

ISIS CYCLISTS CTC: ANNUAL REPORT OCTOBER 2018–SEPTEMBER 2019

RIDE STATISTICS

With thanks to Lucy Wright, who once again compiled the facts and figures from leaders' ride sheets.

Between October 2018 and September 2019 we ran 52 'regular' rides, plus the weekend away and 50-mile challenge. An additional five scheduled rides were cancelled, mainly on account of the weather; these included a special ride for National Bike Week. Rides averaged four per month during the autumn and winter, but with the warmer months our programme became more ambitious. Seven rides were scheduled in both July and September, and eight in both June and August.

Overall, participation was roughly 10% down on last year. In terms of unique participants, 90 women rode with us. Of this total, 67% were repeat riders and 33% were new to the group (2017–18 figures are 56% and 45% respectively). On the positive side, this indicates a more constant following among existing members; however, it also raises the question whether the group wishes to advertise more in order to attract new people.

The table below summarises the average number of riders on our different ride formats:

Regular rides	Distance (miles)	Timing (per month)*	Total rides taking place	Average riders†	Change from 2017–18
Short	<10	1 st Sat	11	8	-2
Medium	~15	2 nd Sat	10	10	+1
Long	20–30, rising to 40 by August	3 rd Sat	11	9	=
Joint Isis-Oxford City to coffee	20–30	Last Sun	5	5	-2
Sunday afternoon mixed social	20–30	Last Sun	5	10	N/A
Stop & Stare	<10	Midweek	4	7‡	=
Summer evening	Variable	Midweek	5	7	-4
Pop-up	Variable	Ad hoc	2	10	+5
Special rides				Total riders	Change from 2017–18
Weekend away				24	=
50-mile challenge				20	+5

* We occasionally vary the day from Saturday to Sunday where a ride is focused on a specific event.

† Figures have been rounded.

‡ Based on data from 3 rides.

NEW RIDE FORMATS

The major change to our repertoire this year has been the introduction of afternoon social rides in place of the joint ride with the Oxford City Cycling UK group on the last Sunday of the month. The joint rides have been an ideal way to introduce some of our riders to slightly faster rides, and a number now ride regularly with the City group. However, we wanted to make a long "Isis Cyclists"-style ride available to men who do not wish to cycle far or fast. The average of 10 riders on the five rides held so far confirm the value of this initiative.

Another experimental format was a pop-up vehicle-assisted ride in August, starting from Lechlade, in which 11 riders took part. We hope to have two such rides a year, as they enable us to explore more distant countryside in a single day.

SPECIAL RIDES

The weekend away (7th–9th June) took us back to the Cotsworld View campsite near Charlbury (previously visited in 2016). The 24 riders had a choice of two routes on the Saturday: a shorter outing to Daylesford and Chastleton House, and a longer one to Stow on the Wold.

The 50-mile challenge (7th September) saw a record-breaking turn-out of 24 riders. Unusually for an Isis Cyclists ride, the route included a substantial amount (over 10 miles) of off-road riding. Along Sustrans route 544 riders enjoyed a dramatic section of old railway path and several lovely villages along the spring line, including Ardington (the lunch stop).

INTO OUR SECOND DECADE...

Away from our bicycles, the celebrations of Isis Cyclists' tenth anniversary in summer 2018 continued into this year, with Ellen Lee and Jane Carlton Smith giving a presentation to Cyclox in October 2018 entitled "Isis Cyclists – 10 years of sweet success." This was followed in February 2019 by a celebratory tea for Isis riders past and present, which included a rolling display of images to trigger conversations and reminiscences.

ENGAGEMENT WITH THE COMMUNITY

As in previous years, we have publicised events run by Cyclox, Broken Spoke and other relevant local groups in our monthly newsletter, which is also reproduced on our Facebook page and our website (www.isiscyclists.org.uk). Through the newsletter and mailing list we have also encouraged women to contribute their views on local transport initiatives, such as Oxford County Council's cycle survey.

LEADERSHIP

Our 12-strong leaders' group continues to meet three times a year to plan the rides programme for the next four months. The website now includes a "Meet the Ride Leaders" page, which enables riders to learn a little more about an individual leader or simply put a face to a name.

ISIS CYCLISTS AND OXFORD CITY CYCLING UK

We have continued to maintain contact with the main Oxford City Cycling UK group through our representation on the committee. However, the current representative (Liz Matthews) is stepping down at the 2019 AGM. We will seek clarification whether a committee 'rep' is required, or whether the required level of oversight can be maintained through circulating the newsletter to the City group's chair and secretary.

As noted above, we are currently not running monthly rides with the main group. However, our programme now publicises the group's shorter monthly rides (usually on the second Sunday of the month), the pace of which should appeal to Isis Cyclists riders.

Liz Matthews
3rd November 2019