



## **Annual General Meeting 2013**

### **CHAIR'S REPORT**

This is the first AGM since DARLOVELO became dependent on its volunteers for its day to day running.

During the course of the year, there was a change in Chair as Sally Forth took over as Chair from Duncan Buckingham, whose work responsibilities meant he was unable to continue in the role.

An additional challenge had come with the closure of the Arts Centre meaning that there was a need to relocate our bicycles.

Bicycles had just been located at West Crescent, Brafferton, Café Create, Cockerton and Bikestop prior to the changeover to voluntary running.

Due to the loss of the Arts Centre storage; a number of cycles were sold off to reduce pressure on the dispersed ad hoc storage. Bikestop experienced an unanticipatedly high number of donations in their first few months and it was a while before they were able to accommodate the number of bicycles that had been agreed.

Thanks are expressed to Richard Grassick who has ably maintained the website and acted as treasurer over the year; to Duncan for the work he has done in maintaining the stock, and for his balancing the needs of Darlovelo with his role at Bikestop; to Beatrix for the work done to keep track of where each bicycle is; to Jo Land for her willingness to allow Café Create to be a hub; to Hugh, Mel, Matthew and Gena for their help and support.

Darlovelo had a presence at the Green Fair in South Park and the Mega Bike Event in the market square.

Challenges have been to do more than keep the organisation ticking over. Not only has there generally been low turnout at events and meetings, but those who have been involved are generally other over-committed and unable to devote more time to the scheme. This was evidenced in the lack of a presence at the annual Community Carnival as regular volunteers all had other commitments.

Only one social ride was arranged this year which attracted a low turnout.

Campaigning work was also affected by the small numbers involved. Darlovelo has supported the 20s Plenty campaign, lobbied Darlington Borough Council to team up with partners across Tees Valley to bid for funding. Whilst the funding bid was submitted it was ultimately unsuccessful.

Tim Stahl attended a meeting to give a presentation to one of our meetings on the short-comings of the design of our existing cyclepath "network". Follow up actions to have leading councillors join us on a tour of these to be followed up by suggested improvements are still pending.

On the positive side, as the treasurer's report shows, the organisation continues to be sustainable and hires took place.

The challenges ahead as I see it are to:

- increase active membership in order to reduce the burden on the existing active members and give capacity for more to be done on campaigning. This might be achieved by developing social activity and rides.
- improve the co-ordination of the location of bicycles;
- review the fleet to see if we have the right offer for the demand there is ;
- set up an system for regular servicing of bicycles.

Sally Forth

Chair 2012-3