



Issue 68  
February 2014

The Voice of Cycling Campaign for North Bedfordshire



Bedford Railway Station - New Double Deckers

# CYCLING CAMPAIGN FOR NORTH BEDFORDSHIRE

*Founded 1992*

## **Committee**

Chairperson	Hazel Mitchell
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## **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>)

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## New Member

We welcome new member: Geoff Barrell and family.

# Editorial

The number of houses and flats that will be built in and around Bedford over the next decade will lead not only to gridlock at peak hours but also for most of the working day if all the new residents decide to move around the town by motor vehicle.

To prevent this - and it is believed the A6/A428 link and the Batts Ford bridge schemes will only have a marginal impact - there has to be a major shift over the next few years to sustainable transport; public transport, cycling and walking.

To cater for the increase in cycling expected, high quality cycling infrastructure must always be put in place. Although the recent Great Denham off-road link (page 11) and on-road cycle lanes in Park Avenue and Goldington Road/St Peter's are excellent, as evident from the increase in cycling seen along the latter roads in the 2013 Bedford Inner Cordon Count (page 13), this has not always been the case for some infrastructure introduced over the last two years.

High quality cycle infrastructure must always be put in place

Changing demographics mean more disabled children survive into adulthood and growing numbers of older people experience impairments. Riding specially adapted cycles can allow many of them to have more mobility and a higher quality of life. CCNB therefore welcomes the study (page 24) that has just started to investigate how older people can be encouraged and supported to cycle into their old age, helping them to retain their health, fitness and independence.

Safety is one of main concerns claimed for pavement cycling

Since October 2013 we have a new Secretary of State responsible for cycling (page 21). He is an active cyclist like his predecessor and is already making his mark (page 25) although we are still waiting for the all party delivery plan the government promised by the end of 2013.

Cyclists' safety is still an issue (page 20), particularly in London, and a Transport Select Committee report on the topic is also due shortly. Safety is always one of the main concerns claimed by cyclists for cycling illegally on the pavement.

With a safer environment - the number of cyclists would be expected to grow exponentially - relieving congestion and road pollution which would otherwise reach or is already reaching dangerous levels.

**How many residents in the borough currently cycle?** (see page 13)

# National Cycle-Rail Award - Larry Heyman

CCNB congratulates Larry Heyman, First Capital Connect's Integration and Operations Manager, for being awarded the prestigious **Cycle Champion Award** at the 2013 ATOC (Association of Train Operating Companies) National Cycle-Rail Awards held last November at the House of Commons.



Larry has been instrumental over recent years in promoting and delivering the much needed expansion of cycle parking facilities at Bedford Station. The increase in cycling to the station particularly over the last seven years was highlighted in the last newsletter - Issue 67. See also pages 6 & 7 of this issue for the launch of the new double deckers.

In the award's citation it stated that Larry has worked to double the number of cycle parking spaces on FCC's network from 2,110 to over 4,200 in 2013 with the number still increasing.

At the same time FCC also claimed the **Cycle Security Award** for its work alongside the British Transport Police, which has seen cycle crime decrease by 25% since 2005. The work has included introducing a high police presence at stations along with FCC funded cycle wardens, attaching high security locks to bikes and holding cycle surgeries for customers.

**Friday 9 May 2014 at 7.30 pm**

**Friends Meeting House, 5 Lansdowne Road, Bedford,  
MK40 2BY**

## **'Active Travel Promotion in Bedford'**

**Presentation by Yo Higton,**

**Sustrans Bedford 'Access to Stations' Project Coordinator  
working in partnership with Bedford Borough Council**

**followed by**

**CCNB Annual General Meeting**

**This is a chance to meet other members and to find out what is  
happening on the cycle scene in the Bedford area.**

**Please put the date in your diary.**

# Bedford Station's New Bike Stands

The increase in the number of commuters cycling to railway stations - see the last newsletter for the progressive increase seen at Bedford - has put a strain on many rail operating companies in knowing how they can introduce additional cycle parking spaces in the restricted areas available at most stations.

One solution which has been gathering momentum is the introduction of 'Double Deckers' which utilise less space than the traditionally recommended 'Sheffield' stands. This type of stand, although not so easy to use by those cyclists who are less fit or agile, can be used to compliment the 'Sheffield'.

Many of the versions available in the UK are imported from Germany or the Netherlands and have certain features which do not allow them to accommodate all types of bikes. As a result First Capital Connect, the train operating company which runs the local Bedford to London and Brighton service, invited the Borough's Cycling Officer and your Editor to discuss with one of their suppliers possible modifications. This has resulted in an improved UK version being introduced which has been given the name the 'Bedford' type.

The first 'Double Decker' - see cover photograph - to hold 44 bikes was installed at Bedford railway station four months ago and was formally opened by The Mayor, Dave Hodgson, on Thursday 14 November 2013.



*The Mayor, Dave Hodgson, cutting the tape with Larry Heyman, FCC's Integration and Partnership Manager*

A further rack to hold 44 bikes will be installed later this year when the wall to the left of the station entrance is rebuilt having been taken down some months ago due to safety concerns.

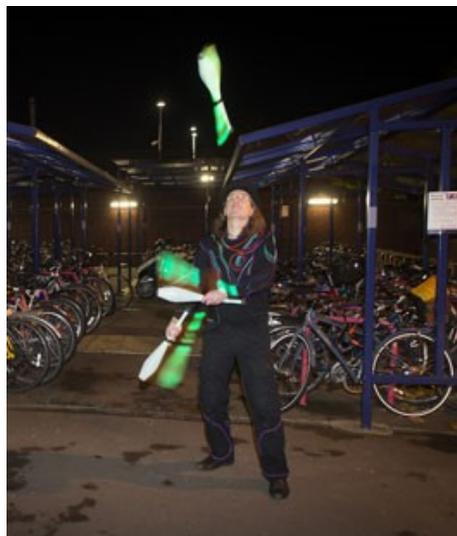
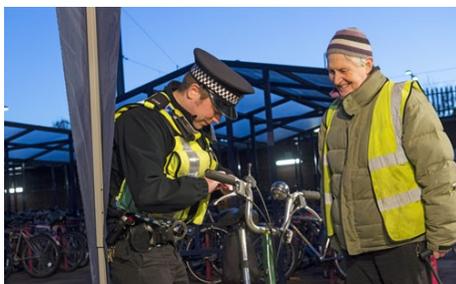


*Commuters queuing for Dr Bike or security marking*

After the launch, as part of the Borough's 'Access to Stations' project administered by Sustrans, commuters were able to have a free bike check from a Dr Bike while others availed themselves of the British Transport Police's bike security marking facility. Visitors were entertained by a glow juggler while waiting for these services.



*Dr Bike*



*Glow Juggler*

← *Security marking*

# Cycle Stands

The lack of provision of secure cycle parking stands at a destination is always one of the major reasons why people do not use a bicycle for utility cycling. Bedford is very fortunate in having numerous banks of stands dotted around the town centre and other locations and the number available is continually being increased through conditions associated with the approval of many planning applications.

## Silver Street

As part of CCNB's agreement with the borough to provide additional stands within the town centre area a further 10 'Sheffield' type stands to accommodate an extra 20 cycles were added to the ends of the existing racks in Silver Street during November 2013.



Silver Street

Even with this increase in cycle stands many cyclists from the east side of the town do not cross over the High Street to use them and still continue to secure their bikes to the railings on either side of the High Street junction with Mill Street.

Mill St./High St. junc. →



## Ram Yard

The end of Ram Yard originally had a number of concrete blocks with slots in which to place a front wheel but with no provision for securing the bike to any immovable object. These were eventually replaced by 11 'Butterfly' clips which today are also regarded as 'not fit for purpose' as only one wheel can be secured to the rack and if knocked can lead to a damaged/buckled wheel.

CCNB has been requesting their replacement for some time and during November 2013 two racks of 5 'Sheffield' type stands were erected to give space for 20 bikes.



## Lidl Kempston

When the Lidl store in Kempston was opened in 2005 the only cycle stands provided were 'not fit for purpose' 'Butterfly' clips attached to the side of a trolley bay.

Since this time CCNB has been asking their Lutterworth, Leicestershire Head Office to have some recommended 'Sheffield' stands installed.



Due to a number of Property Manager changes it was only in November 2013 (eight years later) that three have been finally erected opposite the main entrance next to the Grange Road pedestrian gate.

# New Norse Road Toucan/Cycle Path

As part of the Section 106 agreement for the Orbit housing development currently in progress along Norse Road, Bedford, a toucan crossing has been installed between the new roundabout at the entrance to the development and the one at Maskell Drive/Glenavon Road.

This has been accompanied by a widened path from the toucan on the south side of Norse Road as far as the Glenavon Road junction. The new dual use path will allow cyclists from the development to safely access the Church Lane shops and Putnoe Primary School via the quiet roads of Glenavon Road, Ettrick Drive and Needwood Road.

Unfortunately the new path has not been constructed to the high quality expected with the toucan control cabinet placed within the path and an existing communication cabinet now nearly in the middle of the widened path. Both of these are potential hazards, particularly for the visually handicapped.



*Toucan cabinet*



*Communication cabinet*

# Great Denham Link Launch

As mentioned in the last newsletter, the path along the riverside between the Great Denham and The Slipe was upgraded a few months ago creating a link between the new development and the town centre.



The official opening of the route by Councillor Charles Royden, Deputy Mayor and Portfolio Holder for Environment and Transport, took place at Paddlers Court, Queen's Park on Wednesday 30 October 2013 with many cyclists including those from CCNB in attendance.

At the Slipe, near Queen's Bridge, Queen's Park, Sustrans and Bedford Borough Council hosted a community event during the day. Attendees were able to make delicious pedal powered smoothies and compete on a bike powered Scaletic.



# Bedford Cycling Statistics

The question often posed by members of the public and politicians is 'How many people actually cycle in Bedford Borough?' This is not a question that can be accurately answered.

There are several indicators; national surveys which give an estimate and local ones which count the number of cyclists on a particular day and time passing or leaving their bicycles at certain locations.

What, however, is not in doubt is the increase in cycling that has taken place in Bedford, particularly since 2006. This was shown on the cover of the last newsletter (Issue 67 October 2013) based on CCNB counts at Bedford railway station. A similar increase has also been observed by CCNB for cycles parked in the town centre area.

## Active People Survey

The Active People Survey (APS) is an annual telephone survey administered by Sport England for the Department for Transport. The second report covering the year ending mid-October 2012 contains data for all 326 English local authorities. For Bedford Borough the following results were obtained on a sample of 500 residents.

Proportion (%) of adult residents who cycle (any length or purpose):

<i>At least</i>	<i>2011/12</i>
5 times per week	4
3 times per week	7
Once per week	13
Once per month	20

## NHT Public Satisfaction Survey

For three years up to 2011, the Borough participated in the National Highways & Transport Network (NHT) survey. The following results were obtained on a sample of around 800 residents.

How often do residents cycle (%):

	<i>2011</i>	<i>At least</i>
Daily	7	7
2-3 times per week	8	15
Once per week	7	22
Once per month	11	33
Less Frequent/Never	63*	-
Not stated	4	-

\* The 2012 British Social Attitude Survey states that while 61% of respondents had not ridden a bicycle during the previous 12 months 43% of respondents had access to one.

## 2011 Census

The 2011 Census has shown 3.8% of the working population of Bedford Borough use a bicycle as their main mode of travel to work - 5.0% in the urban area (see page 14 for a fuller analysis by urban ward).

## Bedford Borough Schools

Annual hands-up surveys until 2010 were carried out in all schools.

Results for 2010 showed 3.8% of all pupils cycling to school, 5.0% to urban schools. For urban middle and upper schools it was 7.2%.

## Bedford Railway Station

Access to the station has been recorded by manual and video counts on one weekday in October since 2005 between 5am and 12 midday for all modes; walking, cycling, car (parked and drop off), taxi, bus and motor cycle.

The 2013 results showed 338 people arriving at the railway station by bicycle representing 9% of all commuters, a similar result to those of the previous three years.

## Answer to Question Posed

The APS and NHT surveys show a wide variation. For the whole of the Borough the percentage of residents cycling is between 20 and 33% at least monthly, 13 to 22% at least weekly and 4 to 7% 5 times per week .

*Answer:*

**31,500 - 52,000 residents cycle at least one per month,  
20,500 - 35,000 cycle at least once per week and  
6,300 - 8,000 cycle 5 times per week.**

More residents cycle in the urban area where the level for 5 times per week is in the range 6 to 9%, representing 4,275 - 6,000.

## Bedford Inner Cordon Cycle Counts

Counts of all modes of transport on one weekday in October/November have been carried since 1997 at 17 to 21 sites around the town centre between 7am and 12 midday.

The 2013 count of cyclists was 1196 over 21 sites which represented just 2% of all people counted.

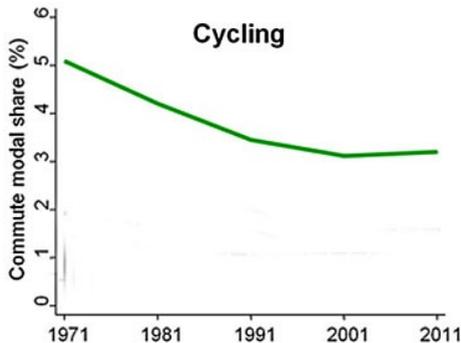
The top 5 cycle routes into the town centre were:

Goldington Road	200	(new cycle lanes during 2013)
Kempston Road	112	
Union Street	90	
Bromham Road	72	
De Parys Avenue	72	

*Thanks to the borough  
and Patrick Lingwood  
for the data reported  
on this page*

# 2011 Census

The 2011 Census has shown 3.1% of the working population of England and Wales cycling to work, a 0.1% increase from the 2001 census and the first increase over the last four.



Changes in cycle use were different across the country with London, Bristol, Brighton and Cambridge all seeing large increases.

An analysis of Bedford inner cordon data from 1997 has shown the year 2006 to be a turning point for cycling in urban Bedford and this has been mirrored by CCNB's railway station counts.

Disappointingly the census figures for Bedford Borough showed a slight decline from 3222 (4.6%) in 2001 to 2912 (3.8%) in 2011. Counts for the urban area were 2477 (5.9%) in 2001 and 2374 (5.0%) in 2011.

The top 12 urban wards for cycling in the Borough were:

		(%)	<b>2001 Census</b>	(%)
1	Newnham	6.6	6	6.0
2	Kempston Central & East	6.2	2 (east only)	7.0
3	Castle	6.1	3	6.8
4	De Parys	5.8	3	6.8
5	Kempston North	5.7	6	6.0
6	Kempston West	5.6	- (new)	-
6	Kingsbrook	5.6	5	6.7
8	Kempston South	5.1	1	7.3
9	Goldington	4.9	8	5.5
9	Harpur	4.9	9	5.2
11	Brickhill	4.5	9	5.2
12	Putnoe	4.3	11	5.1

Only the main mode of transport is recorded in the census hence residents cycling to the railway station would have entered 'train' as their main mode. If included the results would be at least 11% higher.

# Dunstable Travel Hub

Central Bedfordshire Council in 2012, was awarded £4.9m over three years from the Government's Local Sustainable Transport Fund for their 'My Journey: Travel Choices for Central Bedfordshire' project whereas Bedford Borough's project 'Access to Bedford' was rejected.

In March 2013, Central Beds used some of the money to open a Travel Choices Hub in Ashton Square Dunstable where a team of trained Travel Advisors are able to assist residents of Dunstable, Houghton Regis and Leighton with personalised journey advice as well as dispensing a wide range of resources including walking and cycling maps and public transport routes and timetable information.

The Travel Choices Hub aims to make people consider their journeys and whether that trip to the corner shop by car is always necessary and in doing so reducing car use, cutting costs and improving health.

As well as travel advice, the Hub also hosts NHS nurses who can give on-the-spot health checks. Hub customers can then check their health before and after a period of 'car abstinence'.



# Bedford Borough Local Plan 2032

In the National Planning Policy Framework document issued by the Government in March 2012 it states that all local authorities must have a single plan in place which looks at least 15 years ahead, and clearly defines where growth and development is sustainable.

The current Borough plans are a suite of documents which go to 2021:

- Core Strategy and Rural Issues Plan (2008)
- Bedford Town Centre Area Action Plan (2008)
- Allocations and Designations Local Plan (2013) and
- Local Plan 2002 (remaining policies)

Consequently the Council has started on the production of a new plan to ensure that sustainable managed growth takes place up to 2032.

The first stage is an Issues and Options consultation which takes place between 13 January and 24 February 2014. The document can be seen on the Borough's website under:

<http://www.bedford.gov.uk/localplan2032>

Questions asked are about how much growth there should be in the borough and where it should take place. It also invites the submission of possible development sites and asks for views on the future role of the town centre.

Based on the responses a Submission Consultation Plan will then be prepared and issued in Autumn 2014, a plan submitted to the Secretary of State in Autumn 2015 followed by public examination and adoption in 2016.

As per the current suite of plans, the new document will contain many policies which relate to and effect the provision of cycle infrastructure. CCNB as a stakeholder will keep abreast of what is produced to ensure that cycling needs are adequately covered.

Current policies effecting cycling can be seen on the CCNB website under: <http://www.ccnb.org.uk/boroughpoliciesb.html>

## Cycling Magazines on the Up

In September 2009 your Editor counted the number of magazines and supplements devoted to all kinds of cycling in a well known High Street newsagent, always indicative of the popularity of a subject. The exercise was repeated this January and the results were startling. The number had increased from 20 to 31, a 55% increase. If this was translated into the increase in the number of people actually cycling this would be an added bonus. As mentioned in the last newsletter, cycling to the railway station has increased on average by 7% per year. Over four and a half years this would be 31%. Not a bad comparison!

# 20mph Speed Limits Update

## Kempston

A consultation leaflet has been issued to Kempston residents in the area bounded by Bedford Road, Spring Road (included), Elstow Road and Bunyan Road to see if there is widespread support from the community to introduce 20mph speed limits to make the area safer for residents, cyclists and children.



This follows on from two petitions by residents about speeding which have been debated by the Borough's full council.

## Brickhill

In a recent survey of residents in a road in Brickhill, those responding were 92% in favour of a 20mph speed limit. A request has been sent to the Borough for consideration as part of a potential area wide scheme.

## Enforcement

Over the last year there has been some confusion as to whether or not 20mph speed limits or zones are enforced by the police.

The Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) guidance in a version dated May 2013, stated that for 20mph speed limits there were no fixed penalty issued, no speed awareness course requested and a summons only if a motorist was caught speeding at 40mph or above.

During the Parliamentary debate on how to 'Get Britain Cycling' on 2 September 2013 the then Transport Minister, Norman Baker, announced that the ACPO roads policing lead had agreed to rewrite the guidance on the enforcement of 20mph limits.

As a result a new version, confirmed by the Crown Prosecution Service, 'APCO Enforcement Policy 2011-2015: Joining Forces for Safer Roads', was published in October 2013 (although it still bears the date of May 2013 and has caused confusion with the earlier version which can still be accessed on the web).

The current version states that for 20mph limits:

- A **Fixed Penalty** when education is not appropriate when the speed is **24mph or above**.
- **Speed Awareness course** required if appropriate for speeds between 24 and 31mph and
- A **Summons** for all cases at **35mph** or above.

The full document can be seen under:

<http://www.acpo.police.uk/documents/uniformed/2013/201305-uoba-joining-forces-safer-roads.pdf>

# Local Transport Funding/Bodies

For large (>£5 million) local authority transport projects most of the money has, over the last few decades, come from the Department for Transport (DfT) with additional contributions provided by local authorities. However, under the Government's localism policy, the way central funding is allocated to local transport infrastructure is changing.

Up to 2012, authorities would bid for money for a transport scheme, and the DfT would decide centrally whether to give the amount asked for and how much the local authority should contribute.

To be successful, bidders had to follow the DfT's rules and criteria for choosing projects and assessing the benefits of a scheme. (This process also included prioritisation of transport schemes by regional bodies, until the regional government structures were abolished in 2010.)

For schemes to be funded from 2015 onwards, new **Local Transport Bodies** (LTBs) have been formed to take charge of the funding provided by the DfT at a more local level.

The areas covered by the new LTBs are larger than local authority areas and currently follow similar boundaries to Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs). Membership of LTBs includes representatives from LEPs and local transport authorities (county councils and unitary authorities).

It may also include representatives from other local authorities, such as district and parish councils, and stakeholders from the community, such as environmental groups, but this is not compulsory.

Earlier in 2013, 38 LTBs outside London were created and allocated a share of the DfT local transport capital budget and the power to decide how to spend it, subject to guidelines.

Bedford Borough is part of the South East Midlands Local Enterprise Partnership (SEMLEP) area and the Local Transport Body (LTB) comprises four highway authorities; Bedford Borough, Central Bedfordshire, Luton and Milton Keynes.

Funding to support delivery of transport schemes has been calculated based on population and for the South East Midland LTB (SEMLTB) amounts to £22.1m for the four year period covering the financial years 2015/16 to 2018/19. Each LTB had to send to the DfT by August 2013 a prioritised list for the first transport projects.

For SEMLTB this consisted of four projects and four reserved projects.

See: <http://www.semlep.com/news/2013/14-7million-investment-in-transport-schemes-for-the-south-east-midlands/> for full details.

One scheme from Bedford Borough was selected to go forward from their long list of eight - Bedford Western Bypass (Total scheme cost £16m with £2.5m being a contribution from the LTB). No Borough scheme appeared in the reserve list.

The eight schemes put forward by Bedford Borough for consideration by the LTB were:

- Bedford Western Bypass
- Batts Ford Bridge
- Wixams railway station and associated car park
- Signalisation of A6/A421 junction
- A428 improvement (A1 to Caxton Gibbet east of St Neots)
- Bedford Bus Station
- Colworth Science Park
- A421 Bedford Business Park corridor acceleration

Wider LTB schemes which have some parts within the borough were:

- East West Rail western section
- East West Rail central section
- Bedford - Milton Keynes Waterway including adjacent cycle route

Seven of the 11 schemes have cycle infrastructure elements.

The above is contrary to a joint Campaign for Better Transport (CBT) and Campaign for the Preservation of Rural England (CPRE) report issued late last year in which all LTB schemes were examined to see if they supported lower car dependency and sustainable development and helped reduce traffic. The report stated that almost two thirds of the schemes were purely for road building and widening and none were dedicated to cycling schemes in any part of the country.

## Cycling in Bedford Town Centre Update

In the Borough's 2013 Summer Citizens Panel Survey (see the last newsletter Issue 67) one section of the survey posed a number of questions on cycling in the pedestrian area of Bedford Town Centre. From the 534 responses received (out of 1061 Panel members contacted), 53% supported the option of permitting cycling out of the core shopping hours. Just over half of the respondents supported the times of before 9am and after 6pm.

As a result of the survey the Borough has decided to consult the general public on the proposal to amend the town centre cycling ban operational hours.

A Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) is to be published on 13 February 2014 for a six week public consultation. If a majority of respondents accept the proposal the appropriate changes would be made in the 2014/15 financial year.

The east west route is used by many cyclists, currently illegally, from the Castle Road area and beyond as a safe direct route to commute to the railway station in the early hours of the morning when there are very few pedestrians on the streets.

# Cycle Safety

In early December 2013, the Transport Select Committee, a House of Commons Committee, held two oral evidence sessions on cycling safety. The committee had previously considered the issue as part of a wider inquiry into road safety in 2012. This follow up inquiry was held due to concerns over the risks cyclists face on the road following a series of high-profile fatalities.

Half a dozen cyclists had lost their lives in road traffic collisions during November 2013 of which half were in London. Many of the casualties involved large vehicles, particularly Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs), and there have been discussions on whether these should be banned from city centres during peak times.

There has also been discussions on the behaviour of drivers and cyclists and whether more could be done to promote compliance with the law.

The oral evidence session was not confined to concerns over cycling in London, with the committee inviting people to submit their views by 17 January 2014 on issues including:

- Whether cycling is safe, particularly in towns and cities.
- What central and local Government could do to improve cycling safety. Ideas could include better training and advice for drivers and cyclists, better enforcement of the law applying to drivers and cyclists, and better vehicle and road infrastructure.
- Whether it would be desirable and feasible to segregate cyclists from other road users, including, for example, by prohibiting HGVs from entering city centres at peak hours.

In the 2012 inquiry the Committee recommended that:

- The Government should consider how to encourage greater adoption of sensors and mirrors by HGVs.
- DfT should show how its efforts to work in partnership with others such as the Department for Communities & Local Government (DCLG) and local authorities have been effective in encouraging the provision of cycle infrastructure and outline which problems in securing this joint-working have yet to be overcome.
- DfT should issue a formal response to each of the eight points in the Times cycling safety manifesto.

The Committee also concluded that there was much work still to be done if the Government wanted to demonstrate that it was showing leadership in improving cycling safety.

This short second inquiry will follow up these conclusions and recommendations from the Committee's 2012 report.

The new report is awaited with interest.

# New Cycling Minister - Cycle Vision

In last October's government reshuffle, dedicated cyclist Lib Dem Norman Baker MP, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Transport with responsibility for cycling, was replaced by Conservative Robert Goodwill MP. Norman Baker is now Home Office Minister.

Robert Goodwill has said that he is very keen on the cycling brief as he has been a member of the All Party Parliamentary Cycling Group, regularly cycles to work in London and goes on longer distance rides around his Scarborough and Whitby constituency.

Other people in the Department for Transport are:

Patrick McLoughlin MP, Secretary of State for Transport,  
Baroness Kramer, Minister of State for Transport and  
Stephen Hammond MP, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Transport.

In the Shadow cabinet, Mary Creagh has replaced Maria Eagle as shadow transport secretary.

In a speech on 2 December 2013, Robert Goodwill made some positive statements on cycling including the following:

"We have to move beyond incremental improvements and plan transport networks.

Cycling provision has to be put in designed by people who actually understand cycling. The case for increasing cycling infrastructure has to be explained better to existing car and van drivers.

We have to help people choose alternative forms of transport otherwise traffic jams and congestion will increase by 30% in 2025 and will cost £22 billion in wasted time and increase business costs by over £10 billion. Cycling is an essential part of that mix.

We need to improve road safety and tackle the perception held by many that cycling is too dangerous. Department for Transport estimates show accidents involving cyclists have fallen by 33% since the 1990s.

Red tape has been cut to make it easier for cycle infrastructure to be put in place - 20mph speed limits and zones - contraflow cycling. Trials are being carried out on shared use cycle and zebra crossings, elephant's footprint markings at signalised crossings, cycle filter signals.

A lot of poor quality infrastructure has been put in in the past - cycle paths with obstructions in the middle to give a slalom course instead of a cycle route. Many cycle paths built go to nowhere.

To increase cycling levels there has to be a continuous high quality cycle network to make it easier for short journeys suitable of everyone - women, older people and children."

# The Netherlands and Cycling

Most people think of the Netherlands as always being one of the top cycling countries in the world alongside Denmark and Germany.



*Amsterdam Canal Scene*

This, however, has not always been the case. Up to the early 1970s with the increase in motor vehicles, urbanisation and government policies such as the motorways and other major road expansion favouring motoring, cycling was in a more rapid decline than it was in the UK. In the 1950s cycle use was 50-85% but had reduced to 14-35% by 1975.

So what happened? The oil crisis of the 1970s.

The increase of environmental pollution, congestion and the rise in traffic injuries and fatalities coupled with the significant increase in fuel costs provoked demonstrations against the harm that car use was having on people's quality of life.

This resulted in a dramatic reversal of transport policies and most cities decided to restrict car use and promote public transport, cycling and walking. Money was spent on expanding and improving the cycle infrastructure. Within a few years this created a rebound in cycle use and over the following 20 years, levels rose by more than 25% and have continued to rise.

The Netherlands currently has a nationwide bike share of 26% although a number of cities are significantly higher; Groningen 40%, Zwolle 37%, Leiden 33%, Enschede 31% and Amsterdam 27%. This shows that cycling can thrive in places with almost universal car ownership as long as car use is restricted and does not endanger or inconvenience cyclists.

With good infrastructure provided, including 30km/h (18.8mph) speed limits, the country is now one of the safest in the world for cycling. Helmets are only worn by 3% of cyclists and this shows that it is the highway infrastructure, not helmets, that saves life. Cyclists wear ordinary clothes and are of all ages - elderly, women as often as men and children.

In the UK cycling continued to decline and it was not until the creation of the National Cycle Strategy in 1996 and the 1998 Transport White Paper - A new deal for transport that cycling was given some priority.

The UK has a lot of catching up to do.



*Amsterdam 2013*



Ford End Road Bridge - 1950s  
This is possible again

*Bedford 1953*

It is possible for Bedford to do it again with good infrastructure, 20mph speed limits and Bikeability training available to all.

A short history of cycling in the Netherlands can be seen in the Dutch Cycling Embassy video 'Cycling for Everybody' -

<http://vimeo.com/30123650>.

## CCNB Website Revamp

Over the last few months the CCNB website - <http://www.ccnb.org.uk> - has been revamped. Please let us know what you think of it and what further improvements you would like to see.

During 2013 the site had 2000 visitors - approximately 150 per month.

# Older Cyclist Study

Oxford Brookes University last October embarked on a three year study to investigate how older people can be encouraged and supported to cycle into their old age, helping them to retain their health, fitness and independence.

Cycling accounts for only 1 per cent of all journeys for people over 65 years old in the UK while in the Netherlands it is 23% and 15% in Denmark.

The major barriers are believed to be fear of injury and the physical demanding aspect of the activity. These could be overcome by improving the cycle infrastructure and developing assistive technology such as e-bikes that could be adapted for the needs of older people.

It is planned to follow people approaching later life (50-59) and those aged over 60 in four cities.

Participants will be interviewed about their cycling history, and observed as they make familiar journeys by bike. There will also be a study of those given new electric bikes to measure whether their use improves health and independence.

The results of the research will be a website which will host an interactive toolkit based on older peoples' perception of how the towns and technologies could be designed to support and promote cycling amongst current and future older generations. It will enable policy makers and practitioners advising on how the built environment and technology could be designed to support and encourage cycling amongst current and future older generations.

## University of Sydney Pilot

A pilot study by the University of Sydney in 2013 found that older people (aged 49 -79) who had cycled in the preceding month performed significantly better on measures of decision time and response time than those who had not, and those who cycled at least an hour a week showed significant improvements in balance and single-leg standing, making them less at risk of falls.

Cycling is a non weight-bearing exercise that is less stressful on the joints than walking or running, and long-term studies have shown that it reduces risk of cardiovascular disease, several types of cancer, and life-threatening obesity.

## Netherlands Study

A study recently carried out in the Netherlands found that the risk of traumatic injuries (on average 5-9 days of life lost to these) was far outweighed by the benefits of increased physical activity (3-14 months of life gained).

## Low Level Junction Lights

In December 2013 the Department for Transport (DfT) announced that they had authorised for use new low level traffic lights designed for cyclists to improve their safety at junctions.

The first set to be installed early this year as a pilot will be at London's Bow Roundabout which has recently witnessed a number of fatal accidents. A further 11 sets at other locations will be installed later.

The lights will give cyclists improved, clearer signals to ensure they have the information they need at the junction.

Research is currently underway that will give DfT the evidence to consider approving the use of these lights to provide an 'early start' for cyclists.

Advanced signals, common in Europe, help cyclists to get ahead of motor traffic legally, without jumping the red light, and are less confusing to other road users.



## Road Works Safety - Code of Practice 2013

The statutory 'Code of Practice 2013', informally known as the 'safety code' or 'red book', covering safe working at road works was updated last October and comes into force on 1 October 2014. The new version, a revision of the existing one issued in 2001, includes a section on cyclists and advises supervisors to assess the works' impact on them and consider preserving access to the carriageway even if it needs to be closed to motor vehicles. It also says that portable traffic lights should be configured to give cyclists enough time to clear the controlled area.

# Cycling in Verona

Verona is famous for its Roman arena, which during the summer is used for open air operas, and Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet with the world renowned Juliet's balcony (below) - although it appears that this was only added to 'Juliet's' house in the 1920s.



Visiting Verona at the end of last year your editor was surprised by the large number of residents of all ages that were using bicycles to go about their everyday business. The numbers were not in the same league as those seen in Copenhagen or Amsterdam but were nevertheless significantly higher than in Bedford.



In many respects the city is similar to Pisa which we visited earlier last year (see Newsletter No 66). Both places are historical cities situated on a river, in this case the Fiume Adige.

There are only a few on-road cycle lanes (on the very busy roads) but all the non-main roads are subject to 30kph (18.8 miles per hour) and as per in Pisa cyclists are allowed in the pedestrianised historic areas.

*New landscaped square with underground car park and surface cycle stands*



*Verona Bike cycle hire Station*

*Postal delivery*

The city has very recently started a cycle sharing scheme, called the 'Verona Bike', to encourage sustainable transportation. At the present time there are 23 docking stations dotted around the city.



# Underground Cycle Parking in Japan

Although Japan is one of the world's leading car manufacturers and has an enviable public transport system, the bicycle is still a very popular mode of transport to get around cities.

In Tokyo, in particular, one of the busiest cities in the planet, land is at a premium and it is extremely difficult for cycling commuters in the morning rush hour to find a legal space where they can safely park their bicycle.



It is therefore with little surprise that a Japanese construction company has come up with a solution for storing bicycles that takes up very little street space.



The automated bike storage system called Eco Cycle consists of a seven metre diameter cylindrical structure buried 11 metres below ground which is able to store up to 200 bicycles.

Users place their bike into the designated zone and mechanical arms clamp it into place. The owner swipes their membership card to approve the storage. It is then taken underground, stored in an individual space and its location noted in the system ready for when it is collected.

The whole process takes about 16 seconds to store and retrieve each bike.

Each storage unit is claimed to cost about \$1.5 million to construct but already there are currently 43 Eco Cycle facilities at 16 locations across Japan.

A video on the system in action can be seen on:

[http://www.youtube.com/watch\\_popup?v=pcZSU40RBrg](http://www.youtube.com/watch_popup?v=pcZSU40RBrg)

# Copenhagen New Bike Share System

An Android tablet-ed GoBike bike share system was launched in Copenhagen in October 2013 with 1260 bicycles in 60 stations. Paid for via the tablet on the bike which will have access to tourist information, GPS, train timetables (with booking) and an e-motor if you get tired.



*Copenhagen Go bike*

Copenhagen was one of the first to have a cycle hire scheme when it introduced the Bicyklen - City Bike - in 1995. The cycle hire worked on a shopping trolley system where a coin was introduced which was retrieved on the bike's return. They were apparently not popular with residents and were mainly used by tourists although the type lasted until late 2012. It has taken four years for the new one to come to fruition.



*Android tablet*

## Boris e-Bikes

Boris Johnson, Mayor of London, is due to create an electric bike revolution this year. As an extension to his cycle rental scheme he is proposing to introduce a pilot scheme of several hundred battery powered bicycles.

The bikes are expected to be introduced in some of London's hilliest parts, such as Muswell Hill, Crouch End and Alexandra Palace, where steep climbs put many off taking their bike. The docking stations in these areas will double as electric charging points for the bicycles. The e-bikes will however be kept separate from the established pedal powered Boris bikes.

In the meantime the existing scheme goes from strength to strength with a choice of more than 8,000 bikes at over 550 docking stations within 300 to 500 metres of each other, available 24 hours a day, every single day of the year.

The area covered is currently from Shepherd's Bush in the west to Canary Wharf and Victoria Park in the east. By spring 2014 this will also include parts of Wandsworth, Hammersmith & Fulham, Lambeth and Kensington & Chelsea.

Information on the scheme on everything from bike availability to registering for a key visit:

<http://www.tfl.gov.uk/roadusers/cycling/14808.aspx>

## Bolivian Law makes Cycling Compulsory

In October 2013 the city of Cochabamba, the fourth largest city in Bolivia in South America, passed a law that will make it compulsory for residents to ride a bicycle once a week to get around instead of using other means of transport.

The law which comes into force during 2014 is aimed at not only reducing pollution, but also at improving the health of the city's residents by introducing them to the benefits of using two wheels to get around, as part of promoting healthier lifestyles.

The law also provides for the construction of a major new cycle route, upgrading of existing ones, the provision of cycle parking at public and private workplaces and other institutions, and cycle training in schools.

Late last year, the country's president, Evo Morales, participated in a Day of Pedestrians and Cyclists in Defence of Mother Earth, held nationwide since 2011 but first instituted in Cochabamba a decade ago.

Each year, the day sees all motorised traffic in Bolivia halted for eight hours, leaving the streets free for people on foot or on bikes.

# The Power of Advertising

Advertising the mobile bicycle ambulance service based at the Cycle Park in Park Street Cambridge.



## Question?

What initially would an intelligent cyclist's thought be on studying the following list of operas by Verdi?

- Tosca (Puccini!)
- Aida (V)
- Nabucco (V)
- Don Carlos (V)
- Ernani (V)
- Macbeth (Shakespeare!)

Seen in *The Resourceful Day*, the final Inspector Morse novel by Colin Dexter (page 373).

## Health Warning

One hour of cycling is expected to increase your life by one hour.

## Unusual Bikes - Cardboard Bike

In the last newsletter we had an article on bamboo bicycles, a bicycle with the frame made out of bamboo. This time we have a more unusual bike made out of cardboard. Cardboard has been deployed in the past for many things such as gramophones, stereos and even digital cameras but never bikes.

The first bikes were made of wood, before manufacturers switched to steel tubes, and later aluminium alloys and carbon fibre.

After seeing a canoe made out of cardboard, an amateur cyclist turned engineer, Israeli Izhar Gafni, has developed a bike made entirely from cardboard except for the puncture proof solid tyres which were made from old car tyres, the chain from an old car timing chain and pedals from recycled plastic bottles.

Mr Gafni created the bike by following the principles of origami by folding commercial grade recycled cardboard and then applying resin and lacquer. The result is said to be stronger than carbon fibre and the developer now has plans to market the bike to poorer countries where it could be made very cheaply.



*Bike made from cardboard by Ishaar Gafni in Israel*

A video on the creation of the bike can be seen on

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=txSboSNQINs>

## Glow in the Dark Cycle Path

Christ's Pieces Park in Cambridge now has the world's first 'glow in the dark' cycle path. Its aim is to aid cyclist safety, while also saving on street lighting costs.

The illumination comes from ultraviolet particles in the pavement at the Cambridge beauty spot which absorb energy during the day and release it as light overnight.

It is hoped the technology could one day replace streetlamps as a cheaper and more energy efficient form of lighting. No mains power is required.

The trial, which is being carried out by Surrey-based Pro-Teq Surfacing with the city council's permission, saw the luminous particles laid on top of the existing path and then sprayed with a protective film.

The particles release luminescence according to the surroundings, with more light being given off on a dark night compared to a lighter one. There is the potential to give off different colours of light, allowing for cycle and pedestrian areas to be marked off.



*Christ's Pieces Park Cambridge glow in the dark cycle path*

A video on the new scheme can be seen on:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DirpewBP6Cw>

# Cycling Round Bedfordshire

From Bedfordshire Verse with kind permission of Frank Batt

Give me a bike in Bedfordshire  
That winds down a country lane,  
So that I can feel that cold rush of air  
And drift like a swift yet again.

Give me a bike by the riverside  
And a muffler against the snow,  
So that I can ride by the proud swan's side  
And slide by the wide Ouse flow.

Give me a bike on the Stagsden Hill  
And a cape in the bouncing rain,  
So that I can skim with a kingfisher's skill  
And swoop through the pools again.

Give me a bike on the West End Road  
In the blaze of the August rays,  
So that I can hover in friends of corn  
Where the skylarks trill in the haze.

Give me a bike on the Kempston Road  
And a coat in the misty fall,  
So I'll smell the musk of Astey Wood  
And fly to the black rook's call.

Give me a bike in Bedfordshire  
That winds down a country lane,  
So that I can feel that cold rush of air  
And drift like a bird once again.

*Frank offers free poetry readings to any interested group and may be contacted on telephone 01234 306880.*

## Diary

- Wednesday 5 March 2014 - Bedford College Sustainability Day  
Thursday 8 May 2014 - Women's UK Cycle Tour - 2nd stage finish  
in Bedford  
Friday 9 May 2014 - CCNB AGM (see page 5)

See <http://www.ccnb.org.uk/diaryb.html> 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)