

Rideout to Northleach April 2017

To lose one motorcyclist may be regarded as a misfortune; to lose 50% of the group looks like carelessness. And it had been going quite well. The weather was fine, traffic although mildly irritating wasn't really a problem, I hadn't forgotten which turnings to take and the halfway stop had been adequate if somewhat mean with their cheese toastie.

So, ten CWAMs followed me down the A46 and through the lanes to Chipping Campden, a snails-pace Fish Hill, Stanton, Stanway Hill, Bourton and on to Northleach Prison which now goes under the more respectable guise of Cotswolds Discovery Centre. Chappers' photo shows Ian and me deep in discussion and if I remember rightly the topic was the importance of negotiating traffic lights and similar bottlenecks efficiently and without undue delay.



The mandatory men in black photo taken and we were off. Crossing the A40 we explored Turkdean, Notgrove and Naunton before meeting my Nemesis. When we came to Stow crossroads, we were second in the queue, compactly bunched and impatient to go since The Fosse gets two bites of the cherry to each one for the joining roads. To be quite honest, as we entered the town, I was more concerned with a tour bus that had come to an abrupt stop to allow its passengers to gawp or let the driver have another bite of his cheese sandwich, whatever. A quick look behind assured me that I was not alone which was enough for me because I thought that a rheumatic snail should have crossed the Fosse. It wasn't until the next turning some 5½ miles on that I considered the possibility that we had become rideout lite rather than the full fat version that started out. Bit of a shame really because the rear end missed a good run by the Rollright Stones, Long Compton and a trot through the back lanes to Kineton. Nevertheless, they zapped straight up The Fosse and we united as one back at the Long Itch where I got off very lightly considering my abysmal performance whereas road planners took a right pasting and were roundly criticised for poor traffic light management. At the Art of Social Riding session, in answer to Andy's question whether I had a radio, I answered, why would I want one? At the time I considered the last thing I needed on my bike was a radio; now I now know different.



It was good to see some new faces as well as some very old ones in the group. I'd like to do the run again, possibly a little shorter and avoiding Stow. I hope they won't be put off from joining me again.

Thanks to Ian Chapman for the photos.