# Cylchlythyr Clwb Seiclo Rhuthun
# Ruthin Cycling Club Newsletter
# Gwanwyn/Spring 2026

## Welcome to the first RCC newsletter

A newsletter, I hear you ask? At the recent AGM it was proposed that we needed somewhere to share news, views, and top tips outside of our various WhatsApp groups. So here we go!

The plan is to have **three newsletters a year** covering **spring, summer, and autumn**, where we'll bring you information on upcoming events, inspiration for longer rides and cycling adventures, and club news.

This will very much be *your* newsletter. If you have news to share, please send it in to **newsletter@ruthin.cc** so we can include it in the next issue.

## A note from our Chairman

Firstly, what a great thing it is to have a club newsletter. I felt it only right to add a few words to welcome it.

It was sad to wave goodbye to David Jones OBE as our outgoing Chairman, but we are very fortunate that he remains an active member of the club and will still be riding with us each week. I am extremely grateful to David for suggesting I take on the role and hope I can continue the excellent work he has done over many years.




***From my very first ride, I've felt that Ruthin Cycling Club is a special and friendly family.***

While our ride leaders do a fantastic job, what really makes the club work is the dedicated group of volunteers, on and off the committee, who quietly keep everything running. From planning rides and social events to managing kit, finances, communications, and club activities, their efforts are what make the club what it is. They don't always get the thanks they deserve, so let me say it clearly***: thank you for everything you do***.

Looking ahead, there is no need for major change, simply to continue steering the club in the same positive direction, while ensuring it remains sustainable and enjoyable for everyone. As agreed at the AGM, we'll be introducing a few new ideas over the coming year, including regular newsletters, future club rides and tours, and capturing the club's history.

As always, we're very open to ideas. The best place to share them is, as ever, on the rides or over a coffee. I look forward to seeing you all out on the road soon.

## Plenty of reasons to enjoy cycling

Our previous Chairman claims that joining RCC is the best twenty quid you could spend for fun, friends, and plenty of life-affirming time outside in gorgeous surroundings. I'd agree, but a recent newspaper article confirms there are even more reasons to be on our bikes.

Not only are we being kind to our hips and knees, but we're also preserving our muscle health. In a study comparing recreational cyclists with sedentary middle-aged males, cyclists had better strength and less age-related muscle loss. This in turn meant a decreased risk of falls, except off the bike, of course!

As we roll along the Vale, our endeavors lift our mood, even in the rain. Cyclists are **15% less likely** to need medication for anxiety and depression and experience reduced stress levels.

Other anti-ageing benefits include reduced body fat, lower cholesterol levels, a more youthful immune system and this one's for the lads, higher than average testosterone levels. *Ker-ching!*

## Thank you, Ritchie!

One of our newest club members, **Richard Thomas**, wrote this short article for his local paper—and kindly shared it with us.

### Member story – Getting back in the saddle

Do you fancy getting a bit fitter and making some new friends?

I've always enjoyed riding bikes, but for the last few years I'd become a fair-weather cyclist. My bike would come out when the clocks sprang forward and go back into hibernation when they fell back. Each summer I'd gain fitness and lose a bit of waistline, only for it all to unravel over winter.

I was also finding reasons *not* to get on my bike, which is ridiculous given how much I enjoy it.

So I decided to do something about it.

I reached out to a local cycling club to make myself more accountable and to have people to ride with. Funny how, as adults, taking that first step can be hard - my six-year-old has no trouble making new friends, but it's something we seem to lose along the way.

The club I contacted was **Ruthin Cycling Club**, and they couldn't have been more welcoming. From the first email to the first ride, everyone was hospitable, kind, and approachable. The guided rides meant I was soon firmly back in the saddle, and a stone lighter than when I started.

There are guided rides for all levels every Sunday, another group ride on Wednesdays, plus races, time trials, and social events throughout the year.

Membership is only **£20**, so if you'd like to get fitter, explore our beautiful area, and meet some really lovely people, why not give it a go? It would be great to have you along.

# Epic rides - John Miller

**Traws Eryri** 4 - 8 July 2025



Cycling UK has created several new long-distance rides recently, so looking for a challenge, I planned to tackle the closest one with two of my daughters over four days.

Two of us rode gravel bikes and one used a mountain bike (no battery assistance!), all of which were suitable. Around **43% of the route was off-road**, and some sections were too rough to ride, even on an MTB, so there was a fair bit of hike-a-bike, especially where Sarn Helen appears. That road hasn't been resurfaced since the Romans left!

Altogether we covered about **140 miles** over four days, with **3,000–4,000 feet of climbing each day**.

## The route



Starting in Machynlleth, the route skirts Cadair Idris to Dolgellau, loops around Trawsfynydd, heads to Betws-y-Coed via Penmachno, and finishes in Conwy. Highlights include Coed y Brenin, Penmachno Forest, and the final climb above Conwy, where the Carneddau ponies live.

## Logistics & accommodation

We camped and were supported by a camper van, which meant no need to carry tents or food. Refreshment stops are limited, so unsupported riders should plan carefully. If staying at the Cross Foxes in Trawsfynydd, it's wise to book ahead!

## Final thoughts



The route is spectacular. The climbs are challenging but achievable, and although we got wet and muddy at times, it only added to the adventure. Don't miss the final climb above Conwy—the views are worth every pedal stroke, even if you encounter the infamous *Bog of Doom*.

The full route can be found on Ride with GPS or the Cycling UK website.

# Time trial champion



After retiring from her busy role at The Clinic Surgery in 2016, Margaret Docking decided to take up cycling. She joined RCC and soon became a regular rider with the 'B' group. However, as a former cross-country and track runner who had represented her club at both local and national level, Margaret was keen to return to a competitive environment.

She describes time trial riding as "racing against yourself", which suited her well as someone relatively new to the sport. But Margaret is a born competitor, and in search of the thrill of racing, she entered her first National Hill Climb competition when it was held locally on the Old Shoe in Llangollen. She loved the buzz, the cheering, the cowbells, and the challenge and has since gone on to win her age group at the 2025 National Hill Climb Championships in Derbyshire.

Alongside her hill climbing success, Margaret has also been competing on the world time trial circuit. Inspired by Glasgow hosting the UCI Cycling World Championships in 2023, which that year encompassed all cycling disciplines, she qualified to compete in the women's road race. Although she didn't reach the podium, she relished the camaraderie, the opportunity to ride in stunning surroundings, and the chance to meet like-minded cyclists from around the world.

This experience led her to compete again at the World Championships in Denmark in 2024, followed by Australia in 2025, where she achieved outstanding results, second place in both the Time Trial and the Road Race (Medio Fondo).

Margaret attributes her success not only to her love of the sport but also to maintaining a consistent training programme, much of which takes place on her trusted turbo trainer. She will soon be back riding locally for the combined RCC / VC Melyd Time Trial season, which starts on 24 April and runs through to September, featuring races of various distances.

And for anyone wondering whether time trialling is for them, Margaret has some encouraging words:

*"You'll be amazed how fast you can ride with a number on your back!"*

## AGM summary – January 2026

The Club's AGM was held at Ruthin Rugby Club with strong attendance from members.

Highlights from the meeting included a review of a very successful year for the club, notably the **10th Anniversary celebrations**, strong participation across rides and events, and continued growth in membership. The Treasurer confirmed that the club remains **financially stable**, with membership subscriptions staying at **£20**, and healthy reserves in place following investment in anniversary activities and club kit.

Several **committee changes** were agreed, with thanks given to David Jones for his outstanding contribution as Chair, and a new committee confirmed to continue supporting rides, events, competitions, communications, and club development. Members also heard updates on ride planning, club kit, time trials, competitions, and future ideas, including a possible club tour, continued collaboration with VC Melyd, and plans to preserve the club's history.

Members were encouraged to stay involved, share ideas, and consider helping with club activities where possible.

**The full AGM minutes are available on the club website:** https://www.ruthin.cc/club-documents/

## What's on – Dates for your calendar

| Event | Date / Info |
|---|---|
| Rhyl Cycling Club Spring Circuit Races | 28 March 2026<br>riderhq.com |
| North Wales Gravel X | 25 April 2026<br>gloriousgravel.com |
| Reliability Ride – VC Melyd | 26 April 2026<br>Venue TBA |
| North Wales Horseshoe Pass Race | 17 May 2026<br>britishcycling.org.uk/events/details/330357 |
| Black Cat Cycling Challenge | 30 May 2026<br>blackcatcyclingchallenge.co.uk |
| Welsh Festival of Cycling | 23–28 July 2026<br>Ruthin Rugby Club |

## Pit stop

**Caffi Wylfa**
Castle Road, Chirk, LL14 5BS

This bike-friendly café sits in a picturesque spot near the canal in Chirk. Open daily from **9:30am–5:00pm**, it serves tasty food and hot drinks, with both indoor and outdoor seating.

There's plenty of room to park your bike, and it's only **22 miles from Ruthin**—perfect for a relaxed café ride.

## Club news

### Kit : New Season, New Kit?

Thinking about refreshing your kit for the new season? Tony Lloyd has a comprehensive list of club kit available to buy.

www.ruthin.cc

## Get involved

If you have events, ride reports, photos, or news you'd like to share in the next newsletter, please send them in. **newsletter@ruthin.cc**