

Runs Secretary Report – October 2020

This year's riding calendar was severely curtailed by the Covid Lockdown, and an official end to organised club rides.

The lock-down coincided, in great irony, with one of the best Mays in living memory. Those of us in "essential" jobs were able to get commuting miles in, but for everyone else; it was the home trainer, short local circuits, or more sofa-time!

As the lock-down was eased, WhatsApp groups became the favoured way to ride in informal groups, seeking out café takeaways.

When we were able to resume club-riding, albeit on new terms, we brought back the formal Runs List again, in order to make the rides inclusive, and not dependent on being a member of a particular WhatsApp group. WhatsApp and Facebook, however, have now become vital tools to enable us to organise the rides into smaller groups, sometimes to split destinations, to meet the current Guidelines. Club rides have evolved over the last few months to meet the changing conditions under which we must operate, and will continue to do so. For example, we've seen the Thursday ride moved to Friday. It remains to be seen whether things will ever quite go back to how they were, or will continue to evolve.

I am pleased to see that the Club Rides are being very careful to meet the Guidelines, riding in groups of six or less, with leaders for each group, setting off at different times, and carefully choosing where to meet, so that we are not seen to be "meeting socially" in large groups. Big groups at the cafés can make things uncomfortable for them, and create the opportunity for criticism of us, as it can look as though we are breaking the "rule of six".

After some initial complaints from a few people (perhaps based more on prejudice than fact), I think we are now getting it right, and the cafes and pubs –now desperate for the extra trade - are generally happy to cater for us. We need to be mindful of "keeping up appearances" though.

With this in mind, we will continue to issue Runs Lists monthly – thanks particularly to Louise and Amos for getting the lists organised – so that we are more able to respond to the on-going changes from on-high. Start times will remain different for the different groups, as we need to avoid large social gatherings at the start. And we need to continue to spread ourselves over different cafes, to avoid big groups gathering in any one café. My guess is that this will be the way-of-things well into next year, although a more severe lock-down is again quite possible.

Please continue to use the Facebook Group for organising/publishing the rides, as it is accessible to all Cheltenham CTC members. There are a number of WhatsApp Groups being used within the groups – which are really useful – but they do exclude those not in that particular group. By all means, use them for planning rides, but please do publish your rides on the Runs List/Facebook Group where at all possible.