

Minutes of a meeting of the WNBR London Collective

Thursday, 17th June 2025

by Zoom Videoconference

Present: Barbara, Cy, Eccentric, Harvey, Ian, Joe, John, Julian, Kieran, Mike, Natasha, Neil, Norm, Rob B, Rob J, Steve V, Willoh

Apologies: Sophie

(Action items in *red*)

Simon Mr

Simon has stepped down from leading RP and participating in WNBR London. Everyone applauded him for his excellent contributions and wished him well.

Debrief

This meeting was primarily a debrief for the ride on 14th June. Many people contributed feedback, which was captured on a shared drive for consideration at this meeting and for future reference when planning the 2026 ride. Specific areas of concern were discussed and have been summarised below.

We did not try to resolve these issues in this meeting – that is the job for next year’s planners. The intention is to capture observations for next year’s planning team to work with.

There are many positive points in the feedback. Many people thanked us. The weather and turnout were good – we estimated over 1,200 based on the clicker count just prior to Waterloo Bridge. The afterparty was the best yet and made a good contribution to our funds. Press reports were supportive and positive.

Summary of key points:

- There was a confrontation with pony trap drivers
- A few people indulged in unacceptable sexual behaviour at the finish
- No direct complaints were received but negative observations spotted in social media included – nudity, children, not stopping at red lights and pedestrian crossings
- Speed of the front marshals – cycling too fast, not holding enough, not keeping the ride together
- Exit from FMS was slow – insufficient spectator management, drop kerbs
- Using the cycle paths can slow the ride, particularly at bottlenecks, eg 13 minutes to cross Waterloo Bridge
- Perennial question of whether and when to cork – how to manage, which junctions, how long to hold, keeping a lane for traffic when we can (we don’t want to create congestion - it makes it harder for us)
- Whether and when to stop for lights or pedestrians
- Participants stopping for photos
- Buses stopping, eg at Aldwych – learning lesson: keep to the right of buses so they don’t pin you in when stopping
- Use of comms and tracking – eg tracking dropouts, unplanned route changes (like the crane), lost riders at Chancery Lane
- Knowing when to leave LIF (with people having time for a toilet break)
- Effectiveness of the security team, particularly when patrolling the starts and finish; during the ride they are more useful at the rear than the front so they can pick up problems
- WA is always difficult to manage due the size of the crowds - we would be interested in finding other locations

Next Ride

Following consideration of issues on the ride, there was a suggestion that we could switch to a Sunday, when Central London is likely to be less difficult to navigate. Leading over 1,000 cyclists through Central London on a Saturday in June has become increasingly troublesome. There are public events, multiple protests, counter-protests, police lockdowns, road closures, crane operations, traffic jams, congestion and crowds of spectators. Even with good Police liaison, we have found it hard to make trouble-free progress on our planned routes. In 2024, almost every section of our routes had to be diverted as the central area was in lockdown. After discussion, a vote established a clear majority in favour of the switch. We are aware that WNBR Brighton are contemplating moving to a Saturday, so we might swap days with them. The preferred date for WNBR London would be Sunday 14th June 2026.

Action: *Cy to liaise with WNBR Brighton to agree provisional dates then update the website and social media with the provisional date.*

There was a previous suggestion to declare the provisional planned date for 2026 and inform the Royal Parks of our requirement to identify suitable mustering points. This is unlikely to succeed but is seen as the groundwork for raising a formal complaint.

There was a suggestion that we should secure an afterparty venue in the autumn, after the planned date is agreed.

Next Meeting

The Collective agreed to hold the first planning meeting for 2026 on the second Wednesday: 14th January, 2026.