold, and a standard run back to the start, (not all started from Draycott) for a nominal 28 miles ride.

Thanks to all for emailing, it makes planning stops easier, and to the midcourse navigation team (Linda and Paul) for keeping us on track.

Steve C.

🚲 15TH FEBRUARY 2024, STEVE W.

(This ride had been postponed from 8th February because of the forecasted heavy rain.)

As the weather forecast changed for the better, the ride was able to go ahead, but with a watchful eye for the predicted rain in the afternoon. The ride commenced at Lidl's in Wells with 7 riders.

We started by going up Silver Street, past the Moat, then up Torhill Lane, via Tor Woods and Wells Golf Club until we reached Old Frome Road. We then proceeded up the hill to West Horrington, turning right at the school. Once we reached East Horrington we crossed the road past the Gothic Church and proceeded on to Chilcote Drove. At Thrupe Lane we turned left until we arrived on Old Frome Road. Turning left, we then travelled for short while until we reached Rocky Mountain Garden Centre for a well-earned rest. Whilst having our refreshments, it was decided to continue with the planned ride, but not stop for lunch, to avoid the predicted rainstorm.

Once refreshed, we turned left on to Old Frome Road until we turned right up past Windwhistle to reach Bath Road. Turning left we quickly turned right up Haydon Drove and continued along until we met Bristol Road where we turned right and travelled for a short while before turning left through to Priddy. In the centre of Priddy we turned left and cycled down Deer Leap. At the bottom of the hill, we started to say our farewells, so that all could arrive home "dry".

Distance was approx. 19 miles.

Steve W.



JACK'S DROVE, WEDMORE, IN FEBRUARY

Not on a U3A ride but typical conditions on the Somerset Levels in February 2024.

🚲 **14TH MARCH 2024, PETER N.**

Five keen cyclists met at Bradford on Avon canal car park at 10.15. We set off along the canal path to Avoncliffe and on to Angel Fish cafe at Limpley Stoke for a much needed coffee.

Cyclists with thin tyres found the going tough along the canal rain soaked path. While we were being refreshed a fellow cyclist said the tunnels were closed due to rain damage. So change of plan!

We decided to go along the canal to Bath and join the river Avon to the weir at Pulteney Bridge (see photo). Then under Pulteney Bridge into great Pulteney Street to the Holborn museum and up A36 to rejoin the canal to the George for a good beer and meal. We then continued along the canal path back to Bradford on Avon where we looked into the Tythe barn and then a nostalgic ride around Bradford mainly for me!

I would like to do the tunnel ride in the summer when I think we may start at Limpley Stoke where there is a carpark.

An enjoyable ride by all?

Peter N.



14/03/24 - PULTNEY BRIDGE, BATH



14/03/24 - DUNDAS AQUADUCT

🚲 29TH MARCH 2024, JOHN WH.

A Ride on Good Friday

This ride should have been held the previous day but the weather forecast was dire. Things looked better for Friday so we took a gamble, which paid off because all we had to contend with was a few spots of rain after lunch. Linda arrived at Langport from Weston, saying that it had rained for the whole of her journey so we were very lucky! There were six of us for the ride, mostly wearing double waterproofs, but the sun shone as we strained into a strong headwind towards Ilminster.

Our coffee stop was at Brown and Forrests café (beside their smokery) and we thought it was so good that we ought to consider it for a future lunch stop, especially as the menu looked appealing.

Then back into the headwind to Barrington before a stiff climb on a national cycle route to Stocklinch. The on-road cycle route suddenly turned back on itself onto a most unlikely looking pathway which led into the grounds of Dillington house. This then continued through a footpath gate very close to the house itself where there was another climb, which brought us to a gatehouse at the main road, which led us to our lunch stop at the Stonemasons' Inn, Ilminster.



29/03/24 - STONEMASONS' INN, ILMINSTER

By now we were getting a bit blasé about the possibility of rain and some of us proceeded to remove their over-trousers in the dining area. I didn't dare look at the faces of those sat at other tables – after all they didn't know there would be another pair of trousers beneath!!! The return route was much faster now that the wind was behind us and we quickly passed through Shepton Beauchamp, Kingsbury Episcopi and Muchelney back to Langport having completed 26 miles (but I maintain it was 29 miles according to my map measurement!).

We eventually found out that there was rain all around us, with a downpour at Pilton at 10.00 am while Weston suffered heavy rain on and off all day.

John Wh.

🚲 11TH APRIL 2024, RON S.

Five riders set off from Cheddar reservoir on a mild, windless day heading through Axbridge and onto the Strawberry Line to Winscombe where we picked up a further rider at the recreation ground. We then headed straight into Winscombe for a very early coffee & cake break at my favourite stop, the bakers! Fortunately, no one was eating in the bakers so there was just enough room for us to all sit down and enjoy the fresh cakes, coffee and low prices!

Having had an early coffee stop, we now had 2 hours cycling to get to our lunch stop and decided to use the public loos but found that they were all locked...disaster! Apparently the result of cut backs! Furthermore, it also started to rain albeit very lightly.

Undaunted, we carried on to Sandford to join the quiet 'flatlands' towards Puxton and on the way met Linda making the seventh rider. We then crossed the A370 towards Wick St. Lawrence eventually climbing up onto the 'toll road' at Kewstoke where we stopped to get our breath back (or at least those of us on non-electric bikes) and admire the view out to sea and across Sand Bay. We decided to record this 'memorable occasion' via a group photo when, miraculously, the sun shone briefly for the first time that day!



11/04/24 – KEWSTOKE (2 PHOTOS COMBINED)

We carried on along the toll road, through Weston Woods, while trying to admire the extensive views out to sea through the trees while ignoring the mudflats. We then dropped steeply down into Weston-Super-Mare and onto the end of the Esplanade where we rode along trying not to run into any pedestrians. Once off the Esplanade we cycled through Uphill to pick up the cycle path eventually crossing back across the A370 and stopping for a good lunch at the Bleadon Farm shop & cafe where, unfortunately, Linda had to leave us.

Suitably, refreshed we rode up through Bleadon village and on to Loxton returning to Winscombe recreation ground where Clive got back to his car, and yours truly managed to fall off his bike sustaining a grazed knee! Fortunately, nurse Denise was on hand with the first aid kit and managed to patch me up. From here we cycled back the last few miles to Cheddar reservoir recording close to 33 miles. My thanks to those who supported the ride.

Ron S.

🚲 25TH APRIL 2024, LINDA

I was delighted when eight keen pedallers were able to join me at Avalon Marshes for a showery ride to Bere Cider Farm. We set off in light rain but thankfully little wind and not too cold. After toiling up Turn Hill we arrived at the coffee stop and sat in the porch to enjoy mouth-watering cakes, coffee and conversation.

On the road again, we followed the route as planned. The rain stopped for a while, then started again which made cycling alongside the full Sedgemoor Drain a messy process. The wet cinder path threw up red splashes all up our backs, never mind the bikes. A little further on I think we all made the short but steep incline on to the old railway line before our belated lunch stop at J's Bistro. Amid the building works going on in the old Red Deer field we enjoyed a panini and a chat to see us the short distance back to the start.

Thank you all for your support today, I enjoyed your company. Just under 29 miles.

Linda

(Route: Avalon Marshes, Shapwick, Pedwell, Nythe, Bere Cider Farm; Othery, Thorngrove, Weston Zoyland, Chedzoy, Parchey, King's Sedgemoor Drain, Bawdrip, Cossington, J's Bistro in Chilton Polden; Edington, Catcott, Shapwick, Avalon Marshes.)



25/04/24 - BERE CIDER FARM



25/04/24 - SEDGEMOOR DRAIN IN THE RAIN

🚲 9TH MAY 2024, DENISE

Perfect weather for a ride. There were 7 of us starting from Cheddar Reservoir. We met up with Linda at our coffee stop, the Pantry at Winscombe, where we sat outside in the sun. So the 8 of us cycled to Clevedon on, mostly, back roads. When we reached Clevedon, Steve wanted to go for a swim but realised he'd forgotten his cozzie...just kidding. It did look very tempting. There was still a mist hanging over Wales but this cleared during lunch. We had a delicious lunch, again sitting outside, at the Moon and Sixpence; the pier end of Clevedon.

We were blessed by good weather and good company. A very enjoyable ride...slightly more miles than I thought. Thanks to all of you that joined me.



Denise

09/05/24 - THE MOON AND SIXPENCE, CLEVEDON

🚲 23RD MAY 2024, ARTHUR

Mendip Meanders

Despite the grim weather forecast that greeted me a couple of weeks beforehand, I was optimistic that maybe, just maybe it might improve by the 23rd and so my optimism was rewarded, no sun (occasional glimmer perhaps) but no rain either.

Nine of us arrived at old Mill ford in Chewton Mendip by various means mainly cars but two did cycle from Wells. The ride was designed to go east from there to Mells tearoom return with lunch at The Mendip Inn at Oakhill (on the A37), but to add a bit of spice we first headed west then doubled back to take in the 14% steep hill from Litton to Ston Easton. Having surmounted this obstacle, the rest of the hills we met were mere bumps!! The route east bypassed Chilcompton via Old Down the inn being famous for its connection as a stagecoach stop in the days of horse drawn carriages and on to Stratton on the Fosse, equally famous for the monastery at Downside Abbey. To get to Mells we needed to avoid the tortuous ribbon development of the old coal mining villages of Holcombe and Coleford by following a route above them and then on to the lovely village of Mells for a welcome coffee and cake at the Walled Garden cafe.



23/05/24 - IN THE MENDIPS

The return ride to our lunch stop at The Mendip Inn at Oakhill took us past the numerous limestone quarries that dot that part of Somerset but somehow don't seem to spoil the lovely lanes we went through, but it was quite an undulating ride. We eventually arrived at the inn after bypassing Stoke St Michael, yet another mining village.

Having eventually downed a sizeable lunch (soup for me as my Mells scones were still active), we headed westwards through the village of Binegar which used to be served by the Somerset & Dorset railway, long gone, and back to our transport at Chewton, a journey of 30 miles, a north westerly headwind and numerous hills, thank heaven for electric assist.

Thanks to you all for a very pleasant day out.

Arthur

🚲 20TH JUNE 2024, PAUL W.

Six of us gathered at Tucker St car park in Wells on a sunny morning, justifying the decision to postpone from a much soggy day the previous week.

We travelled via the Strawberry Line, including the most recently opened stretch behind Dulcote recycling centre, to North Wootton and thence on to the Lion at West Pennard for coffee. As we sat in the sun we mused as to why the Lion was adorned with sunglasses, to be told by the bar staff: "why not". Given the weather we could hardly argue!

We rode on along mostly quiet roads via Baltonsborough and Butleigh, returning to Glastonbury to enjoy a passing aerial acrobatic display. We had a leisurely lunch at the Middlewick Farm cafe, where we were joined by Barbara.

This made seven for the return ride, still enjoying the sun back to Wells via Godney and Fenny Castle. In all just under 30 miles, and scarcely a climb in sight.

Cheers

Paul W.

🚲 27TH JUNE 2024, RON H.

Wedmore to Burnham-on-Sea

The morning started cloudy with some wind, and we had some rain overnight. By the time we met at Wedmore Car Park the sun was out, the roads were dry and the temperature was rising although there was a brisk wind.

In all 13 members of the group attended the trip to the seaside, which was a commendable number. Some of those who live near the Glastonbury Festival site were a little concerned about the possible traffic congestion getting out of Pilton and Shepton Mallet down to Wedmore, but all arrived in good time.

Our ride left Wedmore and we took the road to Stoughton Cross, past Ashton Windmill and on to Weare and Lower Weare where we met the A38. This was a busy junction but eventually we managed to cross the road and head for Cross. At Cross we then took the Webbington Road to Loxton where we had a stop at the Frankie Howerd Community Café for coffee.

Due to the numbers we decided to order our drinks and cakes, and sit at the tables outside as the weather was fine. The café is run by volunteers and due to only one person in the café when we arrived doing everything, there was a bit of a wait in getting our orders. Another volunteer did arrive soon after and to assist in the delivery of the orders Geoff gave a hand with the waiting service, highly commendable.

One of our group (Jane) pre-arranged to return to Wells from the café stop due to her husband not being well, so we were down to 12. Our route to Burnham took us on the road to Bleadon where we negotiated the hill into the village and then to the junction of the A370. We then headed for Brean and Berrow, and took the Berrow Road into Burnham. Unexpectedly this road, known for the busy holiday traffic, was relatively quiet and we made good time. We did manage to lose some of the Group as we entered Burnham, but we all met up at our designated lunch stop at the Bay View Café on the promenade.

After lunch we took the pedestrian/cycle path bordering the Brue estuary into Highbridge, then the B3139 to Watchfield. From here we took the country lanes towards Mark where, due to a navigational error, we managed to lose 6 of our group who took an alternative route. However we all met up again just outside of Westham. From this point 4 of the group took alternative routes to home, while the remaining 8 of us negotiated the lanes through Westham, Heath House, Sand and back to Wedmore having cycled a total of approximately 33 miles, which was a little more than we usually manage.

Can I thank everyone who supported the ride, that I found very enjoyable, and with great company.

Many thanks,

Ron H.

🚲 11TH JULY 2024, JOHN WI.

A Ride Across The Levels

We met at 10.00 at the small carpark at Ashcott Corner; 10 of us, there should have been 11 but at the last minute Paul found he had a lunch appointment booked. We headed south to Ashcott where we joined Cycle route NCN3 travelling westward through Shapwick, Catcott and Edington to arrive at Chilton Polden for our coffee break at J's Bistro at 11am. The staff as usual were very obliging and set us a table outside in the sunshine. A bonus you might say after the dreadful wet weather we have all experienced for such a long time. We all enjoyed our favourite beverages and cake of which there was an excellent selection as usual.

After a 30 minute sojourn we remounted our cycles and took Goose Lane north across the levels: a particularly quiet narrow lane which brought us out onto the Burtle road where we headed west then north until we reached the church at Mark. Turning left on Mark causeway we headed towards the White Horse Inn and the right turning towards Vole, another quiet lane which eventually brought us out at a T junction. From here we turned left and, after a short distance, right towards the west end of Mark Causeway. At the junction we turned right again and made our way to Rich's Cider Mill restaurant where we stopped for lunch.

At this stage we had travelled just short of 20 miles so were all a little peckish!! Once again the staff were very accommodating and set us up outside in two groups: one table in the sun and one in the shade. We were now down to nine as Steve C. had left us some miles back before we had reached Mark. Their light lunch of a selection of sandwiches with various fillings salad and crisps were popular as was the alcohol-free beverages, but here I must own up to a pint of cider shandy as I find their cider one of the best in Somerset. One of our members enjoyed the roast meal which they are famous for.

After a good break and our batteries recharged (not the ones on the bikes!!!) we headed off towards Watchfield and across the levels with the wind behind us to Burtle and the Shapwick road. Two members turned left here heading for home whilst the remaining riders headed south again picking up the river path east towards Ashcott corner and the car park from whence we had started. A total mileage just short of 30 miles.

John Wi.

🚲 26TH JULY 2024, PETE M.

(This ride was moved to Friday due to forecasted rain all day on 25th July)

Ten intrepid souls braved the rainy weather prediction and set off a little late from Langport only to almost immediately lose four riders. Luckily our four outriders were rerouted over the phone and we all met again at the Coates Willow Centre in Stoke St Gregory to fortify ourselves for the long middle passage. At a convenient turn approaching Barrington we stopped to switch on our lights in spite of the now glorious sunshine, and continued on through the dappled woods to Shepton Beauchamp, then along a narrow sandy single lane road (Littlefield Lane) and into South Petherton. Luckily for us, although we were running late, the Brewers Arms pub kitchen knew we were coming and slightly prolonged their hours. After a well deserved lunch we set off again towards Langport finally encountering the long threatened rain, albeit very lightly.

Despite numerous turns, junctions and potholes there were no incidents, accidents or flat tyres. Thank you all for coming!

Pete M.

🚲 8TH AUGUST 2024, PETE N.

Exploring the Cycle Networks of Bristol to Bath

Today, three of us, Arthur, Ron H. and I, (a disappointing number, was it the weather?) left Bitton heritage railway station towards Bath along the designated cycle track. After 5.3 miles we had a welcome coffee and cake break at Basils Bakery, and then continued along the River Avon cycle track to Pulteney Bridge where we came across our first road. We went along Pulteney Bridge Road and up the A36 for a short distance to the Kennet and Avon Canal towpath, and cycled along the towpath to Limpley Stoke where lunch was originally planned.

After discussion we decided we had ample time to continue to the Cross Guns at Avoncliffe only to discover to our disappointment there was no cooked or snack meals available. So we cycled back to Limpley Stoke for a satisfying lunch at the Angelfish Cafe alongside the canal.

Fully replenished, we left via Monkton Combe heading for the two tunnels to Bath; the first tunnel is a mile long, so it was a lot cooler than outside! We arrived at the River Avon in Bath and returned to Bitton Station on the path we came out on which eventually runs alongside the heritage railway track. The total mileage was 31, and finally it didn't rain!!

Peter N.



08/08/24 - BITTON STATION



08/08/24 - TWO TUNNELS, BATH

🚲 29TH AUGUST 2024, JOHN SEA.

Langport – Kingsbury Episcopi – Ilminster – Stembridge – Langport

This ride was postponed from 22nd August because of unfavourable weather conditions. Fortunately the weather on 29th August was good, with sunshine and light wind, and warm but not too hot. Eight riders from the group assembled at Langport at about 10am ready for the day's ride. The start was up the street named "The Hill". This is an apt name as it is fairly steep, but not too long, and it encouraged the leg muscles to warm up! From there it was a flat and easy ride out to the coffee stop at Kingsbury Episcopi community hall, where the group's orders were served promptly. Refreshments were taken outside at a picnic bench in the sunshine.

On restarting, the group headed on south towards South Petherton, not on the originally intended route due to a missed turn, but via equally attractive lanes amounting to a similar distance. Taking a side turning in South Petherton the riders continued south passing underneath the A303 and almost to Lopen. A turn westwards, to the right, put them on the Fosse Way, which here is a narrow lane. Just after Dinnington, the first notable climb was encountered. This was steep at one point but fortunately not too long. The lane joined a wider country road that runs through Kingstone to the eastern edge of Ilminster. The old A303 was followed past the town centre for about a half mile before the right turn onto the B road heading north towards Curry Rivel. This led up and over the new A303/Ilminster bypass. The route went onwards to Ilford Bridges where the narrower lane to the right was taken, heading back east. One last notable climb up through the sunken lanes led over to Shepton Beauchamp. From there it was easy going out to Stembridge for lunch at the Rusty Axe.

After lunch there remained another easy 5 miles back to the carpark. A diversion was taken from Muchelney to find the converted railway track that ended by the river bridge in Langport. Then it was a couple of hundred metres along the riverside path to the cars. The group had a pleasant ride of just over 29 miles.

John Sea.

🚲 19TH SEPTEMBER 2024, STEVE W.

(This ride was postponed from 12th September due to the weather.)

The ride started at the Tramways in Wells, with 5 riders. The sun shone but the wind was strong. After riding up past the moat and along the Tor Wood path, we then cycled up to East Horrington. Sadly one of the riders, who is still recovering from an injured hip, had to return home. The remaining 4 then cycled up to the Rocky Mountain Nursery for a well-earned coffee and comfort break.

We then cycled on to and through Priddy, before riding down towards Charterhouse. The route then went down Cheddar Gorge, where we saw many cyclists coming the other way. At the bottom of the Gorge, we then cycled on to Wedmore where we stopped for lunch at the Blue Bird Café.

After a nice lunch we then cycled through Bleadney then back to Wells via some quiet country lanes. The sun still shone, but the wind continued.

Steve W.

🚲 10TH OCTOBER 2024, JANE

Ten of us set off from Winscombe. It was chilly and overcast but for a change there was neither wind nor rain! We followed the Strawberry Line to Sandford and then turned off towards Puxton, where we encountered our first couple of floods. After observing some cars we all managed to get through by sticking to the centre line. We then continued and turned off onto the newly opened Pier to Pier Way to Clevedon. By this time the sun had come out and it was warming up. We had an early lunch at the Salthouse In Clevedon and even managed to sit outside in the sun.

After lunch we retraced our steps a little and then followed the Avon Cycleway to just beyond Chelvey, where we encountered a further flood which was deeper than the previous ones. We all managed to get through without any mishaps. Then it was onto Yatton, via Claverham, following country lanes. We stopped for a cup of tea (and some had cake) at the Yatton Station Cafe and all sat outside again. By the time we left grey clouds were appearing. We quickly followed the Strawberry Line back to Winscombe and it was only then that a few spots of rain came down. Total distance was approximately 33 miles.

Thanks for coming.

Jane



10/16/24-ON THE PIER TO PIER WAY



10/16/24 - LUNCH AT CLEVEDON

🚲 24TH OCTOBER 2024, GRAHAM

Eight of us gathered in the Tucker Street car park and headed off down Burcott Road under an overcast sky and against a cool breeze to Fenny Castle. A reconnaissance the previous day revealed several lanes to be flooded and so we turned left to Polsham and cycled down the main road towards Glastonbury, providing a temporary traffic calming service. Unfortunately one of the group had to abandon the ride at this point because of a puncture due to a missing drain cover. At the end of Long Drove we diverted onto the cycle path and we carried on into the town for a coffee stop at the Rural Life Museum.

Another rider had to leave the group here to return to Wells for an unavoidable meeting. Now down to six, we continued on to Butleigh and through Barton St David, passing through a "Road Closed" section (which now seems to be customary on our rides). We arrived in good time for our lunch stop at the Quarry Inn in Keinton Mandeville.

Refreshed with food and drink we left the warmth of the pub and, now with the wind mostly behind us, our return route took us to Ham Street and along Teapot Lane to West Bradley and on to West Pennard. We continued along the lanes to North Wootton and Dulcote with the threat of losing another rider whose e-bike battery level was getting low! Finally we took the Strawberry Way back to the start for a total of 26.9 miles (43.3 km) with 912 ft (278 m) of climbing.

Thank you to those who came along. I hope you all enjoyed the ride despite the absence of the forecasted sunshine.

Graham



GODNEY ROAD ON THE PREVIOUS DAY



LONG DROVE ON THE PREVIOUS DAY

🚲 AGM, 14TH NOVEMBER 2024

Annual Meeting of the U3A Cycle Group held at Quickshifter Café, Unit 6, The Sidings, Wells

1). Members Present

Brian, Peter N., Steve W., Geoff, John Wh., Jane, John Wi., Clive, Steve C., Ron H., Arthur (Chair), Pete B., Ron S., Chris (prospective member), Paul W., Graham., Barbara., Linda., Denise. *(surnames removed for privacy)*

2). Apologies

There were two apologies, new members John and Lindsey H. Arthur welcomed Chris to the Group who is a prospective member.

3). Leaders Rides

Individual leaders' rides were deemed to be successful and it was agreed to continue this format in the future. It was noted that Ride Leaders must carry with them members' mobile numbers plus emergency contact numbers. A small first aid kit would also be useful in case of minor injuries. An updated list of all members' contact telephone numbers will be circulated in the New Year.

(continued)

4). Post Christmas Lunch

It was agreed that this should continue. A suggestion for lunch at the Queen Victoria in Priddy was proposed, and Arthur agreed to organise this for January or February.

5). Future Areas to Explore

Areas in North and West Somerset were proposed as possible different ride areas with car sharing if this was practical. Areas in Wales were also discussed and Linda agreed to look into transporting bikes on the train, and liaise with Paul W. and Clive on suitable routes.

6). Rides in Brittany

This had been discussed at previous meetings but there was no interest from any of the group members to do this.

7). Any Other Business

Linda suggested that previous rides could be put on a database to be reused in the future by members. It was thought that this would be a good suggestion but too difficult to organize but may be worth looking into for the future. It was noted that all ride reports were listed by Graham on the U3A Cycling Group Website. Graham to circulate the website link to all members for information.

Linda confirmed her new mobile telephone number as xxxxx xxxxxx. *(number removed for privacy)*

Geoff proposed individual café rides in the winter months when only one ride a month is normally planned. This could be to meet up with members at any café on any day of the week at a specified time. Arthur could circulate the Café Ride details to all members.

8). Future Group Leader

Arthur raised the question of someone taking over from him as Cycling Group Leader as he had been carrying out the role for approx. 15 years. Although he indicated that this was not imminent and he was prepared to continue, someone new would be required to keep the group running as and when he retires. All members were asked to consider this.

9). Ride Out to Cranmore

Following the meeting 14 Members cycled to Cranmore Railway Station for lunch returning to Wells via new areas of the Strawberry Cycleway through Shepton Mallet.

Ron H., Arthur



18/11/24 - THE CYCLE GROUP AGM

🚲 14TH NOVEMBER 2024, ARTHUR

It's traditional to have a ride following our AGM to clear the air after all the business is over, so a ride was planned to go for lunch at the East Somerset Railway café at Cranmore station. But we needed to earn that lunch, so a few moderate hills were added. Surprisingly fifteen folk signed up which necessitated dividing up into two groups led by Ron H. and myself; in the end there were seven in each team as Steve C. backed out due to mechanical problems.

Both teams left about 11:10 but team B followed a slightly longer route to Nth. Wootton to ensure that team A arrived at Cranmore earlier. Weather conditions were good but not perfect until just before Pilton when it rained, just enough to cool us down after the first of the hills. There was however another short climb out from Pilton to tackle but then cycling became much easier through to Pylle and on to Evercreech and Stoney Stratton. There now remained the final climb up to Cranmore via Chesterblade, about 17 miles from Wells along lanes that were in places liquid mud. But it was worth it to relax in the café with our welcome lunch choices, arriving on time at approximately 1:00 pm, with the other team about ten minutes later; excellent timing.



14/11/24 - JUST BEYOND THE NEW BRIDGE

The return to Wells was planned to follow the Strawberry Line as far as was practical, but the railway line still exists to about a mile from Shepton Mallet so we could only join it at Shepton by cycling through the lanes to the A361 and picking up the multi-user path at Collett Park. This took us to the Tesco business park and through housing estate roads to the new link on the western side of Shepton and over the new bridge; but there were four missing! A phone call from Paul allowed us to regroup eventually into the original fourteen. From here we were able to cycle along the multi-user path to Ridge Road where it was back onto lanes, until part way down Church Hill where we were able to rejoin the new multi-user path right through to Wells.

The total distance was 26 miles. There were one or two mutterings about hills but all in all a good run especially in the afternoon with perfect cycling weather. Thanks to those who joined me and especially to Chris on his first ride out with the group; he has asked to be included in our group so we haven't put him off.

Arthur

🚲 14TH DECEMBER 2024, RON H.

Our start was from Tucker Street car park in Wells where the weather was overcast and threatening to rain, but six of us met up for an earlier start time of 10.00am to ensure we got back to Wells before the light faded too much.

Our route out of Wells took us along the Strawberry Cycleway towards Dulcote, through Worminster and on to North Wootton. From here we negotiated the hill to Pilton where we stopped for coffee and mince pies at the Community Café. After our stop two of our group returned to Wells fearing worst weather to come, whilst the rest of us proceeded on to Pylle, crossing the A37 and on to Ditcheat. Whilst passing through the village we came across a number of thoroughbred racehorses, presumably from the stables of Paul Nichols Racing, on their way for exercise.

From Ditcheat we progressed to Alhampton where we joined the A371 and travelled into Castle Cary for lunch at The George Hotel. The Hotel was quite busy as Christmas Lunches were being served, but we had a reserved table and there was no problem, and the food was excellent.

After lunch we made our way back to Wells via Alford where we encountered some light rain, then on to Hornblotten Green and West Bradley, where we missed our intended route, adding perhaps an extra mile onto our distance. Then on to West Pennard and Launcherly and eventually back to Wells where, by this time, the rain had stopped.

Our total mileage was approximately 33 miles. I would like to thank everyone who attended the ride, despite the uncertain weather conditions.

Ron H.