



The Open University  
Y Brifysgol Agored

# **Cycling organisations: representation, accountability and effectiveness**

Hugh Mackay, Tom Wells & Hilary Reed

Cycling & Society conference, Lancaster, Sept 2016



# The governance of cycling

- Cycles
- Cyclists
- Cycling
- Regulation
- Provision
- Organisations



# Cycling organisations

- Bicycle Association
- Association of Cycle Traders
- Cycle to Work Alliance
- European Cycling Federation
- World Cycling Alliance
- Local cycling campaigns + Cyclenation
- Road racing clubs
- Local cycling groups and clubs
- Cycling UK, Sustrans and British Cycling

# we are cycling

The cyclists' champion **UK**



- Formerly CTC, founded 1878, 68,000 members
- 100 local groups + 700 affiliate groups
- Income £6m pa, 45 FTE employees
- Campaigns e.g. Fill that hole, Space for cycling
- Projects e.g. Bikeability, Belles on Bikes
- Service provision & lobbying govt balance
- Few active members
- Services provided changed: members -> govt
- Right to ride network/ local campaigners



# Cycling UK governance

- Trustees: 26 regional reps -> 12 with relevant skills
- Committee vets apps and advises electorate (members)
- No regional or functional representation
- 3 year terms, renewable up to 3 times
- Reduced accountability to members
- Shift from democratic to business-like
- 'Volunteers' rather than members
- No accommodation of devolution in the UK



- Founded (as Bicycle Union) in 1878
- Members: 2005:15k; 2012:50k; 2016:125k
- 2,100 local clubs which organise 4,000 sporting events
- Income £26m (4 x Cycling UK/ half Sustrans)
- 250 staff, mostly in Manchester
- Oversees competitive cycling, issues race licences
- Sky rides, Ride social and breeze
- Recently, campaigning for utilitarian cycling
- Not a charity. Democratic organisation: club members elect Regional Councils which elect National Council



- Founded 1977
- Charity but no members (supporters and volunteers)
- 570 FTE staff
- Income £44m – over 90% from CG, LG & lottery
- Serves govt while enrolling supporters
- No local groups, but ‘volunteer rangers’
- Shifted attitudes
- Own research & methodologies
- NCN
- Working with Las, not campaigning
- Effective gov’t lobbying: Active Travel (Wales) Act

# Conclusions: governance & representation



- Growth of gov't lobbying: multiple voices/ turf wars
- Gov't funding of civil society organisations (implications for cycling orgs of the 'hollowed out' state)
- New opportunities, pressures, activities
- New accountability and governance
- Mutuality + shared values ->service delivery & market accountability
- 'Mission drift'/ grant-driven
- Do they serve govts or members?
- Meaning of members changing with social media
- Decline in participation (R Putnam)





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