

Gower Cycling Festival

18-25 September 2010

Introduction

This document provides details of the programme. Intending participants may wish to print it out for reference. On this page various Gower attractions which can be visited on the rides are described. They are related to the rides on which they can be visited and which are described on pages 3 & 4 and shown on the route map on page 5. Page 2 covers some things you need to know about the Festival.

The rides are classified into three levels of difficulty. These are distinguished by separate colours on the route map. Thus green is used for **gentle** – mostly half day rides of less than 15 miles – blue for **moderate** and red for **challenging** rides: generally more than 30 miles.

The ride routes on the map are the same as those on the flyer. The scale however is larger and rather than a plain background a Sustrans Discover Series 1:100,000 map is used which shows roads and other features.

Gower attractions

These are described clockwise round the Peninsula. In addition to the specific sites mentioned there is a wealth of interest in the Gower ranging from its flowers and bird life through its geology and caves (you might take time to visit “Cat Hole” in SW Gower, famous for the “Red Lady”) to prehistoric hill forts.

Mumbles. Suffice it to note that this is a well known resort with lots of pubs, cafés and small shops. There is also the Castle. You get the first glimpse of the rugged Gower coast from Mumbles Head . **Rides 1** and **17** take you to Mumbles and **5, 6** and **16** go round the Head.

Three Cliffs Bay. This gem on the South Gower Coast is famous for its three limestone outcrops with the arch under them. **Ride 6** takes you to at least a view of them and if there is time and you can persuade the leader you might walk down to the beach and through the arch. The photo shows the Bay; the three cliffs are off the picture to the left.

Parc-le-Breos Tomb. This is a megalithic tomb in ‘Green Cwm’ which you will pass near the start of **Rides 7, 8** and **18**

Iiston Church. This 12th Century church tucked away in the heart of the Gower is worth a visit. This should be possible on **Ride 6**.

King Arthur’s Stone. Another megalithic tomb, but quite different from that in Green Cwm. Marvel how the stone got where it is! It is located on the Cefn Bryn ridge above Reynoldston. **Rides 7, 8** and **18** pass close to it.



The Penrice Yew. The old yew tree in the graveyard by the 12th Century church makes a break on the climb up from Oxwich on **Rides 12** and **16**. Mary’s tomb (Ride 12) is on the left near church entrance.

Rhossili Down and Beach. The highest point in the Gower (193m) is on Rhossili Down and if you are not too knackered **Ride 18** will take you over it. Hang gliding started here The beach is well known for its surfing and **Ride 16** follows a path above this beach. (On this ride, and if you are tempted, a swim should be an option in Broughton Bay, the next beach to the north.)

Weobley Castle and the Marshes. This 14th century castle is situated on the North Gower coast with a commanding view over the Marshes. **Ride 3** takes you to it. **Rides 12** and **16** pass close by.

Access

NCN 4 between Blackpill on Swansea Bay and Gowerton to the north provides a corridor for cyclists up and down the Clyne Valley. The Railway Inn – the start point for several of our rides – lies on this path two miles from Blackpill.

By train

The Railway Inn is a 7 mile cycle ride from Swansea Station by the coast path or a hilly 5 by the main road. It is a flat 3 miles from Gowerton Station, entirely on NCN 4. There are train services to Gowerton from Swansea Station and the east; also from Llanelli and the west.

By car

There is limited (free) parking by the Railway Inn. If it is nearly full please use alternative parking nearby to leave space for customers. The alternatives are: 1) Ample free parking at the Dunvant Rugby Football Club a short distance to the north. Access by road is from Broadacre and by bike half a mile up the cycle path from the Railway Inn on the east side. 2) Free parking in the Dunvant car park on the west side of the path. By bike this is one mile up the path (north) from the Railway Inn. There is also pay-and-display parking at Blackpill (by the Clyne Valley path but accessed from Derwyn Fawr Road).

So for rides heading south from the Railway Inn allow 5 minutes to cycle from the Rugby Club or 10 minutes from Dunvant, and for rides to the north allow 15-20 minutes to cycle up from Blackpill. For rides going the other way you could join the group when they pass these venues, but let the leader know when you join the group if not before.

About the cycling

Clothing

No special kit is needed for cycling; wear whatever you find comfortable. Bright clothing to make you visible is however recommended for safety reasons, and do bring rainwear. Consider swim-wear: there should be chances to swim in the sea.

For the bike [E] = essential; [R] = recommended.

- Bike lock [E]
- Bike pump [E]
- Spare inner tube [E]
- Tools (tyre levers, spanners, alun keys) [E]
- Puncture repair kit [R]
- A bell or pinger [R]
- Lights [R]

On the rides

Before you start check that your bike is road worthy: brakes adjusted, tyres inflated, etc.

Keep a safe distance from the person in front and avoid sharp braking (unless you have to).

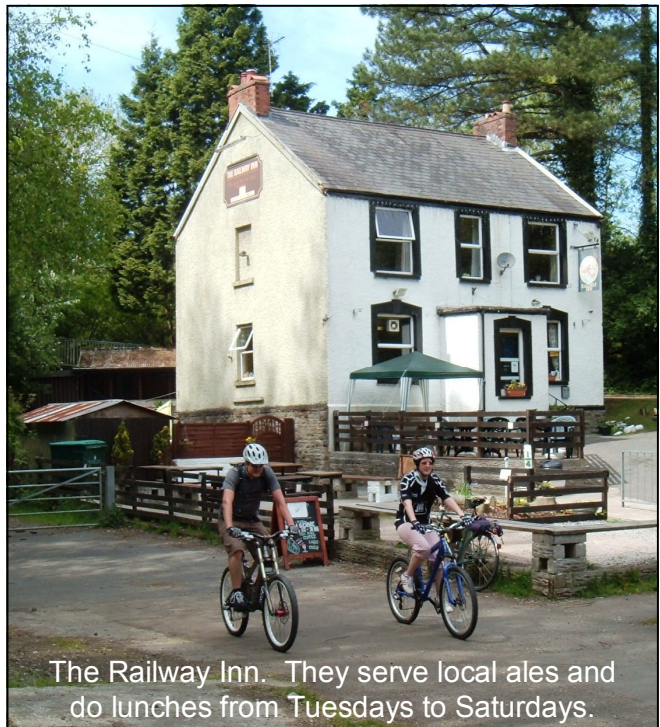
Keep behind the leader and if you decide to leave the ride let him or her know.

Many of the Gower lanes are narrow with blind corners, so take particular care here. Also look out for horses, cattle, sheep and the Gower wild ponies. On the cycle paths look out for oncoming cyclists. Make pedestrians aware of your approach and give children and dogs a wide berth.

Children under 16 must be accompanied by an adult.

Disclaimer

Wheelrights can accept no liability for loss or injury incurred during the Festival.



Gower Cycling Festival (18-25 September 2010) – Programme

This should be read in conjunction with the route map (on page 5) which shows the rides. There is car parking at all the start/finish points (some may charge); [C] = Café; [S] = Shop; T = Public toilet. The venues are as follows:

Blackpill Lido SA3 5AS (GR 619907) [C,T];
Railway Inn, Killay SA2 7DS (GR 598924);
Dunvant RFC SA2 7RU (GR 593932);
Heritage Centre, Parkmill SA3 2EH (GR 544893) [C,S,T];
Civic Centre (East car park), Swansea SA1 3SN (GR 652923) [C,T];
Sail Bridge, Swansea SA1 1RR (GR 662929).

For further information about the programme phone: David Naylor on 01792 233755.

Saturday 18th

Festival Launch by Jane Davidson AM and Reena Owen (Head of Environment. City and County of Swansea)

10.30 Blackpill Lido

Ride 1. Family Fun Ride to Mumbles. Gentle; 4 miles; Half day; leader: Nick Guy

11.00 Blackpill Lido. An easy ride on cyclepath around Swansea Bay, stopping at Southend Park with refreshments available from the Red Café. With parks, beaches and a Lido, there is fun for all.

Ride 2. A Gower Taster. Moderate; 25 miles; All day; leader: David Naylor

11.00 Blackpill Lido. A circular route on cycle paths and quiet North Gower roads. Stunning views over the salt marshes. Lunch in Llanrhidian, returning via the picturesque Green Cwm.

Sunday 19th

Ride 3. Weobley Castle. Moderate; 25 miles; All day; leader: David Ashman

10:00 Railway Inn. Quiet roads lead us to this medieval fortified manor house, with its atmospheric backdrop of the Llanrhidian Marsh and Loughor Estuary. Admission charge payable if you wish to enter the Castle. Lunch in Llanrhidian.

Ride 4. Lliw Valley Reservoirs. Challenging; 42 miles; All day; leader: Martin Brain

10.00 Railway Inn. Venture beyond the Gower for a longer ride around the hills and valleys north of Swansea. There are stupendous views over this wild landscape, passing villages which reflect their rural and industrial heritage. Lunch in a pub near Ammanford.

Monday 20th

Ride 5. Mumbles Head. Gentle; 12 miles; Half day; leader: David Whitehead.

10:00 Railway Inn. A gentle ride taking in both the famous seafront and the hidden back lanes of Mumbles, with a visit to the lovely Clyne Gardens.

Ride 6. Mumbles and Three Cliffs. Moderate; 20 miles; All day; leader: John White.

10.00 Railway Inn. To Mumbles Head with Ride 5, then west to Pennard, with views over Three Cliffs Bay. This breathtaking bay was justly nominated by Katherine Jenkins as Britain's Favourite View. Lunch in Southgate before returning via the medieval church in Ilston.

Tuesday 21st

Ride 7. Off road on Cefn Bryn. Gentle; 12 miles; Half day; leader: Claudine Conway.

10:00 Gower Heritage Centre. If you have a mountain bike that's never been off tarmac before, get some dirt on your tyres and expand your cycling horizons by climbing Cefn Bryn for spectacular views over Gower and a taste of several different terrains. No special mountain-biking skills required for this light but satisfying off-road adventure. Followed by BBQ in Heritage Centre. (Also Ride 8)

Ride 8. Cefn Bryn. Gentle; 14 miles; Half day; leader: David Naylor.

10.00 Gower Heritage Centre. An anti-clockwise circuit encompassing Cefn Bryn partly on a traffic free path. A character-building hill rewarded with great views and a visit to King Arthur's stone.

Ride 9. Swiss Valley. Challenging; 42 miles; All day; leader: Martin Brain

10.00 Railway Inn. Away to the north on quiet roads, this ride looks back at Gower from across the Loughor Estuary. You climb high then drop into the Gwendraeth Valley to eat lunch in *Caffi Cynnes* in Pontyberem. Then it's (nearly) all downhill on the way back, via the Sustrans Swiss Valley and Millenium Coast paths.

Wednesday 22nd

Ride 10. Bikeability ride for all abilities. Gentle; 4 miles; Half day; leader: Mike Cherry.

14:00 Dunvant RFC. A gentle ride down the Clyne cycle path to Blackpill, featuring a variety of specialist bikes. A refreshment stop at Blackpill Lido with picnic tables, café, beach and play area.

Ride 11. Kidwelly. Challenging; 48 miles; All day; leader: John Cardy.

10.00. Railway Inn. This ride follows NCN 4 across the Loughor Bridge and along the superb Millenium Coast path to Kidwelly. Lunch: *Time for Tea* in Kidwelly.

Ride 12. A Gower traverse. Moderate; 22 miles; All day; leader: Don Ashman.

10.00. Gower Heritage Centre. A route of contrasts enabling you to sense the differences between north and south Gower. Five miles from the start you should have a chance to see the old yew tree by Penrice Church and look for the tomb of murdered Mary. Lunch in the Greyhound, Oldwalls.

Thursday 23rd

Ride 13. Dylan Thomas Trail. Gentle; 5 miles; Half day; leader: Nick Guy..

11:00 * Sail Bridge. Swansea poet Nigel Jenkins will guide us through Dylan Thomas's "ugly, lovely town", visiting landmarks connected with the famous poet. You might wish to bring a picnic for Cwmdonkin Park .

Ride 14. Swansea Valley. Challenging; 61 miles; All day; leader: Colin Birch.

10.00. Railway Inn. A longer ride up through Penllergaer Woods to the Swansea Valley and up to the Henrhyd Falls near Coelbren. Back down a different valley and along the coast with stunning views over Swansea Bay Lunch in a place the leader knows.

Friday 24th

Ride 15. North Gower. Gentle; 17 miles; Half day; leader: Bob Smith.

10:00 Railway Inn. A clockwise circuit of this classic route, getting the climb out of the way on the first half of the ride. The beautiful, high Cilonnen Road offers views to the west from Welsh Moor and across the estuary to the north. We descend to the Salt Marsh Road, wandered by wild ponies, which takes us back to the village of Crofty, hub of the cockle industry.

Ride 16. Gower Circuit Plus. Challenging; 38 miles; All day; leader: David Naylor.

10.00. Railway Inn. A grand clockwise circuit with views of the famously beautiful Worm's Head that writhes towards Carmarthen Bay. We'll ride above the spectacular Rhossili beach and then after lunch with the surfers at Hill End, Llangennith, there should be the option of a swim in the sea.

Festival Party

19.00. Gower Heritage Centre.

Saturday 25th

Ride 17. Teenagers ride. Gentle; 6 miles; Half day; leaders: Rachel Guy & Claudine Conway.

11:00 Civic Centre. A gentle, flat ride along the Swansea Bay cycle path towards Mumbles and back, with a lunch stop at the Junction Café. Please ask family and friends to sponsor you - all money raised will go to the Haiti Disaster Emergency Fund.

Ride 18. Heritage Trail MTB ride. Challenging; 30 miles; All day; leader: Roy Church.

10.00. Gower Heritage Centre. A challenging mountain bike circuit over the highest points of Gower, with spectacular views over Rhossili beach. Mtn Bikers will be familiar with the more famous Afan Argoed trails to the east, but Gower's natural XC charms include swooping single track, woods, bridleways and rocky terrain. And of course plenty of mud if it's been raining. Please ride suitably equipped, and wear a helmet. Lunch: Hill End, Llangennith.

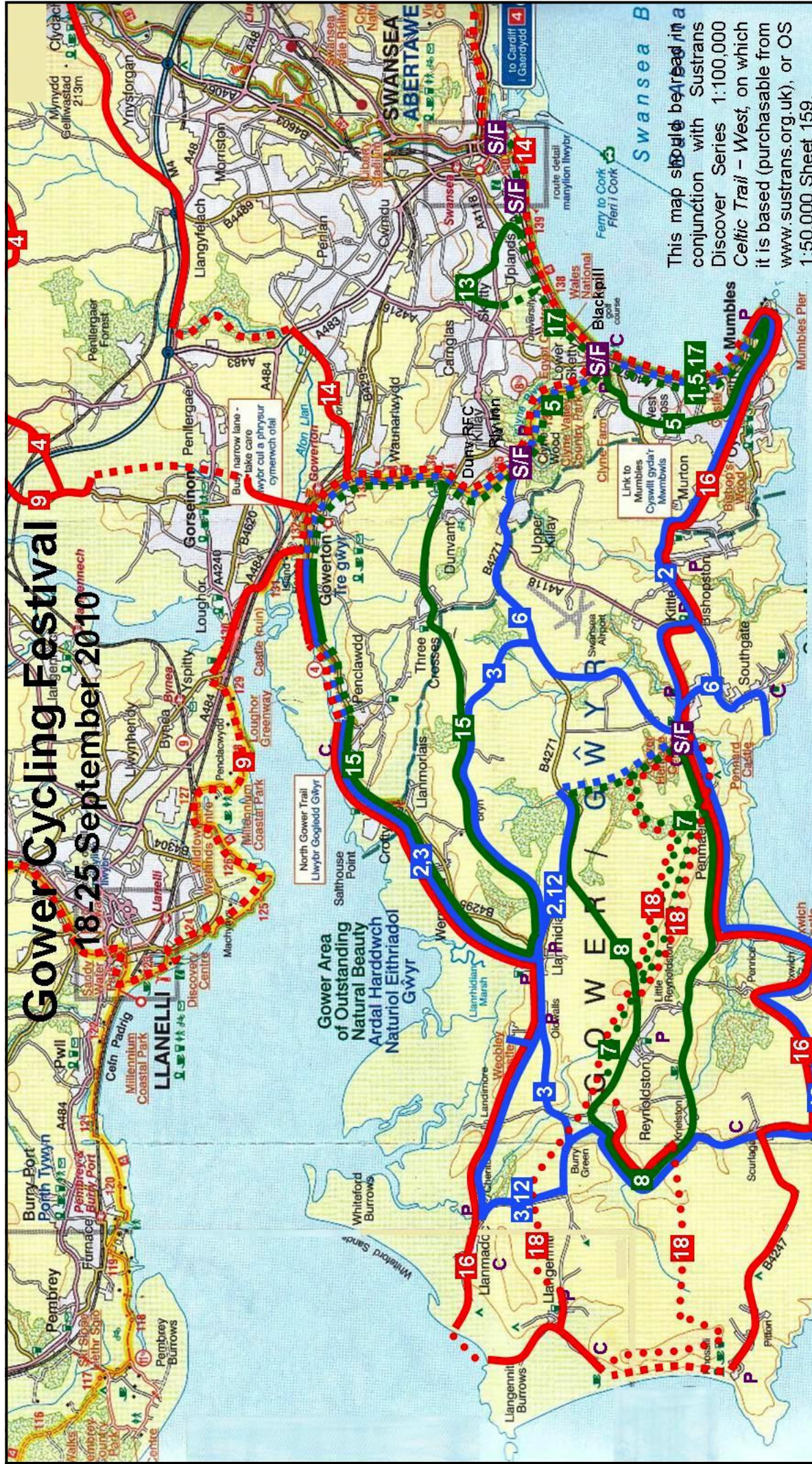
* Time to visit exhibition in nearby Dylan Thomas Centre before ride. Opens 10.00.

Ride leaders phone numbers

David Ashman	01792 203382	Mike Cherry	01792 480200	David Naylor	01792 233755
Don Ashman	01792 232183	Roy Church	01792 371206	Bob Smith	01792 850650
Colin Birch	07749 704898	Claudine Conway	07918 140124	John White	01792 520896
Martin Brain	01792 207800	Nick/Rachel Guy	01792 476178	David Whitehead	01792 205565
John Cardy	07711 175337				

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This map should be read in a conjunction with Sustrans Discover Series 1:100,000 Celtic Trail - West, on which it is based (purchasable from www.sustrans.org.uk), or OS 1:50,000 Sheet 159.

Legend

S/F	Start/Finish
C	Café (Gower only)
P	Pub(s)
Gentle	The ride grades depend both on distance and terrain, the Gentle being mainly <15 miles and the Challenging > 30.

Beach/track	Traffic free	On road	Grade
			Gentle
			Moderate
			Challenging

The rides may differ from the routes shown to suit the conditions on the day.

