

Ouse Washes Experience - Sunday April 6th 2014.

Wanted !

Team Entries from Cycling and Running Clubs

Hello Everyone, let's hope the weather starts to improve soon! Actually despite all the heavy rain the OWE route is standing up pretty well, little more than a few big puddles to negotiate although we may need a small diversion at Welches Dam if the water level in the Washes remains at its present level and of course the Welney Wash Road may remain closed, however, that will not unduly affect OWE as we have made arrangements to transport those that need to get back to Mepal Outdoor Centre either from Welney Village at the end of the 15Km route or from Welches Dam (RSPB Centre) at the end of the 6.5Km route. Also we have secured the offer of off road car parking (subject to land conditions) in the centre of Welney Village this is similar to the support the villagers give to the March Athletic Club's Hereward Relay Run every Autumn, so it would be great if we could show our support in return for local villages like Welney that so often are partly cut off by flooding of the Washes at this time of year.

A huge amount of work has been undertaken by the OWE project team and our associates; Cambridgeshire County Council have come up trumps with some much appreciated financial support to help underwrite the set up costs and Steve Barclay MP for N.E. Cambs., has agreed to attend the event, so we really need to have a good turn out to emphasise the real demand from the running and cycling communities for improved access to our local countryside.

From Rotary our local district President, who hails from Wisbech, has leant his support to the project and we have approached our neighbouring Rotary Clubs to ask them to think about sponsoring their own team of 4 riders or runners.

Now here is where there could be some really positive action to stimulate entries for both riders and runners. We would really like to secure a lot of team entries, our initial thoughts were that local businesses may be happy to support their employees to enter teams, indeed we are hopeful that such a team from a Littleport based business may soon sign up.

However, we also think that if a local running or cycling club approached one of our sister Rotary Clubs to support a local team entry, that may well get a positive response, particularly, as any sponsorship raised by the team will be divided equally between our Lead Charity *Magpas – the emergency medical charity* (who seem to be in the news every week with their bright orange helicopter or BMW fast response vehicle) and nominated local Rotary supported charities, so by backing your Club's team entry a Local Rotary Club could also be able to advance its own local fundraising targets as well supporting a new community event for our local region.

My fellow Ely-Hereward Rotary Club Member, Maurice Weller will, after a well deserved holiday (somewhere hot!), be back in harness at the end of the month to help Running and Cycling Clubs get organised for the event. In the meantime please do not hesitate to contact either Gary Gardner or myself if you need any more information, especially about contacting your local Rotary Clubs, however, please remember each RC is independent so a personal approach by a local member of your own Club is always likely to work best.

Just a couple of other notes, we have, following advice from Eye Runners (please do not hesitate to give us the benefit of your expertise), limited younger runners to those aged between 10 years up to 15 years, to the 6.5 km Welches Dam route (all runners and cyclists under 16 years will require parental permission). The Welches Dam route is a little more than the 5kms normally set young runners in competitive events, but OWE is not a timed event and the route is completely straight and on the level for this first section so we feel it offers a reasonable challenge for a well prepared young athlete. There will be marshals at at least 2 points between the Mepal Bridge Start and Welches Dam, these marshals will have some water and first aid back up will be available from Welches Dam. Arrangements for runners' warm clothing bags to be transported to either Welches Dam or Welney Village Hall are in also in place.

For cyclists we are arranging for a free pick up from the Three Pickerels Pub, (by minibus and bike trailer) for groups who opt to cycle to Mepal Village via country lanes from Littleport, Ely, and other villages like Sutton, thus avoiding the need to use the A142. These cyclists will be transported directly to the start and will form the rearguard of the event's participants probably leaving Mepal Bridge around 10.30am. The Three Pickerels has agreed to open early around 9.30am (only soft drinks teas and coffee no alcohol! but you can get that at the Lamb and Flag if you finish at Welney!)

To access the Eventbrite registration webpage directly:- please click on

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/ouse-washes-experience-registration-9680706253>

Regards, Mike Anthony
17th February

www.rotaryclubely-hereward.org

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