

## FROM THE CHAIR OF CTC COUNCIL DAVID ROBINSON



As Chair of Council I have to ensure that there is proper debate and scrutiny within the Club and that Council listens and responds to members' views.

That includes the proposals at this AGM for the Cyclists' Touring Club to become a charity and absorb our Trust to form a single membership charity.

It is a great time for cycling and CTC. Local and national governments see us as part of a solution to issues of health, transport and climate change. We have record levels of membership and our charity delivers a huge range of local programmes to bring new people to cycling. This externally funded work means that we are reaching an even wider audience without asking you to pay for it, and as a membership charity we can use Gift Aid to do even more.

Set against this, there were allegations last issue of 'financial problems' and 'threats to member benefits' from CTC becoming a membership charity. It's important that minority voices are heard; debate and democracy are key to CTC, making us the robust organisation we are. But, just like our campaigning, our internal discussions have to be conducted professionally and with authority, basing our case on solid evidence.

Council has been preparing these charity proposals for five years. They and our finances have been scrutinised by independent auditors as well as legal, financial, taxation and charity advisors to ensure the best possible outcome for members. The small minority expressing concerns are well intentioned, but not a single one of the experts we engaged agrees with them. Council itself overwhelmingly supported the charity proposals: only one member of 24 voted against.

I am totally satisfied that all matters affecting the change have been scrutinised and that you can vote with confidence. And Council will remain accountable for your club and your money. We will use any extra funding to support the members, groups and volunteers who are the backbone of CTC while reinforcing our campaigning.

We must always seek new opportunities to go forward while retaining the things that make us special. It's a challenge I relish.

## Voting on CTC's future



The big issue on the agenda of the 2010 AGM is the proposal for CTC to become a unified membership charity.



With members poised to vote on the CTC's conversion to a membership charity at the AGM in Loughborough on 15th May, CTC Council has answered questions raised during the debate and urged members to support its proposals.

Barry Flood, Chair of Council's Management Committee, said: 'Speaking as an ex-Inland Revenue Investigations Director, I and CTC's financial advisor Simon Connell, ACMA have examined the financial statements and records of CTC. We found no material omissions or misstatements in the records after a thorough audit. Frankly we are at a loss to understand the allegations made in the last edition of Cycle.'

'Unification will also simplify the structure of CTC, saving us the time and money spent on keeping the organisation separated.'

### Why convert to a charity

CTC Council set out its position for Cycle...

Members join CTC for four main reasons:

- to get membership benefits;
- to cycle with CTC and its groups;
- to support our campaigning; and

- to support the promotion of cycling.

All these activities now qualify as charitable. With these benefits protected by the Council it must be in the interest of members to also grasp the benefits of Gift Aid on subscriptions. We can boost the income of the CTC by up to £100,000 a year – funding that can be used to support more cycling, more local groups and more campaigning.

If we vote 'no' we are also turning away from public recognition. Society supports charitable organisations like ours financially because we can prove we make the world a better place – through charitable services to members and through our campaigning and promotion.

### Charity proposal: the facts

**The Club is *not* being taken over by the Trust.**

Council has ensured that the new unified CTC will preserve the Club as the controlling body, retaining member ownership and benefits.

**Member benefits will *not* be threatened by charitable status.**

There is neither change to member benefits nor change to member groups contained

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Far left: photo by Chris Judea

in these proposals. Charity Commission guidelines clearly show that we can continue without threat to these benefits.

**The accounts are complex, not 'a mess'.**

CTC's financial statements are complex. Our work is divided between nine companies and two charities, each of which has been set up for a specific legal or financial purpose. There is considerable inter-company movement of funds, much of which will be simplified by unification. Ironically, a 'no' vote would prolong this accounting complexity.

CTC's finances are regularly scrutinised by independent auditors, CTC Council and expert advisers. These regular in-depth inspections all confirm that our accounting systems are robust; that CTC Council has full control of the finances; and that the financial relationships between Cyclists' Touring Club and CTC Charitable Trust are exactly as we describe.

**Charitable work and third party contracts are not a drain on members' money.**

Perhaps because of the complexity of our accounts there has been a misunderstanding of this topic. Membership fees categorically do not support third party projects. In fact, the exact opposite is the case.

Last year CTC spent around £2.2million on its own activities, commissioned on behalf of members by CTC Council. Of this, about

**Cyclists join CTC for a wide variety of reasons. Is it time to get Gift Aid on all those membership subscriptions? The AGM will decide**

£1million was spent by our Trust – for example our campaigning, volunteer campaigner support, Filthathole, member group support, touring and technical officers, routes, the website, Newsnet, Parliamentary lobbying, public transport advice, supporting mountain biking and the running of our national office.

But as the accounts show, we only actually had to pay £0.6million from the Club to the Trust last year to do all this. We earned the remaining £0.4million from the charges and surpluses we make on outside contracts – a saving of around £6.50 for every member of CTC. This is really good value for members.

**The Club has loaned the Trust £388,000.**

This is true, but there is no risk in a routine piece of financial planning between companies within a group controlled by CTC Council, who can move the funds at any time. The Club moved all of its then charitable work into the Trust in 2006, a change that has saved members over £200,000 in stamp duty and rates. The loan supported some of the infrastructure and cash flows needed for the change. The merger of Club and Trust will remove the loan but it is administratively easier to leave the loan where it is at present.

**CTC's campaigning work will not have its scope and intentions limited by charity law.**

CTC campaigning has been carried out by the Trust since 2005. In that period we have not experienced any restrictions on campaigning because of the Trust's charitable status, nor do we anticipate any restriction in the future.

Also we know that many of our campaigning partners are charities and they have not faced any constraints on their activities either.

*Members with questions are urged to email [members.matter@ctc.org.uk](mailto:members.matter@ctc.org.uk) or to visit the website [www.ctc.org.uk/charity](http://www.ctc.org.uk/charity)*

## Proxy voting

If you can't attend the AGM, please send in a proxy vote, a copy of which is included as a loose sheet of A4 paper with this issue of your magazine. If you need more copies, for example for family and household members, then you can either photocopy the form or download further copies from the CTC website.

To ensure that your vote is valid, please include your membership number on the form and follow the instructions carefully. Family members must quote their individual membership number, not that of the main member. Family members unsure of their personal membership number can telephone the Membership Department on 0844 736 8451 or email [membership@ctc.org.uk](mailto:membership@ctc.org.uk) to check. If you have any questions about proxy voting, you can telephone Peter Jackson at National Office on 0844 736 8450 or 01483 238 337

As we expect a large number of members will want to send in a proxy vote, CTC Council has decided to use the Electoral Reform Services to count the proxy votes received. Please note that your proxy voting paper must on this occasion be sent directly to ERS, as shown on the form, and not to CTC National Office, as in the past.

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### CTC SPRING DRAW

CTC Spring Draw tickets are included with this issue of Cycle and there are £4,000 worth of prizes to be won. Tickets are just £1 each and raise valuable funds for CTC Charitable Trust, so please don't bin them. If you are unable to sell them please pass them on to someone willing to do so. To receive additional books of tickets please call CTC on 0844 736 8450 or email [cycling@ctc.org.uk](mailto:cycling@ctc.org.uk). CTC regrets that due to the bulk mailing of the magazine it is disproportionately expensive to prevent tickets being mailed to members who have requested not to receive them.

### GO ONLINE TO WIN WIGGLE VOUCHERS

If we don't have your current email address on our system, you are missing out on CTC's weekly e-newsletter 'Newsnet' and other important online communications and offers. As an added incentive to update your details, members entering the site [www.ctc.org.uk/myctc](http://www.ctc.org.uk/myctc) and checking or entering their email address will go into a draw to win one of three Wiggle vouchers worth £50, £75 or £100 which can be spent at the CTC Shop. The competition closes on 16th April 2010 so get clicking at [www.ctc.org.uk/myctc](http://www.ctc.org.uk/myctc).

### STOP SMIDSY

We hope that you never experience bad driving when you're out cycling, but if you do, remember to report it to us via our website [www.stop-smidsy.org.uk](http://www.stop-smidsy.org.uk). What you tell us will help us develop our campaigns to tackle the problem.

**CTC'S CYCLEDIGEST**  
If you're interested in campaigning news in more detail, go to [www.ctc.org.uk/cycledigest](http://www.ctc.org.uk/cycledigest) where you'll find a link to CTC's quarterly campaigning newsletter.



## Ironing out transport problems

Even folding bikes are banned on the Metro Link trams in Manchester. How do you prove a folding bike is no more dangerous or awkward than an ironing board? Manchester cyclists boarded the service with a variety of folding items. The protest, part of Friends of the Earth's 'Love your bike' campaign, has proved effective: the ban is now 'under consideration'.

Meanwhile, a report by the House of Commons Transport Committee, published in February, has said the Government must make faster progress integrating railways with other forms of transport if it

is to persuade people to stop using their cars. To achieve this, CTC recommends a substantial investment in providing cycle access, parking, hire and storage at stations, as well as improving cycle carriage on trains.

CTC has also responded to the Government-commissioned Better Rail Stations report, which called for the provision of sufficient cycle parking for 5% of rail passengers; the current figure is 1.6%. CTC supports this target, but has calculated there will need to be 125,000 cycle spaces available at Britain's 88 busiest stations, up from fewer than 8,000 at present. In particular,

14 central London stations will need to have 67,612 spaces, 50 times the 1,365 currently provided.

CTC believes that a dramatic increase in cycle parking spaces is achievable. The Mayor of London is planning an additional 66,000 cycle parking spaces for the capital; and in Holland, it is common to provide cycle parking for 10% of a city's total population.

More at [www.ctc.org.uk/cyclerrail](http://www.ctc.org.uk/cyclerrail) and [www.ctc.org.uk/beterrailstations](http://www.ctc.org.uk/beterrailstations).

## FROM THE TOURING DEPT MARK WATERS



This is truly the age of information overload – and how much easier it makes our cycling lives! No matter where

you're planning to venture forth, unless it's somewhere very unusual, others will have gone there before and more than likely they will have written up details of their trip.

Blogs, tourist websites, social networking sites and a range of other specialist websites all serve as valid forms of storage and all are accessible to the enquiring cyclo-surfer.

The problem is finding the time to look at all the stuff that catches the eye – there is so much of it.

As a direct result of this information overload, I envisage two new forms of cycle touring developing: with the first, you'll make a concerted effort not to obtain information on the trip you're planning prior to departure, so the trip automatically becomes much more exciting – a journey of discovery instead of following in someone else's wheel tracks.

The second could be rather more challenging: you could plan a tour somewhere that you can find absolutely no cycling reference to on the internet.

Not that many years ago, CTC's route library was a unique and much sought after facility. It still is up to a point, but now there are now a myriad of alternative information sources.

Do give us your views on how we can make our touring information better. Write to me at: Mark Waters, CTC, Parklands, Railton Road, Guildford, GU2 9JX. Or email me at [mark.waters@ctc.org.uk](mailto:mark.waters@ctc.org.uk).



Photo: CTC's Dan Cook running a mountain bike leader course

## Off-road training first

CTC's Mountain Bike Leader Awards are being incorporated into a new six-week training course in Scotland aimed at training mountain bike instructors and helping them find jobs in the leisure industry. The course will be run by Peak Leaders UK at Glenmore Lodge in the Cairngorms. It will deliver both the Trail Mountain Bike Leader Award and the Technical Mountain Bike Leader Award from the CTC's Leader Award Scheme.

It is the first course of its kind in the UK where students are given intensive instruction

over six weeks by professional instructors who will take them from intermediate standard to instructor. It also includes a First Aid Course, Bike Maintenance Clinic, real guiding experience and more. For more information, see [www.peakleaders.com](http://www.peakleaders.com).

CTC's Mountain Bike Leader Awards are offered separately by CTC MTB and can also be studied in a modular fashion rather than all at once. An article on the Awards, which are recognised throughout Europe and the UK, will appear in the June-July issue of Cycle.

## Meeting of minds

 Last year CTC, Aston Hill Mountain Bike Club and the Forestry Commission came together to create a special CTC membership package that provides access and funding to one of the South East's best off-road trails. Now CTC is expanding this concept by adding another two sites, at Rogate and Tilgate. Both new member groups have inaugural meetings in April.

On Wednesday 14th April mountain bikers from Rogate will be meeting in the White Horse in Rogate. On Thursday 29th April riders from Tilgate will be meeting at the K2 in Crawley. For more information on either meeting, contact CTC Off-road's Ian Warby: 07776 203803, [ian.warby@ctc.org.uk](mailto:ian.warby@ctc.org.uk).

Meanwhile, all members in CTC



Rogate MTBers hope to replicate Aston Hill's success

Coventry and Warwickshire are invited to an Extraordinary General Meeting at Bulkington Village Centre at 7.30pm on Monday 19th April to discuss the proposal that CTC Coventry and Warwickshire should be dissolved. If it is passed, the meeting will determine the

date of the dissolution, how current funds are to be disbursed and nominate someone from each of the sections to be the

CTC Member Group contacts.

It is hoped to establish CTC Coventry and Nuneaton CTC as member groups at the same meeting, subject to their being enough members from each area to vote for the proposal.

CTC Cardiff & South East Wales will hold an AGM at 8.00pm at The White Hart, Machen on Wednesday 21st April. For more details, call Owen Rook on 029 2062 0747.

For more information about CTC member groups in your area, visit [www.ctc.org.uk/groupsandclubs](http://www.ctc.org.uk/groupsandclubs) or phone 0844 736 8450.

CTC plans to offer a special membership for MTBers in Rogate

## Do you have the 'X-Factor'?

Fortunately, election to Council, CTC's governing body, is not by means of auditions or a talent contest! If you think you have something to offer CTC by standing for Council – perhaps you have a real passion for some aspect of CTC activities, or you have business or other skills that are necessary to run a £4million organisation – then all you need to do is get a nomination form signed by other CTC members. For this year, as a trial, Council is considering reducing the number of signatures needed to help members to stand.

Full details and the formal call for nominations to represent members in the North East, South West, Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland and the Rest of World regions will be in the next issue of Cycle. If you want to know more, why not attend a meeting of Council as an observer to see Council in action? You can also speak to any existing Council member or telephone Kevin Mayne or Peter Jackson at National Office for further information, or have a look at the CTC website where there are details of how to stand, what is involved, and also statements from existing Council members about why they stood.

## Two Mills' cycling taster

 CTC Two Mills has received a special grant of £465 from CTC Council to deliver a programme of entry-level cycle rides aimed at women who are new to riding with a group and/or returning after a break.

The new rides will be free of charge with no requirement to book in advance. CTC Two Mills Secretary Janet Gregory said: 'We want women to feel more confident on the road for trips to work, shopping or leisure.'

Any other CTC member group that has an imaginative proposal to get people cycling is invited to apply for funds. An application form will shortly be sent to all Member Group secretaries.

## NEWS IN BRIEF

[WWW.FILTHATHOLE.ORG.UK](http://WWW.FILTHATHOLE.ORG.UK)

More potholes than ever before have been logged at CTC's website, Filthathole, probably as a result of the freeze-thaw process that road surfaces have suffered of late. Don't be put off by the crowd, though! There's always room for more reports – and it should help get the holes fixed.

### CONTACT YOUR MP

While urging your MP to sign Parliamentary Early Day Motion EDM 1009 in support of CTC's Vote Bike campaign (see page 46), do please also ask him/her to sign two others. EDM 794 calls for more funding for 'smarter choices' measures, such as travel awareness campaigns or cycle training, to give people the encouragement, incentives and opportunities to try out sustainable travel options. Meanwhile EDM 660 seeks stronger action to protect cyclists from lorries. They are involved in 20% of cyclists' fatalities despite being just 5% of the traffic. You can do this easily by visiting [www.ctc.org.uk/campaigns](http://www.ctc.org.uk/campaigns) > current campaigns.

### HELP FOR HAITI

CTC members in Wokingham have compiled an anthology of poems that is being sold by Oxfam in aid of the Haiti Earthquake Appeal. Entitled 'Everybody Hurts Sometimes', like the REM song being sold for the appeal, it is priced £4.99. See [www.oxfam.org.uk](http://www.oxfam.org.uk). For more details, contact [variloneb@st-crispins.wokingham.sch.uk](mailto:variloneb@st-crispins.wokingham.sch.uk)