

SMCTC Report on web site and WhatsApp groups

Roger Hubbard, March 2022

Our website (smctc.org.uk) is our main vehicle for publicising our club and its activities, and for attracting new members. I've been responsible for authoring and maintaining the website for the past 10 years. The site has been redesigned several times using different technologies, from authoring directly in HTML, then using a Mac-based system (Sandvox) to generate code, to the current setup employing GoDaddy's *Websites and Authoring* software.

GoDaddy have provided the hosting for the website for several years; the use of their authoring software was a logical step because it provides a web-based system that doesn't rely on any specific computer. This makes it possible for more than one individual to update the site, and the resulting design recognises mobile devices automatically and adapts to them. Additionally, updates to the site can be made from a mobile device, though this is only suitable for minor changes.

The current cost of this service is £143 a year for the authoring software and hosting service, plus £23 a year for a fully protected domain name registration. This represents a significant increase from earlier years (just over £100 four years ago), but at that time we were paying only for the domain and hosting, not the authoring software. The increased flexibility and ease of authoring are, in my opinion, worth the extra cost. GoDaddy have offered a very reliable service and I'm happy to recommend their continued use.

In October 2021 I created three WhatsApp groups for the club: SMCTC, SMCTC Vets, and SMCTC Chat. These have proved popular for exchanging information about rides, and especially for last-minute updates, as well as for general notices.

We also have a web page on the Cycling UK pages. This is used mainly as a placeholder for those searching for clubs or rides in our area and contains a link to our private web pages. Most people who've joined us in recent years have found our own web pages directly via search engines.

Although prepared to continue in my role, I feel now is a good time to hand over to a younger member, who can bring fresh ideas.