

Cycle Bedford



Issue 71
February 2015

The Voice of Cycling Campaign for North Bedfordshire



'space for cycling'
Six Core Principles of National Campaign

CYCLING CAMPAIGN FOR NORTH BEDFORDSHIRE

Founded 1992

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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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Contents

2	Committee
2	Campaigning Representation
3	Bedford Borough Council Contacts
3	Contents
4	Editorial
5	Why Cycle?
6	Space for Cycling
8	Wixam to Ampthill Road Cycle Route
9	Cycling in Town Centre
10	Bromham Road Railway Bridge Upgrade
12	20mph Speed Limits Update
13	Highway Consultation in Progress
14	Cycle Training (Bikeability) Update
16	New Cranfield Cycle Route
16	Norse Road Cabinets Moved
17	Future Route 51 Progress
18	A4280/A6 Link Underpass
19	Cycle Contraflows
19	First Aid for Cyclists
20	Cycle Stands
22	Bedford Cycle Network
23	CCNB's New Bedford and Kempston Cycle Map
24	Bedford Railway Station Access Counts
24	Bedford Railway Station Cycle Counts
25	Bedford Railway Station Cycle Stands
25	Bike-Rail Integration
26	Climate Change and the Environment
27	Northampton's Cycle CoNNeCT Scheme
28	Bike for Science
29	Get Britain Cycling Update
29	Infrastructure Bill
30	Cycling in Florence
33	New X5 Buses
34	Roads Were Not Built For Cars
35	National Cycle Rail Awards 2014
35	CCNB AGM
36	Local Cycle Rides - Contact
36	CCNB Vision and Objectives

Editorial

It is claimed that the 2015 General Election on Thursday 7 May will be the most crucial in the history of the UK since 1945.

But how will it affect cycling and what do cyclists want from elected representatives?

The campaign '**space for cycling**' (cover) created by the London Cycling Campaign for the 2014 London elections has now been taken national by the Cyclists Touring Club (CTC) and Cyclenation, the umbrella organisation for local campaign groups including CCNB, for the 2015 elections.



For this special election issue CCNB has no hesitation in reiterating the benefits of getting more residents of Bedford Borough to cycle for that short distance from A to B, reasons already known to all regular cyclists including our membership (page 5).

Three of CCNB's current main campaigning themes align themselves with three of the six national 'space for cycling' themes, namely:

- Complete/improve cycle network including
 - Wixams to Bedford (Ampt Hill Road route) (page 8)
 - Bromham Road railway bridge (page 10)
- 20mph speed limits (page 12)
- Cycle training (page 14)

For this to be successful there has to be more joined up thinking between all departments both locally and nationally - highways, environment, planning, health and education.

Two urban myths must be dispelled:

Motorists pay 'road tax' but cyclists do not -

Road tax was abolished in 1937 and replaced by Vehicle Excise Duty. This goes straight into the general Treasury fund and is not spent directly on roads.

Roads are built for motorists not cyclists -

A new fully researched book recently published shows that cyclists were the real pioneers of smooth surfaced roads several years before motoring was made legal (page 34).

In addition to the usual newsletter distribution, electronic or hard copies will also be given to all candidates in the election for Member of Parliament, Bedford Borough Mayor, Member of Bedford Borough Council as well as local Parish Councillor.

Finally CCNB congratulates Bedford Borough Council for winning in conjunction with Sustrans a 2014 Rail Cycle award (page 35).



Why Cycle?

Cycling is a safe, normal and enjoyable activity for people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities. It is the most inexpensive form of independent door to door transport, apart from walking, with no fuel or parking costs and low cost maintenance.

A considerable number of borough residents cycle all through the year, but it is in the spring and summer when many start to think about cycling. In the borough about 60% of car journeys are less than 5 miles and 40% less than 2 miles. A lot of these could easily be made by bicycle.

Riding a bicycle is like swimming. Once learnt you will never forget how to do it but if you have never ridden a bicycle or have not cycled for some time (and 61% claim nationally not to have ridden one for more than a year) and would like to regain confidence in today's traffic there are a number of training courses available in the area.

As well as saving you money, cycling also comes with a number of health, environmental and social benefits.

Health

Cycling is a healthy activity and incorporating it into daily life leads to a reduction in the risk of cardiovascular disease, cancer, obesity and diabetes and an increase in mental wellbeing.

Convenient

Cycling is a quicker alternative to the car or public transport for many short trips, particularly for travel in peak traffic conditions. It is possible to time a journey to the minute and rely on it.

A bicycle can be easily parked outside the building you are visiting.

Environment

Cycling also has many indirect benefits. Less car use will result in a reduction of energy, noise and pollution, greenhouse gas emissions, vehicle congestion and other harmful impacts of cars.

This promotes social interaction and makes communities more pleasant for all residents whether cyclists or not.

Bedford (and Kempston) is already a **'Town of Cyclists'** and **'Cycle Friendly Communities'** with a level of cycling in the upper quartile of UK towns and cities. Although at the present time it is not up to the levels of Cambridge and Oxford it has the potential to achieve these levels with good planning and promotion.

Every additional resident cycling is one more healthier person and one less motor vehicle contributing to congestion, noise and air pollution.

Space for Cycling



Space for Cycling is a national campaign lobbying local and national government to produce and provide an infrastructure that encourages more and safer cycling for riders of all ages and abilities on the country's roads. The campaign has six themes.

A two minute video by Jon Snow, CTC President, explaining what the campaign is all about can be viewed on:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JNHh6wuK_9E



Protected Space on Main Roads and at Junctions

Main roads and at junctions are often the worst places for cycling because of fast moving and heavy traffic but do offer in many cases the direct route between A and B.

A number of on-road cycle lanes have been installed on busy roads in Bedford and Kempston during resurfacing and two roundabouts have been reconstructed but many residents still do not feel safe on this type of road.

CCNB's cycle map of Bedford and Kempston highlights routes along quiet roads and off-road tracks with safe crossings of busy roads to encourage new and the less confident cyclists to cycle more often. Nevertheless there are many gaps which require upgrading to give a high quality network. Two examples are the missing link from the Wixams to Progress Business Park (page 8) and the Bromham Road railway bridge (page 10).



Cycle-Friendly Town Centres

By making them safer and easier to reach and explore by bike, a more prosperous and 'liveable' town can be created.

The Borough has recently approved cycling out of core shopping hours through the pedestrian area of Bedford town centre. This makes it safer for early commuters to the railway station from the Castle road area. There is a need for further safe routes through and around the town centre.



Cycle Routes through Parks and Green Spaces

Parks and green spaces are perfect places for cycling - particularly for children, families and the elderly. Bedford borough is fortunate in not having any bylaws prohibiting their use by cyclists.



20mph Speed Limits

Reducing motor traffic speeds is proven to prevent death and serious injuries to cyclists and pedestrians alike, especially children, with little impact on most journey times.

This is one of CCNB's main campaigning priorities (page 12). The Borough has a lot of schemes in progress but there is still more to be done to improve the quality of life of all residents.

In urban areas the majority of people killed or seriously injured by motor vehicles in the UK are pedestrians and cyclists. For children between 11 and 16 years old and anyone between 5 and 25 years old speed is the biggest killer.

For every 1mph that speed is reduced, one less person is likely to be affected. But it is not just the lives of pedestrians and cyclists that are improved. Lower speeds result in less congestion and improved traffic flow for motorists.



Safer Cycle Routes to Schools

Bringing up children to be healthy, independent adults is very important and helping them to cycle is one of the best ways to do it.

Cycle (Bikeability) training of all children (page 14) is essential to encourage parents to allow their children to cycle to school. There must be an adequate annual budget for this to occur. Provision of cycle parking and training for all schools should be monitored annually through their school Travel Plan.



Removal of Through Motor Traffic

Fast or heavy through traffic makes residential streets inhospitable for cycling.

To reduce rat running and congestion due to parking problems in many streets a number have or are being converted to one-way with a cycle contraflow. There is still scope for further schemes.

A guide for local decision makers can be downloaded from:

<http://www.ctc.org.uk/sites/default/files/1404-space-for-cycling-guide-local-decision-makers.pdf>

Making space for cycling - a guide for new developments and street renewals can be downloaded from:

<http://www.makingspaceforcycling.org/>

Wixams to Ampthill Road Cycle Route

Wixams, just south of Bedford, when completed will consist of four villages each with its own centre, built around a town centre. The community is expected to be around 10,000 (4,000 homes) with the possibility to expand to 15,000.

The development is being designed to facilitate the safe movement of residents by cycle as well as walking and public transport. Planning approval has already been given for a new railway station located on the west side of the site although its construction, originally scheduled for completion during 2015, has now slipped.

The first village known as Lakeview, started in 2009, is nearing completion and work is currently in progress on Village Two and Village Three.

The consequences of the development are already being felt along Ampthill Road with significant increases in traffic into Bedford resulting in high levels of congestion, queuing, and emission and noise pollution. This is likely to get progressively worse as the development continues even with the completion of the Western Bypass A4280/A6 link.

There is no possibility to widen Ampthill Road to cope with all the extra traffic. One solution, apart from using public transport, is to encourage more residents to consider using a bicycle as a quick, safe and easy way of reaching Bedford town centre and other nearby facilities.

It is therefore important that the missing link in the direct cycle route from the Wixams to Bedford is completed as soon as possible. The link still to be constructed is from the Elstow Waste Depot entrance to the A6/A421 interchange and then across the junction, already planned to be signalled, to the existing cycle track through Progress Business Park.

The link is part of the Section 106 agreement for the Wixams development but was put on hold four years ago until the interchange was signalled for the proposed National Institute for Research in Aquatic Habitats (Nirah) aquarium project in Stewartby which has now been abandoned.

In addition the whole cycle route should be upgraded from the West End junction across all side roads*, extending the off-road route to Britannia Road, with cycle lanes along Britannia Road for experienced cyclists and a toucan crossing of Kempston Road for those cyclists using Victoria Road and the Britannia bridge to the riverside. An off-road cycle route around the Wilmers Corner roundabout in conjunction with cycle/pedestrian zebra crossings should also be provided.

** It is already planned by the end of March 2015 to improve the Ampthill Road cycle route across its junctions with Cosmic Avenue and Sexton Avenue.*

Looking north along A6 towards Interchange already well used by cyclists



Looking north across 3 slip lanes towards Progress Business Park and start of cycle route to Bedford

Cycling in Town Centre

A temporary Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) has been raised to allow cyclists to cycle through the town centre out of core shopping hours between 6pm and 9am. The TRO will be reviewed after 6, 12 and 18 months operation before deciding whether or not to make it permanent. Signs to indicate the authorisation and times will be put up shortly.

Bromham Road Railway Bridge Upgrade

The electrification of the London Midland railway line between Bedford and Sheffield is expected to allow the start of electric train services between Bedford, Kettering and Corby from December 2017.

The project involves a huge investment in infrastructure and work on electrifying the route begins in earnest from April this year. One major part of the work is the rebuilding of 100 bridges along the route to accommodate the overhead electric wires.

Within Bedford Borough planning applications have already been approved and the work in progress or completed on a number of the smaller bridges between Bedford and Wellingborough. The one CCNB is concerned with and which is likely to be the last one to be designed and rebuilt is the Bromham Road railway bridge just north of Bedford railway station. The work will cause severe traffic disruption to the west of the town and is not expected to be started until the A6/A4280 road link currently under construction to complete the town's Western Bypass is completed in 2016.

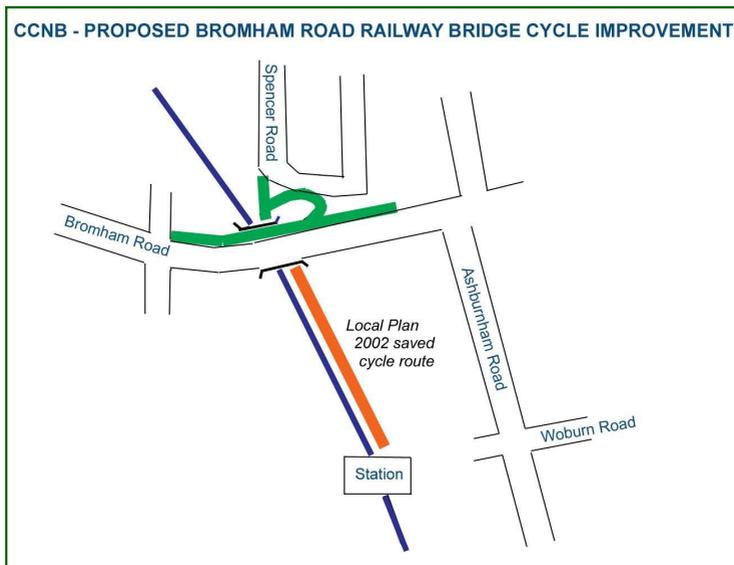
The railway line and the bridge acts as a divide between the east/west parts of the town and the rebuild will be a 'once in a lifetime' chance to improve the bridge for both cyclists and pedestrians.

In 2001 there was a plan to build a pedestrian/cycle bridge across the line next to the railway station as part of the Allen's development. This failed at the last moment due to lack of coordination between two parts of the then Government's Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and the Borough. This MUST NOT be allowed to happen again.

The bridge is used by 'several hundred' cyclists every day, half of them school children to Biddenham Upper School and commuters to the railway station. Due to its narrowness and incline on each side, crossing the bridge using the carriageway is very dangerous for young and inexperienced cyclists with HGVs and buses trying to squeeze them against the kerb. Hence, more than half currently cycle illegally across on the narrow pavement. The dangerous nature of the bridge has been brought out in a number of questionnaires carried out over the last few years in listing it as one of the top safety concerns of cyclists. There have also been two petitions to the Borough requesting that the route is made more safer.

Even when the bypass is opened it is expected that the number of vehicles using the bridge is likely to continue to increase and cause severe congestion due to the development of the north of Bromham Road site as well as Great Denham.

CCNB therefore believe that the upgrade of the bridge should allow the opportunity to construct a wider pavement (equal to or wider than 3m)



on the north side to create a dual use path together with an underpass of the east side from Spencer Road into the station car park. Bedford Borough Council's 2002 Local Plan has a saved cycle route from the bridge to the station. This would then give a safe pedestrian/cycleway for cyclists from Biddenham/Bromham, via a spiral ramp down to Spenser Road and the underpass, as well as a direct route from Clapham/Brickhill via Spenser Road to reach the station and the town centre.

The route was an aspiration of the old County Council from the 1990s. In 1999 Sustrans in one of their 'Access to Stations' paper exercises put forward a toucan crossing in place of the underpass until such time that one could be built.

In an initial brief by Bedford Borough for the North of Bromham Road development it was planned through Section 106 funding to provide a toucan crossing next to Hurst Grove to link in with the then proposed bridge from the Allen's site.



Position of proposed subway from Spenser Rd

20mph Speed Limits Update

20mph speed limits are being increasingly endorsed across the UK. The lower speed limit is safer, healthier, more active, friendlier, cleaner, quieter, better for equalities, better for business and makes no significant impact on overall journey times.



Edinburgh Councillors in January 2015 are the latest to vote for an extensive 20mph scheme covering more than 80% of Edinburgh's roads including the whole of the town centre. This joins most of inner London, Bath, Brighton, Bristol, Cambridge, Leicester, Nottingham, Oxford and many other towns and cities who have adopted similar strategies.

British Social Attitudes Survey

Every year over people are asked what it's like to live in Britain and how they think Britain is run. On behalf of the Department for Transport (DfT) questions are also asked on the public's attitudes to transport including 20mph limits. The survey is now in its 31st year and the latest report (for 2013) on this part of the survey was published by the DfT in July 2014. As in previous surveys the majority of people are supportive of 20mph speed limits in residential areas although only half favour the use of speed bumps.

The DfT report can be downloaded from:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/326097/british-social-attitudes-survey-2013.pdf

Bedford

As part of the Mayor's speed reduction programme a number of schemes have been implemented within the borough over the last few years and many more are at various stages of implementation.

The latest schemes since the previous newsletter are:

Brickhill

As a result of frequent complaints about speeding traffic the Councillors for Brickhill Ward have asked the Borough to consider introducing a lower speed limit (20mph) to promote road safety in the residential area of Mallard Hill and its surrounding roads and also the area bounded by Brickhill Drive, Linnet Way, Waveney Avenue and Avon Drive. The latter four roads are not included.

A consultation of residents in December 2014 gave overwhelming support for the proposal.

Goldington Avenue Area

A similar request to the above has been received by De Parys Ward Councillors for a lower speed limit in the Goldington Avenue area bounded by Caves Lane, Goldington Road and Kimbolton Road.

Brendon Avenue Area

De Parys Ward Councillors have requested a lower speed limit in Brendon Avenue, Langdale and Selsey Way, roads between Polhill Avenue and Chiltern Avenue.

Kempston

Two petitions have been received by Kempston Ward Councillors for a lower speed limit in the Kempston area bounded by Spring Road, Bedford Road and Elstow Road. The latter road is not included. A consultations of residents is outstanding.

Poets Area

Harpur Ward Councillors have requested a lower speed limit on roads within the Poets area; Byron Crescent, Chaucer Road, Cowper Road, Keats Close, Milton Road, Sidney Road and Spencer Road.

A full list of schemes already implemented and in progress together with further information can be seen on CCNB's website under:

<http://www.ccnb.org.uk/20mph.html>

An article on 20mph is also available on the Borough's website under:

http://www.bedford.gov.uk/transport_and_streets/road_safety/speed_limits/20mph_speed_limits.aspx

Highway Consultation in Progress

In addition to the 20mph consultations in progress in the Goldington Avenue area (see above under 20mph Speed Limits Update) there is also one for one way streets in the same area.

Residents are concerned with conflicts in the southern section of Goldington Avenue from the junction with Campbell Road to Goldington Road and have asked Bedford Borough Council to consider implementing a one way system in the affected area. This would remove the conflict that occurs when two vehicles meet on a road that is parked on both sides. In addition there have been requests to implement a one way system on Campbell Road and on the southern section of Bradgate Road from the junction with Campbell Road to the junction with Goldington Road.

In all cases cycling will continue to be permitted in both directions.

Cycle Training (Bikeability) Update

The Association of Bikeability Schemes (TABS) released its 2014 Bikeability School Travel Survey report in December 2014.

The following is an edited version of the summary of the findings put out by TABS:

Children who complete Bikeability cycle training are significantly more likely to cycle to school than untrained children, and they report significantly higher levels of confidence cycling on the road.

With regard to cycling to places other than school, the survey evidence suggests that compared with untrained children, trained children are more likely to cycle to other destinations offering greater opportunities for independent mobility. The most popular cycling destinations for children were going to the park or recreation ground, the pool or sports centre or simply cycling to play out with friends.

Most children think cycling is fun and exciting and the survey results suggest trained children enjoy cycling more than untrained children, especially trained girls. When asked what would make cycling more enjoyable children offered a range of responses, including having a new bike, cycling with friends and family, and having more cycling destinations. Importantly, trained and untrained children both said that cycling would be more enjoyable if they were simply allowed to cycle more. In their own words:

- *Being allowed to cycle further than the end of the road (trained)*
- *More permission and freedom to cycle around (trained)*
- *Mum and dad letting me go to friends house, travel on bike (trained)*
- *Cycling a bit further (untrained)*
- *If I could go on the road (untrained)*
- *Allowing me to go by myself to places (untrained).*

When asked what would make cycling more enjoyable, other children raised concerns that may reflect parent/carer reluctance to let children play out more on bicycles:

- *If cars were more careful when we are on the road (trained)*
- *If cars didn't always think they were more important than you (trained)*
- *Better drivers (trained)*



- *People in cars didn't go so fast (untrained)*
- *Feeling safer around cars to make sure I don't get run over (untrained)*
- *If it is more safe to cycle (untrained).*

Dr Paul Hewson, Associate Professor in Statistics at Plymouth University, said:

Compared with untrained children, the survey results show trained children reported they cycle more often, cycle more to school, cycle more on the road, cycle with more confidence on the road, and enjoy cycling more. The pattern of these associations provides reassurance that most children filled in the survey forms carefully during class time, as for example children who reported that they enjoy cycling more are likely to be both more confident and cycle more.

Dr Michael Frearson, Director at The Association of Bikeability Schemes, said:

The survey evidence confirms what many schools and parents already know: children love cycling and want to cycle more. The results also suggest Bikeability does a good job giving children the skills and confidence they need to cycle on today's roads. Arguably, effective cycle training mitigates some of the risks children and adults face when they cycle on the road. However, the survey results also suggest that more than training alone is needed to get more people cycling more often.

The full report can be downloaded from:

<http://www.tabs-uk.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/2014-Bikeability-School-Travel-Survey-Report-England-FINAL.December17.2014.pdf>

Information

Bikeability is a National Standard for Cycle Training - cycling proficiency for the 21st century - which has been designed by the leading experts in the field of road safety as well as cycling. With its principal outcome

'More people cycling more often and more safely'.

It is designed to give cyclists the skills and confidence to ride their bikes on today's roads and is split into three levels:

Level 1 - offers basic bike handling skills in a controlled environment away from the roads.

Level 2 - is taught on-road and teaches children to cycle planned routes on local familiar roads offering real cycling experience.

Level 3 will ensure cyclists can ride safely and competently in all traffic conditions.

Full details are available from <http://www.dft.gov.uk/bikeability>.

New Cranfield Cycle Route

A new shared path for pedestrians and cyclists, linking Cranfield village with Cranfield University and its Technology Park, was officially opened in November 2014.

The 2.5 metre wide path, funded by the Department for Transport's Cycle Safety Fund and a contribution from Cranfield University, runs approximately 2.5 miles from Lodge Road and the National Cycle Network Route 51 to University Way. It will enable staff and students to walk and cycle to the university separated from traffic.



Lodge Road looking towards Cranfield Road junction



Looking towards the University from Cranfield Road

Norse Road Cabinets Moved

After the shared use path on the south side of Norse Road last year was constructed from the new toucan in Norse Road to Glenavon Road a small cabinet was installed towards the middle of the path near the toucan while near the roundabout the full width of the path was disrupted by the presence of a large existing cabinet. Both were potentially hazardous not only for cyclists but also disabled and partially sighted people. CCNB has just succeeded in getting both cabinets moved to the side.



Large Cabinet

←
before
→
after



Future Route 51 Progress

National Cycle Network Route 51 currently uses the Hastingsbury cycle route through Kempston to Bedford; on-road along Ridge Road and Hill Rise from Wootton before joining the off-road route into Bedford at Hastingsbury Business and Enterprise College.

In the future it will take a completely off-road route from Wootton via the Western Bypass underpass and the Kempston West development and the Great Denham country park to join the riverside route to Bedford.

Further sections of the new route are under construction as part of the new developments.

Looking south-west towards Wootton from Wilkinson Road, Kempston West



Looking north-east from Western Bypass towards Great Denham and Bedford

A4280/A6 Link Underpass

As part of the new A4280/A6 link which is under construction between Bromham Road and Clapham Road, an underpass is taking shape just north of the enlarged Gold Lane roundabout. This will enable cyclists and pedestrians on the popular Bromham/Biddenham to Bedford cycle route to safely cross what will become an extremely busy road for vehicles bypassing Bedford.



December 2014



February 2015



General muddy conditions under which contractors have to work

Cycle Contraflows

Faraday Road

The road was made one-way in 2006 but has only recently had an 'Except cycles' plate added to its 'No Entry' sign to comply with the original Traffic Regulation Order.



Newnham Street

The current one-way street will have an 'Except cycle' plate added to the 'No Entry' sign over the next few weeks. This is on a popular cycle route from Goldington Road to the town centre via The Grove and Mill Street.

First Aid for Cyclists

Last year St John Ambulance launched a free 'First Aid for Cyclists' app available for download from *iTunes app store* and *Google Play* for Android.



In announcing the app they said that with three million people now cycling three times a week or more the app aims to give every cyclist the skills to deal with the most common cycling injuries and should be as essential as a puncture repair kit.

Ashley Sweetland, National Cycle Response Unit Lead at St John Ambulance added:

'We know many cyclists have accidents on the road each year, sometimes resulting in serious injuries where first aid could have made a difference. As the nation's leading first aid charity, we want to ensure that the UK's cycling community is equipped with first aid knowledge, so that more cyclists can help where circumstances might need them.'

'Our research found that on average, cyclists took the least amount of time to come to a cyclist's aid compared to both pedestrians and motorists. We're hoping our app will help to build the world's largest first aid equipped cycling community.'

The app is full of first aid advice from St John Ambulance medically trained experts and Cycle Response unit, who use specially adapted mountain bikes to be the first on the scene at accidents. With tips on how to turn cycling equipment into first aid instruments, the app is a resource that all cyclists can have with them at all times.

For information on St John Ambulance visit:

<https://www.sja.org.uk/sja/default.aspx>

Cycle Stands

The provision of cycle parking stands continues as part of planning application conditions based on guidelines in the cycling section of the Bedford Borough's Parking Standards Document. Recent ones include:

Church Lane Medical Centre

A bank of three 'Sheffield' type cycle parking stands has been provided outside the new medical centre, an additional facility adjacent to the Aldi supermarket at the Church Lane shopping centre in Goldington.



Woodside Christian Centre

A bank of eight 'Sheffield' type cycle parking stands has been provided near the Woodside Christian Centre entrance in Dover Crescent.



University of Bedfordshire - Polhill Campus

As part of the extension to the university in Polhill Avenue, Bedford, the original motor vehicle entrance to the site in Polhill Avenue opposite Dawlish Drive has been blocked off. In its place is a large pedestrian walkway containing a number of toast racks of covered 'Sheffield' type cycle stands for the increasing number of students who cycle to the university.



*Campus
Centre*

left



Library

right

Bedford Cycle Network

A number of destination signs will appear over the next few years headed by the abbreviation BCR followed by a number.

The first ones already seen along the route between Great Denham and the riverside near Queen's Bridge are headed **BCR 1**. BCR stands for Bedford Cycle Route and '1' has been designated as the route between Great Denham and the town centre via the riverside (see table opposite).



At the same time instead of quoting the distance to a destination the signs will quote the time in minutes based on a typical door to door cycling speed of 9.3 miles per hour (15 km/h).

The Bedford Cycle Network (BCN) is a network of 27 strategic radial routes focused on the town centre and 2 (inner and outer) orbital routes. These link up individual existing *roads or paths* to create viable *cycle routes*.

The purpose is to give residents of Bedford and Kempston, no matter where they live, an obvious well-signed route into and out of the town centre with linkages from the town to any other area of Bedford and Kempston.

The idea is that every resident will be no more than 400 metres and typically 200 metres (1-2 minutes cycling) from a signed strategic cycle route. This is in line with Dutch best practice that whole cycle networks are more effective than individual routes and should be designed to a density of 250 metres. Dutch guidance also recommends that routes should also be direct as possible (compared to crow fly distance). The whole network meets the recommended maximum ratio of actual/crow fly distance of 1.2.

The routes vary in type and purpose. The network is based on the principle of a dual network, which provides *fast direct routes* using main roads for confident cyclists willing to share with traffic and *quieter routes* using residential roads and paths for less confident cyclists. In fact the routes have been roughly graded to suit the confidence of cyclists (see chart and tube map):

- A (easiest – nearly all off-road)
- B (substantially off-road using shared cycle tracks)
- C (mostly using quiet residential roads)
- D (on medium busy roads)
- E (for confident cyclists - mostly on main roads).

List of Routes to Town Centre

Route Type	From	via	
BCR 1	A	Great Denham	riverside
BCR 2	E	Great Denham	(Old) Ford End Road
BCR 3	C	Biddenham	Biddenham Turn and main road
BCR 4	B	Bromham & Stagsden	main road
BCR 5	E	Clapham & Oakley	Clapham Road
BCR 6	C	Manton Heights	Park Rd North & Foster Hill Rd
BCR 7	B	Brickhill/Woodlands Pk	various
BCR 8	E	Kimbolton Road	main road
BCR 8A	D	Putnoe	Putnoe Lane
BCR 9	C	Putnoe & Mk Rutherford	various
BCR 10	C	Putnoe & Woodside	various
BCR 11	D	Woodside	Church Lane
BCR 12	B	Elms Farm	various
BCR 13	E	Goldington Road	main road
BCR 14	C	Castle Rd & Riverfield Dr	various
BCR 15	A	Russell Park	various
BCR 16	D	Riverfield Dr Estate	Barkers Lane & Embankment
NCN 51	A	Sandy	riverside
BCR 17	B	Cardington	various
BCR 18	E	Priory Ind Estate	Cardington Road
BCR 19	B	Shortstown	various
BCR 20	C	Meadowsweet Dr	various
BCR 21	E	London Road	main road
BCR 22	C	Abbeyfields	various
BCR 23	D	Elstow Village & Wixams	Wilstead Rd & Elstow Rd
BCR 24	E	Wixams	Amphill Road
BCR 25	C	South Kempston	various
BCR 26	B	Hastingsbury	Bedford and Kempston Roads

A tube style map of the network can be seen on the website:

www.cyclebedford.org.uk/cycle_tube_map.pdf

Editor - The article is an edited version of one prepared in early 2014 by Patrick Lingwood, Bedford Borough Council's Walking and Cycling Officer, for a Bedford Cycle Strategy Group meeting.

CCNB's New Bedford and Kempston Cycle Map

CCNB's new Bedford and Kempston Cycle Map, now in its 5th Edition, has been designed particularly for those who at present feel themselves to be more vulnerable on busy roads, that is, for new or less confident cyclists and children. As such it does not include any of the main or busy road routes which have been characterised as type D or E in the above.

Bedford Railway Station Access Counts

Since 2005, on one weekday in October the Borough has been manually recording between 5am and 12 noon all people accessing the station by all modes.

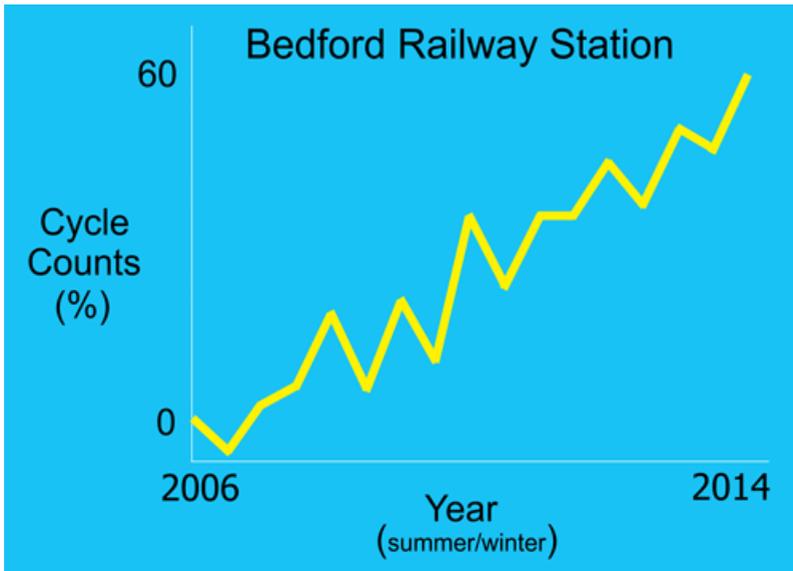
In 2014, there were 4,500 arrivals at the station compared to 3,800 in 2013. For both years the number arriving by bicycle was 9.0%, representing 390 versus 340 bicycles respectively. Other results for 2014 were:

Pedestrians	-	49%
Cars (x1 person)	-	21%
Cars (x2)	-	16%
Cars (x3-x4)	-	1%
Taxis	-	3%
Motor cycles	-	1%

Bedford Railway Station Cycle Counts

Cycle counts at Bedford railway station, collected on a regular basis by CCNB since 2006, have shown an average increased from 230 to 367 for 2014, that is, a 60% increase representing an average increase of 7.5% per year.

As shown in the graph below the winter period counts each year as expected are generally slightly lower than those collected during the summer months.



Bedford Railway Station Cycle Stands

Two years ago the wall between the entrance corridor to the station and the neighbouring building became unsafe and had to be dismantled. The five London plane trees which interspersed the cycle racks along the corridor were believed to have been responsible. The trees were taken down a few months ago and in January 2015 work started to rebuild the wall. While this is being carried out all the cycle stands in the area mainly of the 'Sheffield' type but also one set of the new double deckers have had to be taken up. Only the double deckers have been relocated around the corner towards the Borough's car park resulting in a temporary loss of 60 spaces. The work is expected to be complete by Easter 2015 when all the stands will be reinstated.



The removal of the trees allows space for additional stands and a bid was made to the government's cycle Rail fund for a grant for further double deckers.

Bike-Rail Integration

The complex structure of a franchised UK rail industry makes any policy of investment to promote Bike-Rail Integration problematic. It creates reluctance to convert car parking to cycle parking as there will be a loss of revenue by car parking contractors.

Climate Change and the Environment

Cycling can only contribute a very small amount to the reduction in emissions to improve the environment and thus help prevent significant changes to the climate system.

Nevertheless at a local level if more residents cycled that short distance it would have an enormous effect on many of Bedford's roads. Overall emissions from motor vehicles would be lower resulting in less particulate pollution in the air leading to lower numbers of people suffering from asthmatic complaints. This is on the top of lower noise, less congestion, less wear on the roads and a healthier population in general.

Newsletter No 56 (February 2010) reported on the disappointing results from the 2009 Copenhagen Accord UN Climate Change Conference. Prior to the event Bedford cyclists had rode around the town collecting many pages worth of signatures which were then presented to Patrick Hall, the then MP for Bedford and Kempston asking the government to press hard for a deal at Copenhagen in the interests of people locally and throughout the world.

What has happened since? Not much until recently.

The latest assessment from the International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) is stronger and starker than ever before. The report issues a bleak warning that carbon emissions must fall to zero by 2100 to limit global warming to 2°C above present levels. To do this emissions must be cut by 40-70% by 2050. If not the 22nd century will start with a 'high to very high risk of severe, widespread and irreversible impacts globally'.

The future hinges on negotiations of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change members at a meeting in Paris in December 2015. This meeting will mark the deadline for a global agreement for a successor to the Kyoto Protocol of 1997.

The final preparatory summit for Paris in Lima, Peru last December was encouraging with most developing and developed countries accepting the need for a cap on emissions.



Northampton's Cycle CoNNeCT Scheme

Last summer Northampton launched its very own self service bicycle hire scheme called **Cycle CoNNeCT** creating a low cost, convenient and sustainable way to travel around the town.

The scheme provides 50 bikes for public hire from 10 docking stations inside the borough. The hubs are in:

Mercer's Row, Beckett's Park and Midsummer Meadow and in Gowerton Road, Salthouse Road and Pavilion Drive on the Brackmills industrial estate, Northampton railway station (two hubs) and the University of Northampton (Avenue campus and Park campus).



Hub for 7 bikes at Beckett's Park - The nearest to Bedford

The scheme is being run by Hourbike Ltd, a company that operates similar schemes in other UK cities including Nottingham, Lincoln and Southport. They have said that if it is successful they will expand the scheme to further locations within the town.

Full details of the scheme can be obtained from:

www.cycleconnect.co.uk/

Would a scheme like this be successful in Bedford?

Bike for Science

Over recent years there has been a growing concern all over Europe including the UK about the drastic budget cuts that have been made for research and development projects. The UK government's latest figures for science and engineering show that cash for these activities has been in decline since 2009.

A strong research sector is needed at national and EU level if countries are to emerge from the recession with strong economies.

Late last year more than 16,000 scientists from many EU countries including the UK signed an open letter urging national policyholders to reconsider science budgets.

In France - in a typical French style protest - more than 3,000 scientists, support staff and members of the public set off by bicycle, foot or kayak from across France on a three week 'Sciences en Marche' - 'March for Science' to lobby in front of the country's National Assembly in Paris on 17 October 2014 for additional funding to hire more university research and support staff.



The event was claimed to have been the biggest protest of its kind for 10 years.

It has been stated, however, that their demands are unlikely to be met as the French government has no room for manoeuvre in the face of a stagnating economy.

Get Britain Cycling Update

MPs on Thursday 16 October 2014 debated the progress towards the government implementing the recommendations of the Get Britain Cycling report published in April 2013, one year after the Prime Minister David Cameron's promised 'Cycling Revolution'.

The motion put before MPs and agreed on 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, sustained funding for cycling and progress towards meeting the report's recommendations.

Just hours before the debate the Department for Transport (DfT) published its long awaited draft **Cycling Delivery Plan** for informal consultation. Most campaigners described the plan as 'derisory' and little more than 'a wish list', saying that the targets it set for cycling lacked ambition with no firm commitment as to where the funds were to come from.

The DfT carried out a number of road shows on the plan around the country including one in Bedford which your editor attended. A final plan based on the responses made is still awaited.

Infrastructure Bill

In the meantime a government Infrastructure Bill - first mentioned in the Queen's speech in June 2014 - has been going through various readings and report stages in both the House of Lords and House of Commons.

The purpose of the Bill is to bolster investment in infrastructure by allowing stable long term funding, delivering better value for money and relieving unnecessary administrative pressures. The Bill would increase transparency of information provision and improve planning processes, allowing Britain to build for the future and compete in the global race. It has eight sections including ones on roads, energy, invasive non-native species and nationally significant infrastructure projects.

Campaign groups have been trying for some time unsuccessfully to get a Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy amendment into the bill but then just days before a final reading in the House of Commons on Monday 26 January 2015, the Government, due to pressure from 1,000s of cyclists, backed the amendment. The bill now returns to the House of Lords for consideration of the amendments before it is given Royal Assent. When approved it will allow cycling to be planned in the same way as rail and road.

Cycling in Florence

Florence, cradle of the Renaissance, city of art and one-time capital of Italy with its entire historical centre a UNESCO world heritage site of culture. It was also the home of the great artist Michelangelo.

The city on the River Arno is the third and largest recently visited by your editor after Pisa (Newsletter No 66 - June 2013) and Verona (Newsletter No 68 - February 2014).



As in the other cities visited cycling is very popular with no restrictions in the narrow streets of the historic centre. There were a number of off-road segregated cycle tracks alongside and on the pavements on the busy arterial roads leading into the city.

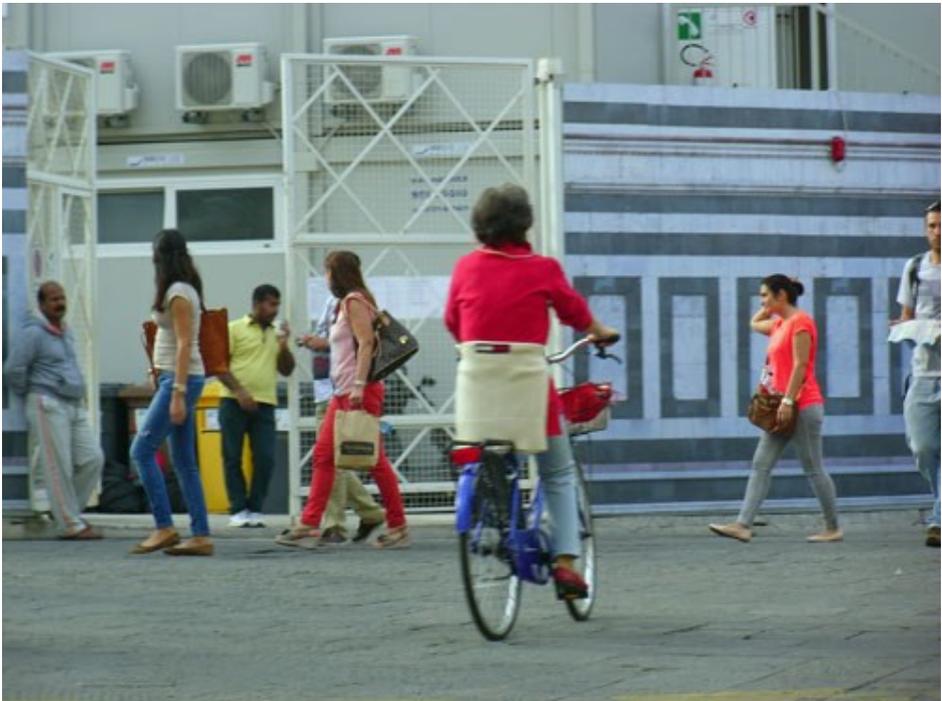


A company was operating tourist trips using modern rickshaw style tricycles.



Most cycle stands (Sheffield type) were generally always full.





At the main Santa Maria Novella railway station there were plans to build a 'Bicipark', new large cycle storage system for commuters.



New X5 Buses

On 5 January 2015 Stagecoach introduced 18 new Plaxton Elite coaches on their X5 Oxford to Cambridge service via Bedford. The coaches still take two bicycles on each service.



New X5 coach at its temporary stop at Bedford bus station

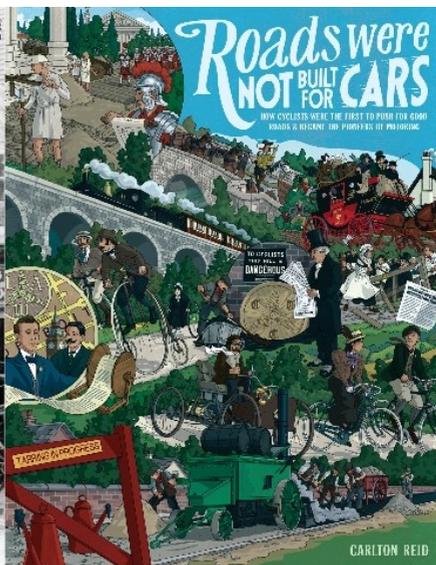
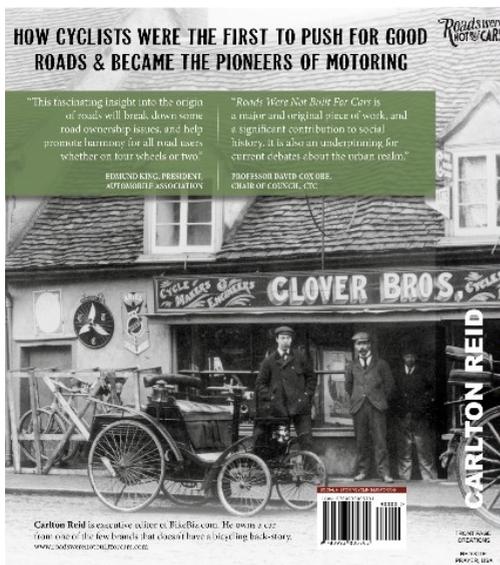
Roads Were Not Built For Cars

'Roads Were Not Built For Cars' is a book written by Carlton Reid which was published last Autumn.

Carlton Reid is a travel journalist, author, blogger, photographer, broadcaster and editor specializing in cycling.

The book details how cyclists were the real pioneers of motoring. Cyclists - the Cyclists' Touring Club and the National Cyclists' Union - in 1886 created, before motoring was legal, the 'Roads Improvement Movement'. This set the scene for the use of macadam, tarmac and asphalt to give smooth solid surfaces on which to ride.

Contrary to some history books it describes how the first automobiles were descended from the manufacture of bicycles and not carriages and in the end concludes that roads are not just for people in cars but for all people.



Hardback and softback versions of the book were sold out within days of publication but it is available as multi-media iPad and Kindle versions.

A second edition of the hardback version of the book will be published during 2015.

More information on the book can be seen on the website:

<http://www.roadswerenotbuiltforcars.com/>

Cycling in general can be seen on Carlton Reid's well known website:

<http://www.bikebiz.com>

National Cycle Rail Awards 2014

The 2014 National Cycle Rail awards took place in late November 2014 at the Methodist Central Hall in Westminster.

Sustrans and Bedford Borough Council were the winner of Category 2 - Partnership Working and Local Government Schemes sponsored by All Party Parliamentary Cycling Group - for their lead on 'Access to Stations', a three year Department for Transport Local Sustainability Transport Fund (LSTF) project which comes to an end on 31 March 2015.

The full partnership involved four train operating companies, twenty railway stations, Network Rail and nine local authorities. Its objective was to increase customers' use of trains for daily journeys by addressing the most common barriers to physically accessing stations by bike and on foot.

The award to Bedford Borough Council was received by Patrick Lingwood, Walking and Cycling Officer in the presence of Robert Goodwill MP, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Transport, and Chris Boardman, British Cycling's policy advisor and former world and Olympic champion.



*Patrick Lingwood (left)
and Julian Windross - Sustrans Bedford Project Co-ordinator
showing off the award in Borough Hall.
Julian replaced Yo Higton who went on maternity leave last October*

Friday 17 April 2015 at 7.30 pm
Friends Meeting House, 5 Lansdowne Road, Bedford, MK40 2BY
'Experiences as commissaire/judge at cycling events'

Talk by Trevor Hughes - Member of British Cycling
followed by

CCNB Annual General Meeting

This is a chance to meet other members and discuss what is happening on the cycle scene in the Bedford area
Please put the date in your diary.

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)