

A brief history of CWA, CWAS & Selkirk Community Chapter

Cycling Without Age (Globally)

Cycling Without Age (CWA) is a movement started in 2012 by a Danish Doctor called Ole Kassow. Ole wanted to help the elderly get back on their bicycles, but he had to find a solution to their limited mobility. The answer was a trishaw and he hired one of these and started offering free bike rides to the local nursing home residents.

He then got in touch with a civil society consultant from the City of Copenhagen, Dorthe Pedersen, who was intrigued by the idea and together they bought five trishaws and launched Cycling Without Age. That was the start of CWA which soon spread to all corners of Denmark. In 2015 the first Chapter outside Denmark was set up in Norway. Since then, CWA has spread to another 50 countries around the world including Scotland. A "Chapter" is the name selected by CWA to describe any individual group operating one or more Trishaws. There are now over 2,200 Chapters around the World. Not bad for a largely voluntary organisation which is only 8 years old.

Cycling Without Age Scotland

Cycling Without Age Scotland (CWAS) was established in 2018. Scotland is unique among the countries with a CWA presence, in that it is the only one which receives any support, financial or otherwise, from central Government. This means that Scotland has a centrally funded organisational structure and staff, able to support Chapters through their start up process and go on to give ongoing support to the established Chapters. They are able to give invaluable help and guidance with all aspects of Trishaw acquisition and maintenance, Insurance, Pilot Training and accreditation and all the necessary documentation.

The creation of Cycling Without Age Scotland was approved by the Holyrood Parliament in 2018, with all party support.

Some Numbers

Heading	CWA (Global)	CWA Scotland	
		2018	2019 20 figures
Formed	2012	2018 19 Report	2019 20 figures
Info. From	CWA Web Site	23 Local Authorities	27 L.A.
Active where	50 Countries	17	32 Active 30 Pending
Chapters	2200	38	86
Trishaws	3000	1864	2,400+ (estimate)
Pilots	33,000		

The ethos of Cycling Without Age is simple. It is a voluntary organisation which aims to enable elderly, house bound or mobility limited folk to get out and about.

This will then allow them to reconnect with their local community, to reduce social isolation and, to use CWA's strapline "To feel the wind in their hair" again.

There are many more sources of information, where you can see much more about CWAS and CWA should you wish.

Cycling Without Age : Scotland : <https://cyclingwithoutage.scot/>

Cycling Without Age (Global) : <https://cyclingwithoutage.org/>

Hear a message from the founder : <https://youtu.be/O6Ti4qUa-OU>

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Cycling Without Age Scotland : Selkirk Community Chapter

We first encountered Trishaws in Hawick where the "Chapter" there already has 2 in action around Wilton Park and its environs. A "Chapter" is the term used by Cycling Without Age for each of the Groups or organisations operating Trishaws.

With assistance from the Hawick Chapter, we held a demonstration in July where we were able to let interested groups see the Trishaws in action. After this demonstration, we established a Steering Group to set up a Chapter in Selkirk. This Group was comprised of members from several different existing organisations in the Town and we feel this breadth of personnel has created a strong and resilient Committee structure from that initial Steering Group. Each member of the Steering Group brought their own experience, knowledge and expertise to the Group. Once the Steering group had done the initial preparation work, we became a formally constituted Chapter of Cycling without Age Scotland (CWA-S) on the 6th of October. Since then, we have been identifying fund raising opportunities with a view to obtaining 2 Trishaws and a wheelchair carrier Trishaw for Selkirk in time to be "Up and Running" by the late Spring or early Summer of 2021. Much of our plans involve co-operative working with the Haining Trust and Volunteers. We would envisage all the early outings taking place on the recently improved network of paths around the Haining Loch. With new paths being planned and created as part of the Haining House and Estate Developments we hope to expand on what we can offer there, as well as identifying and assessing the suitability of other routes around Selkirk. We are also using the Haining Grounds for "Pilot" training with an on-loan Trishaw from the Scottish H.Q. of CWA-S in Falkirk.

The whole ethos of Cycling Without Age is to offer the opportunity to elderly and "Mobility Limited" individuals to get out and about in their Community. A guiding principle of CWA world-wide is to reduce Social Isolation. This ties in very well with the general approach of various Covid Recovery schemes, although not linked to any one specifically. When we have been carrying out our training runs around the Haining, the reactions and obvious support we have received from every one that we met is incredibly encouraging. A number of folk have already experienced the benefits of a "trip round the Haining Loch". They have been our best ambassadors in spreading the word around the town. We already have good contacts with the Care Homes and Sheltered Housing residences in Selkirk and will be in a good position to start offering our services to their residents. Sadly this isn't allowed yet due to Covid, which is why we have set a target start date of late Spring next year. By this time, some of the current Covid 19 restrictions will hopefully have been eased.

Being able to obtain a Trishaw in the near future would allow us to continue with this awareness raising and training secure in the knowledge that we will have one available to us at all times. The one we have just now is "on loan" from CWAS and could easily be recalled at any time to be used by any other Chapter in their Set Up phase. The Trishaws we have "earmarked" for us by CWAS are also a slightly different model, more appropriate to the hilly terrain in Selkirk, so our training would be more relevant, and guaranteed to continue, with the model we hope to be using next year.

In discussion with a representative of the Care Homes in Selkirk, we received the following response:-

In the greater Selkirk area there are three aged care facilities with a combined total of 105 rooms. Many of our residents suffer from age-related ailments including dementia, cognitive impairment and a variety of physical illnesses.

Making the trishaw mobility bike available for our residents will allow more frequent and safe access to the Haining, allowing them to experience the benefits of a fantastic outdoor environment in a controlled manner and with appropriate supervision.

As many of our residents grew up or lived in the Selkirk area prior to entering into our care, it also allows them a valuable opportunity to socially interact with family and friends in a familiar location.

We are positive that there will be additional benefits that haven't been considered through an engagement with Cycling Without Age, and we look forward to bringing positive change to the lives of the residents in our care.