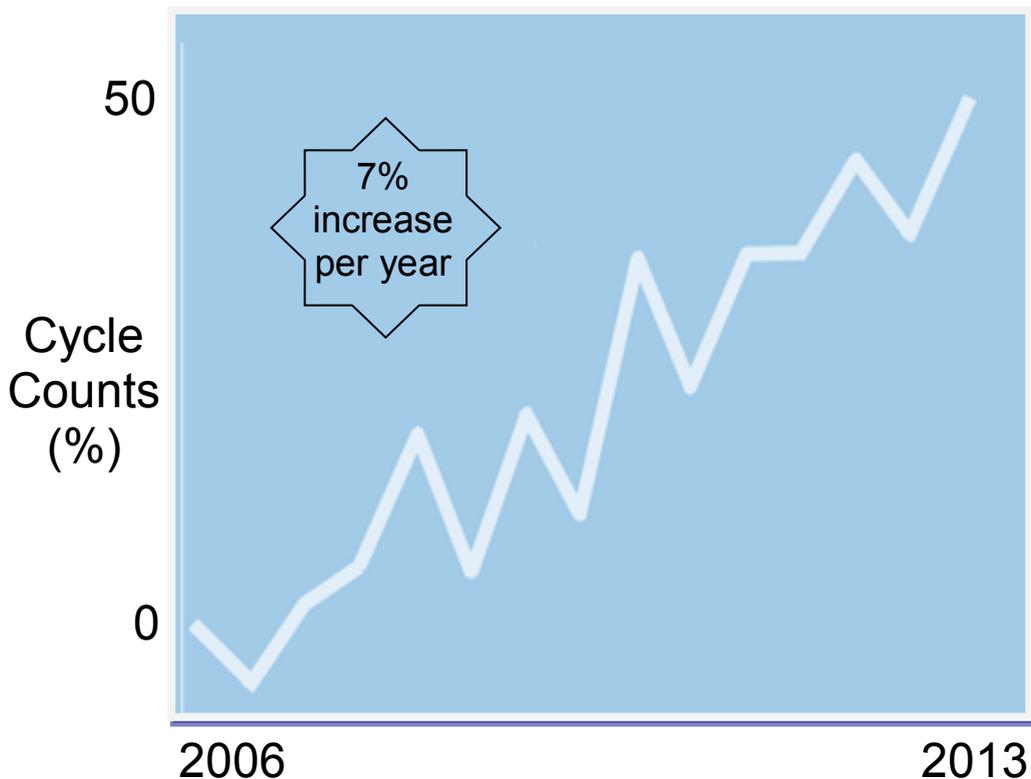




**Cycling continues
to increase and
become cool
as
traffic declines**

Issue 67
October 2013

The Voice of Cycling Campaign for North Bedfordshire



Bedford Station cycle parking counts

CYCLING CAMPAIGN FOR NORTH BEDFORDSHIRE

Founded 1992

Committee

Chairperson	Hazel Mitchell
Vice-Chair	Peter Blakeman
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Promotional website: <http://www.cyclebedford.org.uk>

Campaigning Representation

CCNB is represented on the following committees:

Bedford Cycle Strategy Group

Bedfordshire Rural Transport Partnership Forum

and is a key stakeholder on the preparation and implementation of the:

Bedford Green Wheel

Bedford Stations Travel Plan

Local Transport Plan (LTP3)

It is affiliated to  (<http://www.cyclenation.org.uk>)

Bedford Borough Council Contacts:

Cycling and Walking Officer - (01234) 276328

Bikeability (Cycle Training) - (01234) 228336

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Editorial

The media has recently been asking the question posed by CCNB in a previous newsletter - Is the UK and Europe's love affair with the motor car over?

Although car sales in the UK have increased this year in the rest of Europe they have been at the lowest level since before 1990. All countries are seeing an increase in the number of cyclists and cycling is becoming cool.

In Bedford, CCNB's regular cycle counts in the town centre and at the railway station (cover) both show an average increase of 7% per year since 2006.

Cycling is becoming cool

To cater for this and to encourage more residents to take up cycling on a regular basis the Borough continues to improve the cycle network to make it safer, particularly in the installation of cycle lanes and Advanced Stop Lines (ASLs) at signalled junctions in conjunction with their road maintenance programme.

As a result of the Local Sustainability Transport Fund's three year grant given to Bedford for its 'Access to Stations' project last year we are now starting to see a lot of other cycle infrastructure and improvements on the ground.

Cyclists in a survey at the railway station during this year's Bike Week said they preferred to cycle along tarmacked off-road cycle paths with quiet residential roads coming a close second. Busy roads were the least favoured option but if they had cycle lanes along them more than half said they would use them (page 20).

Travel Plans must be monitored and regularly updated

It is important that all the developments currently taking place around the town are connected to the cycle network at the earliest opportunity to encourage new residents to consider cycling as their mode of transport for short journeys. A lot of major planning applications contain a Travel Plan with actions stating how they will promote sustainable transport. It is important these actions are carried out, monitored and regularly updated and that the Travel Plan is not merely filed away or archived as soon as the application is granted.

Many cyclists take advantage of visiting more cycle friendly areas during their vacations (page 20) although not many would use it to compete in an exhausting sportive event (page 24).

A 'Get Britain Cycling' debate took place in Parliament at the beginning of the Autumn session in September (page 30). We now await to hear the Government's announcement for further funding for cycling.

Riverside Cycle/Pedestrian Bridge Now Open

Network Rail during August 2013 invited the public at their own risk to use this new bridge on a permissive basis for a trial period prior to it becoming a formal public right of way.

The bridge has a non-slip surface and it is easy to ride up and down using a standard bicycle as long as there are no pedestrians or other cyclists. During short visits by your Editor only one cyclist has been seen to go and admire the views (below) while dozens continue to use the original underpass.

It was noted that the bridge was already collecting rubbish including a broken glass bottle and the internal top deck sides starting to be covered in graffiti.



NW - !2 car carriage sidings



E - River and Borough Hall

Cycle Schemes Recently Completed

Goldington Road Cycle Lanes

Resurfacing of Goldington Road from Polhill Avenue to St Peter's, including the Kimbolton Road gyratory system, was carried out during June 2013 and wider cycle lanes put in from St Peter's to Phillpotts Avenue. It was not possible to continue the cycle lanes as far as the Polhill Avenue junction due to the carriageway width in this section and the need to provide parking bays or to install an Advanced Stop Line (ASL) at the junction due to the expense of moving the loops in the road for the light sequence. Markings were completed a few weeks later after the new surface had been allowed to settle.



As part of the work the cycle pinch point outside the Cricketer's Arms has now been removed, an outstanding CCNB request from 2004.



Cricketer's Arms Pinch Point



After with wider lanes



The cycle lanes are protected from parked vehicles by double yellow lines but unfortunately from Bushmead Avenue to Phillpotts Avenue they are only protected by single yellow lines from 7am to 7pm on Mondays to Saturdays with no loading between 7am and 10am and 3.30pm and 7pm. The rest of the time vehicles are allowed to park on them, thus negating their use (see above photograph showing parked cars on both sides of Goldington Road near Howbury Street on a Sunday lunchtime).



Morrisons Amphill Road New Store

The new Morrisons superstore opened its doors on 18 August 2013 and has immediately been the place to go. The store has a reasonable number of cycle stands under cover near to the entrance although access from the upgraded Amphill Road dual use track could have been better. To access the car park and the new petrol station a new traffic signaled junction has been created with advanced stop lines (ASLs) for cyclists on either side of Amphill Road and a toucan crossing across the entrance road for the dual use track.



View of dual use track and bus lane looking north from uncontrolled delivery road

'Sheffield' type cycle parking stands near store entrance already well used



Ridge Road New Roundabout

As part of the Kempston West development a new roundabout has been installed between Hill Rise and the roundabout at the Western Bypass. This will act as the junction for the spine road linking the current development off Cemetery Road with the one at Bedford Meadows near Woburn Road/Marsh Leys.

As part of the construction the cycle track along Ridge Road has now been extended from the Western Bypass underpass as far as the roundabout. A cycle track from the northern arm of the new roundabout will eventually join the one which crosses Cemetery Road and become part of the diverted National Cycle Network Route 51 through Great Denham. The north west corner is the proposed site of the new Kempston Rural school.



Looking north to new roundabout (above) and south to Western Bypass underpass (right)



Wilmers Corner - Improved Roundabout

The Wilmers Corner roundabout has had one of the highest accident records in the Borough and has been for many years a no-go for many cyclists.

In conjunction with the new Morrisons store in Amphill Road improvements have been made to the roundabout over the last two months. As well as crossing points on each arm for pedestrians which include a new Zebra crossing in Amphill Road and an upgrade of the original one in Rope Walk, cyclists have been catered for by the introduction of cycle lanes around the outside of the roundabout.

Observations on two occasions however have not shown many cyclists using the new lanes, most cyclists preferring to go around the roundabout using the paths and two Zebra crossings.



Cycle Lane prior to markings

One of many cyclists using the Zebra crossings



B&Q Store Cycle Link

As part of the Section 106 agreement associated with the development of a B&Q store in Ampthill Road east the developer had to provide a cycle link from the store to connect to the main cycle network, in this case a short section of off-road cycle track on the south side of the road together with a toucan crossing to join up to the cycle track along the north side from the West End/Cow Bridge junction to the Interchange Park.



Toucan crossing linking new track on left to the B&Q store with the existing track on right entering Interchange Park

Russell Park Paths

Two previously unsurfaced tracks on the north side of Russell Park near the childrens playground have been surfaced and link Shaftsbury Avenue to the main path around the park. On the north west side the link to Bushmead Avenue has been resurfaced. Dropped kerbs have been installed at both the Shaftsbury Avenue and Bushmead Avenue ends.

These improvements give a good alternative route from the Newnham Avenue area to the town centre via Kingsley Road and Waterloo Road.

Thurne Way Link to Woodlands Park

The previously muddy (in wet weather) link from Thurne Way to the new footpath/cycleway along the southern edge of the Woodlands Park development was tarmacked during July 2013. The latter is part of the Bedford Green Wheel. A small but important improvement scheme.



After



Before

Clapham Road Path - Resurfacing

A section of the dual use path to Clapham along the west side of Clapham Road from the end of the cottages to the entrance to the water works has been resurfaced as one of the 'Access to Stations' project.

Riverside Link to Great Denham

The dual use path along the Riverside which was widened and resurfaced south of Woodstock Road in 2011 has now been extended (October 2013) as far as the Great Denham development.

The work has been managed by Sustrans using a grant obtained from the Department for Transport.

In the future the section will become part of the new alignment of National Cycle Network Route 51.



Photo (also below left) - Simon Fisher



Link east



Link west - right to Great Denham

Cycle Schemes Underway or Imminent

Norse Road Toucan

As part of the Section 106 agreement of the planning application for the Orbit development site in Norse Road next to Bedford Cemetery a toucan has been provided across Norse Road near to Poppyfields to allow vulnerable residents to easily access the school and shops in Church Lane.

Goldington Road/St Neots Road Dual Use Path

The north side path of Goldington Road and St Neots Road from the Riverfield Drive roundabout to the Great Barford Road at the Southern Bypass junction will be made officially into a dual use path shortly. In 1999 the Highways Agency widened the path to create a cycle track but it was never officially designated as one even though the old County Council mentioned it in a number of documents.

At the same time the west side footpath of Norse Road from the roundabout at Goldington Road as far as Hudson Road will be converted to dual use and link up with the existing dual use path from this point to Church Road/Hookham Lane.

Bedford Station Additional Cycle Parking Stands

Work has finally started on installing approximately 150 additional cycle parking spaces at Bedford station. In view of the space constraints in the station forecourt area 100 of the stands will be in the form of double deckers.

The cover of this newsletter shows the progressive increase in cycle parking at the station over the last few years necessitating the additional stands.

Union Street Roundabout Remodelling

Work is expected to commence by the end of October 2013 on the remodelling the Union St/Roff Av/Tavistock St/Clapham Rd roundabout into a turbo type which will make it safer for cyclists and pedestrians.

'Garibaldi' Bridge

Work will start during October on the long awaited new cycle/pedestrian bridge across the River Great Ouse to be known as the 'Garibaldi' bridge. This will link the riverside path with the dual use Kempston Road path and be an alternative route for cyclists from Elstow and Kempston to reach the town centre. This is being installed as part of a Section 106 agreement of the planning applications for the Britannia Ironworks site.

20mph Zones

During June 2013 20mph speed limit zones were introduced on a number of roads to improve safety for which plans and orders had been issued by the Borough in April 2013. These were:

- High Street Bedford from St Peter's Street to St Paul's Square North
- Linden Road, Lansdowne Road, Dynevor Road and Warwick Avenue Bedford
- The Links (and side roads) Kempston

During July/August 2013 part time zones were also introduced in the vicinity of a number of schools including:

- Brickhill Lower School - Dove Road and Avon Drive (South)
- Castle Lower School - Goldington Road



20mph sign in Avon Drive (south) for Brickhill Lower School

The Higgins Bedford

The Higgins in Castle Lane Bedford opened on 21 June 2013 after a three year redevelopment programme.



Main entrance

The site consists of the former Higgins & Sons Castle Brewery, the Higgins family home next door and a Hexagonal Gallery (originally a school) and the Castle Rooms. The latter three areas became the Cecil Higgins Museum and then Cecil Higgins Art Gallery. Bedford Museum moved to the Brewery site in 1981. They merged in 2005 but retained their separate identities until they closed in October 2010 for redevelopment.

Cycle parking stands in the grounds





Existing cycle stands in Castle Quarter

Cycle Security - Lock It or Lose It Campaign

The security of your bicycle is important when you leave it at your destination, be it the railway station, town centre or your place of work, college or school and you expect it still to be there on your return.

Unfortunately like the rest of the country, the Bedford Borough area is not immune from having bicycles stolen. To reduce the possibility of yours being one of them, please note the following advice:

As a result the Borough in conjunction with Sustrans and the Community Safety Partnership have recently carried out a '**Lock It or Lose It**' campaign with stickers being placed on all cycle stands in the town centre in an attempt to educate cyclists to improve the security of their bicycles when they are left in a public place.

Lock It *or* Lose It!



- Lock both wheels
- Use different types of locks
- Register your bike at Immobilise.com






Cycling in the Town Centre

Following the pedestrianisation of the town centre in 1994 and again in 1998 numerous discussions took place between the County and Borough Councils as to whether or not to ban cycles and cycling within this area.

After four years of deliberations of agreeing and then not agreeing, a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) finally came into force on 17 June 2002 to allow only the pushing of cycles at all times. When the Harpur Street (central), Lime Street and St Loyes improvements were completed in October 2003, the TCO was amended to include Harpur Street (central).

In October 2006 the then Borough Portfolio Holder for Transport asked the County Council to review again whether cycling in the town centre could be allowed outside of the core hours. With no action and the demise of the County Council on 31 March 2009 this request passed to the Borough as then being responsible for highways and cycling.

Initial discussions between interested official bodies, but not with any cyclists, took place during Autumn 2012 but ended it is believed with no clear cut agreement.

Cycling in the Town Centre was one of a number of topics in this year's Borough's Summer Citizens Panel Survey.

The preamble to the topic stated:

"The Council would like to encourage cycling and walking throughout Bedford and is seeking to balance the needs of both cyclists and pedestrians.

Currently cycling in the pedestrian area of Bedford town centre is not allowed. However the pedestrian area lies on popular North-South and East-West cycle routes. The town centre ban means that cyclists have to divert around the town centre and share the road space with heavy traffic.

The Council is aware that many cyclists ignore this ban, especially in the early morning or late evening when shoppers are not around. We are interested to understand your views on this issue."

Questions were asked on whether cyclists should be allowed to cycle in the town centre without any time restriction, outside shopping hours, when there are few pedestrians around or the current ban should continue to be enforced. If it was agreed that cycling should be allowed outside shopping hours, what times would be the best. To check for bias the mode of transport normally used to get to the town centre was also asked.

CCNB waits with interest for the final results of the survey and the resultant actions, if any, planned.

Cycle Stands - Town Centre

To cater for the increasing number of people who now cycle to the town centre, CCNB last November asked the Borough if additional cycle parking stands could be installed, particularly as during regular market days some of the existing stands were hidden by market stalls.

It was agreed that a further 20 stands of the 'Sheffield' type for 40 cyclists would be provided. Ten have been installed over the last two months, five alongside the existing bank in Midland Road at the junction with Greyfriars and five outside the Tesco Metro store.

It is important that for security reasons stands are placed in open areas where they can be easily seen and in places as near as possible to the cyclists destination. It is for these reasons that the 10 Sheffield stands which were installed several years ago in James Street have virtually never been used due to their secluded position. These have now been taken up and reused.

Over the next two months the existing 'Butterfly' stands - a not fit for purpose type - in Ram Yard will be replaced by 'Sheffield' types and further stands installed in other areas of the town centre.



Five additional stands added to the existing set opposite Tesco Metro in Midland Road

Bike Week Cycle Questionnaire

Bedford Railway Station saw plenty of activity during Bike Week, organised by the Borough (Yo Higton), with a questionnaire handed out (with the help of CCNB) to cycling commuters to establish what routes they took to the station and what problems they had.

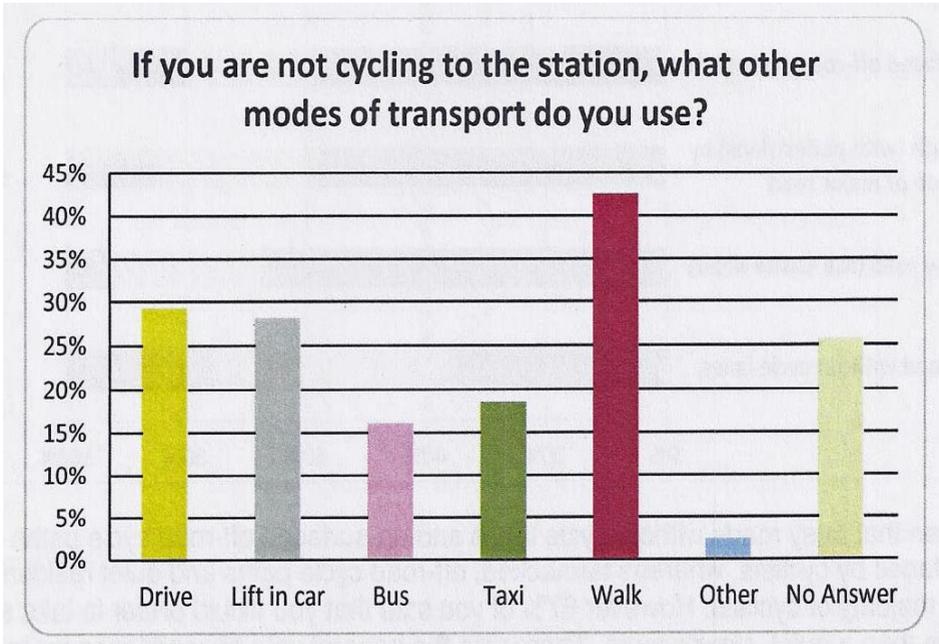
On several evenings the British Transport Police were on hand to security mark bikes (and give away quality bike locks to season ticket holders) while free Dr Bike health checks were given to numerous commuter's bikes by the mobile bicycle repair service MBRS.

The results of the questionnaire have now been made available by the Borough in conjunction with Sustrans - *Thanks to Yo Higton for analysing all the responses and producing this summary.*

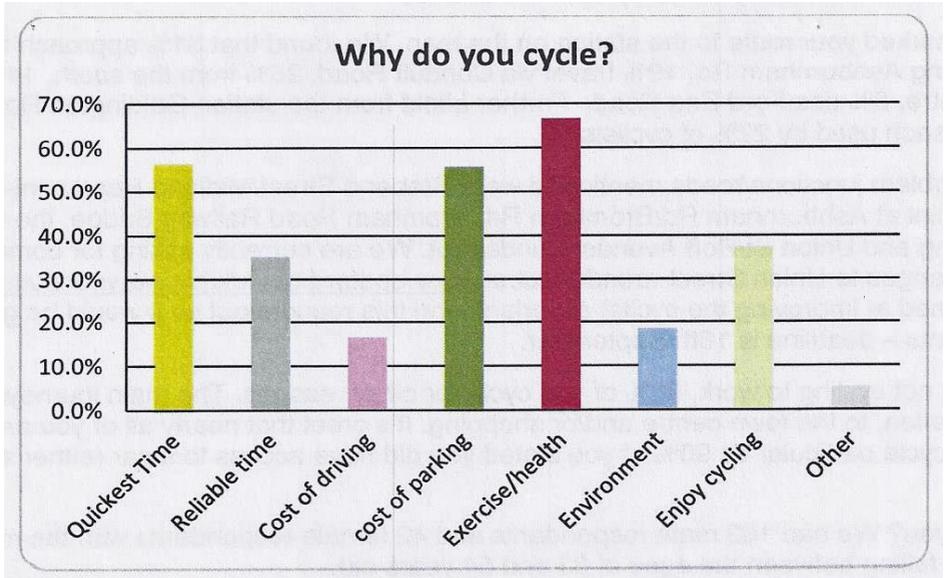
There was an amazing 60% return rate (210 questionnaires) from the 350 given out.

Over 70% said that they cycled to the station every day, only 8% did not cycle all the year round while 80% said they cycled in all weathers.

Those cyclists who did not cycle all the time and in all weathers stated that the main reasons were rain, winter and darkness. Those that didn't cycle mainly walked instead.



When asked the three main reasons for cycling the answers given by over 50% were exercise/health, quickest time and the cost of parking.

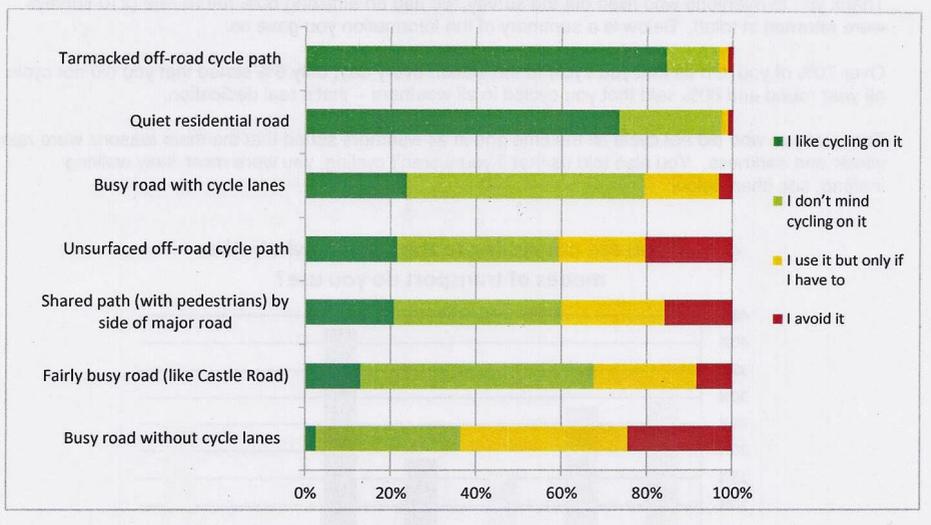


Over 50% cycled to the railway station for less than 15 minutes each way and 98% cycled for less than 25 minutes. The average distance travelled was 1.7 miles but the furthest commute was 10 miles each way (2 to 3 times a week). The majority of cyclists lived in north or east Bedford with 45% from the MK40 postcode (Biddenham/Town Centre/Castle Road areas) and 32% from the MK41 postcode (Brickhill/Putnoe/Goldington areas).

To the question of what types of road cyclists preferred to cycle along gave responses similar to those found in other national surveys (see chart on page 22).

Busy roads with out cycle lanes and un-surfaced off-road cycle paths were the ones most avoided by cyclists, whereas tarmacked, off-road cycle paths and quiet residential roads were liked by the majority of cyclists. However 67% of cyclists said they preferred to take a busy quicker route than a quiet, slower route. There was a general vote of confidence for busy roads with cycle lanes - see pages 6/7 for the recent improved cycle lanes in Goldington Road. When asked how often they cycled on the pavement, 58% said they hardly ever or never do.

The main problem junctions, again, as previously stated over the years by many cyclists, were Prebend Street/Midland Road mini-roundabout, the double mini at Ashburnham Road/Bromham Road, Bromham Road Railway Bridge, the town centre ban on cycling (see page 18) and the Union Street/Roff Avenue roundabout. (Work to convert this roundabout into a European style turbo roundabout to improve cyclists safety - see Newsletter Issue 65 February 2013 for details - is scheduled to start at the end of October 2013).



Bike Week 2013

During Bike Week and the week before CCNB had an exhibition in the Bedford, Kempston and Putnoe Libraries to promote cycling and the reading of books on cycling.



*Bedford Central Library Display
Thanks to Sue Thornton of Bedford Library for the design*

Borough Planning Documents

The Borough Council have adopted three planning documents since the last newsletter.

The Allocations and Designations Local Plan

The Allocations and Designations Local Plan, which sets out new development allocations and designations for areas of land where specific policies will apply within Bedford Borough, was adopted by the Full Council on 17 July 2013.

The document contains a chapter on the cycle network including the Green Wheel as well as background papers and maps.

The document and the formal notice can be viewed on and downloaded from the council's website using the following link

www.bedford.gov.uk/allocationsanddesignations

Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document

The Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) was agreed for adoption by the council's Executive on 10th July 2013.

The document sets out the council's overall approach to planning obligations and the types of planning obligation that the council may seek to secure from development within the context of the Community Infrastructure Levy.

More information is available using the link:

www.bedford.gov.uk/environment_and_planning/planning_town_and_country/what_is_planning_policy/documents_of_the_bdf/developer_contributions.aspx

Statement of Community Involvement 2013

The Statement of Community Involvement 2013 was adopted by the council's Executive on 10th July 2013. The document replaces the Statement of Community Involvement 2006 that had become out of date as a result of legislative change and constitutes an up-to-date guide for community engagement in the planning process, explaining who will be consulted, how that consultation will happen and when it will take place both in respect of planning policy documents and individual planning applications.

The document is available to view on and download from the council's website using the link:

www.bedford.gov.uk/SCI

Diary Date - CCNB Christmas Dinner - Wednesday 11 December 2013

Snapshots of Denmark

Denmark is always compared to the Netherlands as the bicycling nation.

Thanks to Kim Wilson of Bedford Borough Council for allowing CCNB to use some of her photographs taken on a recent vacation to Denmark.



Cycle/Bus Stop interchange in Zealand

Street scene in Aarhus





Rush hour in Aarhus town centre

Cycle parking at Skagen beach



Cycle parking in Aarhus town centre

The Joys of Cycling in the Dolomites

One of the 9,004 cyclists to cross the *Maratona* finishing line

- Sue Thornton

It is 6.28 on a clear and crisp Sunday morning at the end of June. I am surrounded by a sea of lycra as the sun lights up the grey spires of the Dolomites with a delicate glow. The whole starting pen jumps as what I took to be a TV camera dangling below a helicopter turns out to be a massive airborne starting gun. The 2013 *Maratona dles Dolomites* is underway; though it will be a while before the wave of movement reaches back through the ranks and I clip in. 106 kilometres and 3090 metres of climbing to go for those of us tackling the *Medio* course - what have I let myself in for...?



The *Maratona* is an amateur cycling event first raced in 1987 by a pioneering 165 men and one woman. It now attracts over 30,000 applicants, with a lucky 8,500 men and 839 women participating this year. I've been riding sportives in the UK for a few years but the *Maratona* is on completely different level: closed roads, all the accommodation in the *Alta Badia* region booked out and a massive volunteer effort from the community ensuring that turning the pedals was the only taxing element for participants.

Another key difference is, of course, that the Dolomites are mountains: big mountains. The scenery is breathtaking - but the really good news, should you be tempted, is that the roads are well graded and mostly very well surfaced. Though there's no denying it's quite a physical challenge to complete the course, there are none of those show stopping gradients that can pop up in UK events, nor the narrow, gravelly, potholed horrors that take the fun out of descending.

The full *Maratona* course is 138 km, taking in the *Passo Giau* with its 10 km at an average gradient of 9.3%, which had my husband wondering if a more forgiving choice of gears might have been an idea. The steepest of 6 passes on the *Medio* is 7.9% on average so I am proud to report that I never had to wear down my cleats pushing the bike. I did manage a comedy slow-motion keel over onto the tarmac when I failed to unclip at the top of the *Passo Sella* but the view soon had me feeling serene again. There is a 3rd course, the *Sellaronda*, which at 55 km with 4 passes would be a lovely circuit outside of *Maratona* day too.



It will come as no surprise that there is an excellent mountain biking infrastructure in *Alta Badia*, but they are also working really hard to promote access to the mountains on 2 wheels for everyone. The region is home to “the first e-bike sharing scheme at 2000m”. Electric bikes can be rented at altitude to tour well-maintained tracks, before returning the bike down in the valley. White knuckle experiences are entirely optional and there are even packages that include a gourmet picnic to collect from one of the 9 participating “mountain refuges”. These looked more like smart cafes to us when we checked out the attractions on foot, enjoying the “natural reflexology pools” (icy ponds with stony bottoms...), bear-friendly back rub poles, and listening posts telling local fairy tales.



If the *Sellaronda* route takes your fancy there are 2 Bike Days each year when the roads are closed to traffic and there is a free shuttle service to get you back to your starting point if you don't complete the circuit. The events share CCNBs ethos, proclaiming "RIDE A BIKE: AN ECO-FRIENDLY ACTIVITY, ENJOYABLE AND HEALTHY" and they urge all bike lovers to "come and have fun!"

So, how did I get on? 7 hours and 51 minutes after the starting gun shattered the peace I crossed the finishing line. Armed with vouchers for pasta, beer and pudding, and modelling my medal and finishers gilet, I joined the crowds refuelling and already reminiscing. It was an amazing experience to cycle alongside so many others, supported by cheering crowds, alpenhorns, accordions and apple strudel but best of all were the quiet moments when a view suddenly opened up and the finest thing in the world was to be riding a bike.



Further information can be seen on the following websites:

<http://www.maratona.it/en/>

<http://www.mtb-dolomites.com>

http://www.altabadia.org/en-US/dolomites_e-bike.html

<http://www.sellarondabikeday.com>

<http://www.garnilaciasota.it/en/>

Next year's *Maratona* is on Sunday July 6th, and *Cycling Weekly* are taking applications for places now at £150 per person. The contact is Ian Parr at wdcyclesport@gmail.com

Six Ways of Carrying a Baguette

Six ways of carrying a baguette by bicycle were seen earlier this year by your Editor in France on a sleeve of French bread to advertise Benette, the leading brand for the Artisan baker, as the Fournisseur Officiel of le Tour France or as known by its nickname - la Grande Boucle.



Illustrations by Francois Avril

For the second year running the Tour de France was won by member of Britain's Team Sky - this time the Kenyan born Chris Froome.

Last year's winner, Sir Bradley Wiggins, did not participate but did win the 2013 Tour of Britain.

Driving Schools to teach Cycle Safety

Two of Britain's largest driving schools, the AA Driving School and British School of Motoring (BSM), during the summer announced that they were to roll out a cycle awareness module to all instructors. This will ensure a standardised approach to safe driving around cyclists. Drivers will also be taught that cyclists have equal rights to be on the road, and there's no such thing as 'Road Tax*'.

This will help reduce the conflict between motorists and cyclists and is an important step in improving safety as it will highlight to motorists the vulnerability of cyclists and teach them the correct technique when driving near or overtaking cyclists.

** UK motorists since 1937 pay 'Vehicle Excise Duty'. There is no direct correlation between this tax and government expenditure on roads.*

Get Britain Cycling Update

What has happened to the Get Britain Cycling campaign since the All Party Parliamentary Cycling Group's (APPCG) report from the Parliamentary Inquiry held earlier in the year landed on the Prime Minister's desk on 23 April 2013 as reported in the last newsletter (Issue 66 June 2013). The Prime Minister welcomed the report but suggested it was up to Local Authorities rather than Central Government to make the roads safer.

In May it was rumoured that the Coalition Government were on the point of creating a new £1 billion 'Office for Active Travel' (OAT) to promote cycling and walking policies across ministries which would be announced during the Summer's Comprehensive Spending Review. This was not to be.

The announcement by the Chancellor in Parliament on 26 June 2013 instead cut the Department for Transport's operating budget for 2015/16 by nine per cent but at the same time stated that £100bn would be spent on new roads and railways to stimulate the national economy. The plans unveiled the following day in the report 'Investing in Britain's Future' contained no mention of cycling.

In the meantime a petition started by The Times called on the Prime Minister to implement the 18 recommendations made in the 'Get Britain Cycling' report. More than 70,000 signatures were obtained and on the back of this Julian Huppert MP was able to secure a Parliamentary Debate with the proposed motion for Parliament to support the report's recommendations and endorse the proposed target that 10 per cent of all journeys in the UK should be made by bike by 2025 and 25 per cent by 2050 [the current national level is 2%].

Cyclists were urged by all cycling organisation to send a letter to their local MP to asking them to attend the debate which was scheduled for Monday 2 September 2013, the first day of the new Autumn Parliamentary Session. [Due to the debate on Syria MPs were actually called back at the end of the previous week].

Your Editor and many others wrote to Bedford and Kempston MP, Richard Fuller, but in his reply he said that due to other commitments in his diary he was unlikely to be able to attend the debate.

He went on to say that the Government is doing a great deal to help increase safety for cyclists in the UK in the last 12 months and mentioned the Local Sustainable Transport Fund and all the other grants which had been given out recently.

The Prime Minister on 12 August 2013 announced a grant of £77 million for eight English 'cycling cities' to 'cycle-proof' major roads as well as £17m for four national parks. With local contributions the total new

funding between now and 2015 was said to be £148m.

For Cambridge, one of the eight cities, the news was welcomed and will help them achieve their aim in 10 years' time to have 40% of all journeys in the city by bike, bringing it in line with some of the best cities in Europe. For Bedford Borough this meant no additional money on this occasion.

The announcement also included a commitment from the government to cut red tape that can stifle cycle friendly road design and to encourage changes to the way roads are built or altered. Councils will be expected to up their game to deliver infrastructure that takes cycling into account from the design stage. It also extended its commitment to support Bikeability cycle training into 2015/16.

The Government's response to the APPCG Get Britain Cycling report finally came on 28 August just days before the Parliamentary debate. The response can be downloaded from:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/government-response-to-the-all-party-parliamentary-cycling-group>

In the Press Release, Local Transport Minister, Norman Baker, responsible for cycling said:

"The coalition government takes cycling very seriously and we are committed to leading the country in getting more people cycling, more safely, more often.

Many of the recommendations put forward by the All Party Parliamentary Cycling Group mirror those that we are already taking forward so we are ahead on some of the challenges which have been set for us.

However we are keen to go further and faster."

Many cycling organisation however felt the key messages from the government's response were disappointing. There was

- no commitment to minimum spending levels,
- no national cycling champion,
- no long term targets and
- no central top level leadership.

The 12 August 2013 announcement of funds for the 'cycling cities' was said to equate to £10 per head but this only applied for one year to eight cities and not the rest of the country. Several recommendations, cycle targets and 20mph speed limits, were claimed to be for local authorities to decide, taking local conditions into account.

In summary many people believed that the 'Get Britain Cycling' report compiled following evidence from experts within the cycling world as well as outside gave the perfect opportunity for the government to go '*further and faster*' and they have failed to do so.

Parliamentary Debate

A previous debate 18 months ago in Westminster Hall to respond to the Times 'Cities fit for Cyclists' campaign had attracted 70 MPs.

The debate in the Commons on Monday 2 September 2013 attracted nearly 100 MPs of all parties and lasted four hours.

Outside to put pressure on the Prime Minister to improve cycle safety, a 'Space for Cycling protest' was organised by the London Cycling Campaign. The event, a slow ride past Westminster, consisting of more than 5000 cyclists.



London Cycling Campaign Photograph

The motion finally put forward for the debate was:

"That this House supports the recommendations of the All-Party Parliamentary Cycling Group's report 'Get Britain Cycling'; endorses the target of 10 per cent of all journeys being by bike by 2025, and 25 per cent by 2050; and calls on the Government to show strong political leadership, including an annual Cycling Action Plan and sustained funding for cycling."

Many MPs spoke of the enormous health, economic and environmental benefits that increasing the number of cyclists would bring.

The Government was criticised for abolishing the Cycling England strategy and stating that pro-cycling councils had an 'anti-car' dogma.

During the debate the Shadow Transport Secretary also criticised the Department for Transport for pledging only £114 million to be spent on cycling over the next three years out of a total roads budget of £28 billion, adding that cycling short distances had huge potential to cut congestion and boost the economy.

Labour have an eight point cycling manifesto to ensure that all new transport schemes are assessed for cycle safety and sets out plans for the Active Travel Bill, recently introduced in Wales, to be extended to England with the obligation for councils to build safe cycling routes.

The Liberal Democrats said they were planning to adopt the 'Get Britain Cycling' report as party policy.

The Prime Minister had said he wanted a 'cycling revolution'

All main parties unanimously backed the recommendations in the 'Get Britain Cycling' report.

Closing the debate, Julian Huppert MP, Lib-Dem co-chair of the APPCG echoed this cross-party consensus, calling for "all of our parties, for this government and all future governments, to get Britain cycling."

Autumn Party Conference Actions

The Liberal Democrats adopted a 'Cycling Reform' motion calling for cycle spending and safety policies at their annual conference and these will now be included in their manifesto for the 2015 election.

The Labour Party's Shadow Transport Secretary said that if the party is returned to government in 2015 it would introduce clear goals to increase cycling as well as restoring road safety targets including a default 20mph speed limit in residential areas.

The Conservative Party's Transport Secretary said that we know what we have done is just a start and if elected in 2015, cycling will form a key part of a plan for transport.

Latest - All Party Delivery Plan expected by the end of the year.

A good home required by Bike Accessories

- An aluminium mudguard
- 2 pannier racks
- A wire basket
- A gel saddle and stem

Available from a CCNB member. Please ring

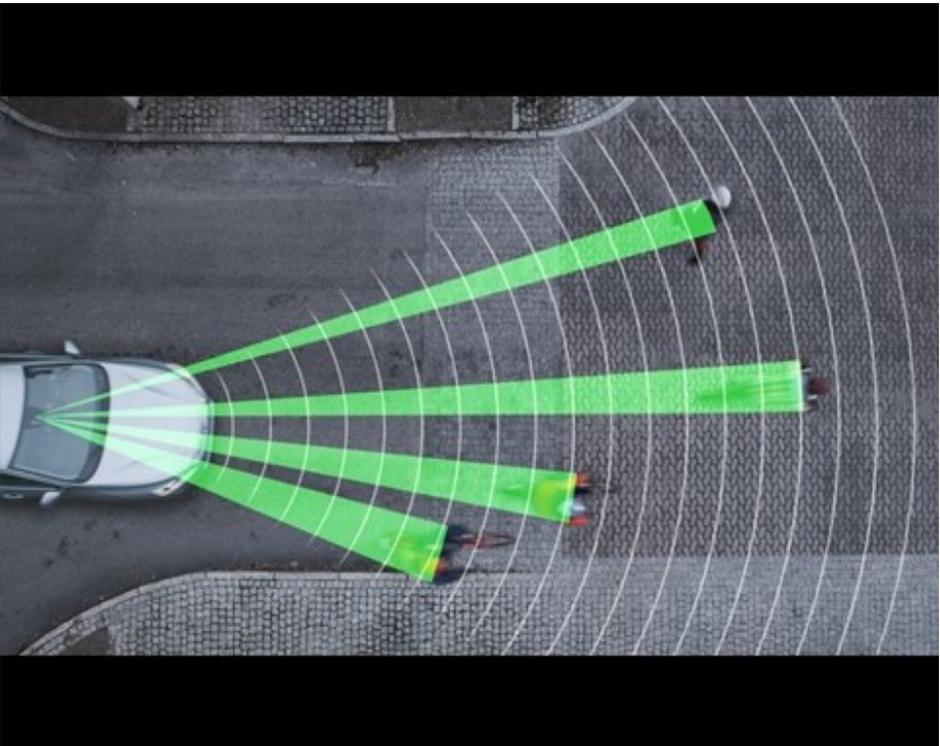
Telephone: (01234) 215445

Pedestrian and Cyclist Detection System

The Swedish motor manufacture, Volvo, at this year's Geneva Motor Show announced that a new safety feature, a Pedestrian and Cyclist Detection system building on its existing Pedestrian Detection system would be introduced in European Volvo cars during 2013.

It was claimed in a statement by the company that it would be able to detect cyclists "swerving out in front of the car" and automatically apply the brakes to avoid hitting the cyclist. "The advanced sensor system scans the area ahead. If a cyclist heading in the same direction as the car suddenly swerves out in front of the car as it approaches from behind and a collision is imminent, there is an instant warning and full breaking power is applied."

This latest innovative safety feature consists of a grille-mounted radar unit, a forward facing high resolution camera positioned ahead of the inside rear view mirror and a central controller that uses a constant data stream from both to monitor and evaluate surrounding traffic.



A You tube video of the system in action can be seen on <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cOn4729TcI0>

Unusual Bikes - Bamboo Bike

A bamboo bicycle is bicycle with the frame made out of bamboo. Although one was first showcased in 1894 it is only in the last few years that the material has been made into racing bicycles, road bicycles and mountain bikes.

Some of the main features of bamboo designs are vibration damping, crash tolerance, as well as the natural look of the bike. It has the strength of steel and the responsiveness of carbon fibre. As such it can give a bicycle with a very comfortable and smooth ride.

The material is not likely to replace carbon fibre bikes in developed countries but can be used to make simple and cheap bikes in Africa and South East Asia. The raw material grows extremely well in the climate of these areas and using the right species (there are 1500 different species in existence) local people could be trained to build the frames.



US custom built urban bike which demonstrates what can be achieved

The first UK-built mountain bike made out of bamboo was unveiled at the 2011 Bike Show designed by Oxford Brookes University and built by Yorkshire-based Raw Bikes (now RAW Bamboo Bikes Ltd).

Learn to make one yourself at the Bamboo Bicycle Club, a UK-based project that provides people with the knowledge and tools to make their own bikes as well creating a hub for those embarking on their own frame building adventures.

CCNB Christmas Dinner

25 Restaurant @ Bedford College.

Wednesday 11 December 2013

A booking form with the menu details will be sent shortly to all members.

See <http://www.ccnb.org.uk/diary.htm> for other events

Local Cycle Rides Contact:

CTC - North Beds Section - (01234) 219148

Cycling Campaign for North Bedfordshire



Our Vision

To see Bedford as a

'Town of Cyclists' & 'Cycle Friendly Communities'

Objectives

- ◆ To promote, encourage and support cycling as an important means of transport and recreation.
- ◆ To encourage consideration of the needs of cyclists in all aspects of transport planning and management, access issues and recreational use.

Membership

Please contact us if you have any cycling issues or better still, consider becoming a member to give us added weight in our discussions with the relevant authorities. Write to:

Membership Secretary, c/o 15 Dove Road, Bedford, MK41 7AA

including your name, address, postcode, telephone number and e-mail address (if available) together with your subscription.

Single £3.00 (£13 for 5yr); Family £5.00 (£22 for 5yr)