

GOWER CYCLING FESTIVAL 2012

a report by

David Naylor (*Wheelrights* Secretary)

SUMMARY

The Festival again went well. The numbers were up on last year but marginally less than in 2010. Generally good weather contributed to the success.

The addition of three weekday evening rides proved a successful innovation. Three rides on each of the weekend days with, as previously, two daytime rides on the weekdays again worked well. Apart from the evening rides the programme was much as in the last two years, an addition being the ride to Glyncoirwg (Ride 8).

The distribution of participants between the *gentle*, *moderate* and *challenging* rides was less even than in previous years. Most took part in the *gentle* rides but this was because the evening rides were thus classified.

More people joined more than one ride than previously. This correlates with significantly more buying £5 Festival Passes (Most were purchased in advance.) rather than paying £3 per ride.

Despite concerted efforts to advertise the event across the UK only one came from outside Wales! In previous years we had had a handful. We need to address this for the next Festival.

A case is made for making the *Gower Heritage Centre* a hub with a party on the Saturday night (rather than Friday) and the Festival extended to end on Sunday. This is linked with measures to get more people to make a Gower holiday of the event.



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1. Introduction

This report provides a record of the third *Gower Cycling Festival*, held from 15th to 22nd September, 2012. Its main purpose is as a source of information for the next festival.

The event itself – the opening, the rides, registration and the party – are described first, then the preparations and how it was publicised. This is followed by the sections: Finances, Feedback, Analysis and Conclusions & recommendations.

The web page has now been altered to show a selection of photos taken during the Festival.

2. The event

2.1 Opening

A formal launch of the Festival took place at 10.30 on Saturday, 15th September, next to *Ripples Café*. Two gazebos were put up by GHC staff. Festival flyers, Swansea cycle maps were dispensed here and some Festival Passes sold. Despite good weather the turnout was disappointing. Claudine Conway introduced Byron Davies AM (Shadow Transport Minister) who gave a short speech and cut a tape to formally open the Festival. An *Evening Post* report on the event appeared on 18th September.

The first three rides set off from *Ripples Café* at 11.15 (15 min.s behind schedule.).

2.2 The rides

All 22 rides, took place as planned.

The routes followed are shown on Figure 1 (on p. 3). This shows the intended routes. There were some minor deviations from them.

There were 148 participants, divided into an estimated 100 men, 41 women and 7 children. A breakdown of the numbers on each ride is given in Tables 1 and 2 (on p. 4). Figure 2 (on p. 5) uses histograms to compare the data of Table 2 with the previous two Festivals.

The proportion of £5 Festival Passes to £3 single ride payments was significantly higher than last year. Estimates of the number of Passes and £3 single rides purchased are given in 6.1 (on p. 7). Due to incomplete record keeping we are not sure if these figures are precise .

Back up to the rides was provided by the GHC who offered to rescue stranded riders. Their services were not needed.

2.3 Registration

The procedure for registering participants at the start of rides was as last year. The same riders lists were used. (See Appendix 2 of the 2011 report.) We did better at recording the email addresses of participants than last year. However, as then, the information about who paid what and whether it was for a Pass or a single ride was not clear for some rides.

Despite taking greater care to distribute feedback forms (Appendix 1) than previously only 8 were returned. (10 last year and 16 in 2010.).

2.4 The Party

This took place on the evening of Friday, 21st, in the GHC starting at 7.0pm. As last year Scotty played the guitar and sang to us accompanied by Rhiannon. She was followed by Jez. There was then a raffle. (The proceeds of this went towards a £100 *Wheelrights* donation to BikeAbility Wales.) Apart from the Festival organisers there were not many at the party who had been on the rides.

As in 2010 we had put the party on the Friday. This was in response to feedback from last year. Despite this the turn out was poor, albeit a bit better than last year's approx. 25. As suggested in 6.4 (on p. 8) it might be better to move it to Saturday.

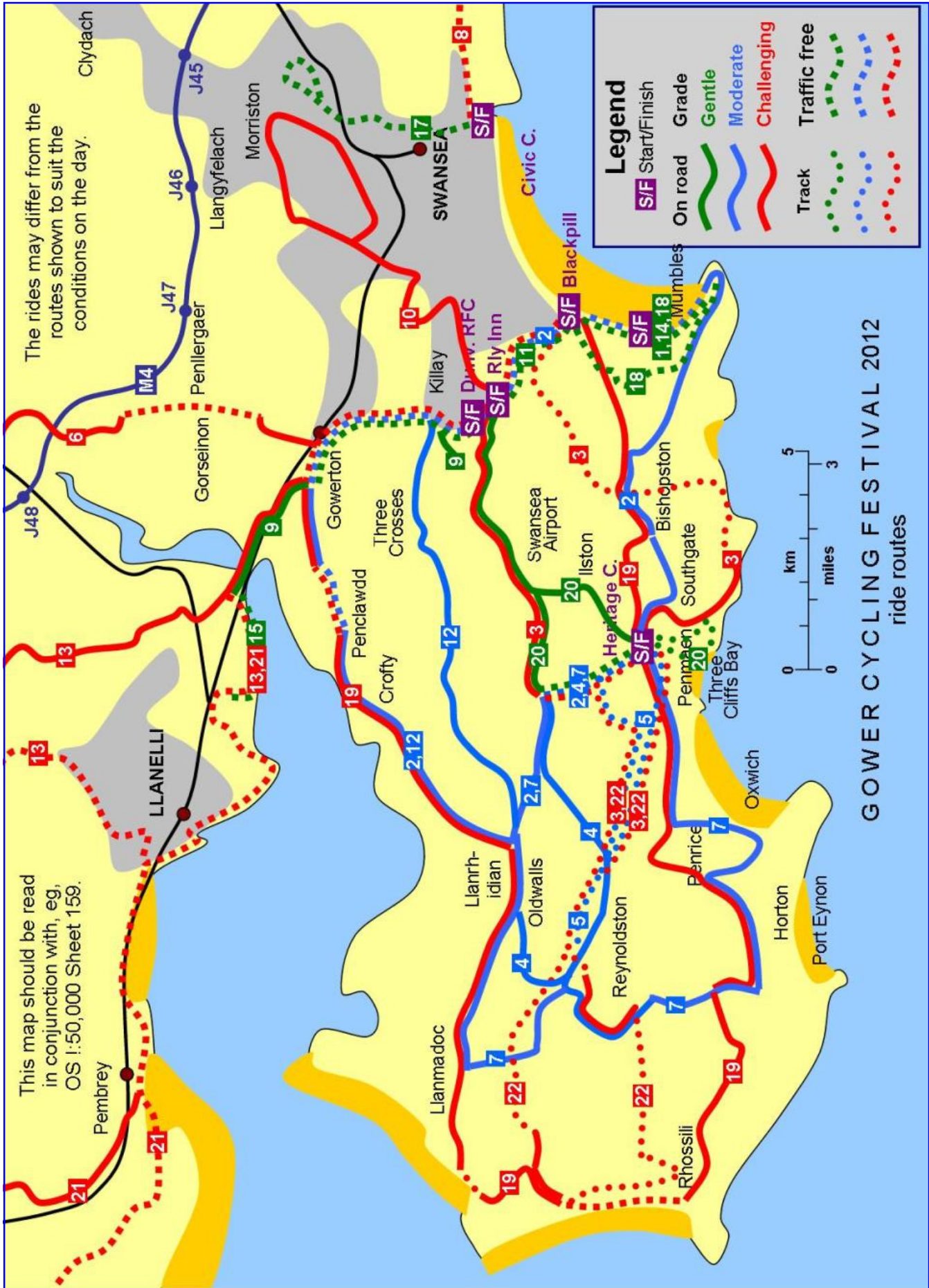


Figure 1 – Map showing routes

Key

M = Men; **W** = Women; **C** = Children; **T** = Total on ride.

Date	Ride	Ride title	M	W	C	T
Sat. 15 th	1	Family Foreshore ride	9	3	6	18
	2	A Gower Taster	12	6	0	18
	3	Gower Combine	3	2	0	5
Sun 16 th	4	Cefn Bryn (Road)	1	2	0	3
	5	Cefn Bryn (MTB)	4	2	3	9
	6	Carreg Cennen (CTC ride)	9	0	0	9
Mon. 17 th	7	A Gower Traverse	8	3	0	11
	8	Glyncorrwg	7	0	0	7
	9	A Folk ride ^{Evening}	8	6	0	14
Tue. 18 th	10	City Heights	4	4	0	8
	11	BikeAbility Wales	13	7	0	20 [#]
Wed. 19 th	12	North Gower Circuit	7	0	0	7
	13	Swiss Valley (CTC ride)	14	2	0	16
	14	Mumbles Mile ^{Evening}	3	2	0	5
Thu. 20 th	15	Penclacwydd (Sustrans)	13	8	0	21
	16	Big Road ride	4	3	0	7
	17	Copperopolis ^{Evening}	8	6	0	14
Fri. 21 st	18	Mumbles and Clyne	3	1	0	4
	19	Grand Gower Circuit	4	1	0	5
Sat. 22 nd	20	Three Cliffs ride/walk	9	2	0	11
	21	Kidwelly (Tandems)	15	6	3	24
	22	Heritage Trail (MTB)	13	0	0	13

[#] Incl. BikeAbility 'clients'.

Table 1: Numbers on the rides

n	r	Breakdown			
		g	m	c	t
1	88	38	16	34	88
2	23	12	17	17	46
3	18	32	11	11	54
4	8	14	9	9	32
5	1	3	1	1	5
6	2	2	1	9	12
7	1	2	4	1	7
8	1	4	2	2	8

Legend

n = rides joined by an individual.

r = Riders who joined n rides

g, m, c = rider/rides in respective categories, ie **gentle**, **moderate** or **challenging**

t = sum of previous 3 columns (= nxr)

Table 2: Breakdown of ride attendance

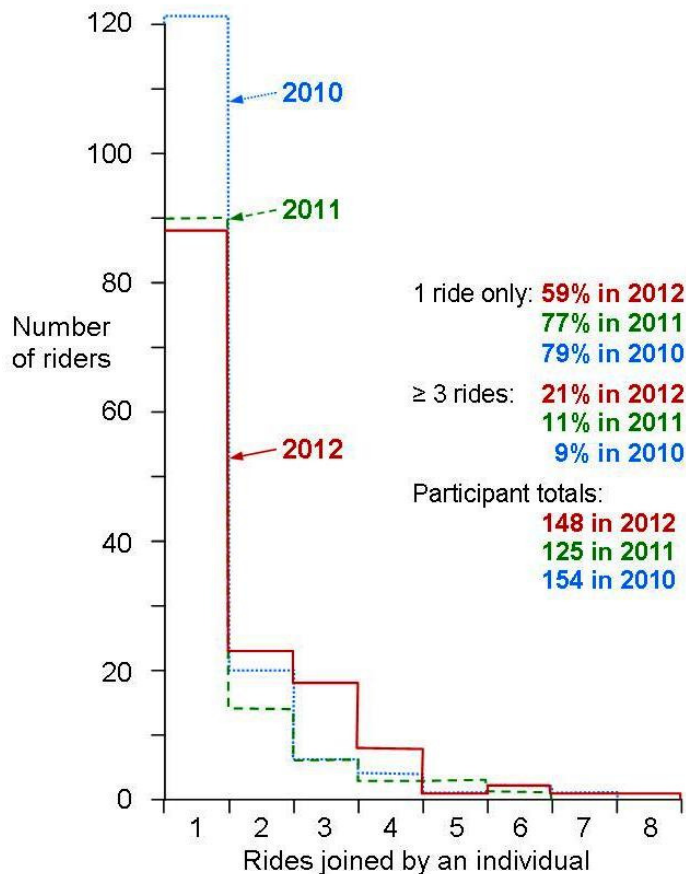


Figure 2 – Ride attendance distribution

WELCOME
The Gower Cycling Festival is an opportunity to explore some of Britain's most beautiful countryside. Whether you're an experienced cyclist or a beginner there are rides to suit you.

BOOKING FORM for ordering Festival Pass(es)
A Pass costs £5 for adults, free for children under 16. It entitles you to unlimited rides during the Festival. The alternative is £3 per ride, payable at the start of the ride.

Name: _____ (Leader if more than one)
Address: _____
Postcode: _____
Phone number: _____
E-mail: _____
Emergency contact: _____
Phone: _____

I require adult at £5 and free child Passes.
Please add any additional names for the passes below.

Your intentions
It would also help if you would indicate below which rides you are likely to join. This does not commit you.

I enclose a cheque payable to "Wheelrights" for £ _____

Signed _____

Please return this form with your cheque to:
David Naylor (Wheelrights Secretary)
45 Pennard Road, Southgate, Swansea SA3 2AA,
Any queries phone David on: 01792 233755; or
Email: davidjohnnaylor@tiscali.co.uk

Figure 3 – Flyer booking form



Figure 4 (left) – The Pass

Note: *Wheelrights* three aims are printed on the back.

3. Preparation and Publicity

3.1 General

A Working Group was set up comprising Martin Brain, Claudine Conway, Paul Elliott, Colin Fielder, Nick Guy, Phil Jones, David Naylor, Richie Saunders and Rob Wachowski. Meetings were held in the Railway Inn on 17 & 31 Oct. 2011, 13 Feb., 16 July, 13 Aug. and 10 Sep. 2012.

3.2 Booking

An attempt was made – with some success (See 2.2 above.) – to sell £5 Festival Passes in advance. To make this easier on-line booking with the choice of payment by PayPal or bank transfer was set up. Initially an on-line booking form was provided. This however did not work (because the code was browser dependent rather than being implemented on the web server). The form was then removed and PayPal or bank transfer payers asked to email the information to the writer. This was not satisfactory as many failed to do this until reminded.

As last year Passes could be ordered using the booking form on the flyer (Figure 3) or the same form downloaded from the website. £3 single rides could only be purchased at the start of rides. Again there was no charge for CTC members joining the two CTC rides

3.3 Flyers, posters and a banner

4000 copies of an A3 flyer were produced by *Riddler Webster* as in the last two years. These were distributed to bike shops, TICs and bike hire centres across South Wales and to local shops, cafés, pubs and camp sites.

A4 posters (Figure 5) were produced and put up in local bike shops, cafés, pubs and on the cyclepath at Blackpill.

The poster and the flyer could be downloaded from the website.

Last year's Festival banner was updated and displayed at the launch, outside the Railway Inn and in the GHC during the party.

3.4 Website

As last year the GCF web page could be accessed either from www.wheelrights.org.uk or from www.gowercyclingfestival.org.

Again, as last year, the web page included three separate pdf files which could be downloaded. These comprised a two page Introduction, the two page rides programme and the map (reproduced here as Figure 1.) This was to enable those interested to print out the files they needed.

The change to enable payment by either credit card using PayPal or by bank transfer and the associated problem has been explained in 3.2 above. To get an on-line booking form to work the writer has learnt that it needs to be coded using a server-side code such as php (rather than the client-side javascript used previously) to enable the content of the form to be returned to us. He hopes to achieve this before the next Festival.

Links to the web page were sent out to various contacts across the UK. These are listed in Appendix 2.

4. Finances

A list of the sponsors is given in Table 3, and Table 4 provides a balance sheet. The receipts from the sponsors (mainly ads on the flyer) more than covered the production cost. Those from the Party totalled £160.00 half of which the Gower Heritage Centre allowed us to keep.

<u>Sponsor</u> (mainly flyer ad.s)	£
Swansea Council	150.00
Gower Heritage Centre	150.00
Pennard Stores (3 Cliffs C.)	150.00
Traveline Cymru	60.00
The Railway Inn	60.00
Schmoos	60.00
Urban cyclery	60.00
The Dolphin Inn	35.00
Seren Retreat	<u>35.00</u>
Total:	<u>760.00</u>

Table 3 – Sponsor funding

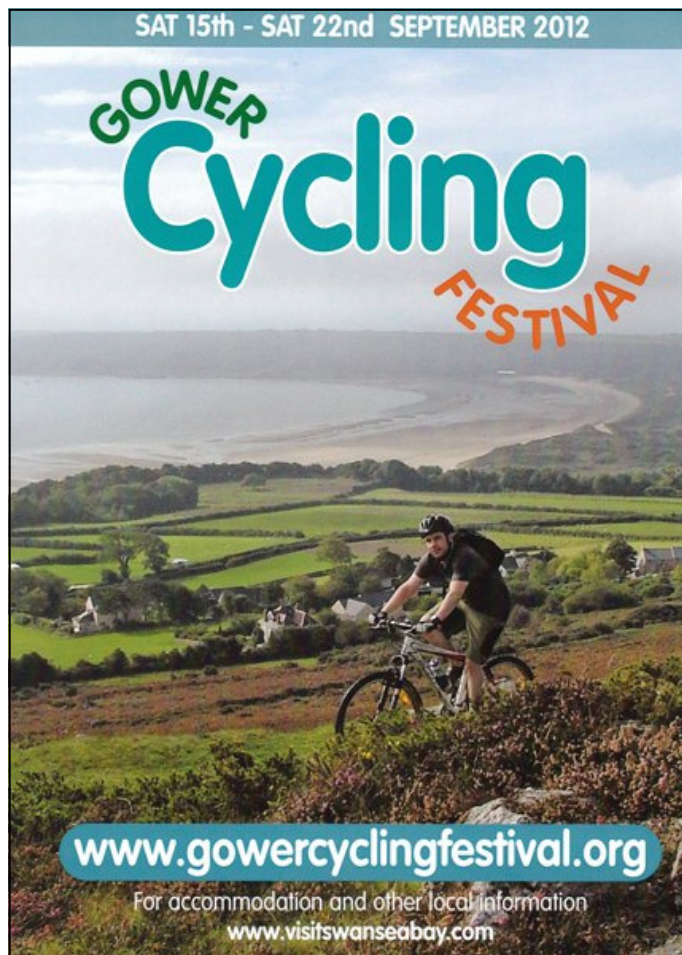


Figure 5 – Poster

<u>Receipts</u>	£	<u>Expenses</u>	£
Sponsors	760.00	Flyer & posters	844.00
Passes/rides	409.05	Party musicians	80.00
Party tickets	80.00	Party sound	<u>70.00</u>
Raffle	31.50		
Rummage box	3.00		
<u>Total receipts</u>	<u>1283.55</u>	<u>Total expenses</u>	<u>994.00</u>
Receipts exceed expenses by £289.55			

Table 4 – Finances

5. Feedback

8 feedback forms (Appendix 1) were returned. Their content is summarised as follows.

Qu. 1. How did you find out about the Festival?

Internet: 1½. Word of mouth: 2½. (1 from the writer on a cycling holiday.)

Flyer: 2 Poster: 2. Other: 0.

Qu. 2. Your comments

All reported favourably on the rides, particularly the evening rides; one person could only attend these. Another suggested more *moderate* rides. Festival not known about in Bridgend area.

One would have liked more advice on accommodation and the chance to stay at the same centre as other Festival attendees.

Qu. 3. Your name and means of contact (optional)

All provided this.

6. Analysis

6.1 General

An effort had been made to persuade people to buy the £5 Festival Passes in advance. This paid off as 38 of the 60 Passes were purchased before the Festival. A consequence of this was that fewer paid for single rides, 38 of which were bought thus giving a ratio of £3 rides to Passes of 0.63. The corresponding figure for 2011 was 0.91.

To make it easier for the stewards the writer had included on the riders lists entries for those who were known to or intended to take part in the ride. He emailed these to all the stewards with the request that they print them out or let him know if they wanted him to do this. A couple did but unfortunately three failed to, two turning up without the lists and one not turning up at all. Consequently the record of who paid what on each ride was incomplete.

Of the 148 attendees an estimated 50 didn't pay anything. Of these 6 were CTC members who only joined the CTC rides and were not expected to pay. 7 were children, also free. 8 on the BikeAbility Wales ride were BikeAbility 'clients' and so not expected to pay. At least some of the remaining 29 were leaders or back markers for whom payment was up to them.

A simplification for the next Festival which would most likely bring in just as much money would be to abolish the £3 for single rides and simply have a £5 registration fee. This needs to be considered together with incentives to encourage advance registration.

More from afar would probably have come if we had provided discounted accommodation at a central location, logically near the GHC. B&B accommodation is available in the area, and Roy Church has advised that the GHC can provide camping. It is already a focus point or "hub" for the Festival in that it is the party venue and a number of rides start and finish there. This would reinforce its roll as a hub.

6.2 The rides

The provision of three rides/day during the weekends and two daytime rides on the other days was appropriate, as was the provision of the three evening rides.

The rides themselves were it appears without exception enjoyed. There is therefore not a case for significant changes, except perhaps for some rescheduling on the day of the party.

There were 5 *gentle* daytime (gd), 3 *gentle* evening (ge), 5½ *moderate* (m) and 8½ *challenging* (c) rides. (Ride 21 counted as m/2 and c/2.) The average numbers attending them were gd: 13, ge: 11. m: 11 and c: 9. In the light of this and feed back from the participants a better balance might be to have one more m and one less c.

If however the party is moved to Saturday (See 6.4 below.) there is a case for providing some rides on the following Sunday (one of which would be the normal Sunday CTC ride). This addition could be offset by a later launch on the first Saturday. (See 6.3 below.) This would allow more time for visitors from afar to get to Swansea on the first day.

6.3 Launch

Ripples was suitable in that we were welcomed at the café and there was space to put up the gazebos. However had the numbers been greater (they were disappointing) we could have obstructed the path. This would not be a problem at Blackpill which would also be more suitable geographically. But then the Junction Café have not made us welcome in the past! As noted above moving the launch from 10.30 to say 2.00pm would both allow more time for people to get there for it and ease the load on us if the Festival is extended by a day.

6.4 Party

Few Festival participants attended the party. Two measures are suggested to address this:

- Make use of the hub concept outlined in 6.1 and, on the day of the party, start and finish all the rides at the GHC with the party following immediately afterwards.
- Hold the party on the final Saturday and, to discourage people from disappearing after their Saturday ride (as they did in 2011), provide some rides on the following Sunday.

6.5 Publicity

Despite the writers best efforts (See Appendix 2) to spread the web link to contacts across the UK only one person came from outside Wales and one from outside S. Wales. Strategies to address this are clearly needed. One, already mentioned in 6.1, would be to arrange central discounted accommodation. Another might be to use Facebook.

The distribution of the flyers and posters appears to have been effective in promoting the Festival locally.

7. Conclusions and recommendations

7.1 The Festival was again successful, in part due to good weather. However the numbers should have been higher.

7.2 We need to consider whether to hold the next one in September as we have done previously or earlier, eg during the August holiday period.

7.3 The level of the rides was again about right, with the new evening rides being very successful. These should be retained. The balance would be improved by replacing one of the challenging rides by a moderate one.

7.4 The number of rides: three on each of the weekend days, two on weekdays plus the three evening rides was OK. However if the party is moved to the final Saturday consideration should be given to both shortening the rides on the first Saturday (See 6.2 & 6.3) and providing rides on the Sunday after the party. One of these final Sunday rides would be CTC's normal Sunday ride. In addition a family ride and a "Participants choice" might be provided, the latter to be decided at the party!

7.5 To encourage people to make a Gower holiday of the event we should arrange discounted accommodation logically in the Parkmill area, ie close to the GHC (See 6.1.)

7.6 Consider holding the Festival Party on the final Saturday (See 6.4 and 7.4.)

7.7 We should abolish the £3 single ride charge and rename the £5 Festival Pass "Festival Registration". It would entitle people to join unlimited rides, as did the Pass. Registrants would be given a card (similar to a Festival Pass.). To encourage people to register in advance early registration would be linked to discounted accommodation as proposed in 7.5 and perhaps also to other discounts, eg at bike shops. We would encourage all participants to register but (as with the collection of the £3 for single rides) we would not turn people away who didn't. Ideally we would not collect any money at the start of rides. This may not be practical but at least the work of stewards would be simplified

7.8 We should consider the use of Facebook to let people know about the Festival. For this to be effective it may be necessary to place an ad.

7.9 Receipts exceeded expenses to the extent that we can consider spending more on promotion.

David Naylor, October 2012

Appendix 1

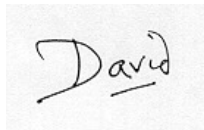
Gower Cycling Festival (15-22 September 2012) Feedback Form

Dear Participant,

After your last ride please complete this form and return it either

- by hand to one of the organisers,
- by post to me at Copper Roof, 45 Pennard Road, Southgate, Swansea SA3 2AA, or (if form downloaded from our website):
- by e-mail to me at davidjohnnaylor@tiscali.co.uk

Thanks in anticipation



David Naylor (Wheelrights Secretary)

1. How did you find out about the Festival? Circle, or fill in 'Other'

Internet

Word of mouth

Flyer

Poster

Other

2. Your comments

.....
.....
.....
.....

3. Your name and means of contact if you would be happy for us to get in touch or to let you know about future events such as a 2013 Festival.

.....
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Appendix 2

Web link recipients

The link www.gowercyclingfestival.org was sent to the following:

- Jane Chapman (Sustrans Bristol HQ) [jchapman@sustrans.org.uk] on 22 June.
- CTC Cardiff. Emailed a Steve Barrock in April? (No record.)
- CTC Cymru [rossjeal@btinternet.com]
- CTC Right to Ride Forum. [CTC-RTR@yahoo.com]
- *Cycle* Emailed Bob Kynaston 13 Feb. to request entry in 'Dates for your diary'. [westerley@westerley.plus.com] Promised entry for Aug./Sep. issue did not appear.
- Cycle Bristol CTC [mweber@taltalk.net]. Entry on their events calendar.
- John Grimshaw [johngrimshaw@ymail.com] on 22 June.
- John Holland (Portsmouth Cycle Campaign Group) [john_holland@totalise.co.uk] on 22 June.
- Malcolm & Gia Margolis (www.wheel-easy.org.uk) [info@wheel-easy.org.uk]
- Alasdair Massie [alasdair_massie@lineone.net].
- Roy Spilsbury/Maurice Clarke [allmail@cyclingsnorthwales.co.uk] Entry in www.cyclingsnorthwales.co.uk. See 13 June email.
- Previous participants. Emailed on 11 June.
- Spokes (E. Kent) Email exchange with Sam Webb on 26 June [sam.webb@mac.com]
- Sustrans [volunteers-uk@sustrans.org.uk]. Sent article about GCF to Katie Artse-Tuyn for *The Movement* (on 21 April) but I don't think it ever appeared.
- Geraldine Williams [Geraldine.Williams@swansea.gov.uk] Entry in www.visitswanseabay.com.
- York Racecourse Centre. Stuart Askey [Stuart.Arksey@yorkracecourse.co.uk] had posters put up in the Centre. (20 June email.)