



# *Cycle Bedford*

**Climate Change  
Issue**



Issue 73  
October 2015

**The Voice of Cycling Campaign for North Bedfordshire**



*Cycling  
can help  
save  
the planet*

**and your health**

# CYCLING CAMPAIGN FOR NORTH BEDFORDSHIRE

*Founded 1992*

## *Committee*

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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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## Quote

Every time I see an adult on a bicycle I no longer despair for the human race.

H G Wells

# Editorial

Climate change is the most important issue of our time and the meeting in Paris in December 2015 will be the last time for governments around the world to agree on targets to reduce global emissions to a level that can meet the goal of holding global warming to below 2°C compared with the pre-industrial temperature. Virtually all developing and developed countries now accept the need for a cap on emissions.

Failure to act now will mean in the future an even bigger refugee crisis than the current one.

However the solution is not just up to governments. There are many things that can and are being done at the local level by local authorities such as Bedford Borough Council but in the end all residents must also take responsibility.

**Global warming has to be held to a rise below 2°C**

Cycling will not solve the problem but using this mode of transport for short distances, of which more than 50% of journeys are less 5km, will go some way to reducing emissions in our towns and villages. At the same time it will have a significant positive effect on the health of our residents.

CCNB counts this summer in the town centre and the railway station show more and more residents cycling with increases of 10% and 6% respectively over summer 2014 making Bedford an even greater cycling town. There is however still scope for even further increases over the coming years.



This special Climate Change issue looks at the causes, factors contributing to it, its effects, other effects and in terms of sustainable transport, and in particular cycling, what can be done by local authorities, businesses and residents.

The seriousness of Climate Change was endorsed by President Obama on his recent visit to Alaska. He said "*Climate change is probably one of the biggest challenges our planet faces. If there is one thing that threatens opportunity and prosperity for everybody, wherever they live, it's the threat of a changing climate.*"

**Global warming is the responsibility of all residents**

# Union Street Roundabout Awards

The updated Union Street roundabout, the first ever 'turbo-roundabout' constructed in the UK, has now been in operation for one year during which time it has generated significant interest not only across Great Britain but also internationally. Although still subject to occasional negative publicity, mainly by vehicle drivers, it has been deemed to have been a success in giving improved safety for cyclists and pedestrians.

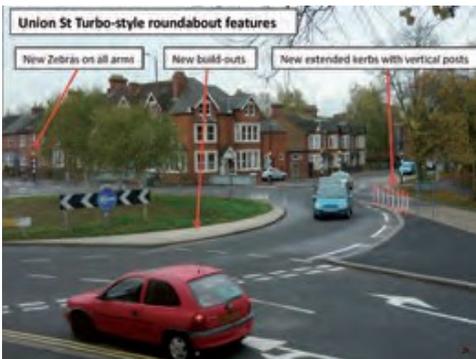
The design has achieved its purpose in reducing the average speed of motor vehicles on the circulatory carriageway from 20 to 14mph, a reduction of 6mph whilst reducing the maximum speed from 26 to 20mph. These speeds are comparable to the speed of an on-road cyclist making them feel safer and more comfortable in using the roundabout. The slower speeds also reduce the time where any potential conflict may arise on entering the roundabout.

In the last few months the Borough has received a number of awards for its innovative design.

At the new Smarter Travel Awards in February 2015 at the ICC in Birmingham Bedford Borough Council's Walking and Cycling Officer, Patrick Lingwood, was one of the three finalists in the Smarter Travel Professional of the Year category for the person who has made an outstanding contribution to sustainable transport.

This was followed in July 2015 at the Annual Transport Practitioners' Meeting at London Metropolitan University by Patrick being given the PTRC award for Best Paper Demonstrating Sustainable Transport Solutions for his paper *Bedford turbo-style roundabout - a new cycle and pedestrian-friendly design*.

At The Chartered Institution of Highways & Transport (CHIT) 2015 Awards in June 2015 at the Landmark London Hotel, Bedford Borough Council and Hanson Contracting were awarded Highly Commended in the CIHT/Ringway Innovation category for innovative problem solving in the highways and transportation industry.



Bedford Borough Council hosted on 9 July 2015 a Landor Links Conference in the Howard Room, on 'Modern Roundabouts' sponsored by Transport Today to which your Editor was invited. Some 50 delegates heard presentations on different styles of roundabouts both in the UK and overseas. The conference finished with a visit to the Union Street roundabout.

# New Cardington - New Route

A cycle route link has recently been created between Harrowden Road and the New Cardington development. It is now possible for cyclists to get directly onto Harrowden Road from any part of the new development without using the Tinkers Hill off-road track as far as Old Harrowden Road and then having to cross the busy A600 into Harrowden Road.

The route from the end of Harrowden Road at the T-junction with Bedford Road Cardington on turning right leads to Cardington village and the other villages beyond.

Turning left onto the off-road cycle track leads to Priory Business Park and Priory Park.



*Cycle route link from Harrowden Road into New Cardington development*

# Great Barford Bridge Safety

The bridge is expected to be made safe for cyclists to cross by the end of November 2015 (see Newsletter No 72). A new system to detect the presence of cyclists is to be installed using the latest long range microwave detection/thermal imaging monitors.

# Great Denham Cycle Track

The last newsletter showed the new cycle track under construction through Great Denham looking from the west side. Work has now started on the track from the east side where the current track from the town centre to the start of the Great Denham development ended.



*New track under construction  
Oct 2015*



*End of track and start of  
grass footpath Oct 2013*

# Bromham Road Railway Bridge

The electrification of the Midland Mainline north of Bedford was paused by the government in June 2015 due to a number of project overruns by Network Rail.

On 30 September 2015 the government announced an immediate restart. The line to Kettering and Corby will now be completed by 2019 (two years late) and the line north of Kettering to Leicester and Sheffield by 2023.

This means that planning work to raise the Bromham Road railway bridge to allow for the overhead electric cables to be installed and at the same time to make the bridge more accessible to cyclists (see Newsletter No 71) can now go ahead.

# A421/A6 Interchange

In Newsletter No 71 it stated how important it was to complete the missing link from the Elstow Waste Depot via the junction to the existing cycle track through Progress Business Park.

Highways England (originally Highways Agency) in March 2015 was awarded a grant from the Department for Transport to cycle proof the junction.

A feasibility study is being carried out this financial year with a view to construction during 2016/17.

# Cycle Ramps

During a visit to Beeston a few months ago your editor noted that cycle ramps had now been installed on both sides of the bridge crossing the Great North Road, the A1, to allow cyclists to easily walk their bicycles over the bridge.

The bridge is the only way for pedestrians and cyclists to safely cross this busy trunk road and is on the route of the Greensands Ridge Walk Public Footpath and Greensands Cycleway.

The Greensands Cycleway was signed during 2014 and runs in Bedfordshire from Leighton Buzzard in the west to Sandy in the east.



CCNB had originally requested this improvement for cyclists way back in Mid-Beds District Council/Bedfordshire County Council times.

The only similar cycle ramp in Bedford is on the south west steps of the County Bridge from St Mary's Gardens to Prebend Street. In this case it is simply a narrow concrete infill of each step.



The route is a useful alternative for cyclists to avoid walking up the wide ramp on the south east side of the bridge and waiting for the green light at the toucan crossing on Prebend Street. The light cycle is linked to the nearby Cauldwell Street/Kempston Road/Prebend Street junction lights and is therefore much longer than at a more typical crossing.



# Renhold Cycle Track

A section of Bridleway No 26 (BW26) between the Polhill Arms in Wilden Road, Renhold and the rear of the cemetery in Norse Road has been upgraded and widened to three metres as a spinoff from the 'Orbit' development on Norse Road.

At the same time Footpath No 5 (FP5) from BW26 to Church End, Renhold, next to Renhold Lower School, has been upgraded and widened to four metres. This will enable children from the Norse Road estates to easily walk or cycle directly to school along a traffic free route without having to be driven there by motor vehicle.



*BW26 - Start of upgraded section*

*FP5 - looking from BW26 to Renhold*

# Cycle Stands - Sandy

Colourful red cycle stands at the new Tesco store in Sandy.



# Climate Change and cycling

What is Climate Change?

What causes Climate Change?

What factors contribute to Climate Change?

What are its effects?

What is being done Internationally?

What is being done Nationally?

What is being done Locally?

What can residents do?

What else does air pollution cause?

# What is Climate Change?

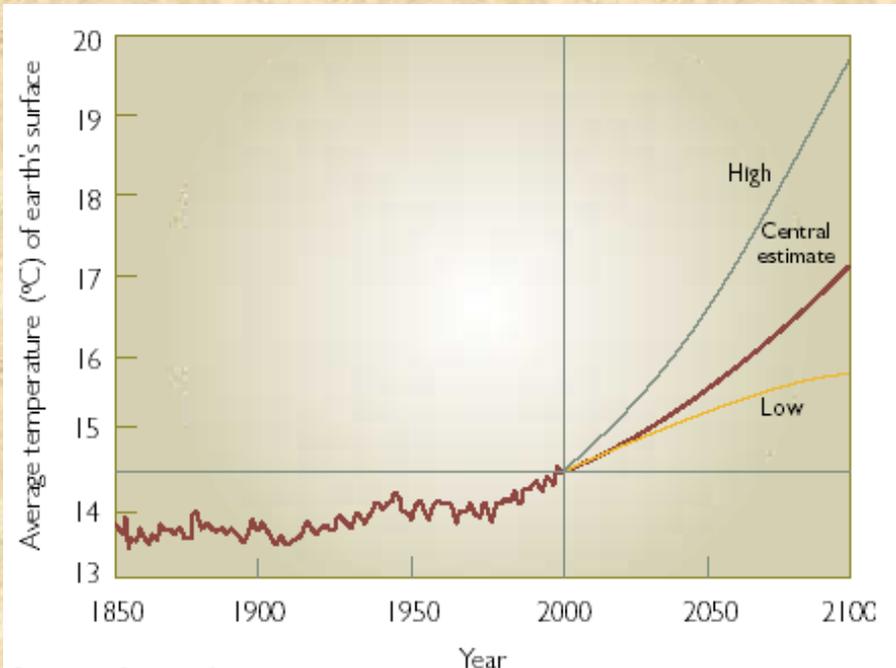
Climate change and global warming are the names given for the gradual increase in temperature of the surface of the Earth since the industrial revolution. Many people, however, confuse the difference between the weather and climate change.

Weather is what you see outside on any particular day, that is, it reflects the short-term conditions of the atmosphere whereas climate is the long-term average daily weather for an extended period of time at a certain location.

The difference between the two is illustrated in the short National Geographical video:-

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cBxDfPdp\\_k](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cBxDfPdp_k)

Over the last century the Earth has warmed by nearly 1 degree Celsius and potentially could rise a further 4 degrees by the end of the century. If this happened it would be devastating for our planet and ecosystems unless urgent action is taken to reduce the impact.



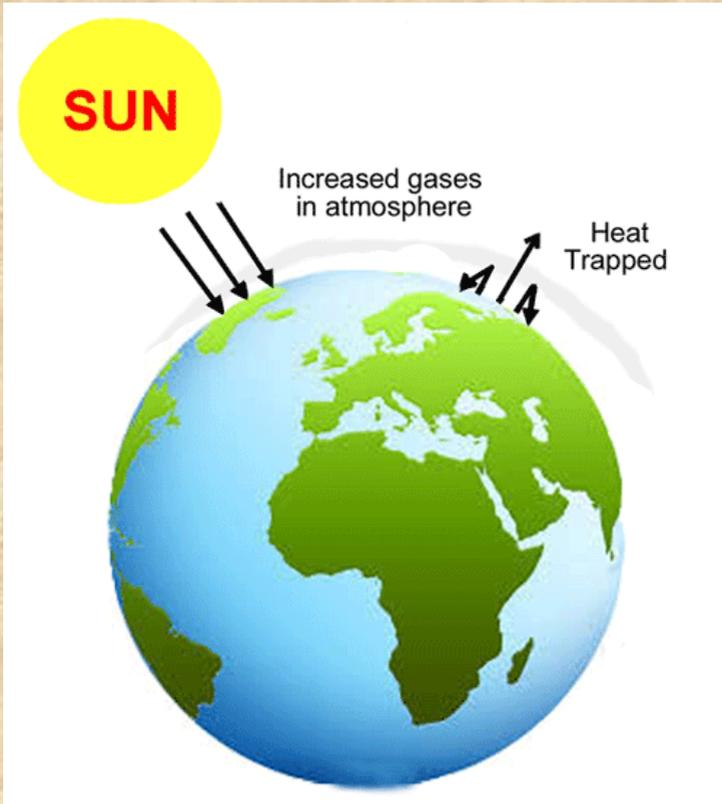
*Global temperature record since instrumental recording began in 1860 projected to 2100 - IPCC*

Limiting the temperature rise to 2 degrees, instead of 4 degrees, would make climate change more manageable, while avoiding some potentially devastating effects.

# What causes Climate Change?

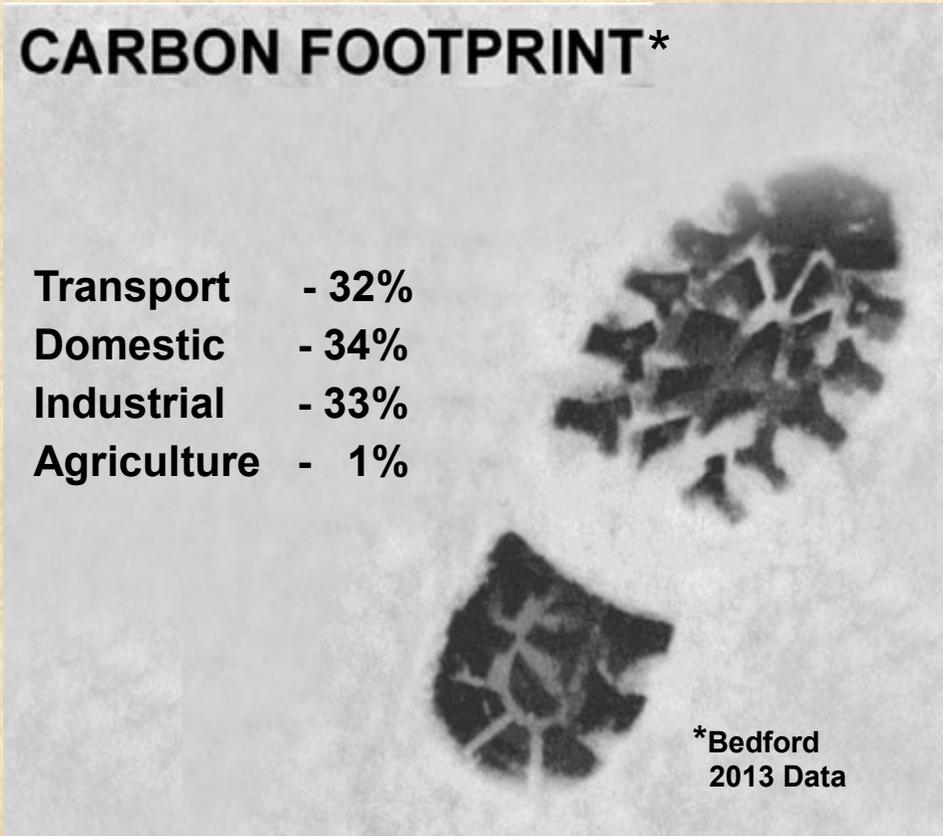
Climate change is the result of increased levels of carbon dioxide and other gases, mainly methane and nitrogen oxides, being entered into the atmosphere since the pre-industrial era, driven mainly by economic and population growth.

The gases trap heat in the atmosphere to give the so-called 'greenhouse effect'.



The amount of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere from burning fossil fuels and other activities including population growth has dramatically increased since the industrial revolution, going up by about 38%, 26% since 1960. The global value expressed as carbon dioxide in parts per million (ppm) was 398.32 on 15 October 2015 measured at the Mauna Loa Observatory in Hawaii USA. Because of its long lifespan, as more carbon dioxide is emitted the amount will continue to rise. The extra carbon dioxide will trap more and more of the sun's heat, and warm our climate. As the atmosphere warms, the amount of water vapour it holds increases - which further adds to the warming effect.

# What factors contribute to Climate Change?



Emissions\* emitted for various modes of transport based on a 5km round trip (in kg CO<sub>2</sub>) are:

Car (1.4 - 2.0 litre)	- 1.1
Car (>2.0 litre)	- 1.7
Bus	- 0.5
Bicycle	- Zero

Every trip\*\* made by bicycle will reduce an individual's carbon footprint by:-

Up to 0.82 tonnes of carbon dioxide per year  
Equivalent to 8.4% of a typical individual's total carbon footprint of 9.8 tonne from all sources.

\* Values obtained using [www.co2calc.co.uk](http://www.co2calc.co.uk)

\*\* based on one return journey of 5km each way every working day (taken as 240 days).

# What are the effects of Climate Change?

A few of the global warming effects, particularly since the 1950s, are:

## Natural disasters

There has been a significant increase in natural disasters around the world including forest fires, droughts and flooding causing major disruptions to crops and wildlife as well as humans.

## Sea temperatures

The temperatures at the surface, above the surface and in the depths of the ocean are increasing.

## Ocean acidification

Oceans are becoming more acidic due to the absorption of carbon dioxide. This is already preventing shell formation and causing the shells of others to dissolve. This will wipe out many species and effect the fishing industry.

## Sea levels

Sea levels have risen by about 10cm around the UK, and about 17cm globally with the rate of rise increasing in recent decades.

## Melting glaciers

Glaciers all over the world are retreating. This has been observed in the Alps, Rockies, Andes, Himalayas, Africa and Alaska.

## Reduction in Arctic ice

Arctic sea-ice has been declining since the late 1970s, reducing by about 0.6 million km<sup>2</sup> per decade - an area about the size of Madagascar.

## Shrinking ice sheets

The Greenland and Antarctic ice-sheets, which between them store the majority of the world's fresh water, have both started to shrink.

## Changes in rainfall

Rainfall patterns are changing across the globe. Wet places are becoming wetter and dry areas are becoming drier. There are also changes between seasons in different regions.

## Global inequalities

There will be a huge increase in inequality between different countries of the world.

## Bio diversity

Changes and losses in bio diversity due to destruction of natural habitats.

# What is being done Internationally?

The first serious look at what was happening with the climate started with a series of United Nation Conferences in the 1970s following a number of highly publicised climatic and environmental events with disastrous consequences which occurred during the 1960s and 1970s. These demonstrated the fragility of world food production and trade systems and their dependence on the Earth's climatic system.

This resulted in the First World Climate Conference in 1979 to assess the state of knowledge of climate and to consider the effects of climate change variability and change in human society.

The First Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) set up in 1988 was reviewed at a Second World Climate Conference in 1990. The outcome was a call for a global treaty on climate change resulting in a United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

The global treaty was opened for signature at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (the Earth Summit) in Rio de Janeiro in 1992. The message was clear, we cannot continue to live in the way we are. The problems - social, economic and environmental - are so strongly linked that the solution, it was agreed, must be to tackle these issues together to achieve 'sustainable development'. One of the programmes developed was '**Agenda 21**', a blueprint for global action to affect the transition to sustainable development in the 21st century.

In 1997 in Kyoto, Japan, the '**Kyoto Protocol**' was adopted although it did not enter into force until 2005. The Protocol committed the European community and 37 industrialised countries to stabilise greenhouse gas emissions by setting binding targets to give an average 5% reduction compared to 1990 levels over the period 2008 to 2012. The EU countries collectively made an agreement to reduce the levels by 8% under the EU burden sharing agreement while the UK undertook to reduce emissions by 12.5%.

In Doha, Qatar in 2012, the **Doha Amendment** to the Kyoto Protocol was launched taking a second commitment period from 2013 to 2020 inclusive. For this second commitment period, 38 developed countries, including the EU and its member States and the UK (including Gibraltar) agreed to an independent quantified economy-wide emission reduction target of a 20% compared with 1990 levels (base year).

However the countries committed covered only 14% of global emissions. Since 1988 the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has issued regular Assessment Reports and other reports on the state of knowledge on climate change. The latest one, the Fifth Assessment Report, was finalised in November 2014.



*Gathering of Bedford cyclists on Saturday 5 December 2009 to draw attention to the climate change talks about to take place in Copenhagen*

UN negotiations have been underway since 2007 to develop a new international climate change agreement to replace the Kyoto Protocol in 2020 that will cover all countries. These resulted in the mute Copenhagen Accord (2009), Cancún Agreements (2010), Durban outcomes (2011), Doha Climate Gateway (2012) and the Warsaw decisions (2013).

## **Paris Summit**

At the Paris summit in December 2015, potentially 196 countries, including the main carbon emitters US and China, will meet to sign a new climate change agreement.

The agreement will bind countries to reduce global emissions to a level that can meet the goal of holding global warming to below 2°C compared with the pre-industrial temperature.

The EU's contribution to the new agreement will be a binding, economy-wide, domestic greenhouse gas emissions reduction target of at least 40% by 2030.

# What is being done Nationally?

The British government's first climate programme was launched in 2000 following on from its commitment given at the 1992 Rio Earth Summit.

One of the seven main strategies of the programme was to cut emissions from the transport sector.

The 2000 programme was updated in 2006 following a review in 2004.

After cross-party pressure over several years, led by environmental groups, a **Climate Change Act** was introduced which became law in 2008. This put in place a framework to achieve a mandatory 80% cut in the UK's carbon emissions by 2050 (compared to 1990 levels).

It should be noted that in 2008 the UK was the world's 9th greatest producer of man made carbon emissions.

A guide was issued to local councils in 2010 on 'Adapting to Climate Change'. One of the top tips suggested under sustainable transport was to help to ensure that cycle paths are provided and well maintained to encourage a reduction in car dependency.

In a government public attitude survey in 2011 to climate change and the impact of transport and respondents willingness to switch from travelling by cars to other modes, 44% stated that they were willing to use public transport more often, 27% to switch to cycling and 55% to walking.

In September 2014 in readiness for the Paris summit a report was issued under the coalition government a 'Paris 2015 - Securing our prosperity through a global change agreement'.

## Cycling

Over the last three decades successive governments have issued many papers, etc involving cycling but not many have been followed through to the present time. These range from the National Cycle Strategy (1996), White Paper - A new deal for transport (1998), National Cycle Strategy Revival (2001), White Paper - The future of transport (2004), Walking and Cycling - An action plan (2004), Cycling England (2005-2011), to Low Carbon Transport - A greener future (2009).

The more recent successful strategies have been the introduction of the 'Bikeability' cycle training scheme from the Road Safety Strategy - A safer way (2009), the Cycle to Work Scheme and Cycle to Work Guarantee (2009) and the Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF) from the White Paper - Creating Growth, Cutting Carbon (2011).

The previous government has issued a number of grants for cycling but many have been given only to specific towns and cities leaving most of the country devoid of funding for cycle infrastructure. The LSTF funding is now near its end.



*The Rising Tide by Jason Decaires Taylor. The four proud horses and their riders on the Vauxhall foreshore of the River Thames during September 2015 with the Houses of Parliament in the distance. The sculptures are concealed and revealed by the daily ebb and flow of the tide. Taylor has said he is very concerned with all the associated effects of climate change and the state of the seas and the piece symbolises the origins of industrialisation and the damaging focus just on work and construction. He hopes that the politicians across the river will take note. [Note the oil derrick faces of the horses].*

In 2013 the All-Party Parliamentary Cycle Group issued a 'Get Britain Cycling' report and this led to a number of debates in Parliament on cycling and cycling safety and a draft Cycling Delivery Plan in October 2014.

A number of informal road shows were carried out by the Department for Transport and in March 2015 responses on the topics raised were published.

The Infrastructure Bill which became law during 2015 calls for a Walking and Cycling Investment Strategy (WCIS). A Roads Investment Strategy (RIS) for 2015-2021 was published in March 2015 and provides a format which the CWIS is likely to follow.

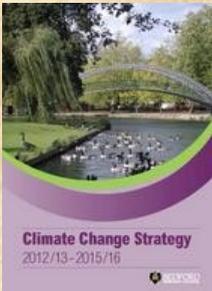
# What is being done Locally?

Bedford Borough Council first started on the road to improving the environment in 1990 with the formation of an Environmental Development Team to promote environmental issues and develop environmental policy. An Environmental Strategy and Action Plan which included cycling was launched in 1992.

Following on from the recommendations of the 1992 Rio Earth Summit a roundtable of representatives of all groups interested in the environment was formed in 1994 called **Local Agenda 21**. A comprehensive action plan was put together and regular meetings held with stakeholders, including CCNB, until the early 2000s.



The council was one of the early signatories of the **Nottingham Declaration** launched in October 2000 committing them to work towards reducing emissions.



All local authorities had to have a Development Framework to replace their local plan and one of the documents produced was **The Core Strategy and Rural Issues Plan** adopted in 2008. This contained Policy CP26 - Climate Change and Pollution. As a result of the government's 2008 Climate Change Act a **Climate Change Strategy** 2010/12 was put in place. This has been refreshed recently to include the year 2015/16. The document can be accessed from:

[http://www.bedford.gov.uk/environment\\_and\\_planning/sustainability/what\\_is\\_the\\_council\\_doing/climate\\_change\\_strategy.aspx](http://www.bedford.gov.uk/environment_and_planning/sustainability/what_is_the_council_doing/climate_change_strategy.aspx)

The strategy has two priorities; tackling climate change and using resources efficiently.

Under the first priority one of the objectives is to tackle '**Emissions from Transport**' by:

- Reducing greenhouse emissions from vehicles through transport planning and the use of alternative fuels and technologies;
- Improving and promoting a safe and convenient walking, cycling and public transport network; and
- Ensuring that new developments are located and designed to encourage the use of public transport, walking and cycling.

The council works with residents, communities and local businesses to encourage the use of more sustainable methods of transport and for staff has a '**Green Office Guide**' which advises how to commute to work in a more sustainable way.

It also demonstrates its commitment to increasing the amount of cycling

in the borough by meeting all five commitments of the Department for Transport's '**Cycle to Work Guarantee**'. The council has also signed up to the Government's '**Cycle to Work Scheme**' that allows employees to claim a voucher to buy a new bike, the cost of which is paid back with tax free deductions from the employee's salary.

Pool bikes are available that can be borrowed for business use to enable staff to cycle to meetings and make site visits.

## **Climate Local Bedford**

In recognition of the important role that local authorities have in tackling climate change, Bedford Borough Council signed the Climate Local Commitment on 26 October 2013.

Cycling is included in the following two commitments:

- (1) To promote greener travel behaviours and encourage use of more sustainable modes of transport within the council and wider community with the justification to support multiple corporate objectives to support our local economy, reduce carbon emissions, improve air quality, reduce congestion, and improve health and road safety.
- (2) To support the sustainable development process by continuing work with internal and external partners to ensure new developments are accessible by sustainable modes of transport with the justification to ensure transport remains considered in Planning Policies and to encourage developers to;
  - (1) build in locations that encourage walking, cycling and Public Transport; and
  - (2) include infrastructure to encourage walking, cycling and Public Transport.

## **CCNB Comments**

The council has many good policies in place for cycling although there have been some concerns over the years relating to the discharge of planning conditions.

In spite of huge budget cuts imposed on it by the government, a lot has been done on the ground for cycling over the last few years in terms of improving cycle infrastructure and the number of cycle stands provided.

CCNB's priorities for the council are to:

- Complete the missing links in the town centre cycle network and improve those routes which still have some safety concerns.
- Make roads safer for pedestrians and cyclists by continuing the introduction of 20mph speed limits into all residential areas, schools and shopping areas and
- Encourage all schools to take up 'Bikeability' cycle training.

# What can Residents do?

Solving climate change can not be left solely to big businesses and international and national governments or even local governments such as Bedford Borough Council. It is also the responsibility of everybody including all residents living in the borough.

Cycling instead of using a car can not solve the problem but it can go some way in helping to reduce carbon dioxide emissions to save the planet and the toxic nitrogen oxides to improve peoples health.

In the borough 55% of car trips are less than 5km, distances easily achieved by bicycle. A catchment area for 5km comprises the whole of the urban area of Bedford and Kempston and neighbouring suburbs of Bromham, Biddenham, Clapham, Elstow, Shortstown and New Cardington.

All of this area, mostly flat terrain and compact is within a 15 minute cycle of town centre (based on a typical cyclist's speed of 12 mph).

Residents should therefore consider using a bicycle as a 'normal' everyday activity for that short journey to

**Work**  
**Shopping**  
**School**  
**Railway Station**  
**Leisure Facilities**

in addition to those trips used solely for leisure purposes.

As stated on page 14, one return trip by bicycle of 5km each way every working day can save up to 0.82 tonnes of carbon dioxide per year equivalent to 8.4% of a typical individual's total carbon footprint.

Cycling is a safe, normal and enjoyable activity for people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities and this is demonstrated in Bedford and Kempston by the number of residents already cycling and increasingly cycling on a regular basis.

CCNB counts this summer in the town centre and the railway station have shown increases of 10% and 6% respectively over summer 2014. There is however still scope for further increases over the coming years.

Cycling is the most inexpensive form of independent door to door transport, apart from walking, with no fuel or parking costs and low cost maintenance. It is also convenient, extremely healthy and promotes social interaction making communities more pleasant for all residents.

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

# Benefits of a Bicycle

no need to pay for fuel, parking,  
road tax or car insurance...hurray!

faster and easier than walking

it feels like flying

shapes up that posterior

puts a huge grin on your face

zero  
emissions

slows climate change

whizzes past traffic jams

it's as  
quiet as  
a mouse

gives you  
legs of steel

reduces stress, increases wellbeing and  
means you can have that extra biscuit

the Earth sends a little extra  
love to those on bicycles!



# What else does air pollution cause?

Pollution caused by emissions, primarily from motor vehicles, not only affects the climate but also the health of people. A paper published by the government in September claimed that pollution across the UK is linked to at least 52,500 premature deaths a year, that is, 9% of all deaths.



*An appropriate 2007 cartoon by Australia's Michael Leunig*

Motor vehicles, particularly diesel types which currently represent 50% of those sold, as well as emitting the main greenhouse gas, carbon dioxide, also pump out into the atmosphere nitrogen dioxide and sooty particulates now deemed to be a danger to public health. The levels of these types of pollutants have increased over the last two decades and has resulted in a significant increase in people suffering from asthma type problems as well as contributing to a number of cancers.

As mentioned previously, cycling can only contribute a small amount to help save the planet. Nevertheless at a local level the more people cycling for short distances and the resultant lower volume of motor vehicles would have an enormous effect on reducing the emissions contributing to this type of problem.

More people cycling would also make people more healthier by helping to tackle the other health issues of our time; obesity, diabetes and heart diseases.

As stated on page 22 every new person cycling is one less motor vehicle causing congestion and air and noise pollution.

## Bedford Pollution

Under the Environment Act of 1995 local authorities are required to review air quality in their area and in places where air quality limits are exceeded, they have to designate Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) and work towards certain air quality objectives. An air quality action plan, describing the pollution reduction measures, must then be put in place.

Bedford has had an AQMA for the whole of the town centre area since 2009 due to the presence of high levels of nitrogen dioxide resulting from heavy levels of through traffic. It has two continuous monitors at two locations, High Street and Prebend Street, and 46 sites monitoring annual means, 30 to 67% of which have given values exceeding national targets over the last five years.

There are also current concerns along Ampthill Road with the increase of traffic from the Wixams and the new superstore.

It is therefore imperative that as much traffic as possible is removed from the central area including the High Street and Greyfriars not only for health reasons but to revitalise the economy of the town centre.

The solution however is not just for Bedford Borough Council. It is the responsibility of all individuals to seriously consider changing their mode of transport for short journeys to cycling, walking or public transport.

## Chinese Pollution Solution

In 2013 north-east China suffered its worst smog for some time with particulate levels soaring to 1,000 micrograms per cubic metre against the World Health Organisation's recommended level for daily exposure of just 25.



Many people came up with designs to try and change the situation. One such person was Beijing based UK artist, Matt Hope. He developed a prototype air purifying bicycle out of a mesh rubbish bin, a fighter pilot mask, a moped helmet and a pedal powered wind generator.

A short video on the bike can be seen on:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UCJQ3NsDUYc>

# Travel Plans

A Travel Plan is a long term management strategy, articulated in a regularly reviewed document, to deliver sustainable transport objectives through action and provides employees and visitors of commercial, public and retail organisations, students and staff in schools and colleges and residents in large developments with greater information as to the alternative modes of travel available.

The concept of a travel plan originated in the USA in 1970s and was introduced into the UK in 1990s with the first one being adopted by Nottingham County Council in 1995. It was originally part of the Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions (DETR) 'Planning Policy Guidance 13: Transport' and is now included in the new National Planning Policy Framework which replaced it in March 2012.

Travel plans can offer real benefits not only to the organisation and its employees, but also the community that surrounds it. It may help to relieve local parking or congestion problems or improve public transport connections across the area. It may also relieve stress on employees through reducing delays. For **cycling** this includes:

- Safer and better quality cycling routes
- Showers and changing facilities
- Lockers at key locations
- Good quality secure cycle parking
- Cycle training
- Cyclists' Breakfasts/Bicycle User Group (BUG)
- Assisted bicycle purchase (salary sacrifice) scheme
- Pool bicycles.

A "Welcome Pack" or "Travel Guide" would normally be supplied containing:

- Local bus routes, bus stops and timetables
- Information to encourage **cycling**, including details of local **cycle** shops,
- local **cycle** route network map, **cycle** training schemes, etc. Information on local schools within the catchment area and details of safe walking routes and other travel options
- Information on other key local amenities (e.g. schools, colleges, shopping areas, health care facilities, public libraries, etc.) together with a map-based presentation to incorporate, for example, approximate **cycling** and walking distances or times
- Information on local car sharing opportunities and schemes

Once a travel plan is created and approved a travel plan co-ordinator is appointed to oversee the monitoring and management of the plan and to keep it up to date. In the case of businesses, employees are encouraged to **cycle** to work through the establishment of a “Bicycle User Group” (BUG) to represent the views and interests of cyclists or potential cyclists.

For large housing developments a travel plan officer would liaise with the local cycling officer within Bedford Borough Council and seek to promote local authority-sponsored **cycling** safety and training schemes amongst residents, particularly young people. Local residents are then encouraged to become involved in such a way that the community eventually takes responsibility for continuity of the plan.

An up to date Travel Plan is compulsory element of all relevant planning applications submitted to Bedford Borough Council and if not supplied is one of the conditions of approval.

Over the last few years more than a 100 Travel Plans have been submitted (and collected by CCNB) from businesses, developers and other organisations including ones from almost all of the schools in the borough. Unfortunately almost of them have been shelved after planning approval has been obtained in spite of the Borough’s Planning Department’s enforcement procedures.

CCNB believes that not completing or updating the action plans in all these Travel Plans has prevented Bedford from becoming more of a cycling town than it currently is and has to be rectified if air pollution and congestion are to be reduced to meet Climate Change and Health targets through a reduction in motor vehicle use.

## **Travel Plan Officer**

A new Travel Plan Officer, Funmi Atolagbe, has been hired in the last few months to support the planning application process and to improve and update the advice available for local schools and businesses.

## **Bike It**

After a gap of four years a new Bike It Officer, Steven Allsop, has been appointed for Bedford sponsored by Bedford Borough Council Health, The Harpur Trust and the Wixamtree Trust initially for a one year contract until 31 August 2016.

The exciting challenges of Steven’s role will include the promotion of sustainable and active travel principally to pupils of eight primary schools in Bedford as part of a package of measures to increase the number of pupils, parents and school staff who cycle, walk and make use of public transport for local journeys.

# Cycling's Global Renaissance

All around the world cities and towns are realising the benefits of cycling (and walking) by reclaiming roads or parts of roads into cycle tracks. Examples from just three European cities are:

## Seville

The Spanish city had massive congestion problems until a few years ago when the Head of Urban Planning and Housing, Jose Garcia Cebrian, decided the only way forward was to turn to the bicycle. Within a short space of time made possible by bold political will, a broad network of connected cycle infrastructure was put in place together with a comprehensive bike share system.

As a result the number of daily cycling journeys has risen drastically from a 0.5% modal share to today's current 7%.

## Paris

Public consultation began in June 2015 on the Mayor of Paris, Anne Hidalgo's plan to improve the environment of the city by turning the right bank of the River Seine into a pedestrian/cycle zone from the Place de la Bastille to the Eiffel Tower. The left bank was pedestrianised two years ago and if implemented, no cars will be allowed along either bank. It is claimed by City Hall experts that reclaiming the riverbank from traffic would lead to an average drop of 15% in nitrogen dioxide levels as well as a reduction in noise pollution.



*Artist's sketch of proposed plan*

## London

In 2013 the Mayor of London, Boris Johnson, announced an Olympic legacy for all Londoners in the form of a £913 million budget to create a city where people feel they have the choice to use a bicycle instead of a motor car (see Newsletter Issue 66 - June 2013).



One of the projects of this decision, the East-West cycle superhighway, has now started to take shape along the Embankment where cyclists are already making good use of the near-finished stretch leading up to Westminster Bridge. The completed route between Westbourne Grove and Tower Hill will provide a fully segregated cycle lane which people of all ages and abilities can enjoy.

Another project the North-South route from Elephant and Castle to King's Cross started in March and the southern section is expected to be completed by the end of the year.

### *A LCC 'space for cycling' success*

The projects are a huge campaign success for London Cycling Campaign (LCC), who in 2012, along with 10,000 supporters called for streets that are as safe and inviting as they are in Holland. In response Boris Johnson promised that all new cycle superhighways would be built to best continental standards.

## What about Bedford?

With increasing development taking place around Bedford congestion and air pollution from motor vehicles is going to continue to increase unless there is a significant shift to sustainable transport.

Prime targets for improving the environment in Bedford would be the removal of through motor traffic from both the High Street and the dual carriageway section of Greyfriars. This would revitalise the economy of the town by making the central area a more attractive place in which to visit and shop.

# Cycling Renaissance Continues

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) in July 2015 published figures which showed that sales of bicycles produced in the UK during 2014 were 70% higher than the previous year and more than double the number produced in 2011.

Since 2011 there has been the cycling successes of the Olympics and Bradley Wiggins winning the Tour de France in 2012 and last year's Tour de France stages in Yorkshire, Cambridge and London.

This has led to many bike and accessory retailers breaking their own sales records; the cycle chain, Halfords, recently reported an increase of 25% in sales with its revenues climbing to just over £1bn, from £940m the previous year while Britain's biggest outdoor clothes retailer, Mountain Warehouse, saw sales increase by 20% and profits by 25% to £25m.

This year is expected to continue these increases. In June, Bradley Wiggins broke cycling's most prestigious record of the longest distance travelled in one hour and in July Chris Froome won his second Tour de France.



*Brompton folding bike*

In the meantime Brompton Bicycle, makers of the folding bicycle, has decided to double its factory space by moving from Brentford to new premises in Greenford to enable it to cater for the growing market in folding bicycles and aims to produce 100,000 bikes a year by 2021. Brompton now exports its bikes to 44 countries as well as having stores in a number of overseas cities.

# Posties' Bikes Saved From Extinction By An Elephant

Newsletter No 57 (June 2010) had an article on the demise of the bikes used by UK's postmen when it was decided to replace them by motor vans.

What has happened since this time. Well many of them are now getting a second life due to UK charity Krizevac. The charity has refurbished and painted green 10,000 old bikes as 'Elephant Bikes' and for every one sold in the UK one will be donated to Africa for the benefit of Malawians.

The charity got the idea for its 'Elephant Bikes' after wardens in a Malawi national park had their red bikes resprayed green to stop elephants charging at them.

*Elephant Bike  
Malawi  
(photo: Krizevac)*



*Elephant Bike  
England  
(photo: Krizevac)*

# Cycling in Budapest, Belgrade & Bucharest

## - Neville Hobday

On a recent cruise along the Danube, I had the opportunity to take guided cycle rides in the cities of Budapest and Belgrade and to observe some of the cycling infrastructure in Bucharest.

A total of about 14 people decided to cycle on each occasion and we were divided into two groups of seven each with a leader and a back rider. There was a reasonable choice of cycles which came in three sizes. They were in good working order and handle bars and saddles were easily adjustable. Helmets were available and the safety briefings on both rides were basic: try to stay together and do not jump any red lights! In view of the relative inexperience of most of the participants this was completely inadequate particularly in Budapest where cycle paths were either along busy roads and pavements or non-existent. In addition the leader would sometimes leave the group behind and the back rider wasn't! In Budapest one rider fell trying to negotiate a kerb but fortunately was shaken rather than injured. It is fair to say that most of us were in a similar state when we returned to the ship.

The Belgrade tour was a better experience. Roads and paths were quieter and the route more varied. Places of interest included a fortress, palace and a former concentration camp. The context of the ride also embraced the upheaval following the break up of the former Yugoslavia. It was clear from the ride leaders; however, that had the route taken us through the city centre, conditions would have been equally as hazardous as those in Budapest. One website states that cycling in Belgrade was not to be recommended as awareness of cycling was low, there were few cycle paths and drivers had no understanding of cyclists.

Budapest operated a bicycle sharing network with 98 docking stations and 1000 cycles which commenced in 2014. I did not find any evidence of a similar project in Belgrade.

The ride leaders were in their mid twenties, spoke perfect English and were well educated with post graduate qualifications in teaching and architecture. They were unable to find jobs in their chosen disciplines in countries in which the employment rate was said to be over twenty per cent.

The holiday finished in Bucharest where there was not an opportunity to cycle. The city is nicknamed little Paris because of its triumphal arch, fine buildings and wide tree lined boulevards. A short walk in the centre revealed a number of impressive cycle tracks which proved to have an interesting past. Segregated tracks built in the 1970s were replaced in 2007 with parking spaces, then between 2008 and 2010 over 100km of

shared paths were built only to be closed by the traffic police in 2012 as they were found to contravene the traffic code. In 2013 the city Mayor refused to allow segregated cycle paths on roads claiming that Romanian drivers were uncivilised and that he did not "want to count the dead people" due to traffic accidents. The Mayor also claimed that most cyclists did not want such cycling paths. The reaction of cyclists was to organise protests in March and September 2013 which attracted 3000 and 5000 cyclists respectively. I am unaware if or how the problem was eventually resolved but the cycle paths were well used on our visit.

Interestingly, in Bucharest there was also a bike sharing scheme operating from three centres with an availability of about 500 cycles.



*Bucharest segregated cycle path*



*Blocked path - usual problem everywhere*



# 'Unstealable' Bike

Three Chilean engineering students have designed a bike which they claim is, once properly locked up, impossible to steal without breaking the frame.

Called the Yerka Project, the bike maintains the design of an average urban bicycle but incorporates a closing frame device which means the only way to break the lock is to break the frame. In doing so the bike would be of no use and the thief would leave empty handed.

The students said that they had decided to develop the technology after having been victims of thefts of their bicycles.

If the thief breaks the structure to which the bike was secured to, he would still not be able to ride it. When the frame is in its locking position, it blocks the crank set and pedals making it impossible to ride. The lock features a reinforced collar over the keyway and a high security disc style cylinder for increased protection.

With the new system it is no longer necessary to carry the additional weight of a heavy D-lock on your bike and is claimed to take only ten seconds to operate.

The bike, in addition, has special anti-theft nuts on the wheels which can only be removed using a unique key.



A video on the system can be seen on:

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=7A4eOsAyQcw](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7A4eOsAyQcw)

# Mark Rutherford's Cycling Letter

The Victorian novelist, William Hale White, born in Bedford in 1831 who wrote under the name Mark Rutherford took up cycling in middle age.

In a letter to his friend Sarah Colenutt in 1887 he wrote from his home in Carlshalton, Surrey.

“During the winter I have been trying to learn to ride the bicycle, and have at last succeeded, but of course the innate depravity of human nature at present displays itself forcibly, and I deviate from rectitude apparently for no reason whatever. You would hardly believe how difficult it is for a man of 55 to learn. The body has lost its flexibility and power of balance. Once I fell off and was strapped up all round my chest – could do nothing for a fortnight – and on a second occasion pitched suddenly on a heap of stones, rendering my hands incapable for a week. But the worst of all was that for a month I did not seem to make the slightest progress. However, I made up my mind that I would persevere day after day till a certain date fixed far ahead, and that then I would yield if not successful. At last I had vouchsafed to me a ray of hope and then got into smoother waters. The roads, too, have been all against me, as bad as they could possibly be.

Do you know why I went on? Do you remember the sarcasm applied by a certain lady who shall be nameless to that ‘armchairifed’ tricycle riders who went up Union Street? What would that lady have to answer for, if I had been killed!

But partly also the reason was that I am scientifically curious as to the limits of a man's powers, and more particularly middle-aged powers, and do not like defeat. Shelley used to say, I always go on till I am stopped. I went on a good deal after I was stopped – by stone-heaps to wit.”



Mark Rutherford may have looked like the photo (left) on a Rover Safety bicycle. He was working as a civil servant at the Admiralty at the time.

*Editor—We are indebted to Nick Wilde, secretary of the Mark Rutherford Society and a CCNB member, for allowing us to use this letter from his transcription of The Colenutt Letters.*

All 173 letters transcribed can be seen under:

[http://www.davidfrench.org.uk/markrutherford/S\\_Features/colenutt.htm](http://www.davidfrench.org.uk/markrutherford/S_Features/colenutt.htm)

## CCNB Christmas Dinner

25 Restaurant @ Bedford College.

**Thursday 10 December 2015**

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

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)