

CTC, Parklands, Railton Road, Guildford, GU2 9JX
E: cycling@ctc.org.uk
W: ctc.org.uk
T: 0844 736 8450 (national office)
0844 736 8451 (membership dept)

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Cycle Magazine Editor: Dan Joyce
e: editor@ctc.org.uk

Designers: Nicky Gotobed, Simon Goddard

Advertising: Anna Vassallo
tel: 020 7079 9365
e: annav@jppublishing.co.uk

Creative Director: James Houston

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Cover: Karen Darke on the summit of Cadair Idris, by Challenge Your Boundaries



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THE EDITOR



BEING A member of a CTC Member Group or affiliated local cycling club has a compelling advantage: you'll only cycle alone when you want to. While solo rides are pleasant too, the shared experience of a group ride seems to me richer. It's a social occasion, not simply the physical act of pushing the pedals and the satisfaction of soaking up the views.

I think that's why local cycling groups are still thriving, even though we're told that people aren't as clubby nowadays. A shared ride is fun. Cyclists who aren't in formal clubs recognise this too and organise ad hoc rides from among groups of friends. But since an ad hoc ride will be drawn from a smaller pool of people, it's easier for it to get derailed if there are one or two no-shows. Then you're back where you're started: on your own. Club rides, by contrast, are a regular fixture.

These rides only get to be regular fixtures thanks to those club members who are willing to lead them. Whether the ride is on road or off-road, the leaders need to know which routes to take and how to adapt the ride to suit those who have turned up for it. It's easy to see what the group gets out of this: a navigation-free, social ride.

What do the ride leaders get out of it? As well as the ride itself, they get to enjoy the enjoyment of others. Thanks, they'll be told, often indirectly with a smile and a 'see you next week': thanks for sharing.

DAN JOYCE



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