

Dear DA and Section Secretaries,

Please see the letter below from Jill Kieran, CTC Council's Group Development Co-ordinator. The revised Policy Handbook for CTC Groups and Organising Committees is attached to this email.

If you have any queries about the Policy Handbook please contact myself or Jill Kieran.

Best wishes

Alex Geen

CTC Local Groups, Events and Volunteers Officer.

Dear Colleagues

Updating CTC's policy handbook for local groups.

Thank you to those colleagues who have contacted myself and Alex Geen directly with your further comments about the policy handbook. I am particularly pleased that the changes we have made to clarify the position of sections have been well received, I am sorry this caused so much concern in the first version.

Before referring you to the detailed revisions we have been working on can I take this opportunity to tell you the overall position of CTC Council at this point which I hope reflect the most significant concerns you have raised.

Why do we need changes?

We have been discussing and consulting on these changes for over two years, council has received an enormous amount of feedback from a wide range of sources. We have also completely reviewed the legal and constitutional issues we need to take into account since the DA handbook was last altered in the early 90's.

It is clear we need some changes because:

We have to change some of our policies to let you as groups make the changes you have asked for.

We have to change some things because legal or insurance frameworks have changed and we need to protect the integrity of what you do from outside regulation.

We have to change some things because for every group that is successful we have others that are struggling or have experienced significant operational issues on which they have needed the detailed help of council or staff and gaps in our procedures have been exposed.

In many cases these issues will be invisible to many groups, often they are only changes that need to be made to protect you in the event that something goes awry, so we just need to get the background paperwork in place.

And it is equally clear that such changes should enable those groups who have no current need for change to continue much as they do now, but offer the potential for change to those that need it.

So can I therefore make the following commitment on behalf of council:

As the governing body of CTC we need to update our policy handbook for local groups. As the current handbook retains wording that was created in 1973 we recognise that the whole document has needed a significant re-write.

It is our clear intention that its implementation is to support our existing local groups and the way they choose to operate. Therefore the handbook will be phased in during 2007 and 2008 and where groups do not wish to significantly change the way they currently operate we will work with each individual group to establish how they continue under this new policy framework. We expect the policies to be in place nationally from January 2008 and that groups are phasing in relevant changes from October 2007 to September 2008.

Where any policies prove problematic we will use this period to monitor your feedback and make further relevant changes.

Timetable

I have reported the concerns raised by a number of groups about the timetable to the relevant council committee.

The committee endorsed a recommendation that we continue with implementing the new policy structure this autumn, as long as it was clear to groups that we want a phased and supported implementation that gives groups time to gather their thoughts as above.

For those that have welcomed the refreshment of the guidance then please continue to develop your thoughts and move forward at your AGMs.

For those that need more time to reflect can I strongly recommend that you do not spend significant time considering every page of the policy document. We cannot expect to cover the nuances of every group in national policy guidance. Instead spend your time being clear about the kind of group you are and the way you and your members want to continue in the future.

If you then cannot find the appropriate framework within the new policy handbook contact myself or one of our support staff and we will try to find information about how other groups have faced the same issue or offer you

some suggested interpretations, but this is always much clearer if you know what you want to achieve, working in hypothetical situations doesn't help any of us, this is now a practical process.

Details

Those changes that are relevant to the majority of groups have now been included in a redraft of the Policy Handbook. (enclosed).

Many questions or comments we have received are either very specific to an individual group or covered by existing changes. Where answers to these individual comments are still not clear then we will continue working through them. It would be helpful if those that have submitted several comments could come back and tell us which if any you consider to be outstanding after you have read this letter and the re-draft.

We want to do a final redraft at some point that takes on board all your comments about continuity and clarity of style and language. While we are still redrafting and getting input from a wide range of sources this is very difficult. Please can we ask you to work with the version you have received for the moment and allow us to take breath and listen to your comments over the next couple of months so we can move forward to a final version for January 2008.

What else is happening?

I am delighted to tell you that some of the supporting work we have been planning for local groups is beginning to slot into place.

In particular I would like to give you early notice that we would like to hold another 2 day local groups conference on the weekend of 29th and 30th March 2008. This time we are seeking a venue in the Midlands or Northern England, we will come back to you soon.

At the conference I hope we will be able to introduce you to our new development team of 13 officers and two managers who will be based around England from next year, paid of by the BIG lottery fund. There will be an article in the magazine in a couple of weeks time telling you more.

And for those of you with an interest in the area it looks like we have some strong leads for Birthday Rides in 2008 and beyond.

If I can remind you again please give some thought to nominating your volunteers and groups for voluntary group of the year 2007.

Best wishes

Jill Kieran

CTC Council's Group Development Co-ordinator

Alexandra Geen

CTC Local Groups, Events and Volunteers Officer

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CTC - the UK's national cyclists' organisation provides a comprehensive range of services, advice, events, and protection for its members.

CTC Charitable Trust, CTC's charity arm, works to promote cycling by raising public and political awareness of its health, social and environmental benefits, and by working with all communities to help realise those benefits.

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