

GOWER CYCLING FESTIVAL 18-25 August 2018

a report by David Naylor

SUMMARY

As in the last three years camping was provided at the Dunvant RFC. We took care to avoid conflict with BikeAbility's clients which last year had caused a problem. There having been no complaints it appears that the camping arrangements worked well.

The numbers participating were close to last years which were the highest for the preceding four years. The proportion joining more than three rides exceeded even last year's, then the highest so far. This reflects that more stayed for the full week than in the earlier Festivals. (See Figure 3 on p.6.) We were pleased that nearly as many women as men took part.

Pre-Festival registrations were down on last year but this was compensated by several registering during the Launch. As last year those attending just the CTC and U3A rides – to which this year we added a Cappuccino ride – were free for those who joined only those rides.

The hot dry summer weather had ended in early August and during the Festival it rained on every day except the last. The rain was however mostly light and it was warm. Despite this there was a good turn out for nearly all the rides.

Due to low cloud at the launch Rides 2 & 3 were amalgamated (There would have been no views from the Swansea highpoints on Ride 3.) Also we omitted a planned ride to Aberafan on the last day bringing the total to 20 rather than 21. This was because of reduced demand on that day and because we lacked people to run it.

There were less children than in recent years but 9 year old Tatiana and 11 year old Lia made up for this by each joining a large number of rides.

Responding to pressure from the Council we chose different (less suitable) routes for the two rides which normally would pass through Green Cwm.

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The poster for the Gower Cycling Festival features the title in large, stylized letters: 'Gower' in red, 'Cycling' in blue, and 'Festival' in red. Below the title, the dates '18 - 25 August 2018' are displayed. A photograph shows a group of cyclists riding along a paved path through a lush, green forest. At the bottom of the poster, the website address 'www.gowercyclingfestival.org' is written in white on a dark blue background, and a QR code is positioned below it.

1. Introduction

This report provides a record of the ninth *Gower Cycling Festival*, held from 18 - 25 August, 2018. Its main purpose is as a source of information for any future festivals.

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

The web page shows a selection of photos taken during it.

2. Preparation and Publicity

2.1 General

The Working Group comprised Ian Davies, Allyson Evans, Nick Guy, Pat Hansard, Mike Lewis, David Naylor, and Chris Walsh. They met on 14 Oct. & 15 Dec. 2017, 11 Jan., 22 Feb., 28 April & 7 July in the Environment Centre Café, and on 2 Aug. 2018 in BikeAbility's office at the Duvant RFC.

An important factor this year was that we had Council support. See 3.2 below.

The event was covered by several articles in the *Evening Post*, the main ones being on 13 August and (during the Festival) on 20th. It was again publicised in Phillip McDonnell's *Environmental Events*, on Swansea Bay Cycle Forum's website. on visitswanseabay.com, and on *Cycling UK's* (CUK) website. It was included in the June/July edition of *cycle*, in an editorial in the July/August *What's On* and there was a link to our web page in the 3 August *Cycleclips*. *Wheelrights* had a stall at Uplands market on 28 July at which the Festival was publicised.

This year we responded to pressure from the Council not to take Rides 2 and 18 through Green Cwm due to the Llethrid dispute. In return we benefited from Council support.

2.2 Flyers and posters

An A4 flyer (Front panel on p.1) was again produced in house. 2,000 copies were printed most of which were distributed. As before the flyer incorporated a booking form. (Figure 4 on p. 6.)

An A4 poster (Figure 1) was produced and displayed in local bike shops, cafés, pubs and on NCR 4. It could also be downloaded from the website.

2.3 Registration

93 (including 3 free children) registered in advance of the Festival. 22 (including 2 children) registered during it. A further 28 joined rides. (These were non-payers as they helped or joined just the [] rides.) This totals 143 of whom 13 pre-registrants didn't join any ride. There were therefore 130 participants (4 of whom were children).

The above is summarised in Table 1 on p. 5. The [] rides, for which payment was not required, comprised the Cappuccino, U3A and CTC rides.

Again, advance registrants were invited to indicate which rides they intended to join. These were added to the 'Riders lists' in advance to be ticked by the steward if the person turned up.



Figure 1 – Poster

2.4 Website

As in previous years the GCF web page could be accessed from either www.wheelrights.org.uk or www.gowercyclingfestival.org. The format was unchanged with the *Introduction, Rides Programme* and *Map* (Figure 2 on p. 4.) downloadable as pdf files.

As before on-line registration allowed the choice of payment by PayPal (until it broke down) or bank transfer. A printable booking form was provided for those who paid by cash or cheque.

3. The event

3.1 Launch

Due to us now having Council support we had no problem arranging for the launch to be held at Blackpill, although we did have to pay a £35 administration charge. (This would have enabled us to access mains electricity for the PA system, in the event not needed as it was battery powered.)

It rained on and off but not until after we had erected the *Gower Heritage Centre's* and *Wheelrights'* gazebos. These provided cover for a number of 'advance' registrations. As in previous years, Richie Saunders provided a commentary while Ian Charles played his guitar.

Shortly before 2.00pm there was an Evening Post photo-shoot, then Nick Guy introduced cllr Mark Child and Jayne Cornelius who gave short speeches before launching the Festival.

Due to the rain and low mist Ride 3 (Kilvey Hill and City Heights) was cancelled with potential riders joining Ride 2. This and Ride 1 set off at 2.30pm as planned.

3.2 The rides

Having for the past five Festivals resisted pressure from the Council not to take our rides through Lethrid Cwm this year we gave in. Rides 2 and 18 went via Lunnon instead.

In addition to not taking rides through Green Cwm we made a few other changes. To avoid having long rides on the day of the party we held it on the Friday instead of the traditional Wednesday. This meant that the Wednesday rides, particularly the CTC ones, could be as long as they needed to be.

Responding to the need for rides suitable for small children we provided an option to the Bont and Wildfowl ride (20) which avoided the busy main road between Gowerton and Kingsbridge. Paradoxically no children took this option, the two young girls joining the longer ride. Previously they had both been on some of the 'challenging' rides!

Once again we had Tony Moon of the Rhondda Tunnel Society attending the ride up the Afan Valley (16).

Since printing the flyer we decided not to hold the 'Aberavan' ride (21) so the final 'Estuary Wide' ride number was changed from 22 to 21. With Ride 3 being cancelled this left 19 rides plus the party. They all went according to plan and the numbers were in double figures for all except two with half between 20 and 30. See Table 2 on p. 5.

Table 2 shows the breakdown between the gentle (g), moderate (m) and challenging (c) categories. In obtaining these figures allowance was made for the fact that some rides were split between categories as participants started from different places. eg the Glyncorwg ride (16) was a 'c' ride for most, but for those who joined it at the Waterfront Museum it was 'm'. Hence the fractions in Table 2. Table 3 shows the split between men, women and children. As this table illustrates women were well represented. In all 57 joined rides compared with 67 men.

3.3 Social

This year we were entertained by the 'Mardi-jug' band who played jazz and Western music. They were excellent, involving the audience, in particular the two small girls. This made the evening. They did not even charge a fee, just asking to be fed and watered!

The Duvant Cricket Club caterers provided the buffet as they did last year, and this time we got the numbers about right. This was helped by offering advance booking at the reduced price of £5.00, the post-launch buffet price being £6.00. 51 partook of it, including the 6 band members. There was also a raffle. It has yet to be decided what to do with the proceeds.

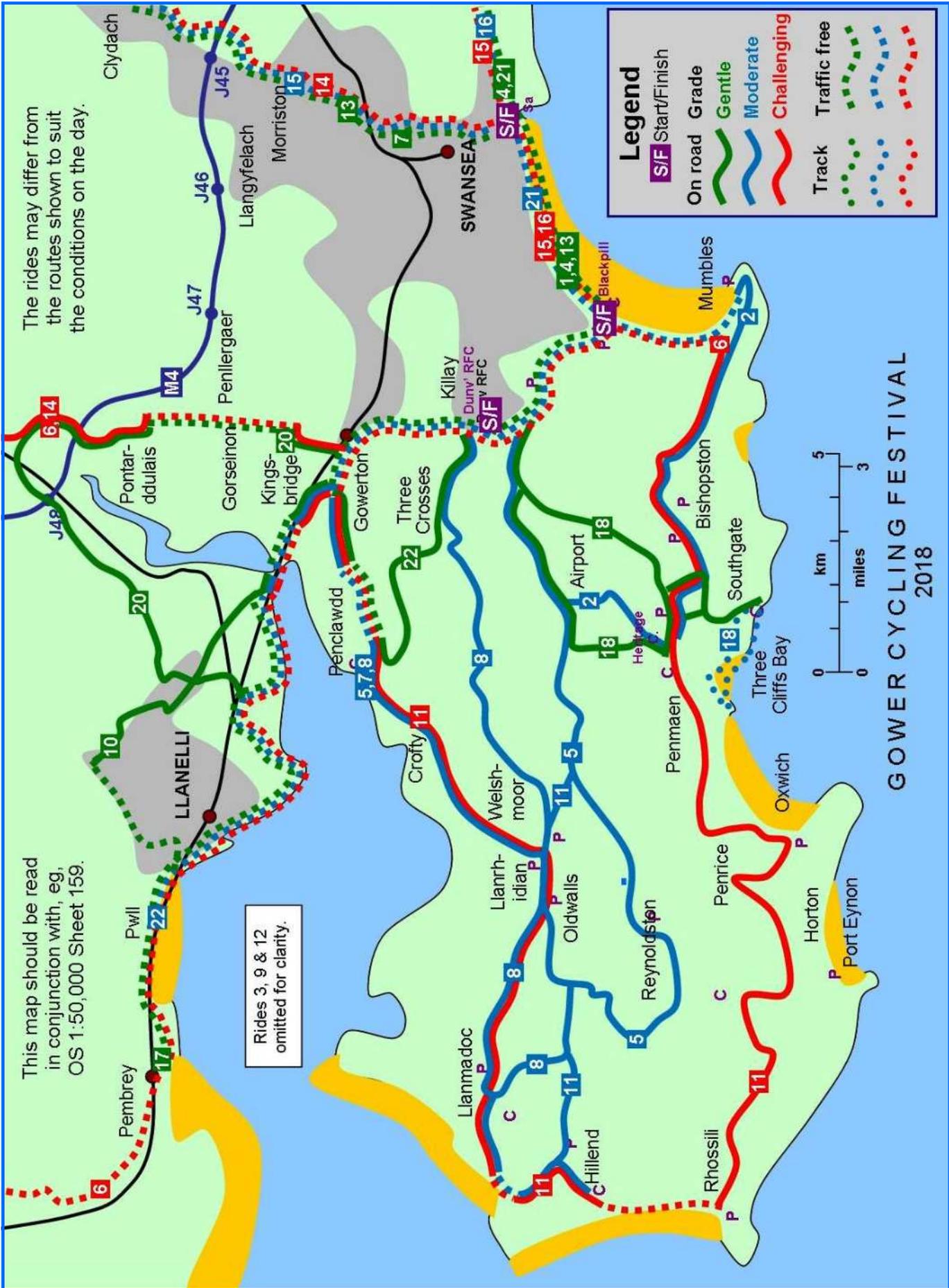


Figure 2 – Map showing routes

| | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------|-----|
| Registered incl. children | At least 1 ride | 102 |
| | No rides | 13 |
| Not paid: [] & helpers. | | 28 |

| | | | | | |
|-------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|------------|
| Category | g | m | c | e | |
| No. rides | 7.1 | 6.3 | 4.6 | 1 | 19 total |
| Riders/cat. | 15.0 | 22.0 | 17.0 | 20 | Av. = 18.0 |

Table 1: Registration breakdown.

Table 2: Av. number per ride.

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

| Date | Ride | Ride title | (Leader) | M | W | C | T |
|-----------------------|------|------------------------------|---------------------|--------------------------|----|---|----|
| Sat. 18 th | 1 | Beach and ice cream | (Nick Guy) | 6 | 11 | 0 | 17 |
| | 2 | Taste of Gower | (David Naylor) | 9 | 11 | 0 | 21 |
| | 3 | Kilvey Hill/City Heights | (Chris Walsh) | Cancelled. Joined Ride 2 | | | |
| Sun 19 th | 4 | Campus to Campus | (Nick Guy) | 4 | 2 | 0 | 6 |
| | 5 | King Arthur's Stone [CTC] | (Pat Hansard) | 13 | 12 | 2 | 27 |
| | 6 | Kidwelly [CTC] | (Ian Davies) | 8 | 2 | 0 | 10 |
| Mon. 20 th | 7 | Copperopolis | (Dawn Aplin) | 6 | 9 | 2 | 17 |
| | 8 | Llanmadoc and Beach [U3A] | (David Naylor) | 13 | 10 | 2 | 25 |
| | 9 | Folk ride ^{Evening} | (John Roach) | 11 | 7 | 2 | 20 |
| Tue. 21 st | 10 | Swiss Valley | (Nick Guy) | 13 | 9 | 0 | 22 |
| | 11 | Grand Gower Circuit | (David N./Chris W.) | 14 | 10 | 2 | 26 |
| Wed. 22 nd | 12 | BikeAbility | (Nick Guy) | 8 | 4 | 1 | 13 |
| | 13 | Port to Pottery | (Allyson Evans) | 8 | 12 | 1 | 21 |
| | 14 | Brynamman [CTC] | (David Naylor) | 13 | 6 | 0 | 19 |
| Thu. 23 rd | 15 | Ystradgynlais-Crynant | (Chris Walsh) | 2 | 4 | 0 | 6 |
| | 16 | Glyncorwg | (Nick Guy) | 16 | 11 | 2 | 29 |
| Fri. 24 th | 17 | Bury Port | (Mike Lewis) | 15 | 8 | 1 | 24 |
| | 18 | Ride/walk (3 Cliffs) | (David Naylor) | 5 | 5 | 0 | 10 |
| Sat. 25 th | 20 | Bont and Wildfowl | (David N./Nick G.) | 6 | 4 | 1 | 11 |
| | 21 | Estuary wide ride | (Chris Walsh) | 9 | 9 | 0 | 18 |

Table 3: Numbers on the rides

| | |
|-----------------|-----------|
| Swansea | 56 |
| Wales (rest of) | 42 |
| England | 27 |
| Further afield | - |
| Unknown | <u>18</u> |
| Total: | 143 |

(a) Origin

| | |
|---------------|----|
| Flyer | 11 |
| Facebook | 1 |
| Internet | 8 |
| Word of mouth | 6 |
| Been before | 28 |
| Other | 9 |

(b) Source

Table 4: Participants' origin and how they knew about it.

Origin numbers are for individuals. Source numbers are based on pre-Festival registrations and many are for a couple or a family.

3.4 Camping

8 campervans and 6 tents used the Dunvant RFC facility, accommodating 21 adults and 2 children. The charge was £8/night without electricity, £10 with.

Measures having been taken not to disturb BikeAbility's activities (Campers were asked not to engage with their clients.) the camping went smoothly. There was however a little confusion over payment of the camping fees.

4. Finances

Table 5 summarises the finances. The payments from the Dunvant RFC campers, not included in this table, totalled £554. They were paid directly to the RFC. .

| Receipts | £ | Expenses | £ |
|------------------------------------|---------------|-------------------------------------|---------------|
| Advance adult registrations (90) | 450.00 | 2000 A4 flyers | 180.00 |
| On the day adult reg. (20) | 100.00 | <i>Around Town</i> advert | 90.00 |
| Buffet receipts | 263.00 | A4 posters (Print Partnership) | 31.75 |
| Raffle | 110.00 | Uplands market stall | 46.00 |
| Donation | 12.00 | CCS for Blackpill launch | 35.00 |
| | | Buffet: Dunvant Cricket Club | 280.00 |
| | | Band: drink and travelling expenses | 51.00 |
| | | Raffle: book of tickets | 6.00 |
| Total receipts: | 935.00 | Total expenses: | 719.75 |
| Receipts exceed expenses by 215.25 | | | |

Table 5 – Finance summary

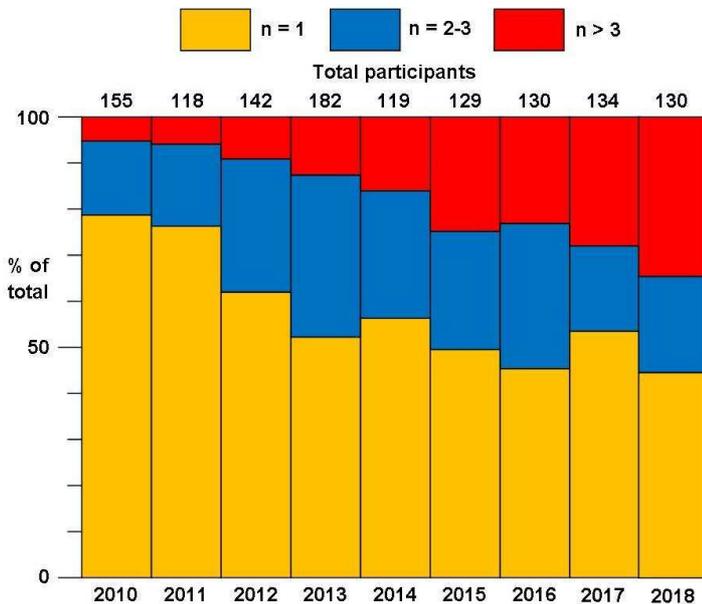


Figure 3

Proportion of riders who took part in n rides.

Figure 4 – Flyer booking form

Gower Cycling Festival
(18-25 August 2018)
Booking Form

This form is for **Festival Registration** with payment by cheque (or cash). If you prefer to pay by PayPal or bank transfer please use the interactive form on the Festival web page.

Registration costs £5 for adults, children under 16 free. It entitles you to *unlimited rides*. You can book the Friday evening buffet here at £5. (Reduced from £6.)

Please register **in advance of the Festival**.

Name(s):

(Identify children with "C".)

Where you're from (Enter home town or County.):
.....

Phone:

Email:

Emergency Contact:

Phone:

Please indicated the rides you are likely to join. This does not commit you. Include 'B' if you want the buffet.
.....
.....

I require: ... adults (£5) ... child(ren) ... Buffets (£5).

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

Signed

How did you hear about the Festival? Please circle:
Flyer; poster; facebook; web; verbal; been before or
tell us how:

Please return this form with your payment to:
David Naylor, Copper Roof, 45 Pennard Road,
Pennard, Swansea SA3 2AA.

5. Comments and Conclusions

5.1 General

Despite some rain on every day except the last the rides were well attended making this Festival one of the best.

The proportion of visitors from outside Swansea (See Table 4.) was up compared with last year, with more coming from the rest of Wales and from England. There were however less from England than in 2016. That more joined more than 3 rides than in all the previous festivals indicates that more came from afar and stayed for the full week

The camping at the Duvant RFC ran smoothly. The numbers were up on last year but slightly down on 2016 when we had the greatest number. A minor problem was that some simply turned up without pre-booking. As noted in 3.4 (p.6) the procedure for collecting camp fees needs to be reviewed.

The party on the Friday evening was a particular success. This was largely due to the Mardi-jug band. We were fortunate to get their services for no more than the price of a few drinks and food. By offering buffet bookings in advance at £5 instead of £6 we got the numbers about right. Some who had pre-paid did not turn up, compensating for the reduced price.

5.2 Registration

No significant change to the on-line registration facility was made, and it worked smoothly. Registrations came in later than in previous years causing us concern that numbers would be down. (In fact they were not, being about the same as in recent years.)

5.3 Launch

There were no problems, largely due to support from the Council this year. (See 3.1).

The arrangements, with councillor Mark Childs and Jayne Cornelius launching it, worked as planned. We had an Evening Post photo-shoot. This featured in an article on 20 August. The rides (albeit with Rides 2 & 3 combined due to the weather) set off on schedule at 2.30pm

5.4 Rides

The rides again proved popular and the feedback has been good. This indicates that the practice of providing a cross-section of rides from gentle to relatively challenging, retaining the more popular rides but making a few changes from year to year, works. Our attempt to provide family rides this year didn't achieve much since most of the rides joined by 9 year old Tatania and 11 year old Lia were aimed at adults! They did however serve a useful purpose by providing easier rides for the less confident cyclists. Of the other 3 children who registered 2 took part in only one ride (Copperopolis, Ride 7) and the other in none. We were pleased to have nearly as many women as men joining the rides – definitely more than the national average.

Use of the Duvant RFC as the starting point for most of the rides worked well, as did the Santander rental bike hub at the Waterfront Museum (Instead of the Sail Bridge) as a joining point for the rides to the east.

It is regrettable that for the first time we were obliged to not take the two rides (2 and 18) through Green Cwm for lack of permission from the owners of the land across which the Llethrid public footpath goes. We took these rides through Lunnon instead. This was unsatisfactory because it missed out an interesting and lovely part of the Gower and involved the steep and potentially dangerous descent to Shepherd's. Every effort should be made to re-establish the right to use the route through Green Cwm.

5.5 Publicity

We produced 2,000 A4 flyers this year (3,000 to 5,000 in previous years). With the flyer being the second main source of information about the Festival (See Table 4) and our stocks running low more should have been printed, perhaps 2,500. As can be seen from Table 4 most knew about it because they had been before, with the internet and word of mouth bringing in a few. Most of the rest learnt about it from *Cycling UK's cycle* and on-line *cycleclips*. With only one person learning about it from Facebook clearly something needs to be done about this.

5.6 Finances

We had followed precedent by charging the same amount (£5) for advance registration as for post launch registrations. To encourage people to register in advance we had previously considered charging more on the day. This would both speed things up at the start of rides and make things easier for us. We decided against, a factor being that we wanted to avoid handling coins, such as would be necessary if we charged, say, £7. Should we perhaps have charged £10? Any resulting reduction in numbers would have been offset by increased income from those who did register on the day. Even at £10 the Festival would be good value.

The loss of the PayPal payment option (Probably related to the introduction of new data protection regulations in May.) made it easier for us. With the remaining options of bank transfer, cheque or cash payment it would seem that we can do without PayPal.

As in all our previous festivals we have more than covered our costs. This was despite the fact that we neither sought nor received funds from our 'sponsors'. (The Council, Three Cliffs Café and the Gower Heritage Centre.) Our costs are minimal because the organisation is entirely done by volunteers. The principal saving is due to the website being run in house as was also the design of the flyer and posters. The main costs were in the printing of the flyers and some advertising. See Table 5 on p.6.

David Naylor
September 2018