

## **Aylesbury Cycling UK – Minutes of AGM 16<sup>th</sup> April 2024**

### **Attendance:**

Philip Baronius, Tina Butcher, Penny Dablin, Sue Evans, Nina Ewers, Trevor Garrett, Alan Gibson, Anne Gibson, Michael Heybrook, Jan Janecki, Roger Lewis-Smith, Peter Nettle, Helen Osgerby, Richard Paver, Yvonne Redmond, Peter Robinson, Jeremy Scothern, Luda Ushakova, Nick Vere-White, Andy Winter

### **Apologies:**

Richard Atfield, Neil Dury, Jacqueline King, Ben Parry, Colin Payne, Margaret Williamson

### **Committee Attendance:**

Peter Robinson – Chairman  
Nick Vere-White – Treasurer  
Roger Lewis-Smith – Rides Secretary  
Jeremy Scothern – EP/NC rides coordinator

### **Matters arising for AGM 2023**

No matters were raised and no objections given.

### **Chair's Welcome and Report – Peter Robinson**

*Thanks to everyone for coming this evening.*

*Thanks to those who served on the committee during the year; Ben, Nick, Philip and Jeremy, with Roger taking over from Philip as Rides Secretary at the start of 2024 and Penny joining us.*

*Thanks to everyone who has led a ride; you do make a difference. Seeing a leader's name reassures people that the ride will happen and that there is some support if things go wrong.*

*Philip's development of the online Rides List and associated simple forms for volunteering for a ride and reporting the numbers afterwards have been very helpful and responsibility for the Rides List was easily transferred to Roger.*

*At the last AGM we decided to change the name of the group to Aylesbury Cycling UK to avoid confusion and this change has been made to our website, Facebook group, Strava club page and all the other places we have found so far. Jeremy wanted to make some changes to the website and this has happened and those who need it have access to send emails via the Cycling UK database.*

*Cycling UK have made changes to their website making it more difficult to use. We have experienced many problems trying to send out newsletters. Support from Cycling UK has been poor, with the Groups Officer away on sabbatical and others not answering emails or telephone enquiries.*

*I have decided not to continue as Chair of the group. I started the group in 1980, in the days before the internet, mobile phones and electronic communication. I have been involved in various roles almost continuously since, but now wish to devote my time to other commitments, especially grandchildren.*

*It is good to see the success of the Easy Pace and Newcomer Rides thanks to Jeremy and Pete Nettle and the team of leaders they have gathered. The Moderate and Step Up rides have lost some riders during the year but are still enjoyed by those who take part, and we have a library of routes to a variety of destinations. We are blighted by road closures and road works, but we are still fortunate to have access to beautiful cycling country and quiet lanes.*

*The committee can provide leadership, endorse proposed activities, agree expenditure, establish systems for organising rides and activities, and communicate with members via the Cycling UK email system, but nothing happens unless someone does it, so please volunteer to lead rides or organise events to make the most of your club.*

*I believe that communication could be improved by using an email template with a footer containing links to the Rides List and the forms for volunteering and reporting after rides.*

### **Secretary's Report – Ben Parry**

In Ben's absence, interim secretary Penny Dablin read Ben's report:

*This past year has seen all rides being well attended and it brings me great pleasure to see so many people supporting all of the hard work that goes into planning our rides. I would like to thank those of you that are involved with our ride and route planning, as without you the rides would not go ahead.*

*The social media platform continues to read very well and it is great to see the updates across our Facebook page and to also see the weekly emails regarding the rides that have been planned.*

*As we depart from the recent poor weather, I am hoping to see more people out enjoying our amazing countryside along with enjoying great company and amazing coffee and cake.*

*The road conditions locally still are of concern to me as they pose a risk of injury to riders and damages to wheels, tyres and bikes. So please, do take it steady on the descents, particularly as we still have leaves on the ground and poor weather. Also some of the HS2 diversions mean more traffic on roads which would historically be fairly quiet. This leads to driver frustration and, in some cases, a below standard of driving and patience from some drivers. Rider safety is paramount – please do be careful.*

*After serving the group and committee since Stephen Bland stepped down as group secretary, I have sadly decided to step down myself as group secretary. This decision has been driven by the lack of road cycling that I am doing and also a major career change. I feel that a secretary should be close to the group and due to family and work commitments, I have sadly not been able to be as close to the group as I would have liked. I am still cycling but I've gone back to the 'dark side' and am now enjoying MTB with my work colleagues, which, other than BMX, has always been a great love of mine.*

*I am sure that you will welcome Penny, who has agreed to take over from me as group secretary and I wish her very well in this role.*

*I would like to thank all of my fellow committee colleagues and I wish you all very well.*

*Ben Parry, April 2016.*

### **Treasurer's Report – Nick Vere-White**

Nick circulated the accounts prior to the meeting and explained the completion of a form for Cycling UK to claim our annual grant of £200. At present money is only being spent on the AGM venue and website domain names leaving a surplus for the year of £123.22 and a bank balance of £394.44.

Currently there are two domains – [www.aylesburyctc.org.uk](http://www.aylesburyctc.org.uk) and [www.aylesburycyclinguk.org.uk](http://www.aylesburycyclinguk.org.uk) both of which should forward to our page on the Cycling UK website. The old aylesburyctc.org.uk domain name may be retired in future as the club has been renamed.

A question was raised as to how many Cycling UK members might be considered part of our club. Emails using the Cycling UK system go out to 260 local members. Nationally Cycling UK has around 70,000 members.

A discussion then ensued around what value the club actually received from being part of Cycling UK. It was agreed to pass this to the committee for investigation and recommendations.

No questions or concerns were raised on the accounts and these will be submitted to Cycling UK.

### **EP/NC Coordinator's Report – Jeremy Scothern**

The following is the text of Jeremy's report to the meeting. He didn't actually cover everything here but it was intended.

*Since our re-launch of the Easy Pace programme in 2022 we have developed a great core group of riders, who bring a warm sense of friendship and fun to our rides. Our members come from all walks of life and we have even had Ben, the unicyclist, who came along to try our Newcomers ride!*

*As with most groups, people come and go. Cycling is a bit like gym membership, after the initial burst of enthusiasm some people move on to other things. However past riders often make guest appearances and are always welcome.*

*We've been lucky in getting a few mechanically minded members like Graham joining us who were able and willing to fix punctures or make minor fixes to our people's bike's, sharing the task of keeping us rolling.*

*We have a great group of leaders now who bring their own skills and personalities to their role. They also respond well to my attempts to press-gang them into service with each new rota.*

*This year has given us some challenging weather, but despite this the turnouts have been surprising. Last week with 43mph + winds predicted 16 riders turned up. Our ride numbers have grown throughout the year and now average about 13 of which 6 were female and 7 male. On busy Sundays we've had total group numbers in excess of 18.*

*Cycling in groups is normally a safe activity, but with all activities, things can happen.*

*We had a couple of incidents during our year, Jacqueline came off her bike in August after clipping wheels with another bike and broke her collar bone, she's now back with us after a long break and doing well and Tina came off on the Hale because of the sap from the trees which had made the road very slippery. Fortunately, Tina soon recovered. At both incidents the rest of the group did a great job in responding to the incident.*

*The original format for the Easy/Newcomers group was alternating rides, thus ensuring two rides a month for new riders and people preferring the shorter rides. Then in August 2023 we added an Easy Plus option on the Newcomer weeks as it became clear some riders wanted more.*

*These rides are basically Easy Pace with a bit more freedom to go up hills or ride a bit further and have proved very successful, but are still very much part of the Easy Pace stable. The rides only have one leader as it is normally the more experienced cyclists who join in.*

### ***Newcomer and Easy Pace Leisure Rides!***

*Last September we held an informal gathering to chat about how our group works and what people wanted. As a result we have developed the following 'mission statement' which we find useful and believe defines what we do:*

*'Newcomer and Easy Pace are leisure rides. They are aimed at creating a social, recreational and supportive environment, where ordinary people can enjoy the experience of cycling around the beautiful Bucks countryside and at the same time meet new people.*

*Whilst a notable aspect of cycling is its benefits to our health, our rides are not about speed, distance or competition, (although we still go up hills), but about the 'craic' (overall experience).*

*These rides are intended as an end in themselves, but for those who seek more of a challenge we also act as a stepping stone to the faster groups.'*

### **What next?**

*We tried running monthly Saturday Coffee Mornings in our first year which initially worked well, but people moved on so we changed our efforts to support just the Kings Head social and try to build that up.*

*I have been putting out extra publicity each month to promote the monthly social meetings and particularly to encourage our EP/NC riders to come along. With the support of the Kings Head we have been able to book the Hop Pocket area for us to meet free of charge. Unsurprisingly these socials work better in the warmer months and lighter nights when we can gather in the lovely old Kings Head courtyard and on occasion have had 15+, we hope to see this continue as it is great complement to the club's programme.*

*I did put new publicity out last spring for our 'Leisure' rides and will do so again this year. However, in doing so we need to try and find a balance as on one hand we already have good numbers, but we want to encourage new people to try cycling, on the other hand we don't want rides to become unmanageable.*

*Whilst we focus on the leisure side of our club, we still mention our faster rides so that those looking for more challenge can still find something to suit them within our club.*

*Unfortunately, these faster rides have struggled recently and don't always take place. Hopefully they will be resurrected as there is still an appetite for faster rides and it gives us a more holistic service to offer as a club.*

*During the year there have been a few issues with Cycling UK's website which have caused problems for our emails and they have temporarily lost their Groups officer, however I understand they are planning a much more proactive service which could be very useful to us in the future.*

*Thanks for all the support people have given me over this last year, we look forward to another great year!*

*Jeremy Scothern Easy/Newcomers Co-ordinator*

*11-04-2024*

## **Ride Secretary's Report – Roger Lewis-Smith**

The following table gives the statistics for the different rides over the year

	EP M	EP F	SU M	SU F	Mod M	Mod F
Total	279	230	196	96	224	32
Attended rides	52	51	48	35	48	18
Average per ride	6	5	4	3	4	2

### **Groups**

#### **Easy Pace & Newcomers**

*Newcomers and Easy Pace rides have been rolled up together as far as data collection is concerned . Thanks to Jeremy both have been well attended with a good balance between male and female riders. It has been difficult to manage this in the past due to the wide range of abilities. It would help me though if ride leaders would fill in the post ride leaders form so I can collect the statistics for Cycling UK.*

#### **StepUp Pace**

*This group is struggling a bit for attendees of late. There are a few members that frequently swap between Moderate and Step Up. This apparently is mainly due to starting points being difficult to access because of HS2 road closures. A ride coordinator would help the situation a volunteer is required.*

#### **Moderate Pace**

*This has a hardcore of regular riders but has struggled a bit over the last 12 months since several of the regular riders appear to have jumped ship for some reason over to ACC. Again, a ride coordinator would be good.*

*If anyone has any ideas on how to attract new blood into the SU & M Pace rides, please let the committee know.*

### **Tour de Vale 2024**

David Winterburn has manned a table at the Tour de Vale in the past promoting Cycling UK in this area but this has not been particularly successful. It is a recruitment opportunity that we are not using very well.

There was a discussion around how to stand out – club kit, banner, leaflets, chatting to people in the queue for burgers etc.

It was agreed this needs to be considered by the committee to determine a way forward.

### **Election of Officers**

Prior to the meeting both Ben Parry, Secretary, and Peter Robinson, Chair, had advised of their resignations. Nick Vere-White, Treasurer, resigned at the meeting.

The following officers were elected with no dissent at the meeting.

Chairman – Jeremy Scothern, proposed Penny Dablin, seconded Peter Nettle

Secretary – Penny Dablin, proposed Jeremy Scothern, seconded Yvonne Redmond

Treasurer – Peter Nettle, proposed Helen Osgerby, seconded Anne Gibson

Rides Secretary – Roger Lewis-Smith, proposed Peter Robinson, seconded Penny Dablin

Easy Pace/ New Comers Rides Coordinator – Jeremy Scothern, proposed Penny Dablin, seconded Peter Robinson

Step Up Rides Coordinator – vacant

Moderate Rides Coordinator – vacant

Safeguarding Officer – Yvonne Redmond, proposed Peter Robinson, seconded Penny Dablin

### **Any Other Business**

- Facebook group – Peter Robinson suggested the current membership of the Facebook group probably needed cleaning up with out of area people removed. Roger suggested we should set up a questionnaire for potential members to filter out ‘undesirables’ as they apply to join.
- Thame – Haddenham Station Greenway – Michael Heybrook introduced the proposed Greenway between Haddenham and Thame which has been mooted for many years but is mired in obstruction. Several issues being landowners unwilling to accommodate the Greenway on their land, and the fact that it would cross the county border between Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire so both sides are trying to blame the other. The local action group, HaddSWAC (Haddenham Safe Walking & Cycling) are planning a Mass Cycle-in around the village of Haddenham on 30<sup>th</sup> June and are looking for cyclist support. Bucks Council, Oxfordshire County Council, MP Greg Smith and England’s Economic Heartland have all signalled strong support for the scheme and there is nominally £368k of Sec. 106 money in a pot earmarked for it with more development money on the way. Michael will email Penny Dablin with full details and hopes for our support on the day.
- Routes library – Roger wishes to maintain a Routes library and have links to all Sunday ride routes on the Rides spreadsheet. Currently he only has Step Up and Moderate rides. Jeremy doesn’t want to be tied to a published route as leaders can change the route on the day depending on who turns up for the ride. The general consensus is that routes should be published and if they change on the day, so be it. Being published is more useful than not having the route ahead of time for leaders, possible stand-in leaders, and members who may be late at the start and want to catch up or members coming back from injury.
- Peter Nettle proposed a vote of thanks to Peter Robinson for his 44 years of support of the club. Attendees applauded.

The meeting closed at 21:05.

### **Actions for Committee from meeting:**

- Create email template as per PR’s suggestion
- Consider promotion of club at Tour de Vale
- Determine what Cycling UK do for us as a club and what action, if any, needs to be taken
- Ideas for attracting new members to SU and M rides