

GOWER CYCLING FESTIVAL 10-18 August 2013

a report by

David Naylor (*Wheelrights* Secretary)

SUMMARY

The Festival again went well. The numbers were significantly up on previous festivals. This was mainly due to the event being in August but also to better publicity. It was especially good to have more people from afar: 32 from England and 6 from abroad.

The addition of the second Sunday was, in retrospect, not a good idea. Nobody turned up for the 'Participants Choice' ride although the 'Pedal and Paddle' one was a success. One reason for this extension was to encourage people to attend a Saturday evening party. A few did, but the turn out was still poor, much as last year.

More people joined more than one ride than previously. This is attributed to having a single £5 registration charge without the option of £3 for a single ride. Also those making a Gower holiday of the event – many more than previously – tended to join more rides.

The distribution of numbers between the gentle, moderate and challenging rides was reasonably even, thus a similar balance is considered appropriate for the next Festival

Next time we should consider replacing the party by a mid week pub evening, but also have a BBQ at the Gower Heritage Centre (GHC) on one day. This would follow the rides which would start and finish there.



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1. Introduction

This report provides a record of the fourth *Gower Cycling Festival*, held from 10th to 18th August, 2013. Its main purpose is as a source of information for the next festival.

Some facts and figures are presented, followed by feedback, ending with comments and conclusions.

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

2. Preparation and Publicity

2.1 General

The Working Group comprised Don Ashman, Claudine Conway, Allyson Evans, Colin Fielder, Nick Guy, Phil Jones, David Naylor, Richie Saunders and Rob Wachowski. They met in the Railway Inn on 26 Nov. 2012, 9 Jan., 20 Feb., 17 Apr., 15 May, 26 June and 7 Aug. 2013.

An ad. was placed in the July *What's On*; also the event was publicised in the *Evening Post* culminating in a two page spread on 6 August.

2.2 Flyers and posters

4000 copies of an A3 flyer were produced by *Ridler Webster* as in the last three 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 and A5 posters (Figure 1) were produced and put up in local bike shops, cafés, pubs and on NCR 4 and 43 cycle paths. The A4 poster 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.

Various contacts across the UK were emailed. (See the Appendix.)

2.3 Registration

Mainly as a result of the decision to replace £5 Festival passes and a £3/ride fee for non Pass holders by a single £5 registration fee 107 (incl. 17 free children) registered in advance of the Festival. A further 53 (incl. 6 free children) registered during it. These advance registrations made it simpler for the stewards at the start of rides as the need to collect money and the details of on-the-day registrants was significantly reduced.

As last year there was no charge for CTC members joining the three CTC rides. We also allowed non-registered non-CTC people to take part in these rides as CTC guests. This spared the stewards collecting money.

A further simplification was that by inviting intending participants to indicate which rides they had in mind to join when they registered, these could be added to the 'Riders lists' in advance, and simply ticked by the steward if the person turned up.



Figure 1 – Poster

Of the 67 bookings for those who registered in advance (several of which were for more than one) 42 used the on-line facility with payment by PayPal or bankers order, 10 paid by cheque using the website booking form, 14 the flyer booking form and 1 another means.

2.4 Website

As last year the GCF web page could be accessed either from www.wheelrights.org.uk or from www.gowercyclingfestival.org. It had the same format as last year with the Introduction, the rides programme and the map (reproduced here as Figure 2 on p. 4.) downloadable as pdf files. The accommodation section was expanded to provide details of B&Bs and campsite in the vicinity of the Gower Heritage Centre (GHC).

By introducing php code which runs on the (Swansea University) server on-line booking worked, and was widely used – see 2.3 above.

3. The event

3.1 Launch

This took place at 14.00 on Saturday, 10th August, by the Blackpill Lido.

Meeting soon after noon two gazebos provided by the GHC were put up together with a power connection for the speakers. An important detail was the successful stringing of a power cable high above the path adjacent to the Lido to the hut containing the power source. A weight strung to the cable was thrown over a tree branch to achieve this.

There was some display material and a few people registered. Names were entered on the riders' lists for the first three rides. We provided a fourth steward – needed as this process is inevitably hectic. (Mainly due to people turning up late.)

David Judd introduced cllr Nick Davies, John Grimshaw and Byron Davies AM (Shadow Transport Minister), all of whom gave short speeches and cut a tape to formally open the Festival. A photograph subsequently appeared in the *Evening Post*.

The first three rides set off at about 14.30 as planned.

3.2 The rides

24 of the 25 rides took place as planned. Ride 23 – 'Participants Choice' – did not as no one turned up.

204 either registered or joined rides. Of these 182 went on rides, divided into an estimated 97 men, 65 women and 20 children. ("Estimated" because the sex of eg a "Chris" had to be guessed!) A breakdown of the numbers on each ride is given in Tables 1 and 2 (p. 5). Figure 3 (p. 6) uses histograms to compare the data of Table 2 with the previous three Festivals.

The percentage distribution of participants between the *gentle*, *moderate*, *challenging* and *evening* rides was approximately 27%, 23%, 38% and 12% respectively.

Innovations this year to make the rides more interesting included a talk about the Ynysmeudwy Pottery at the Pontardawe Riverside Centre on Ride 7, a visit to the Cheriton Pottery on Ride 12, a commentary by David Judd on points of historic interest in Mumbles on Ride 17 and kayaking on the Pedal and Paddle ride (25).

3.3 The Party

This took place on the evening of Saturday, 17th, in the GHC starting at 7.00pm. A band was provided. As last year it was poorly attended.

One of the reasons for adding a day to the Festival was so that with rides on the final Sunday people would stay for a Saturday party. With the welcome exception of the Stourbridge contingent few visitors attended.



Figure 2 – Map showing routes

Key

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

Date	Ride	Ride title	(Leader)	M	W	C	T
Sat. 10 th	1	Icecream and Beaches	(Nick Guy)	4	4	5	13
	2/2	A Taste of SE Gower	(David Naylor)	18	14	4	36
	3	Pwlldu by MTB	(Rob Wachowski)	5	2	0	7
Sun 11 th	4/4	King Arthur's Stone	(Phil Jones)	5	5	1	11
	5	Cefn Bryn by MTB	(Claudine Conway)	4	2	2	8
	6	Grand Gower Circuit [CTC]	(David Naylor)	15	6	0	21
Mon. 12 th	7	Port to Pottery	(Allyson Evans)	9	7	2	18
	8/8	Kidwelly	(Don A./Colin F.)	16	9	2	27
	9	A Folk ride ^{Evening}	(John Roach)	10	5	0	15
Tue. 13 rd	10	City Heights	(Claudine Conway)	5	2	-	7
	11	BikeAbility Wales	(Mike Cherry)	12	6	5	23
Wed. 14 th	12	North Gower	(David Naylor)	6	5	0	11
	13	Henrhyd Falls [CTC]	(John Cardy)	8	1	0	9
	14	Mumbles Mile ^{Evening}	(Claudine Conway)	4	3	0	7
Thu. 15 th	15	Penclacwydd [Sustrans]	(Helen Davies)	11	10	2	23
	16	Big Road ride	(Claudine Conway)	3	1	0	4
Fri. 16 th	17	Mumbles and Clyne Gardens	(Colin Fielder)	8	12	1	21
	18	Swiss Valley	(Martin Brain)	12	4	0	16
	19	Copperopolis ^{Evening}	(Nick Guy)	13	10	1	24
Sat. 17 th	20	Three Cliffs ride/walk	(David Naylor)	2	6	0	8
	21	A Gower Traverse	(Don Ashman)	4	3	0	7
	22	Gower Beast MTB ride	(Roy Church)	11	0	0	11
Sun. 18 th	23	Participants Choice	(Chris Walsh)	0	0	0	0
	24	Carreg Cennen Castle [CTC]	(Phil Jones)	17	2	0	19
	25	Pedal and Paddle	(Nick Guy)	7	4	1	12

Table 1: Numbers on the rides

n	r	Breakdown				
		g	m	c	e	t
1	95	27	16	39	13	95
2	49	21	31	37	9	98
3	15	13	16	12	4	45
4	11	18	10	11	5	44
5	6	4	5	17	4	30
6	2	4	6	2	0	12
7	4	11	7	3	7	28
No. of rides		7	5½	8½	3	24
Av		49.4	42.3	68.4	21.9	182
Av/Rides		7.1	7.7	8.0	7.3	7.6
Total	182	22 registrants joined no rides.				

Legend

n = number of rides joined by an individual.

r = number of riders who went on n rides

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

t = sum of previous 4 columns (= nxr)

Av = $\sum x/n$ where x = **g, m, c, e, t**

Table 2: Breakdown of ride attendance

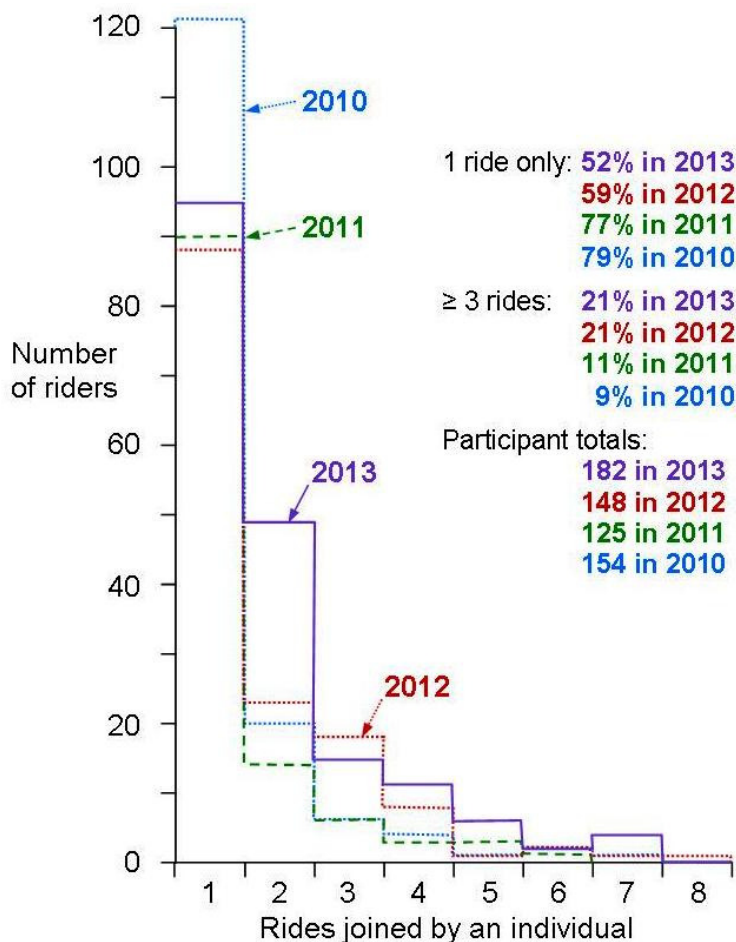



Figure 3 – Ride attendance distribution

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.



REGISTRATION FORM for ordering Festival Pass(es)
 This form is for advance Festival Registration with payment by cheque (or cash). Registration costs £5 for adults, children under 16 free. It entitles you to unlimited rides during the Festival and discounts for accommodation (Explained on the web page). If you prefer to pay by credit card or bankers order please use the interactive form on the Festival web page.

Name: _____ (Leader if more than one)
 Address: _____

 Postcode: _____
 Phone number: _____
 E-mail: _____
 Emergency contact: _____
 Phone: _____

I wish to register adult at £5 and child(ren) (free).
 If more than one please add the additional names below.
 Also it would help us if you would indicate which rides you are likely to join. This does not commit you.

I enclose a cheque/cash (indicate which) for £ _____
 Cheques payable to "Wheelrights"

Signed _____

Please return this form with your payment to:
 David Naylor (Wheelrights Secretary)
 Copper Roof, 45 Pennard Road, Southgate, Swansea SA3 2AA.
 On receipt of this you will be sent or given a card for each registrant.
 (Keep this with you on the rides as confirmation of your entitlement to take part.) Any queries phone David on: 01792 233755; or
 Email: davidjohnnaylor@fiscal.co.uk

Figure 4 – Flyer booking form

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 ad.s on the flyer) fell short of the production cost by £154.

Sponsor (mainly flyer ad.s)	£
Swansea Council	150.00
Gower Heritage Centre	150.00
Three Cliffs Coffee Shop	100.00
Traveline Cymru	60.00
The Railway Inn	60.00
The Dolphin Inn	60.00
BikeAbility Wales	30.00
360 Watersports	30.00
Recycle	15.00
Total from sponsors::	655.00

Table 3 – Sponsor funding

Receipts	£	Expenses	£
Sponsors	655.00	4000 flyers (RW)	779.00
Registrations	665.72	50 posters (RW)	45.00
		1000 GCF pcs	45.00
		Banners (RW)	90.00
		Banner (Harcourt)	10.00
		Party/flyer posters	25.00
		Uplands market	30.00
		What's On ad.	60.00
		Party band	75.00
Total receipts:	1320.72	Total expenses:	1159.00

Receipts exceed expenses by £161.72

Table 4 – Finances

5. Feedback

Nine feedback forms (Figure 5) and three emails with feedback were returned. There was also verbal feedback.

All praised the event, singling out the rides, the organisation and “the lovely people”.

There were a few suggestions (The first three all came from one person.):

- That back markers wear a yellow vest to distinguish them.
- Better marshalling of junctions.
- A need for longer pauses when reassembling for weaker riders to recover. (Not stated on which ride(s) this was a problem.)
- One analysed why no one turned up for the Participants Choice ride and suggested that the party was poorly attended because people were put off by the £5 charge and the location. (See comments in 6.4 below.)
- One wrote: “Please hold it again in August.”


Gower Cycling Festival (10-18 August 2013)
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 2014 Festival.

.....

.....

Figure 5: Feedback form

At a CTC meeting following the Festival it was suggested that an alternative to the term “challenging”

be used for the rides so described since most of these rides, were they CTC rides (and three of them were), would be described as “moderate”. A distinction could then be made from the 70+ mile Ride 16 which was truly challenging and the “challenging” rides.

Of the 8 respondents who stated how they found out about the Festival: 2 found it just from the internet, 2 from internet and word of mouth, 2 from word of mouth, flyer and internet, 1 from just word of mouth, 1 from a poster and 1 from a flyer.

6. Comments and Conclusions

6.1 General

A particular effort had been made this year to attract people from outside South Wales. This bore fruit in that 20% of those who participated came from either England or abroad.

The majority – about two thirds – registered in advance. This was very satisfactory as it eased the task of the stewards. Also about half of the advance registrants indicated which rides they intended to join. These were entered on the 'Riders lists' (in green) so that the stewards simply had to tick the entry if they turned up. This worked well and should be repeated.

44 took part without paying. However 19 of these attended only the CTC rides so were not expected to pay. Of the remaining 25 some were leaders or other helpers or were disabled and it was left to them whether or not they paid. Since 22 of those who registered did not join a ride the registration fees paid by them came close to covering the 25 missing payments!

Holding it in August worked. The advantages of people being available due to it being the holiday season offset the disadvantages of more traffic in the Gower and accommodation being harder to come by and more expensive. We identified campsites and B&Bs near the GHC (which we had designated a 'hub' area) but were unable to negotiate discounts.

It has been suggested that next year's Festival should be integrated with CTC Cymru's annual cycling event. We need to consider the pros and cons of this carefully.

The decision to add a day – the final Sunday – to the Festival was not a good one. (See 6.4).

6.2 Launch

The decision to return to Blackpill was the correct one. The arrangements for the launch which followed the pattern of previous years was also satisfactory, as was holding it in the afternoon. A consequence of not starting the rides until 2.30pm was that they inevitably finished rather late – c. 6.00pm. This didn't matter.

More time between the formalities and the start of rides is needed to record participants details. Advancing the the launch to, say, 1.30pm would achieve this.

6.3 Rides

As can be seen from table 2 the average attendance per ride was pretty even lying between 7 and 8. The provision of more 'challenging' rides than 'moderate' and 'gentle' matched the greater demand for these rides. This arose due to three of the rides doubling as CTC rides.

Figure 3 shows that more people attended more than one ride than in any of the previous Festivals. This reflects the greater number coming from further afield, some of whom combined the event with a Gower holiday.

The non-attendance on the Participants' choice ride (23) was due to a combination of the weather and the difficulty of letting people know about it. It should probably not be repeated.

While the marshalling of the rides generally worked well we need to prepare for the eventuality of greater numbers by adopting a procedure used elsewhere whereby riding marshals use a rota system in which they marshal junctions and swap with the back marker when he/she catches up. This would be appropriate when there are more than about 30 on a ride. (We had 36 on Ride 2.)

The provision of more attractions than previously – new ones featuring pottery on Rides 7 and 12, a potted history of Mumbles on Ride 17 and kayaking on Ride 25 – was appropriate.

We should review the terms 'gentle', 'moderate' and 'challenging' to describe our rides in response to the feedback that our 'challenging' rides would be described as moderate by the CTC. At the very least 'c' might be replaced by 'l' for 'long'. 'c' could then be reserved for rides like Claudine's 70+ mile Ride 16.

6.4 Party

Linking the party to an extra day of rides (See 3.3 above) did not achieve its objective. We have never been able to achieve a decent turn out of participants at the party so perhaps we should not hold one. Instead a BBQ at the GHC immediately after the rides on a day when they all start and finish there (This was planned for Saturday, 17th, but didn't happen largely because of the weather, which probably also affected the party turnout.) and maybe a pub. evening should replace the party.

6.5 Publicity

From the limited feedback received it appears that most learnt about the Festival either directly from the internet or a combination of word of mouth and the internet. Of the 9 respondents (See 5 above) only 2 learnt about it from just the flyer or poster. Of those who registered in advance over three quarters used the website, most to book on-line with a few downloading a booking form. The remainder – less than a quarter – used the flyer booking form. Next time we should take measures to learn how people found out about the Festival. This could be done by a question on the booking form.

In the light of this we should review whether or not we should again produce 4000 A3 flyers. While a 3-way fold flyer is desirable as it fits in the stands in TIC's, etc., it does not need to be A3. An A4 flyer is easier to produce, costs less and uses half the volume of paper so that more of them can be fitted in a stand. I believe it would be just as effective. As we did this year the flyer could (and should) be supplemented by a GCF postcard.

David Naylor, September 2013

Appendix

Web link recipients

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

- CTC UK. Emailed Julie Rand on groups@ctc.org.uk on 29 March to request event be registered on ctc.org.uk. (It was.)
- CTC's *cycle*. Emailed Dan Joyce on editor@ctc.org.uk on 29 March to request inclusion in June/July 'Dates for your Diary'. (It wasn't.)
- CTC Cymru. Emailed web master Ross Jeal on rossjeal@btinternet.com on 29 March to request last year's entry to be updated. Also forwarded to Emrys Jones on demrys2jones@hotmail.co.uk. (*cycle* gave him as a contact.)
- Bristol CTC. Emailed web master on contact@cyclebristolvtv.org.uk on 29 March to request entry. (Don't know outcome.)
- Bristol CTC. Emailed Geraldine Williams on 29 March to request entry in www.visitswanseabay.com. (This happened.)
- John Grimshaw. Emailed him and David Gray on 15 April. [johngrimshaw@ymail.com].
- Jane Chapman. Emailed her on 15 April.
- Malcolm & Gia Margolis Emailed them on 15 April. [info@wheel-easy.org.uk]. Requested entry in www.wheel-easy.org.uk.
- John Holland. Emailed him on 15 April. [john_holland@totalise.co.uk].
- Maurice Clarke and Roy Spilsbury. Emailed them on 15 April. On N. Wales CTC website 16 April.
- Alasdair Massie. Emailed him on 15 April. [alasdair_massie@lineone.net].
- 2012 Danube holiday participants. ('Mercurio12' distribution list.)