

## Wessex report - Flowerpots ride: January 2013

A sunny Sunday with springtime temperatures in late January found seven tandems and a solo gathered at the cafe of Eastleigh's Recreation Centre for pre-ride coffees and map briefing. The now annual Flower Pots ride took us, led as usual by David and Ann Friend, through the Hampshire lanes and over a few hills (with some great downhills following) to the Flower Pots Inn at Cheriton, known for its good ales, tasty bar lunches and roaring log fires. En route we spotted snowdrops and daffodils, and even a hawthorn bush and wild clematis just coming into leaf.

A brief shower during our leisurely lunch was followed by more sun as we wound our way back over the hills. Sheila and John Ward, spurred on by comments in the Journal about boring photos of regional rides, tried to pull ahead several times and take interesting and dynamic photos with Sheila's new smart-phone. However, Sheila was fighting the technology and losing, and the views, while fine, were distant and behind a leafless hedge. Jane was doing better with her free Strava app, which records her rides, and immediately afterwards could report that we had climbed 1,260ft and our maximum elevation was 590ft at Beacon Hill. The total distance was just over 30 miles in all and it was a good day out.

