



MARK WATERS

AFTER 13 YEARS WITH CTC, MARK WATERS RETIRED AS AN INFORMATION OFFICER JUST AS THIS ISSUE WENT TO PRESS. BEFORE HE LEFT, HE SPOKE TO DAN JOYCE ABOUT HIS ROLE

You wouldn't guess from meeting him that Mark Waters has his bus pass: like many cyclists, he doesn't look his age. Unless you're a Surrey club cyclist or have been on one of the tours he's led, you probably *won't* have met him face to face. But if you've ever phoned CTC, the chances are good that you'll have heard his urbane diction, as he is (or was) one of CTC's three Information Officers.

'We are all active cyclists in different fields,' Mark says. 'I focus on touring and travelling abroad and so on. I've been a CTC club cyclist from the mid '80s.'

He's an audax rider too. 'I was doing a London to Paris charity ride for the NSPCC when I bumped into a chap who told me about audax. I joined up immediately and rode Paris-Brest-Paris in 1991.'

His cycling and outdoors background – he's a qualified outdoor education instructor and was a mountaineer – made

him an ideal candidate when the job of touring advisor, as it was, came up at CTC.

'For me, it's been the best job in the world,' he says. 'I really enjoy speaking to members. It's not every job where you're able to provide solutions to people's problems by giving them the information they need. It's hugely satisfying.'

The Information Officers are the first point of contact for anyone who gets in

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touch with CTC. That means the public as well as CTC members. Mark says: 'We've got to be ready to answer questions on insurance, on health and fitness, training, on routes and touring, but really anything.'

As well as replying directly to queries, the Information Officers have a library

of information sheets to send out on a range of tours and topics. New members might be unaware of how much cycling information the team has at hand.

'They're not secrets,' says Mark, 'but I wonder how many members know about the Cape Wrath Fellowship, for example? Then there's British Cycle Quest.'

British Cycle Quest (BCQ) is a kind of nationwide cycling 'treasure hunt', where participants visit up to 402 destinations across the UK, answering a question to prove that they've been there. It's a perfect excuse to go cycling somewhere new.

Mark was the administrator for BCQ and has ticked off some of the clues himself. His problem, as with all of us who spend eight hours a day at work, has been finding the time to get on his bike.

'I hope to do more cycling once I leave,' he says. 'I've already got four tours in the planning stage and would like to support other CTC tour leaders too.'

Call the CTC Information Office on 0844 736 8450 or email cycling@ctc.org.uk



Photo: Chris Juden