

December 2025

Volunteer

NEWSLETTER 4.



Cycling is enjoyed by all , whatever their ability!



Safe Environment | Qualified Instructors | Bikes Provided | Ideal for Beginners

OUR NEWS...

Another successful
Mince Pie Run

Ride It
For James

SWFA supported
Events

Introducing our next
STAR of the MONTH
and our new
SPOTLIGHT on who?



Volunteers - WE WANT YOU - Our Thanks To... - Diary Dates



Solihull Wheels For All is a charity registered in England and Wales, charity number: 1181993.



£601 raised!

Another Successful Mince Pie Run!



Solihull Cycling Club held their annual **Mince Pie Run** at Lawsonford Village Hall on 30th November.

Supported by volunteers from SWFA, the event raised an amazing **£601** for us at **Solihull Wheels for All** — a fantastic increase from last year's £410!

We're so grateful for all the delicious cake and mince pie donations.

Extra kudos to everyone who cycled to the event - despite the chilly start!

Time trial event
(Birmingham Midland Cycling)

Ride It For James



Ride It for James event came about in 2021 from a simple desire to “do something” to support James, who suffered a life-changing accident in 2020 which sadly brought his cycling career to an end. James had ridden with a cycling group alongside our own SWFA volunteer, **Graham**, and is someone who truly embodies the spirit of the cycling community.

The photo above was taken by James (right) during a Dynamic Rides sportive many years ago. At the time, (Graham, left) was recovering from an ankle injury and was struggling to keep up. As he dropped back, James did too, saying, “**We started together and we are going to finish together.**” Words that have stayed with Graham ever since — especially coming from an elite rider.

In 2025, SWFA was proud to support the event once again, and **Ride It for James** was a great success — and, above all, a lot of fun. Twenty-six cyclists completed the 9.6-mile route, with Solihull Wheels for All volunteers supporting the day both at H.Q. in Knowle and marshalling at Five Ways Island. They also ensured plenty of cups of tea and coffee were available. Thankfully, the weather was on our side!



★ *Ride It For James event winning time - 9.6 miles in 22 mins 26 seconds* ★



We’re also delighted that **BMC** has once again chosen **SWFA** as their Charity of the Year; a huge thank you to everyone involved, and especially to Graham. Since the event, **BMC** has announced a donation of **£707** to Solihull Wheels for All. Thank you so much; we will ensure this money supports our service users, just as **James intended**.

SWFA members have been busy actively supporting some recent community events. Our presence has enriched our knowledge and provided the public with information about our provision.

On Sunday 19th October, we were present at Tudor Grange Leisure Centre in support of British Blind Sport's 'Festival of Sport' event. We chatted to several organisations and many potential service users. We would like to extend our appreciation to **Simmie** who created Braille leaflets in support of SWFA.



Inclusive Multi-Sport Festival!



We attended Access Sport's Inclusive **Multi-Sport Festival** on Sunday 9th November at King Edwards VI Handsworth School for Girls.

It's always insightful to see what other community events provide.

Gary and Joe attend the **Include Me Games 2025** event, held at north Solihull Sports Centre back in October 27th. It is a FREE event (usually annual) for people with disabilities and health conditions to try inclusive sports like archery, boccia, basketball, and more, plus connect with support services.





Star of the month

Meet Alan Thomson

Alan is our bike guru. He has much knowledge of bikes and is always on hand to apply this.

ALAN

Alan has been involved with SWFA since its inception and played a key role in establishing the charity in 2019 after council funding was withdrawn. He was the charity's first **Chair of Trustees** and remains deeply committed, attending almost every session. Most recently, he has supported events including Cerebral Palsy sessions, British Blind Sports, and the Mince Pie Run.

Alongside Joe, Alan takes the lead on Bikeability and is **particularly skilled at adapting bikes to meet individual needs**; including modifying tricycles to make them more assistive for both service users and support workers.

He previously worked as a maintenance engineer at Lucas Aerospace - which may explain his love of tinkering with bikes. Alan is also a keen member of Solihull Cycling Club. Together with Arthur, Alan is one of our main links with the club.

Fun fact: Another of Alan's skills is his ability to graciously slip down the grassy slope on a wet morning at one of our open sessions. :-)

We need more people like Alan. Could you help us to help others?



David

We're shining a spotlight on one of our Trustees or Volunteers to give you a glimpse into the people who help run and support Solihull Wheels for All.



Spotlight On:

**David Williams,
Our Trustee and Treasurer.**

This month's spotlight is on **David**, who would be the first to admit he was never really a cyclist - unless you count the odd family bike ride at Center Parcs!

After a long and varied career across several industries, David finished his working life with the insurance arm of BNP Paribas, retiring in 2018. A keen rugby player, he played well into his 40s before returning to another long-time favourite: golf.

So how did a non-cyclist end up becoming such a key part of Solihull Wheels for All? Family connections played their part, with David's daughter marrying the Chairman's son - but what started as a small favour soon became something much more.

David originally agreed (slightly reluctantly!) to volunteer just once a fortnight. Fast forward 18 months and he was not only fully hooked, he also found himself being appointed as both a Trustee and Treasurer. These days, you'll often find him supporting Monday morning sessions or helping out on trips to Merstone School and the North Solihull Leisure Centre.

Any early doubts quickly disappeared. David now says **"The best part of volunteering is seeing the sheer joy it brings - those smiles, laughs, and moments when people realise they *can* enjoy cycling, no matter their fears, injuries, or disabilities."**

When he's not volunteering, David keeps busy with an ever-growing DIY project at his daughter and son-in-law's house (which shows no sign of ending!), with the occasional game of golf squeezed in when time allows.

David's story shows that you don't need to be a cyclist to make a difference - **just willing to get involved**. If you'd like to be part of something rewarding, friendly, and full of smiles... **volunteer with us**.

JOIN OUR VOLUNTEER TEAM

solihull
WHEELS
FOR ALL

CAN YOU SPARE SOME TIME TO SUPPORT OUR SERVICE USERS?

WHO WE ARE.

We provide *inclusive cycling opportunities* for people of all abilities, including those with disabilities or limited mobility. Our aim is to make the joy and freedom of cycling accessible to everyone.



WHAT WE OFFER VOLUNTEERS.

- Flexible commitment – no obligation to attend every week
- A welcoming and supportive environment, focused on promoting fun and enjoyment
- Full training provided



WHAT WILL YOU BE DOING?

- Helping set up and pack away equipment
- Assisting service users with helmets and bike use
- Encouraging and engaging with participants
- Option to ride alongside with service users
- Completing a compulsory DBS check



HOW TO GET INVOLVED.

- Download our volunteer form [here](#).
- Email your completed form or any questions to: solihullwfaenquiries@gmail.com
- Visit our website: solihullwheelsforall.org.uk
- Find us on Facebook: facebook.com/solihullwheels

SESSION TIMES MON & WED: 10:30—12:30 at TUDOR GRANGE.
MON (BST ONLY): 6PM—7PM

everyone
ACTIVE

COMMUNITY
FUND

COMMUNITY
CHAMPIONS



Thank you

**More Bikes Donated.
We Welcome a New Volunteer.**

A huge thank you once again to **Alan Thomson** for securing another fantastic trike donation (see photo above!). It's brand new and looking great in pink - we're sure it will bring lots of smiles and happy rides to everyone who gets to enjoy it.

We'd also like to say thank you for the donation of a **Saracen mountain bike**, kindly given by a friend of our volunteer **Rob**. These generous donations make a real difference to what we can offer our riders.

One of our tricycles has been on loan for the past two to three months with Bike Right, who are providing Bikeability sessions at a couple of schools in Birmingham. The tricycle enables pupils with specific needs to take part in cycling training. Bike Right have generously donated £50 for the use of the tricycle. Thank you very much from us all.

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Welcome Steve Evans – A Valued New Volunteer at SWFA

We're delighted to welcome Steve, who joined SWFA as a volunteer in the middle of June. Following the track resurfacing, he has been attending and supporting our service users at our Tudor Grange sessions every Wednesday.

Thank you to our longer-standing volunteer, Paul Bailey, for introducing both Steve Evans and previously, Paul Dean to us over the past year. We're very lucky to have Steve as part of the SWFA community and look forward to all that lies ahead with him on the team.

Thank you, Steve, for your commitment and support - we really appreciate it!

If you are interested in becoming a **volunteer**,
please email us at: solihullwfaenquiries@gmail.com

Diary Dates and Notices



Solihull Wheels for All has been given a boost from **Everyone Active** in the borough as part of the **Community Champions** scheme, which supports projects addressing local issues and changing lives. We have been kindly allocated **£1,000** to use at **Tudor Grange Leisure Centre** until the end of **March 2026**, for the benefit of our service users.



National Lottery Open Week returns from **7th to 15th March**, giving projects and venues across the UK the chance to say a huge thank you to the players who raise **£30 million every week** for good causes.

To mark this, **Solihull Wheels for All** will be running **free sessions from 7th to 15th March 2026** to thank our service users and to support National Lottery Open Week.



Let's hope for dry weather!

We hope to see you at our weekly open sessions held at:

Tudor Grange Leisure Centre

Monday's and Wednesday's from 10:30-12:30pm.

We also provide off-site sessions. Please see our social media pages for dates.

Our **AGM** will be held in January. Date is TBC.

FINALLY FOR 2025, A HUGE THANK YOU TO ...

ALL our Volunteers and Service Users who have supported/attended our sessions.