

Hello

Welcome to Welland Valley CC. And thank you for taking the plunge and joining one of the region's biggest and most active cycling clubs. I hope you'll be with us for many happy years.

This guide has been put together to give you the inside track on how the club works and how to get the most from your membership.

Welland Valley is a club for cyclists of all disciplines, ages, experience and speeds. With more than 250 adult and junior members - from multiple world champions and ex-pros to complete newbies - they'll be a range of activities just right for you.

So throw yourself into club life and see what happens.

Jon Durnin (Club Chairman).

How the club operates

Welland Valley CC is run by a volunteer management committee of c12 members. All committee members are elected on an annual basis at the AGM and any club member may stand for office.

The committee, which meets eight times per year, oversees the club's finances (we're currently solvent with c£12k in the piggy bank), organises the annual programme of races and events, and does a host of other stuff.

The club committee exists to serve the membership and is always keen to hear what it's doing right, what it's got wrong, and any ideas for improving what's on offer.

Communication with members

The club has a website which lists all club events and race results. There is also a Welland Valley Facebook page, which is probably the best place to keep up to date with what's going on. In addition, there are regular emails to all members and a number of informal Whatsapp groups for various activities.

Volunteering

It is a condition of being a club member that you volunteer to marshal at one event per year (or two if you are a regular competitor). If you've never marshalled at a race before, you'll be given a full briefing (but it's really dead simple). To volunteer, you need to go to the Sign Up Genius page on our website and pick a date and event of your choosing. The earlier you do it, the more events you'll have to choose from.



Club runs

If you're new to Welland Valley CC, probably the best place to meet other riders is at the weekly club run. These happen every week of the year come rain or shine - leaving The Square at Market Harborough at 9.15am on a Sunday.

There are usually two or three concurrent club runs. There's a fast ride (averaging 20mph); a steady ride (c16mph) and a very steady ride (c14mph).

The rides last for between two and two-and-a-half hours, usually ending at the café in Welland Park for much-needed coffee and cake.

No-one ever gets dropped on the steady ride or the very steady ride; so it's probably best to start with one of those and move up in speed as appropriate.

Ladies' ride

In addition to the weekly club runs, there is also a monthly ladies' ride at 12-14 mph. Watch out for dates on the club's Facebook page.

Chain gangs and other rides

The club runs weekly chain gangs during the Spring and summer – leaving from outside the school at Church Langton at 6.30pm on Thursdays. The first group thrashes round quiet country roads at c22mph for an hour, with a second group moving at c20mph. Don't worry if you've never ridden in a chain gang before, because you'll be shown the ropes by some old hands. It's great fun and superb training.

There's also a fast training ride most Saturdays. Again, check Facebook for details.

And if that's not enough, there are regular 'beer n bike' off-road rides. And – you guessed it – check Facebook for what, where and when.

Time trials

The club runs around 20 time trials between March and October. Most of the TTs are run over 10 mile courses; but there a couple of 25s, some early-season hard-rides and a hill climb.

Most TTs attract fields of 35-45 riders of all shapes, ages and standards. You don't need a time trial bike and lots of fancy kit to take part. Around 40 per cent of riders now compete in the competitions for standard road bikes.



The club's main TT courses are based around the Langtons, Naseby and Kibworth, with riders put into leagues to compete against others of similar speed. There are marshals at all key turns on the course to warn motorists and other road users that an event is taking place (but safety is the rider's individual responsibility)

Race HQ normally opens an hour before the start of a TT for sign-on; and more importantly stays open afterwards for refreshments and those 'what went wrong / I could have gone faster if only' discussions.

Sportives

Welland Valley stages an annual sportive in aid of Macmillan Cancer Support. This year's event – with 100k and 60k road routes; along with 100k, 60k and 30k off-road routes - takes place on Saturday, May 30. Full details on the website.

The club also encourages members to take part in other sportives and organised rides; with riders recording their mileages to compete for the prestigious Lee Scampton Trophy and Vials Tourist Trophy.

Road racing / circuit racing

The club has an active road race group, with riders competing locally, regionally and nationally. A good starting point if you want to give road racing a try is the Northants and District Cycling Association series, which is held on local courses.

Members also compete in British Masters Cycling (formerly the League of Veteran Racing Cyclists) fixtures across the Midlands and beyond; and race on closed circuits at Mallory Park and on the new track in Leicester.

Finally, if you're still keen to give it a go, but not sure it's for you, then try the club's very own own circuit race series in August, which is especially designed to give members a flavour of bunch racing.

And if all that's not enough, Welland Valley promotes five road races per season – including two national level events – one as part of the British Women's Team Series and one for the British Masters Cycling national series.

Cyclocross

One of the biggest growth areas in Welland Valley CC is cyclocross, with around 80 members competing across the season (which typically runs from October to March).

Members mainly race in the new Leicestershire Cyclocross League and the West Midlands Cyclocross League.



The club also runs cyclocross skills sessions on Wednesday nights; and there are informal pub runs for 'crossers on Friday nights in the Spring summer and Saturday mornings in the winter. Again you'll find more details on the club Facebook page.

Twice per year the club promotes a race at Misterton Hall, near Lutterworth, which can attract more than 400 entrants.

Track racing

Track sessions are held at the Derby Velodrome and are publicised on the website and Facebook.

Mountain biking

If knobbly tyres are your thing, then the club has an active mountain bike section, with members ranging from complete novices to multiple world champion Vic Barnett. We're typically cross-country mountain bikers and less-so hardcore downhillers.

Club members race extensively in the Friday Night Summer Series

Whizz Kids

Welland Valley has a highly active Whizz Kids junior section, which is part of British Cycling's Go-Ride scheme. Its aim is to get youngsters to have fun on two wheels in a safe environment.

Whizz Kids meets regularly – generally on the second and fourth Saturday of every month at 2pm for a variety of sessions. These include core skills such as balance, braking and bike handling, progressing to other days where youngsters get the chance to try off-road cyclocross, track and bunch racing.

Riders can join Whizz Kids as soon as they can ride without stabilisers (or use their legs on a balance bike) and can stay until they reach 16.

More information: whizzkids@wellandvalleycc.co.uk

And finally

If there's anything we haven't covered in this briefing, please feel free to contact our new member liaison officer, Claire Moore, at newmembers@wellandvalleycc.co.uk

Best wishes.

John Welsford (Membership Sec).

