

Cycle Bedford

**Secure cycle stands are a
requirement at all
destinations to boost
cycling**

Issue 75
June 2016

The Voice of Cycling Campaign for North Bedfordshire



A6/A4280 link launch - Monday 25 April 2016

CYCLING CAMPAIGN FOR NORTH BEDFORDSHIRE

Founded 1992

Committee

Chair	Peter Blakeman
Secretary	Carole Blakeman
Treasurer	Neville Hobday
Other members	Veronica Brown Richard Impey Colin Last
Newsletter Editor	Peter Blakeman

E-mail: ccnb@ccnb.org.uk

Website: <http://www.ccnb.org.uk>

Promotional website: <http://www.cyclebedford.org.uk>

Campaigning Representation

CCNB is represented on the following committees:

Bedford Cycle Strategy Group

Bedfordshire Rural Transport Partnership Forum

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

Bedford Green Wheel

Bedford Stations Travel Plan

Local Transport Plan (LTP3)

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

Bedford Borough Council Contacts:

Cycling and Walking Officer - (01234) 276328

Bikeability (Cycle Training) - (01234) 228336

Highways Helpdesk - (01234) 718003/e-mail

highways.helpdesk@bedford.gov.uk

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Editorial

A new book just published in the Netherlands, called '**Cycling Cities: The European Experience**', an update of one published in 1999, looks into why some cities have high cycle usage whilst others do not, even if they have good cycle infrastructure.

Examining 100 years of urban cycling policy, use and practice in 14 European cities in 9 countries including Manchester in England they have concluded that for cycling to succeed there also has to be a political will to take space away from cars to discourage their use.

In this country both Stevenage and Milton Keynes have had extensive off-road cycle networks for many years but this has not resulted in either place having high cycle usage due to unrestricted car use, whereas in Cambridge it has succeeded due to curbs on motor traffic in the central area.

This in many ways is in agreement with the reports from consultants on the town's Traffic Management Study and the background papers for the Local Plan 2032/5.

More safe cycling and walking increases a town's economy

For Bedford town centre to survive there has to be a significant reduction in traffic congestion and pollution.

The successful opening of The Great Ouse Way (see cover and page 6) now allows this to happen.

The next big cycling schemes expected over the next year are the replacement of the Bromham Road railway bridge, the A421/A6 junction improvement and the opening of the Riverside North cycle/pedestrian bridge (see page 5).

In the meantime climate change is roaring ahead with temperatures likely to soon exceed the 2 degrees C above the pre-industrial levels limit agreed at last December's Paris Climate Change Summit. This year is on course to be the hottest year ever after May was the 13th month in a row to break global temperature records.

All Bedford Borough residents must do their bit to try to reduce pollution and what better way to do it than to start this summer and cycle (or walk) that short distance and use a bus or train for longer distances.

Contrary to popular belief suppressing motor traffic to improve an area's environment and allow more safe cycling and walking will actually boost a town's economy.

To increase cycling significantly there has to be curbs on motor traffic in the town's central area

STOP PRESS - New Cycle Bridge Arrives

A new four metre wide cycle/pedestrian bridge now spans the River Great Ouse between the new Riverside North development and St Mary's Gardens. The bridge arrived in sections on several lorries in early June and after assembly was lifted into position across the river using a high tonnage mobile crane on 29 June/1 July 2016.

As mentioned in the last newsletter the bridge will not be open for public use until the whole development is completed in Spring/Summer 2017.



Bridge being assembled

*Bridge being lifted across river
1 July 2016*



A4280/A6 Link Now Open

The Great Ouse Way (A4280/A6) link, a new 2.4km long road between the Clapham Road roundabout (near Sainsbury's) and the Gold Lane/Bromham Road roundabout was opened by the Mayor, Dave Hodgson, on Monday 25 April 2016.



The Mayor, Dave Hodgson, with cyclists at the launch

Cyclists took advantage of the opening to try out the new off-road cycle track which runs along the whole length on its south side (see cover photograph).

The new track makes it easier and quicker for residents of Brickhill and Clapham to reach Biddenham, Bromham and Great Denham.



Both sides of the track have solar powered LED lights inserted into the surface which light up at night

A video on the completed link can be seen on:

<https://youtu.be/FqBFdy4eNvg>

Peripheral Improvements Outstanding

Between the Clapham Road roundabout and Sainsbury's entrance the path is only 1.8 metres wide. The supermarket chain ALDI has had a planning application approved (15/02334/MAF) to build a new store in this area and a condition has been placed on them to widen the path to 3.0 metres and at the same time to have the traffic signals at the Sainsbury's exit lanes modified to include a toucan crossing to ensure that cyclists can safely cross this busy junction.



*Improvements required:
Sainsbury's exit lane
and path to roundabout*

At the Bromham Road end cyclists can cross over Bromham Road on the east side of the roundabout using the central reservation to get onto the path into Gold Lane. Unfortunately there is currently no provision to return onto the carriageway. A request has been made to have a dropped kerb and short link from the path installed as part of the project's snagging work.

*Improvement required:
Path link and dropped
kerb to Gold Lane*



Roundabout 3A

The A4280/A6 link road contract also included an additional roundabout to be constructed from the middle roundabout (No 3) to service the proposed Bromham Road North development. This roundabout (number 3A) has been designed with four parallel crossings, one on each link, now approved under the new edition of the Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 2016 (see page 25).



Roundabout No 3A with parallel cycle crossings on all four arms

The road will be extended by the developer of the site to a new roundabout to be constructed on Bromham Road near to the old Golf Club entrance. The road will continue to have 3 metre off-road cycle paths along each side.

When completed it will be a potentially safer alternative for students cycling from the Brickhill area to Biddenham Upper School.

The new development will see approximately 1200 houses built together with a new school, health centre, convenience store, etc. A wooden cycle/pedestrian bridge will also be built across the new link to enable residents and others to reach a new country park to be created along the River Great Ouse (see Newsletter No 70).

Harrowden Crossroads Improvements

A road safety scheme was put in place two months ago for Harrowden crossroads to supplement the existing right turn ban from the A600 (Tinkers Hill) into Harrowden Lane which has been heavily abused. The scheme included a realignment of Harrowden Lane and the installation of a traffic island. At the same time a new prohibition of right turn out of Harrowden Lane onto the A600 has been introduced due to the restricted visibility at this junction.

The original right turn ban included an 'Except for Cyclists'. This has now been revoked and cyclists are now requested to dismount to make the manoeuvre on foot.

To aid cyclists a short section of off-road cycle track has been provided.



Tinkers Hill with crossing point from Shortstown to Bedford cycle track on left to new section leading to Harrowden Lane on right

Harrowden Lane with new traffic island and short section of off-road cycle track



However for cyclists from the Shortstown/New Cardington area who wish to use Harrowden Lane to reach Cardington or Priory Business Park CCNB recommends that they use the cycle track along Carmichael Drive, crossing at the toucan crossing into Conder Boulevard and then turning left into Chamberlain Way.

Tavistock Street Improvements

A 150 metre stretch of Tavistock Street at its junction with Harpur Street was closed for 12 weeks between February and May 2016 to allow for a new drainage system to be constructed to stop flooding of properties and businesses. The final resurfacing of the road has allowed an Advanced Stop Line (ASL) for cyclists to be marked out at the junction together with a short section of on-road cycle lane on the north side between Queen Street and Peel Street.

*Advanced
Stop
Line*



*On-road
Cycle
Lane*

Cycling UK

At CTC's AGM in May last year it was decided to change the CTC acronym which stood for the Cyclists' Touring Club to Cycling UK.

This officially took place on 5 April 2016.

Britain's oldest transport organisation has been promoting cycling and protecting cyclists since 5 August 1878. On that Bank Holiday Monday, thanks to the vision and vigour of Edinburgh medical student Stanley Cotterell, the Bicycle Touring Club was formed in Harrogate. Five years later, it was renamed the Cyclists' Touring Club.

Cycling UK's Chief Executive, Paul Tuohy, said:

"For 138 years, we have championed a simple belief - that cycling is a wonderful gift that should remain accessible and available to all. Today we remain the nation's voice for cycling and the strongest force for progressive change.

Much like our founding objectives to promote, assist and protect the use of all cycles on public roads, we will continue to work to make cycling a part of everyday life for everyone."

The CTC website has been revamped and can now be seen under:

<http://wbc.cyclinguk.org/>



we are
cycling
The cyclists' champion **UK**

Public Space Protection Order - Town Centre Cycling Restrictions

Public spaces protection orders (PSPOs) came about from the reform of anti-social behaviour powers resulting in the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014.

They are intended to deal with a particular nuisance or problem in a particular area that is detrimental to the local community's quality of life, by imposing conditions on the use of that area which apply to everyone. In most cases this involves around, alcohol, dogs and noise but can cover all types of anti-social behaviour. A PSPO may be for a restriction on a single issue or more generally a number of issues in a particular area. They are initially valid for three years.

Enforcement is by a police officer, police community support officers and council officers. If an individual does not comply with the order they are deemed to have committed an offence and are liable to a fixed penalty notice or court action.

Bedford Town Centre TROs

With the last pedestrianisation of the town centre - Harpur Street (South) and Midland Road (East) - in the late 1990s, Bedford Borough Council introduced a consolidated Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) in June 2002 banning all cyclists from riding through the whole of the pedestrianised area.

In spite of the ban many cyclists for safety reasons and directness have continued to use the Silver Street/Midland Road route to reach the railway station from the Castle Road area and beyond in the early hours and in the evening when there are virtually no pedestrians about.

CCNB has campaigned for more than a decade for cyclists to be able to use the route 'out of hours' until eventually a consultation was carried out in 2013. Following a positive outcome a temporary TRO was approved in March 2015 to allow cyclists to cycle through the town centre out of the core shopping hours between 6pm and 9am. The TRO is to be reviewed this Autumn.



Bedford Town Centre PSPO

Bedford Borough Council has received complaints over many years of cyclists riding recklessly and aggressively through the pedestrianised area of the town centre during the day time and with the introduction of PSPOs they have taken the opportunity to use this mechanism to tackle the problem.

Bedford Citizen's Panel and others in June 2015 were asked the question:

'Do you support additional enforcement of the current restrictions on cycling through the pedestrianised areas of the Town Centre during shopping hours of 9am to 6pm with a focus on reckless and inconsiderate cycling.'

Of the 739 responses received, 79% supported additional enforcement. Bedford Borough Council decided to carry this out using the PSPO procedure.

A draft PSPO was approved by the Council in February 2016. The final order came into force on 16 May 2016 for a period of three years until 15 May 2019. A copy of the order can be seen under:

[http://www.bedford.gov.uk/
community_and_living/community_services/
community_safety/
town_centre_cycling_pspo.aspx](http://www.bedford.gov.uk/community_and_living/community_services/community_safety/town_centre_cycling_pspo.aspx)

The restriction quoted is:

'No person shall cycle/ride bicycles through the main pedestrian area of the town centre between the designated times (09:00hrs and 18:00hrs) as specified on the map attached to the order.'

The order states that anybody committing an offence will be issued with a fixed penalty of £75 to be paid within 14 days or £50 if paid within 8 days.



Bedford Controlled Parking Zone 2008 Amendment

Just before the above PSPO came into force the Council issued an amendment to the Controlled Parking Zone 2008 to permit for a trial period of 12 months motor vehicle access to the pedestrianised area of Harpur Street (Central) and Paradine Court from 21 March 2016 to allow the pick up of goods from the adjacent Marks & Spencer's anytime between 9am and 5pm.

CCNB and others immediately opposed this amendment on safety grounds and it was withdrawn after two weeks.

Cycle Stands

One of the top questions always posed by cyclists/would be cyclists is 'will there be a safe and secure cycle parking facility at the location where I want to go - work, shops, school, railway station, public building or leisure centre'.

Bedford is fortunate in having secure cycle stands in most locations as well as comprehensive guidelines for the provision of new cycle parking stands in all new developments.

The original Bedfordshire County Council's 2006 document was replaced in September 2014 by the Borough's Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) - Parking Standards for Sustainable Communities. Section 5.0 contains the updated cycling parking design guidance section which can be accessed from the website:

<http://edrms.bedford.gov.uk/OpenDocument.aspx?id=9xQIDeL8KGNfrqOwJbCDxA%3d%3d&name=5-0%20Cycle%20parking%20design%20guidance.pdf>

All planning applications as a result now have to include, or have as a condition of their approval plans, provision of the appropriate number of secure cycle stands.

For more than 20 years CCNB has perused the planning department's weekly list to check that none have slipped through the net.

The last two months has seen a number of useful additions, particularly at the railway station although not to the level now available at Cambridge railway station or at Utrecht in the Netherlands.



*Not fit for purpose
'Butterfly'/'V' clips*



*Not fit for purpose
small hoops*

Bedford Station Cycle Stands

The long awaited additional cycle stands at Bedford railway station were finally installed during May 2016.

The station now has 182 new two-tier and 10 new 'Sheffield' spaces but for a loss of 108 old 'Sheffield' spaces. The total number of cycle parking spaces available for commuters is 612 (including 24 in the Borough's adjacent Ashburnham Road car park) up from the 528 spaces available in August 2014, an increase of 84 (15%).

The two-tier type although saving space are not suitable for all cyclists and it is important that an adequate number of the simple 'Sheffield' types are still available. The latest installation now provides 340 (56%) two-tier types and 272 (44%) 'Sheffield' types.

The £125k scheme was funded 90% from a DfT grant and 10% by Bedford Borough Council. The fund was part of £2.25m allocated to Govia's Thameslink and Southern franchises by the DfT from the Government's Cycle-Rail £15m fund announced in September 2014 for the year 2015/16 to improve cycle facilities at railway stations.

Govia's tendering of the large project was awarded to Lock It Safe who had previously carried out large scale installations at many stations including at Leicester, Sheffield, Nottingham and Derby. The units installed at Bedford station are therefore different from the original External Solutions version installed in November 2013 and July/August 2014, particularly in the feature available for locking the bicycle to the stand.



South Wing Hospital Cycle Stands

As a result of a planning application to the Borough in December 2015, a secure, covered cycle compound was installed at Bedford South Wing Hospital during April 2016 on the corner of King's Place and Britannia Road.

The compound has four times five 'Sheffield' type toast racks to accommodate 40 bicycles. The new facility is covered by CCTV, has automatic lighting and a secure access system via staff 'swipe' cards.



40 space cycle shelter next to King's Place Office Block

Subject to budget restraints there are also plans to install cycle security signage around the site, to upgrade existing cycle parking facilities as required and to remove cycle parking facilities from under-used or vulnerable areas and re-allocate them to more suitable locations.

The aims of the investment are to provide additional secure cycle parking facilities for staff, patients and visitors and to encourage more staff, patients and visitors to choose cycling as an option for some or all of their journeys to the site.

A travel survey last year showed that 10% of staff currently cycle to work and a further 12% of staff occasionally cycle.

Cambridge Station Cycle Stands

The new CyclePoint at Cambridge railway station with 2,850 cycle parking spaces, a mixture of two-tier racks and Sheffield stands, all under cover, is now nearing completion. This number is five times larger than at Bedford railway station.

The £2.5 million scheme was partially opened in February 2016 and the final second floor in May 2016. The bike park has a bike shop on the ground floor offering maintenance and bike hire facilities. There is also a special area on the ground floor for bicycles such as cargo bikes and tandems.

The facility was commissioned by Abellio Greater Anglia, a subsidiary of Dutch railway operator Nederlandse Spoorwegen. The two-tier racks used are FalcoLevel Premium+ which meet the Dutch national 'FietsParkur' standard for secure cycle parking.



Stairs/wheeling channels to upper floors



Two-tier racks on first floor



Further racks arriving from the Netherlands



Racks being lifted to second floor

Utrecht station in the Netherlands now has spaces for 12,500 cycles.



Two-tier cycle parking tree - Cambridge Station

Unchained Dogs

One person's junk is another person's prime material.

Israeli artist Nirit Levav Packer graduated from a New York City College with a degree in fashion design and built a career specialising in bridal and evening gowns. Unsatisfied she began in 2010 to broaden out into pottery, jewellery and ceramics but it was in her father's workshops where she trained to do welding and metal cutting and started to make iron sculptures from various recycled materials.

During a random visit to a bike repair shop, the artist looked at the parts the owner intended to throw away and decided to create a statue of a dog (a Rottweiler) out of bicycle chains.

This inspired the next and a whole series of life-like dog sculptures was eventually made out of these recycled parts - chains, gears, pedals and bike seats - that were collected for her by bicycle repair shops and garages all over Tel Aviv.



A video on Baby Choo - a tea cup Yorkshire Terrier can be seen on:

<https://youtu.be/w5P3wnBsO8k>

Pictures of the whole series of dogs from full-size greyhounds, a bichon frise, a cocker spaniel, poodles and other mutts can be seen on:

<http://unchaineddogs.com/>

CCNB AGM Presentation

Editor and Chair of CCNB gave a presentation on ‘**Cycling in the Netherlands and Bedford**’ at CCNB’s AGM on Friday 22 April 2016 at the Friends Meeting House in Lansdowne Road. 21 members attended the event.

The Netherlands

In the Netherlands the bicycle is an integral part of everyday life and in many cities up to 70% of all daily journeys are made by bicycle.

The presentation started with a video showing that Dutch infrastructure didn’t just happen as believed by many people including some Dutch.

Before World War II journeys were predominately made by bike but in the 1950s and 60s as car ownership increased, roads became increasingly congested and there was little provision for cyclists. The consequence of this in the early 1970s was an appalling increase in child deaths and a social movement, ‘Stop the Child Murder’, demanding safer cycling conditions for children was formed. Vigorous campaigning together with the 1970s petrol crisis persuaded the Dutch government to diverge from road building policies and invest in cycling infrastructure.

But even in the Netherlands cycling infrastructure is not always perfect and a video on the state of the current infrastructure in Groningen showed that much more money has to be spent to bring the older sections of the cycle network up to the best practice.

Groningen, a city of 200,336 people, was one of the five finalists selected to become the Netherlands Cycling City of 2016. The others were the small town of Goes (37,153) in Zeeland, Maastricht (122,397) in Limburg, Nijmegen (170,681) in Gelderland and the large city of Utrecht (334,176).

At the awards ceremony on 18 May 2016 Nijmegen was selected.

After the announcement Alderman Harriët Tiemens of Nijmegen said:

“It is a beautiful reward for our efforts, but also a great incentive to continue to work even harder to get our cycling policies right. We want to make Nijmegen as attractive as possible for cyclists. In recent years we see that more and more people cycle. Cycling to the city centre increased with nearly 20 percent. That decreases traffic and parking problems in the city, but it is also good for air quality and people’s health in Nijmegen.”

A short video on the cycling infrastructure in Nijmegen can be seen on:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wZDsRH3g0q0>



Bedford

As in the Netherlands, the UK and Bedford saw a significant increase in the use of the motor car throughout the 1950s and 60s leading to most main roads becoming increasingly busy and this inevitably led to a decline in cycling.

In Bedford, coupled with the still rapid growth of the town, congestion particularly in the town centre became a major traffic problem.

The Town and Country Planning Act was passed in 1947 and as a result Bedford Borough was required to prepare a comprehensive development plan and **Bedford by the River - A town planning report** was published in 1952. The plan led to the construction in the 1950s of four cycle tracks to improve cross town communications for cyclists on the west and south of the town which complemented a number of paths regularly used by cyclists including the Riverside path and Cemetery Hill path to give an off-road cycle network of 12 km throughout the area.

Motor traffic increased five fold between 1945 and 1965 causing further conflict and the need to improve the walking and cycling environment.

The 1970s saw a revival in cycling from the low levels of the previous two decades not least due to increasing public concern for the environment and the acknowledgment of its efficiency, cheapness, convenience for both children and adults. However many people considered cycling to be unsafe - vulnerable to the danger of conflict from motor vehicles.

Bedfordshire County Council following Local Government reorganisation in 1974 carried out a transportation study in 1976. This showed that as many people used a bicycle as public transport and that there were more bikes in the town than in any place of comparable size in the country.

The Council therefore put forward a plan in 1977 to provide (radial) special routes for cyclists throughout Bedford (into the town centre). This was to comprise some 39 km of cycle lanes and tracks and 19 signal controlled crossings.

It was very radical for the time and was believed to be the only transportation study in the country which included cycling as a quantified mode of travel.

The first cycleway proposed was the route from Lombardy Close in Hillyfields to De Parys Avenue - a distance of about one and a half miles. The early 1980s saw a number of cycle routes promised in the 1977 plan steadily introduced and was the basis of the cycling network seen in Bedford and Kempston today.

At this time the County Council was considered as one of the leading authorities on cycling in the country.

20mph - Scottish Conference

The City of Edinburgh hosted Scotland's first 20mph conference on 8 June 2016 in part to celebrate its default 20mph limit over 80% of its roads from 31 July 2016.



Delegates agreed that area wide 20mph limits with signs and lines were great value for money in the short and long term and was the right urban limit. There was also near unanimous support with 95% favouring a national default 20mph limit for built-up areas as best value for money in raising everyday road safety and liveability.

Rod King MBE, Director of 20's Plenty for Us, led the call for Scottish Minister for Transport Humza Yousaf to announce a plan to bring in a Scottish 20mph default limit to replace 30mph. Local Traffic Authorities would be free to make exceptions at 30mph.

20mph limits are proven to prevent casualties and make people feel safer. Case studies from Edinburgh, Cardiff, Bristol, Warrington and Liverpool showed that support for 20mph is strong and rises after implementation. Two thirds of drivers think 20mph limits are a good idea. 60% of residents thought 20mph provided a safer environment while three quarters of people said 20mph benefited their community with typically 20% fewer casualties experienced.

Medical personnel are certain that 20mph limits increase public health and exercise levels by encouraging more people to cycle and walk.

A National limit change is far better value than asking each cash-strapped authority to change their own road signs on the, perhaps 90% of, roads going 20mph. Legal costs are minimal. Less would be required for public consultations on exceptions

Rod King MBE's power point presentation given at the conference on 20mph limits – a developing urban standard for streets is at

http://www.20splenty.org/readyfor20_scotsnational20ppt

Bedford Town Centre

CCNB has suggested to the Borough Council that 20mph speed limits should be introduced on all roads in the central area of the town to improve the safety of cyclists and to encourage more cyclists to use these roads instead of the pedestrianised area. This is in addition to continuing their introduction in all residential areas and around schools.

Still waiting implementation in the borough are 20mph limits for all roads in the centre of the village of Felmersham.

Bikeability Plus

Following on from the Bikeability Plus pilots carried out in a number of schools in Cambridgeshire and 17 other areas last year (see Newsletter No. 74), the Department for Transport (DfT) in March 2016 announced a £5 million fund for it to go nationwide from September 2016.

The pilots have shown that the number of children who cycled to school at least once a week more than doubled to 10%. Nearly 20,000 children have already received the training and the £5 million funding will now reach an additional 200,000 more across England.

The programme also introduces 4 to 5 year olds in reception classes to balance training, so they have a fun, positive introduction to cycling as they start school. Older children will also be shown how to fix and maintain their bikes themselves - so they can keep on staying active and cycle safely.

A focus of Bikeability Plus is introducing children and parents in disadvantaged communities who might not otherwise cycle to the healthy and affordable way of getting around.

CCNB has asked Bedford Borough Council to ensure that part of the fund comes to schools in our area.

During March 2016 the DfT released three Bikeability promotional videos showcasing what trainees are able to do following training. The films were shot on the streets and cycle paths of Cambridge by the Brother Bear film company helped by an Outspoken Training Instructor Trainer.

The short films can be downloaded from:

Level 1 - This is my bike

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dRz-7FWuLg&feature=youtu.be>

Level 2 - This is my adventure

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ewlZ7nlq-3E>

Level 3 - This is my independence

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f6AnxdQjrWk&ebc=ANyPxKpE79dVoXfq6U8NyCY1Hy_ieiGQbb

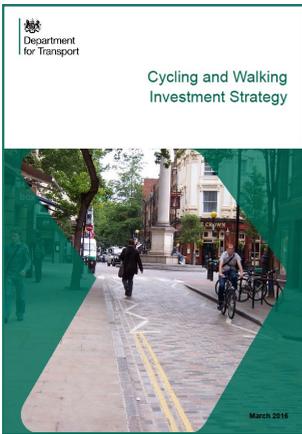
Outspoken Training of Cambridge in March 2016 was awarded a further contract to be the delivery partner of Bedford Borough Council for Bikeability cycle training.

Quote

Cycle tracks will abound in Utopia - H G Wells.

Cycling & Walking Investment Strategy Draft

A draft of the Government's Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy (CWIS) was published for consultation on Easter Sunday, 27 March 2016.



The commitment to producing a CWIS came into being as part of the Infrastructure Act 2015 and followed intensive campaigning from national and local cycling organisations and other environment, health and transport groups.

The Act states that the Secretary of State for Transport must publish a CWIS for England with objectives and financial resources.

The strategy includes a national target for doubling cycling by 2025 and also cutting cyclist deaths but does not meet this ambition with any additional funds.

The dedicated investment allocated from 2016-17 to 2020-21 is only £316 million. This is down by over a third on the previous five years representing only £1.39 per person outside London. This is extremely small when compared to the Government's £15 billion Road Investment Strategy.

The strategy states that creating a walking and cycling nation is a long-term process and this strategy is the first step in that process. Our long term goal up to 2040 is that walking and cycling should be a normal part of everyday life, and the natural choice for shorter journeys such as the commute to school, college, work or leisure trips. We want to create a nation where cycling and walking are the norm for all people whatever their background or characteristics. To make our goal a reality, we want everyone in the country to have access to safe, attractive routes for cycling and walking.

This will require transformative changes over the coming years that will require us all to share a responsibility to make it happen. Realising this ambition will not only require sustained investment in cycling and walking infrastructure but also long-term transport planning and a change in attitudes amongst central Government, local bodies, businesses, communities and individuals. Cycling and walking must be seen as transport modes in their own right and an integral part of the transport network.

The draft strategy can be downloaded from:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/512895/cycling-and-walking-investment-strategy.pdf

Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 2016

The Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions (TSRGD) 2016 came into force, one year late, on 22 April 2016. The new version replaces the 2002 edition with an updated, revised and consolidated TSRGD. It allows local highway authorities to have more freedom to introduce a number of different design options that have made a positive impact on cycling in other countries.

CCNB Newsletter No 69 (June 2014) described what was to be updated based on the draft document put out for consultation in May 2014.

Amongst those items that have found their way into the final version are:

- Pedestrian and cycle crossings - a Zebra with a marked crossing alongside for cyclists. This will also enable a 'Dutch style' roundabout to be built with a separate cycle track that has priority over motor traffic.



These are already being used at the Union Street roundabout

- Zig-zag markings up to 2m from the kerb to accommodate cycle lanes
- Low level cycle signals, separate filter lights and red cycle signals, all of which can help improve convenience and safety at junctions
- Mandatory on-road cycle lanes without a Traffic Order requirement
- Advanced stop lines (ASLs) with no lead in lane
- 20mph zone flexibility

However, Traffic Orders must still be issued for contraflow cycle lanes and cycle exemptions at banned turns.

Full details of the new regulations & directions can be downloaded from:

<http://tsrgd.co.uk/pdf/tsrgd/tsrgd2016.pdf>

Government e-Petitions

The government's e-petition went live on 4 August 2011 and is an easy way for a person to try and influence government policy in the UK. If more than 10,000 signatures are obtained it receives a government response and if more than 100,000 a potential debate in parliament.

Since its introduction there have been 9899 petitions. As of the end of May 2016 there were 2931 open petitions of which six were cycling related. The top one (similar to one in 2012) which has attracted 21,584 signatures (up to 30 June 2016) and is open until October 2016 is:

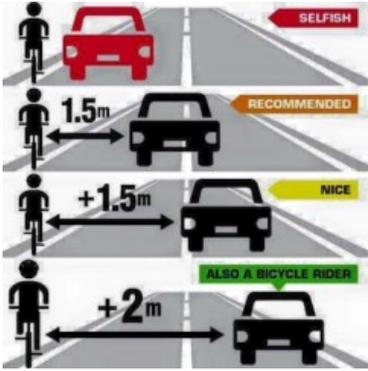
To introduce a permanent, minimum passing distance when overtaking cyclists

The lack of a clear specification may result in a personal decision as to what a "plenty of room" means in terms of distance. Therefore, introducing a minimum legal passing distance when overtaking cyclists will considerably reduce the number of cyclist casualties, aiding in a safer cycling practice. Suggestion of 3.28 ft (1m) when overtaking cyclists on roads with speed limits up to and including 30mph. On roads with higher speed limits, the minimum passing distance should be 4.9 ft (1.5m).

Government Response

This Government currently does not have plans to legislate on a set minimum space e.g. 1 metre on roads with a speed limit of up to 30mph when overtaking a cyclist.

This type of legislation would be extremely difficult to enforce and the Government does not believe that it would add to the existing rules and guidance, including those set out in the Highway Code, which advises drivers to give cyclists "at least as much room as you would when overtaking a car".



We are keeping this position under review, and are interested in learning from the experience of places where legislation of this type has been introduced. One example is South Australia, where since 25th October 2015, drivers are required to give a minimum of one metre when passing a cyclist where the speed limit is 60km/h (37.3mph) or less or 1.5 metres where the speed limit is over 60km/h (40mph). The penalty for drivers caught disobeying this rule is a \$287 (£148) fine, plus a \$60 (£31) victim of crime levy and 2 demerit (penalty) points. However, it will take time to understand the benefits and impacts of this legislation on cyclists and other road users.

In the UK, rule 163 of the Highway Code states that motorists should give cyclists (and pedestrians and equestrians) as much space as they would give a motor vehicle when overtaking but does not specify a set distance. Last year Olympian Chris Boardman starred in an industry-funded video which reminded drivers that

“People on bicycles are flesh and blood, they’re mums and dads, sons and daughters, brothers and sisters.”

He stressed that motorists need to “give them plenty of space when overtaking.”

The video can be seen under:

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/o9pmw2ckQSU>



Other open cycling petitions together with the number of signatures are:

- Balance bike lessons on the National Curriculum for all Early Year children - 79
- Train all cyclists to use the roads safely - 52
- Ensure road cyclists pay a tax and adhere to a DVLA type set of rules - 41
- Make it compulsory for all cycle riders to have some sort of bell or horn fitted - 35

The latest one with 11 signatures open until November 2016 is:

Cycling revolution will cure the nation’s poor health

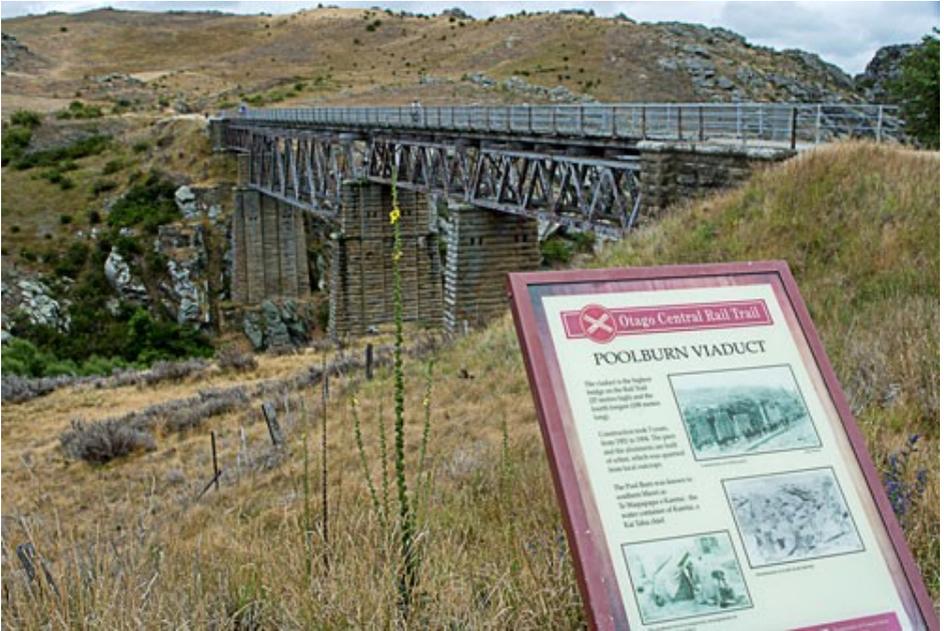
67% of men and 57% of women in the UK are overweight or obese. Coronary heart disease, stroke, type 2 diabetes, colon cancer, breast cancer, osteoarthritis, depression, dementia are just some of the diseases that can be prevented/delayed by doing regular exercise.

Imagine how much money could be saved by the NHS (£115 billion spent per annum) if the population was healthier.

This money could be spent on:

more bike stands, a mass education programme about the benefits of cycling in primary schools, secondary schools, universities and work places throughout the UK, cycling facilities (stands, lockers and showers) in the locations above and longer cycle superhighways in London and superhighways in every city in the UK.

The Otago Central Rail Trail - New Zealand 2016 - Helen Blakeman



The Otago Central Rail Trail was the first of the long distance cycle paths to be developed in New Zealand, opening in the year 2000. Situated south east of Queenstown in the South Island, it traverses an arid area of old gold mining settlements, following the original railway track which linked the small towns, booming in their day, at the height of the gold rush in 1862.

The 152km trail has been created for the benefit of cyclists (3-4 days), walkers (6 days) or horse riding. It is recommended that those on horseback should ride at a walking pace in single file keeping to one side of the trail, dismount before bridges and tunnels and remove dung! Mobility scooters, electric

wheelchairs, and electric bikes are also allowed on the trail.¹

The line of the trail follows a crescent shape on the map between Clyde and Middlemarch and can be followed in either direction. However, if cycled from west to east, from your destination at Middlemarch it is then possible to take the Taieri Gorge Railway to Dunedin.

Bike hire outlets offer various options for independent and guided tours, and storage to help you to plan your itinerary, including transfer of cyclists, bikes and luggage along the trail. There are numerous accommodation options, along the way, which may be busy during peak times such as Easter.



Paul and I stopped off at the rail trail, as an impromptu detour on our main itinerary this January, during the New Zealand summer school holidays and the trail was remarkably quiet. Apparently the trail was originally conceived as an autumnal tourist destination, around Easter, when temperatures would

be cooler for cycling. We arrived in Clyde in the searing 35° C late afternoon heat and did not envisage being able to attempt the trail at all! However, the next morning was mild and overcast, so we took the advice of the enthusiastic staff at Shebikeshesbikes, in the recently renovated historic Clyde Railway Station and embarked on a 40km mainly circular bike ride towards Chatto Creek, double backing to Alexandra, before following the banks of the river Clyde and returning to our starting point. The 12km winding path along the river, although not actually on the rail trail itself offered an exhilarating ride through the trees, with occasional glimpses of the aqua waters of the Clyde. Crossing the red bridge just before the hydroelectric dam brings you back into the historic village of Clyde, apparently originally named Dunstan², after Dunstanburgh Castle in Northumberland (home from home, as we live in Alnwick). In fact there are historic heritage trail leaflets for three of the settlements near to the rail trail (Clyde, Ophir and St Bathans), indicating historic buildings and recounting the history of their original inhabitants.

Day 2, having checked the weather forecast, we were keen for more. We had stayed the night in Ophir at the art deco (slightly later than gold rush era!) Blacks Hotel, one of my favourite stays of the whole New Zealand trip, including a late evening walk up the deserted main street of historic buildings.

Ophir is 2km off the trail, so we drove to Shebikeshebikes' main hub at Omakau to pick up another two bikes, paniers and helmets (by law, these must be worn in New Zealand). A rather tedious 7km of cycling along a straight stretch of the loose stone surface brought us to the recommended morning tea stop, the Stationside Café at Lauder for superb savoury muffins and strong coffee. The café has a most beautiful, pristine loo for the use of its patrons, before sampling the eco long drop toilets further along the trail, for which you need bring your own toilet paper.

One of the most dramatic parts of the trail follows from Lauder, through



the Poolburn Gorge, including the two tunnels. You are asked to dismount and walk through the tunnels using a torch, as well as bike lights. A father and son just carried on riding, but this could be dangerous, especially when busy, as on one tunnel at least, you cannot see the opening at the other end. We used the light from Paul's mobile phone, which

wasn't really adequate to get a sense of where the tunnel walls were, and the old train tunnels don't seem that straight! The Poolburn Viaduct is another highlight at 37m and chance for a photo stop, before cycling on into the Ida Valley, which is where we eventually turned back, finally clocking up another 45km half day.



Poolburn Gorge Tunnels

As well as the main settlements such as Wedderburn and Ranfurly, there are several possible side trips including Naseby and the blue lake at St Bathans, which could extend the trail over four or five days. We drove to St Bathans that afternoon and got out of the car in torrential rain to take photographs of a rather grey lake. Therefore, I would certainly recommend packing all weather gear for the rail trail, including sunhats (difficult under a helmet), sunscreen, waterproofs), in fact 'clothes for all seasons' as it states in the official leaflet.

This Central Otago Rail Trail taster was the culmination of our holiday cycling experience in New Zealand this year, and we will be keen to complete the trail in full next time.



Ophir Post & Telegraph Office

Note

1 - Otago Central Rail Trail Map, 7th edition 2015

2 - Ibid

Further information can be seen on the following websites:

www.otagocentrailtrail.co.nz

www.shebikeshebikes.co.nz

Cycling in New Zealand - Helen Blakeman

In my four years of living in Auckland, I never even got on a bike, thinking it was far too busy for cycling. However, the discovery of a new bike shop on Devonport wharf, across the harbour from the city centre, convinced me otherwise and we enjoyed two bike rides round the North Shore cycle network, even negotiating the main roads, which have wide cycle lanes, some of them on the actual pavements.



Helen and Paul on North Shore cycle network with Auckland Sky Tower and harbour bridge in background

Christchurch Transport Interchange Two-tier Cycle Stands

We also cycled in Christchurch, in the South Island, through suburbs emptied after liquefaction and toured the new construction sites emerging rather slowly after the February 2011 earthquake, including the development of an impressive new transport interchange.





Cathedral - Christchurch



New Transport Interchange - Christchurch

Google Self-Driving Bike

On 1 April 2016, Google Netherlands launched via a short video, its new product, a self-driving bike.

Although it is an obvious spoof of its self-driving cars and the Netherlands' bike culture, it is not impossible that it could be an everyday mode of transport in the distant future.

Watch the video on <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LSZPNwZex9s>



The bike takes young children to school without their mother

Town Centre Study

The outcome of the town centre study is interdependent on the preferred strategy for the Local Plan.

Background reports for the study can be seen under:

http://www.bedford.gov.uk/transport_and_streets/highways/schemes_and_projects/key_transport_projects.aspx

IKEA Flat Pack Bike

Also in April 2016, but not on 1 April, IKEA, the Swedish flat pack furniture company, announced the launch of its new flat pack bike which should be available in the UK from August 2016. The new unisex bicycle called the 'Strada' - to skid sideways in Swedish - is the company's first foray into the transport sector.

It will be available in one colour, two sizes (26 and 28 inch frame sizes),



and have a host of customisable add-ons and extras including an optional trailer.

The bicycle uses a belt drive rather than a regular chain to avoid rust (guaranteed for 15,000 km), has 'back-peddalling' brakes to eliminate the need for cables and an automatic gear-change system

Local Plan 2035

Due to the overwhelming response for sites in the second consultation late last year which included some large settlements and the length of time needed to examine them, the programme has slipped. It will now be early 2017 before residents are able to comment on the outcome of this work.

As the local plan needs to look forward 15 years from the date of adoption, changes to the plan's timetable mean that the end date of the plan has moved from 2032 to 2035. The technical documents that have already been published will be updated to take account of this change.

Details can be seen under:

http://www.bedford.gov.uk/environment_and_planning/planning_town_and_country/planning_policy_its_purpose/local_development_scheme.aspx

Diary

Saturday 10 September 2016 - Bike 'n Hike
Wednesday 14 September 2016 - Cycle to Work Day
16-22 September 2016 - European Mobility Week
23-29 September 2016 - The Cycle Show - Birmingham NEC

See <http://www.ccnb.org.uk/diary.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)