



Riding Birmingham's Big Hoot Trail for charity



David has chaired some extensive debates at recent AGMs

DAVID COX OBE

Cycling UK's Chair of the Board of Trustees is retiring from that role, but he isn't hanging up his wheels.

Tony Upfold spoke to him

It's no bad thing to have a cox at the helm when you're steering through choppy waters. The last few years have seen the struggle to gain charity status, the rebranding of CTC as Cycling UK, and the streamlining of the Board of Trustees. Calmly keeping control and focusing on a bright horizon has been David Cox, who steps down as Chair of the Board of Trustees at the end of the year, after five years at the helm.

'I'm proud of our achievements during my time as Chair,' said David. 'It's a big responsibility looking after an organisation that has been around for 138 years, with many members whose parents and grandparents were also members.'

Now aged 70 himself, David joined CTC/Cycling UK in 1976 and has ridden with the Cycling UK-affiliated Beacon Roads Cycling Club in South Birmingham since 1980.

'The change of name from CTC to Cycling UK met with some resistance in a few quarters,' he said, 'but there wasn't a lot of opposition to the idea on the Board. Basically, we now have a name that reflects what we do. People from outside the organisation hadn't heard of CTC, didn't know what it stood for or what we did.'

"I JOINED CYCLING UK TO PROTECT AND ENHANCE OUR RIGHT TO CYCLE SAFELY ON THE ROADS"

'We needed – still need – to be much more outward-looking and embrace what is going on in the wider world and the name Cycling UK helps us do that. It tells people we are here to encourage and promote all types of cycling – whether it's touring with one of our groups, family cycling, riding off-road or using a recumbent trike.'

CAMPAINING FOR CYCLING

He added: 'If you read "Winged Wheel", the history of the first 100 years of the Cyclists' Touring Club, you immediately realise that a huge amount of what we did as an organisation back then, we do today – promoting and campaigning on behalf of cycling and cyclists. I joined Cycling UK originally for the very reason the club was formed in 1878: to protect and enhance our

right to cycle safely on the roads. We are a broad church and always have been.'

David lived on his bike as a child. Once he got his driving licence, he didn't ride for 10 years. He rediscovered cycling during the 1970s bike boom, bought a machine for a fiver from a friend's garage and started commuting on two wheels. He still rides 6,000 miles a year, including club runs, audaxes, and holidays, and is membership secretary and welfare officer with the Beacon Roads Club, as well as a ride leader.

David lectured in the Sociology of Organisations at what was then Birmingham Polytechnic, became the University of Central England and is now Birmingham City University. Now an Emeritus Professor, he was involved in the governance changes for university status and the development of the Faculty of Health. He was Chair of the successful South Birmingham Primary Care Trust and was responsible for the health of 383,000 people. His services to health care were recognised with an OBE and an honorary degree.

While he might be retiring at national level, David's local campaigning will continue. He is involved with the Birmingham Wellbeing Service, 'Be Active', and is vice-chair of cycling campaign group Pushbikes.

'I'd like to thank Cycling UK's Board of Trustees and staff,' David concluded, 'as well as our volunteers across the country who are all so committed to sharing their great passion for cycling.'