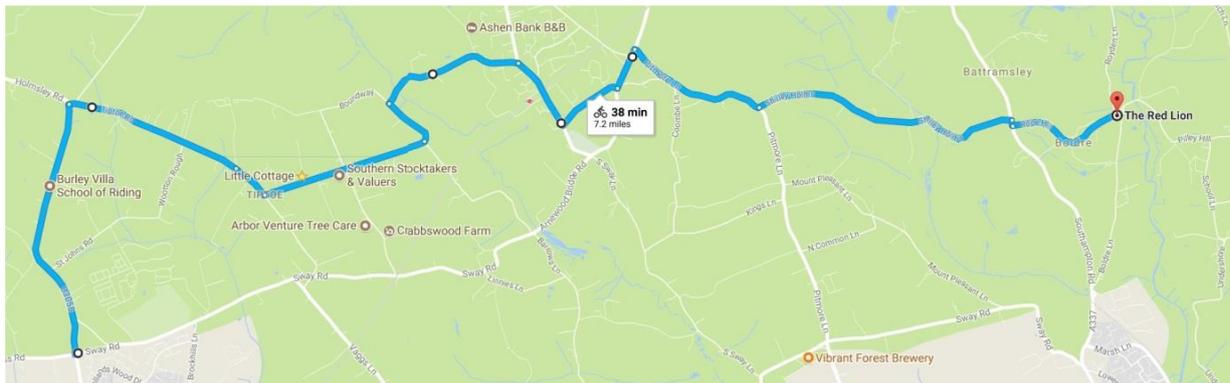


28 August 2017 Update, following the Cyclofanatic New Forest Rattler on 27 August 2017, and covering Bashley, Tiptoe and Sway

Even on the day of the event, to my astonishment this event was not even registered on the NFDC event register at

http://forms.newforest.gov.uk/ufsac/ufsmain?formid=EVENT_REGISTER

I covered the course from the Bashley Roundabout (OS S22429296568) to the Red Lion Boldre (OS SZ3186098332) as the map shown below, between 09:45 and 11:45 am, spending much of the time by the Rising Sun cattle grid, warning riders of the cattle grid and the right turn.



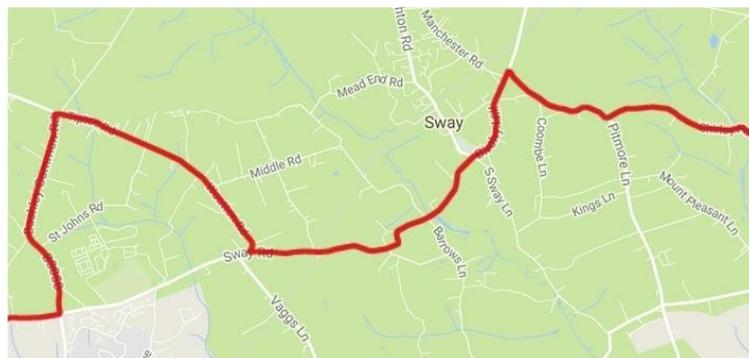
The riders on the whole were not the flat-out-at-all-costs racers we see for the UK Cycle Events races, they were on the whole polite and often warned of their approach as appropriate; and so the riders managed themselves well.

However I noticed the following issues:

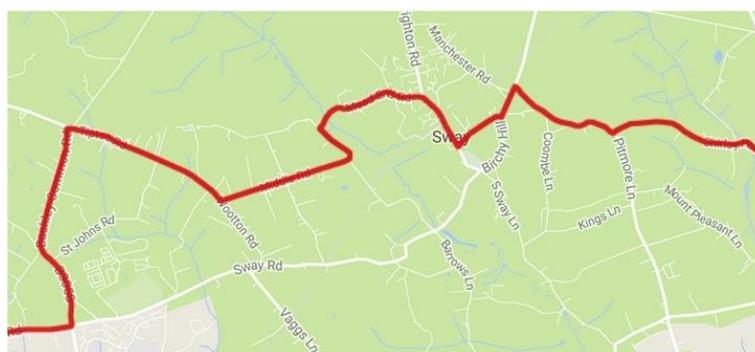
1. Local residents did not know about this event – some found out at the last minute only through local E-mail and social media etc. This event was not on the NFDC event register, the organisers seem to have made no effort whatsoever to contact local parish and town councils, the New Forest District Council, local newspapers, the New Forest National Park Authority, the Safety Advisory Group, the Verderers, the Riding Schools, Hampshire Highways, the New Forest Association of Local Councils, the Forestry Commission etc. It's almost as if they have never noticed the [New Forest Cycle Event Organiser's Charter](#) It would surely be to the advantage of the organisers and the riders if they gave us notice – they would find there would be less traffic, combine harvesters, stock, riders on horseback, dead deer, ditching and hedging work, tractors, ponies, cows, sheep, mobile caravans and goodness knows what else around the route, because locals would take appropriate care where possible.
2. Marshalling was utterly non-existent on the entire 7 mile plus section I covered – and that includes no marshal at the dangerous staggered crossing of the A337 (from Shirley Holms to Rope Hill) where I saw one near miss; no marshal at the B3058 between Burley Villa Riding School and the Rising Sun pub – including at the cattle grid which is falling apart, and the sharp right turn into Tiptoe Road); and no marshal on Mead End Road (there was one minor gravel-rash spill there) or at the right turn from the B3055 into Pitmore Lane. Signage was poor and often seemed to rely on a local person's fence, hedge or similar, or road furniture. We have a number of adverts fly-posted like that – and often left there for a long

time, so there's always a danger that someone will in all innocence remove a vital sign. I think someone – presumably the organisers – had also sprayed some markings onto the road surface and I'm not convinced that is wise.

3. Few riders had rear numbers – as is suggested in the [New Forest Cycle Event Organiser's Charter](#). I'm pleased to report that unless the vast majority of riders opted for the shortest of the three courses (that shortest course did not pass Bashley, Tiptoe or Sway) then this event would have been inside the 1,000 riders limit suggested in the [New Forest Cycle Event Organiser's Charter](#).
4. The route was poorly considered. If only the organisers had consulted with the local town and parish councils I'm sure a better route – with less dangerous elements – could have been suggested. Even small changes would have helped make the ride safer and more enjoyable. There was no feed station, toilet facilities, first aid or anything similar on the section of the course that I monitored which might have thus dictated that part of the route.
5. The maps shown on <http://www.cyclofanatic.co.uk/rattler.php> are fairly useless - they are not large enough scale to clearly see which roads are used, they don't even show which way round the course the cyclists go and there are no mile markers, feed stations, toilet locations, approximate time ranges at various locations etc. marked.
6. At least one section of one of the maps shown on <http://www.cyclosport.org/event/27-Aug-2017/UK/new-forest-rattler/maps.html> is wrong and was misleading. In the small section I covered the 82 mile route is shown going south along the Wootton Road to the B3055 Sway Road, and then east along the B3055 – as the map below.



So people in that area who knew about the ride went elsewhere, but the ride did not take the route shown! The ride was signposted and all the riders I saw went down Middle Road, Tiptoe, Mead End Road, Station Road and Church Lane; as below:



For Church Lane the clue is in the name – on a Sunday morning there was a lot of traffic and parking around the church; so that was not a sensible route at that time. Again on these maps there is no direction round the course indicated, and no mile markers, feed stations, toilet locations, approximate time ranges at various locations etc. marked.

In summary the entire organisation of this ride left a lot to be desired, but the riders themselves generally rode safely and were considerate. In taking say £25,000 or so from the riders it seems to me that the organisers maximised their profits by cutting safety corners. This will also reflect poorly on Moyles Court School who hosted the start and finish. Should the organisers ever want to run an event in the New Forest again, please may I suggest they start with the [New Forest Cycle Event Organiser's Charter](#) and early liaison with all the appropriate local groups so as to ensure the safest and most enjoyable route for the riders.