



Cycle Bedford

Veronica Brown
cyclist &
cycling campaigner
1932-2016

Issue 76
October 2016

The Voice of Cycling Campaign for North Bedfordshire



Riverside North's Controversial New Cycle Bridge

CYCLING CAMPAIGN FOR NORTH BEDFORDSHIRE

Founded 1992

Committee

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cycle_bedford

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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Cover

The cover photograph for this issue shows the new cycle/pedestrian bridge across the River Great Ouse from St Mary's Gardens to the Riverside North development.

The design of the bridge has led to a number of adverse comments in the local press as it is different to the artists sketch shown in the original planning application for Riverside North. CCNB has not involved itself in this aspect of the bridge but awaits for its opening next Spring/Summer when it is expected to give safe access to the town centre for those cyclists (and pedestrians) who currently use the pavement/road of Town Bridge and County Bridge.

Editorial

Veronica Brown, one of CCNB's founder committee members, sadly passed away at the end of August.



(Obituary page 6/7)



There has been intense euphoria for cycling once again following the 2016 Rio Olympic and Paralympic games. This time the legacy must not be allowed to fall away as it did after the 2011 London games (page 5).

The consultation on the Government's draft Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy (CWIS) closed on 23 May 2016 and although the final version was promised during the summer nothing has been published to date.

Potential Government sources of funding announced in the 2015 Autumn Spending Review were quoted in the draft CWIS and the opportunity has been taken by Bedford Borough in the last few months to submit bids for cycling grants from several funding streams recently announced. CCNB also hopes that some of the money received from the Local Growth Fund for traffic management in Bedford town centre will be used for cycling. Also from the bid which has been recently submitted for the Ampthill Road corridor, if successful (page 16/18).



In the meantime the Borough's Planning Team continue to extract funds from developers through the planning process for the provision of cycle stands and cycling infrastructure links to the Borough's urban cycle network (page 8/9, 12/14, 21/23).



The fall of sterling since Brexit combined with Brent crude oil hitting a 52 week high in early October 2016 has meant an increase of 11/14% for a litre of petrol/diesel since the beginning of the year. Recent reports have suggested that this is likely to rise by a further 5% over the next few weeks hitting the pockets of motorists just in time for the Christmas period. Please encourage your non-cycling friends to save money by occasionally leaving the car in the drive and cycling (or walking) that short distance. The fitness achieved can then give further savings by the cancellation of the monthly gym subscription.

Rio 2016's Olympic Legacy

The London 2011 Olympic and Paralympic Games were a great success for cycling and showed what could be achieved with adequate financial support. The government at the time said the legacy left by the games should last a lifetime. Although giving a boost initially it was short lived and has not given the increase expected.

Following intensive campaigning by national and local cycling organisations and others, a five year Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy (CWIS) was included in the 2015 Infrastructure Bill. In March this year a draft CWIS was produced for consultation. The final report including the financial resources to go with it was promised this summer. We are still waiting.

Four years later, the Rio 2016 games has again surpassed expectations with Cycling Team GB winning 12 medals in the Olympics; six gold, four silver and two bronze and 21 medals in the Paralympics; eleven gold, four silver and six bronze.

Will the legacy be any better this time?

A host of Rio cyclists alongside cycling legends Sir Chris Hoy and Chris Boardman have sent a letter with British Cycling's authority to the Prime Minister, Theresa May, in which they say that:

"The best way to honour the achievements of our athletes would be to create a legacy of every day cycling in this country - a place where cycling is the choice form of transport for people to get around in their daily lives."

"Investment in cycling as a form of transport isn't purely an investment in cycle lanes, it is an investment that will pay off for the nation's health, wealth, transport infrastructure and the vibrancy of our towns and cities. It has the added benefit of just making it easier for ordinary families to get to work and get to school."

The letter calls on the Prime Minister to devote 5% of the government's transport spend to cycling infrastructure and to set targets to improve road maintenance.

Under current proposals, investment will decline to less than £1 per head by the end of the parliament in 2020 whilst £28 per head is spent in the Netherlands.

The full letter can be seen under:

https://www.britishcycling.org.uk/zuvvi/media/bc_files/campaigning/20160901_Theresa_May_letter.pdf

What Chris Boardman said on 1 September on the topic can be heard on

<https://youtu.be/kq7dIYJD7Pc>

Veronica Brown 1932-2016



It was with great sadness that we learnt of the death of Veronica Brown on Wednesday 31 August 2016 following many years bravely fighting cancer.

Veronica was one of Bedford's foremost leisure cyclists and cycling campaigner as a member of CTC, the short lived ABC and then CCNB.

She said that she did not get her first 'proper' bike until her early 20s but from then on it was the start of a life exploring the countryside all over Britain.

When she moved to Bedford in 1973 it was not long before she was involved in forming a CTC Section for families; her daughter,

Gillian, was then on the back of a tandem. The group started with two families and a few single people, and rides were once a month. Eventually more people joined and rides became weekly with some Saturdays for shorter rides to encourage new people to ride.

Veronica brought together CTC and the Friends of the Earth (FoE) in 1975 to form the **Association of Bedford Cyclists** (ABC) to draw attention of the County Council to cycling. At the time the council were making proposals for a cycleway scheme in Bedford and wanted views on their plans. After handing in a petition of more than 400 signatures and numerous public meetings and cycling firmly on the council's agenda, it was agreed in 1978 to disband the ABC and for the CTC and FoE to continue campaigning separately.

In 1976 she was appointed President of the Bedfordshire District Association of CTC, a position she held until October 2013 when she was forced to give up due to in health.

In more recent years she organised the Bedfordshire Section of the 40 Plus Cycling Club and for over three years was National President of the 40 Plus.

Veronica was instrumental in having a series of eight local cycle rides - 'Two wheels to leisure' published in the Bedfordshire Times newspaper in 1978 to commemorate the centenary of the CTC. These were so

successful that she was asked to produce another series for the following year.

When Hazel Mitchell put a letter in the local press in 1992 calling for a new organisation to be formed to promote cycling and campaign for improved cycling infrastructure Veronica was present at the founding meeting. She was elected to the committee of the new group, originally CCB (Cycling Campaign for Bedfordshire) but changed to CCNB two years later, and remained a valuable member until her death.

Over the years Veronica regularly attended meetings with both Bedford Borough Council and the Bedfordshire County Council until its demise in 2009 to help keep cycling on the agenda. She contributed numerous articles to CCNB's newsletter and with her knowledge of cycle routes helped CCNB publish a number of cycle books and maps including the popular Bedford and Kempston Cycle Map in 2000 and now in its sixth edition.

Up to 10 years ago she was regularly cycling more than 5,000 miles per year although by 2012 this had dropped to about 3,500 miles per year.



Veronica in the 1970s with her late husband Hugh and daughter Gillian posing on the Suspension Bridge along the Embankment

We shall miss her as a very much loved and respected member of the cycling fraternity.

Cambridge Road Upgraded Cycle Track

The old section of Cambridge Road including the cycle track between the Wallis Road roundabout and the Cardington Road toucan crossing opposite Priory Business Park was closed in December 2015 to allow Travis Perkins to develop the area.

This was completed and opened towards the end of August. The development includes an upgraded 3m wide off-road cycle track through the development as far as the Borough owned land. This contains a triangle of tracks. The left hand section proceeds to the toucan whilst the right hand section goes to the slip road from the southern bypass, under the bridge and onto Cardington. Vegetation had been allowed to grow across these tracks to give a narrow width, marring the effect of the new upgraded stretch through the development.

At the request of CCNB the area was mowed and the paths cleared at the end of September 2016.



New wide track with good crossing points of entrances - Each business unit has 'Sheffield' cycle parking stands under cover

Before and after path condition (below) of Borough's sections near Cardington Road



Bromham Road New Junction

A section of the Bedford to Bromham cycle track on the north side of Bromham Road opposite Biddenham Turn was closed in November 2015 to allow a new junction to be created for the start of the first phase of the North of Bromham Road development. While this was carried out temporary pedestrian lights were installed at each end and cyclists were expected to use the carriageway.

The junction was completed during September with a 4m wide cycle track and a new toucan crossing of Bromham Road just slightly west of the original one together with an additional toucan across the new road into the development. All sections of the carriageways which are controlled by traffic signals have Advanced Stop Lines (ASLs) for on-road cyclists.

*Four metre width
off-road track with
ASLs on-road*



*Short on-road
cycle lane and off-
road track at
Biddenham turn*

Wentworth Drive Resurfacing/Markings

As part of Bedford Borough Council's road resurfacing programme, in August, it was the turn of the section of Wentworth Drive between Colchester Road and the Church Lane roundabout. The opportunity was taken to change some of the road markings while improving the infrastructure for cyclists.

Cycle Bypass

One of the improvements was the removal of the short cycle bypass on the south side of Wentworth Drive near Mark Rutherford School. It had been introduced a number of years ago with the intention of improving the safety of cyclists where the carriageway narrows due to a central reservation.

CCNB has always maintained that the opposite was true and has been campaigning for its removal since 2005. This was agreed with the Council in 2007 but it has taken this length of time to rectify.

The cycle bypass took cyclists away from the line of sight of motorists where the lane was too narrow and put them back into the carriageway at a point where motorists were prone to overrun the cycle lane.



Cycle bypass removed 2016

Cycle bypass 2005



Mini-Roundabout

In an attempt to slow down motorists entering the mini-roundabout at the Dover Crescent junction from the west two flush kerb buildouts filled with white mastic paint have been added on the north side. The carriageway on this side has been curved slightly on entering the roundabout but not the line marking leading up to it.

There have been some concerns that this may be a potential hazard due to its pinch point for those less experienced cyclists using the road route. The Borough have agreed to add a further line shortly to lead users around the build out.



Cycle Lane

A 1.5m on-road cycle lane has been marked out on the north side of Wentworth Drive from the Church Lane roundabout to just before the mini-roundabout.



Great Denham Track

The new track along the riverside from the start of Great Denham (town side) to the crossing of the River Great Ouse on the Western Bypass has been finished for more than a year except for a 30 metre section half way along which has to be completed before it can be successfully used by cyclists without a detour. Observations of the area suggest it will not now be ready for a few more months until the adjacent houses which have just been started are finished.

Future Route 51 Snags

In the future the National Cycle Network Route 51 will be diverted from its current route via the Saxon Centre in Kempston to a new one along the riverside via Great Denham and the Kempston West developments which includes the section above.

For it to be a quality cycle route three sections have been flagged as not up to the standards expected, particularly as the route is likely to be used by tandems, tricycles, bikes with trailers and a wide variety of disabled cycles, wheelchairs and mobility scooters.

To date one of the snags has been corrected and a further one marked out for implementation.

Wilkinson Road

When the track from Ridge Road to Wilkinson Road was constructed two years ago no dropped kerb was provided. One was put in recently but separated from the track by an earth bank planted with trees. The whole section has now been dug out and renewed with the track going to the dropped kerb.



*Original track alignment
Not going towards dropped kerb*



*New alignment
of track and dropped kerb*

Martell Drive

At the top of the rise from the Cemetery Road toucan the three metre wide track changes from the west side of Martell Road to the east side on its way to Ridge Road. The crossover links on both sides however are at right angles and only one metre wide. A request has been made to have them widened to the three metres widths of both tracks. Both links have recently been marked out to three metres width ready for modification.



King Alfred Way

Where the track between the new country park and the Great Denham development meets King Alfred Way there are two right angled turns. To enable all modes of cycles to negotiate these turns easily it has been recommended they have a corner radius installed.



Interchange Park East/Progress Park Link

The Midland Mainline railway on an embankment separates Progress Park off the A6 just south of the Cow Bridge junction and the new Interchange Park East development on Ampthill Road opposite the original Interchange Park.

It has always been the intention to link the two using the existing Network Rail bridge under the line.

When Progress Park was first developed a surfaced track was constructed from the road to the bridge and it was possible to access what was then a field along Ampthill Road

The planning approval (13/00477/MAF) for the land east of Ampthill Road had a condition to construct a dual use track from the road system in the development to the bridge. This was constructed at least one year ago but instead of creating the desired link Network Rail in their wisdom blocked off each end of the bridge.

CCNB has asked the Borough Council to request Network Rail to reopen the bridge to enable the link to be established.



Dual use track behind M&S in Interchange Park East



Track in Progress Park towards bridge



Manor Road Country Park

The Manor Road Country Park just outside Kempston at the back of the Marsh Leys development was described in Newsletter No 69 of June 2014 as a little known gem. The park features a dual use meandering path accessible from the west end of Manor Road to an east end entrance just prior to the level crossing of the Bedford to Bletchley railway line.

When it first opened both entrances had small kissing gates making it inaccessible for those with bicycles or pushchairs. At the request of CCNB the west gate was replaced by the Borough in 2011 with three bollards but it was another two years before it was possible to use the east entrance when the 'V' of the kissing gate was removed.

It was a big disappointment when visiting the park in June 2016 to find that a new kissing gate, even narrower than the one previously removed in 2013 had been recently installed by person's unknown making a round trip impossible.

CCNB is waiting for an explanation and rectification.



Modification of east gate 2013



New kissing gate installed 2016

The Army Cyclists Corps

An article on 'The Army Cyclists Corps' and in particular 'The Huntingdonshire Battalion' was published in Newsletter No 70 of October 2014 to mark the centenary of the start of the First World War on Monday 4 August 2014.

This was picked up a few months ago by a commissioning editor of The Gazette, the UK's official public record since 1666, and your editor was asked to write an article for the First World War resource section. The article can be seen on

<https://www.thegazette.co.uk/all-notices/content/100706>

Borough's Cycling Bids

Potential Government Sources

The Department for Transport (DfT) in its March 2016 Cycle and Walking Investment Strategy summarised five main sources of funding for cycling (and walking) :

DfT cycling and walking specific programmes:

- Bikeability
- Cycle Ambition Cities
- Highways England
- Access Fund

DfT local transport programmes:

- Local Growth Fund
- DfT highways maintenance block
- Integrated Transport Block

Other central Government programmes:

- NHS Healthy New Towns
(Department of Health - Walking Cities)
- Public Health
- Government's new sport strategy
- National Planning Policy
 - National Planning Policy Framework
 - Community Infrastructure Levy
 - Section 106 planning obligations

Local body programmes:

Initiatives led by business and the third sector:

- Business Investment
- Cycle to Work Scheme

Borough Funding

Bikeability - Funding has been obtained for 936 cycle training places during 2016/17. It is aimed to bid each year to 2019/20 with an increase to 1895 places. The training will be for a mixture of Levels 1, 2 and 3, balance and learn to ride.

Highways England - As part of the Government's commitment to cycle proof the strategic road network one of the schemes approved for the first of the five year plan was to install a cycle track together with traffic signals including toucans at the A6/A421 junction to allow cycles to safely ride between the new development at the Wixams and the existing Ampthill Road dual use path.

It was learnt a few weeks ago that Highways England had paused the scheme which had been due to be completed by 31 March 2017.

Access Fund - In the 2015 Autumn Statement the Government announced a £60m revenue fund for the years 2017/18 through 2019/20 to deliver sustainable transport projects that seek to grow the economy by boosting levels of cycling and walking, and by improving access to jobs, skills, training and education.

Travel Bedford Bid

The Borough has put in a £1.25m 'Travel Bedford' bid to support the investment it has already made in cycling and walking infrastructure by promoting the town's cycle network. The bid, if successful, will be used to encourage residents of the new housing developments around the town to cycle, particularly those new to the area, encourage residents in the existing residential areas to think about cycling or walking to work, training or educational establishments and supporting all school children to take part in the Bike It programme.

The bid is primarily for two Travel Bedford Officers, two Bike It Officers and one School Travel Plan Officer. CCNB is one of the partnership bodies for the project.

The full bid document can be downloaded from:

http://www.bedford.gov.uk/transport_and_streets/transport_policy/transport_bids.aspx

Access to Bedfordshire Stations Bid

A joint 'Bedfordshire STARS' (Sustainable Travel Access to Railway Stations) £2.73m bid with Central Bedfordshire and Luton Borough has also been submitted to promote walking, cycling and bus use to the Midland Main Line train stations in Bedfordshire. The bid for a three year period from April 2017 to March 2020 builds on existing infrastructure and Station Travel Plans already in place to promote access to employment, training and education opportunities.

More details can be found under:

http://www.luton.gov.uk/Transport_and_streets/Transport_planning/Pages/Access-Fund-for-Sustainable-Travel-2017-to-2020.aspx

Local Growth Fund - The Borough was awarded £11m in the second round of the fund (LGF2) to improve the traffic management of **Bedford town centre**.

A Bedford town centre transport study together with three further ones as part of the background for the Local Plan 2035 was briefly summarised in Newsletter No 74. The reports concluded that traffic entering the central area had to be significantly curtailed to reduce congestion, noise and pollution and cycling, walking and public transport significantly increased to make the town a more pleasant place to live in, visit and shop.

Local Growth Fund (LGF3) - The Borough has recently submitted a further bid for £5.1m of funding to the South East Midlands Local Enterprise Partnership (SEMLEP) under the third round of the Local Growth Fund (LGF3) to improve the **Amphill Road corridor**.

Congestion in this area has been one of the main topics of the letters page of the local media for sometime as traffic continues to increase with the expansion of the Wixams, Interchange Retail Park and supermarket in Amphill Road.

Improvements proposed are enhancements to the traffic signals at junctions along the route, information systems to alert drivers to current conditions and improved capacity at certain key junctions. There is no mention in the bid document for improving the cycling infrastructure except for moving the pedestrian/cycle path at the Cow Bridge junction onto separate bridges to allow a further traffic lane to be introduced.

SEMLEP will include the bid in a package of bids to be given to the Government shortly for funding from the £1.8b allocated to the Growth Fund.

CCNB believes that the measures proposed will only alleviate the problems for a short period of time. With all the new developments proposed to the south the only solution has to be more drastic - reducing vehicle use by encouraging more residents to use the P&R (buses), cycles and even their feet. It is only by this means that congestion and its pollution will be reduced and the health and wellbeing of all residents improved.

As a separate project not connected to the bid, the path on the east side of Amphill Road from Maryville Road to the toucan opposite Sexton Avenue is to be widened to three metres and converted into a dual use path. At the north end the path connects to the enhanced existing quiet road/off-road track which runs from Maryville Road along Southville Road and Mabel Road to Sandhurst Road where the footbridge crosses over the Bletchley line to Elstow Road.

Sustainable Transport Delivery Excellence Programme (STDEP) - The Borough in June 2016 won STDEP revenue funding for 10 days of work by Sustrans and Living Streets to assess the Bedford Cycle Network with respect to signing.

Bedford Railway Station Cycle Counts

September 2016 saw the highest number of commuters cycling to Bedford railway station with 449 leaving their cycles in the racks and up to an estimated 50 more taking their cycles, mainly folding bikes, on the train. This is a 7.6% increase on September 2015.

Priory Country Park New Café

A new café, The Cloverdale Retreat Café, opened in Priory Country Park during August 2016 in part of the visitor centre.

It is open seven days per week from 10am to 4pm serving a range of teas, coffee, snacks and cakes.

The visitor centre already has two 'Sheffield' type cycle parking stands and is just off the National Cycle Network Route 51 from Bedford to Sandy and alongside the cycle route to Priory Business Park and beyond.

It should therefore be very popular with cyclists wanting to take a short break and complements similar cafés at Russell Park, the Embankment boating lake, Bedford Park and Mowsbury Park.



New Norse Road Sports Facility

As part of the Aspire development of 321 homes in Norse Road by Orbit Homes a new sports facility including a football pitch and pavilion was opened by the Mayor, Dave Hodgson on 8 July 2016. The pavilion offers changing rooms and showers as well as refreshments and parking. It is available for use by local residents as well as the wider community.

The planning application called for seven 'Sheffield' cycle stands for 14 cycles. What has been provided is eight 'Not fit for purpose' front wheel type stands. The reason is under discussion with the Borough.

Bedford Pavilion New Cycle Stands

The Bedford Pavilion Café in Bedford Park now has six 'Sheffield' type cycle stands installed to enable up to 12 bicycles to be securely parked while their riders take a break at one of Bedford's most popular stop-off points.

The cycle stands were given to the café at the request of CCNB instead of being scrapped when they were replaced at Bedford railway station by new two-tier cycle stands. The café has had them renovated and painted green to blend in with the park's surroundings and they now look as good as new.



↑
*New cycle stands to left of cafe
just after installation*

← *After two weeks
confirming their need*

De Parys Hotel New Cycle Stands

The upgrading of the De Parys Hotel in De Parys Avenue was given approval by the Borough's Planning Department in October 2013. One of the conditions of the approval was the provision of long-stay covered secure cycle parking for staff and guests and short-stay cycle parking for restaurant customers to be made available before the development was occupied.

The short stay cycle parking provision as shown on one of the plans submitted with the planning application was not provided when the hotel opened for business in August 2014.

CCNB has been trying to get this implemented since this time. The provision was finally fulfilled in August 2016 some two years late although with only two 'Sheffield' stands instead of the four originally indicated.



Bedford Station New Bicycle Pump

A second public cycle pump was installed in Bedford station during August alongside the new two tier cycle stands parallel to the main station entrance corridor from Ashburnham Road. The pump complements the one installed last year at the other end of the site next to the route into the main car park.

Outstanding Schemes Approved ex Planning Applications

CCNB checks all relevant new planning applications submitted to Bedford Borough Planning Department not only for the inclusion of cycle parking stands but also to see if any new cycle infrastructure can be included to either link in with or improve the existing cycle network.

For CCNB's year 1 April 2015 to 31 March 2016 responses were made on 24 applications.

Some recent planning approvals with cycle infrastructure elements are:

Clapham Road Health Club (15/02130/MAF)

A new health club is under construction in Clapham Road opposite Franklin cottages. A dual use path is to be constructed on the east side to join the current path at the toucan crossing.



Wallis Way Unit C (15/02934/M73 - 14/01748/MAF)

As part of the construction of a warehouse block in Wallis Way a new dual use path will be constructed from the office entrance in Cambridge Road to join the cycle network at the Harrowden Road roundabout.

Manton Lane Reservoir (16/01829/MAO)

An application to replace the redundant reservoir in Manton Lane by Class B2 and B8 units if built will see a new three metre wide dual use path constructed from the entrance of the site to the start of the existing cycle network at the Manton Lane/Brickhill Drive junction.



Southfields Road Fire Station (15/02661/FUL)

External works at the fire station in Southfields Road will see the existing dual use path extended southwards with a link across Southfields Road to join a slightly diverted path to Laurel Walk. This will increase the safety of pupils cycling to the two nearby schools.



Cycle Thefts

Cycles today can now cost up to several thousand pounds to purchase so it is important that when they are left at a location they are securely locked. This is equally important when left at home.

There are more than 2000 cycle parking spaces in the urban area mainly based on the 'Sheffield' type of stand; 405 around the town centre, 612 at the railway station (half are now of the two tier type) and more than 1000 in other public and private spaces.

From a high of 72 during 2014 to a low of 17/21 at the beginning of 2015 bicycle thefts have been slowly increasing again with a figure of 44 stolen in the Borough during August 2016.



CCNB's advice is:

- Always lock your cycle in well-used and properly lit areas where it is visible to passing pedestrians if leaving it unattended.
- Use a good quality lock that matches the value of your bicycle. If necessary use two different types - a D-lock as well as a flexible one.
- Thread it through the frame and at least one wheel if using one lock and secure it to something immovable, such as a cycle rack or railings.
- Remove and take with you quick release valuables such as lights, pumps and panniers.
- Ensure your cycle is easily identifiable. Make a note of model, frame number, colour and any accessories. Also photograph it and have the underside of the frame marked with a post code.
- Insure your cycle and if it is stolen report it immediately to the Police.

There are a number of schemes where you can register your bicycle on a website but one recommended is Immobilise.

<https://www.immobilise.com/help/registerbike>

Bedfordshire Police regularly organise events where you can get your cycle marked and receive crime reduction advice.

A leaflet on 'How you can keep your bike safe' can be downloaded from:

http://www.ccnb.org.uk/how_to_keep_bike_leaflet.pdf

Keep Your Distance - Government Petition

In the last newsletter (Issue 75) there was an article on Government e-Petitions. The top cycling related petition was 'To introduce a permanent, minimum distance when overtaking cyclists'.

The petition is open until 29 October 2016 and must reach 100,000 signatures before it will be considered for debate in Parliament. The petition as of 19 September 2016 had reached 23,241 up from 21,584 reported at the end of June.

Nevertheless two organisations have taken it on themselves to make people more aware of driving too close to cyclists.

Isle of Wight Council has used some of their Local Sustainable Transport Fund to place an advertisement on the back of one of the island's buses (below).



West Midlands Police are using officers in plain clothes equipped with cameras to ride their bikes along some of Birmingham's busiest roads to identify and catch 'close pass' drivers who endanger cyclists. The officers radio ahead to patrol cars when they film bad driving. Proceedings have begun on a number of motorists although most offenders are given roadside advice.

Cycling in Venice Lido

When you talk of Venice (Venezia), the capital of northern Italy's Veneto region, you immediately think of the car and bike free historic city built on more than 100 small islands separated by canals and linked by bridges in a lagoon in the Adriatic Sea.



Venice's Piazza San Marco with the St Mark's Basilica

Bicycles and motor traffic are however allowed on the Lido, a long thin island which acts as a partial barrier between the southern Venetian Lagoon and the Adriatic Sea although very few cars are seen. Nearly all the transport is either by bike or bus.

The Lido di Venezia (as it is known in Italian) until the end of the First World War was without buildings but was rich in vegetation. Then over the next two decades, rapid urban development took place and it became the smartest bathing resort in Italy.

In 1932 a Film Festival appeared for the first time on the terraces of the Hotel Excelsior, one of the main hotels built on the Lido. The Palazzo del Cinema was opened in 1935 and, except for 1943 to 1945, the Film Festival since that time has taken place there every year.

Last November was the second time your Editor had visited La Biennale



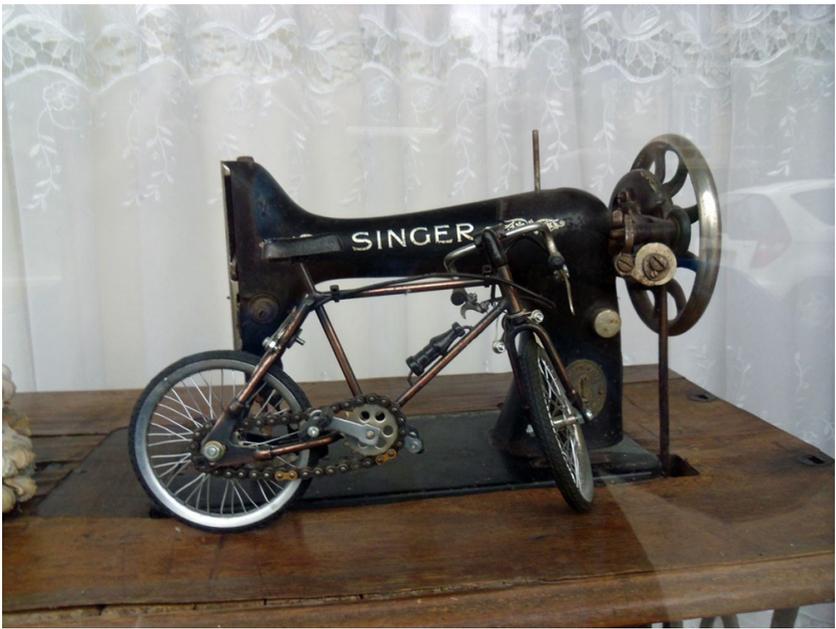
di Venezia - the international art festival which takes place every two years mainly in the Giardini and Arsenale but also in individual venues spread around the whole area including the Lido.

On our previous visit we had encountered the regular flooding of Venice and on several days had to use the duckboards provided to get around some of the streets including St Mark's Square. This time there was no flooding but for most of the time it was engulfed in perpetual mist.

Several decades ago we had visited the Lido and seen the large number of bicycles left at the boat jetties by residents on the island commuting each weekday by Vaporetto to the historic city or the mainland and industrial centre of Mestre.

Visiting this time saw the nearly completed refurbishment of the whole area near the jetties and the provision of many areas of cycle parking stands completely full of 1,000s of bicycles - a dramatic increase over the last time.





Miniature bicycle seen in local shop window



Local flower shop



Biennale Art installation on Lido



Lido to Mestre car ferry

Cycling in Dublin

Dublin City Council began installing cycle lanes and cycle tracks in the mid 1990s. There are now approximately 120km of on-road cycle tracks in the city and 50km of bus lanes that cyclists can use. In addition there are about 25km of off-road cycle track.

Each year in November since 1997 there has been an annual traffic count which measures the modes of transport on 33 routes which can be used to access Dublin city through a cordon roughly defined by the Royal and Grand canals during the busiest commuting hours between 7am and 10am.

Cyclist numbers in 1997 were 5,628 but by 2006 had fallen to 4,839. They then started to steadily increase reaching 10,893 in 2015 – an increase of 5 per cent on 2014 and a massive 125 per cent over the past decade.

dublinbikes

The Council launched a bike rental scheme - dublinbikes - in 2009. Since 2014 it has been sponsored by Coca-Cola Zero. The current scheme provides 100 public bike stations around the city with approximately 1500 bikes available for general public use. The network of stations extends from the Mater Hospital in the north to the Grand Canal in the south and from Heuston Station in the west to the 3Arena in the east.





*Photo by
Cian
Ginty*

Cycle stands

Dublin City Council has bought, as in many other European cities, two car shaped bike racks to demonstrate to residents the number of cycles that can be parked in the space of one car.

*Photo by
Sonia
Gallaher*



Royal Canal Greenway Route

The Royal Canal cycle route through Dublin is the latest scheme to be approved for implementation. The 7.3 kilometre route is being built in four phases although only one phase has been completed to date.

When finished it will be the Dublin leg of a national cycle route that leads to Galway. It will also be Ireland's contribution to the proposed east-west EuroVelo Route 2 from Galway to Russia via Britain, Germany, Poland and Belarus.



*Royal Canal route
looking east towards
Portland Place*

Other Routes

On many other routes in the city there are kerb protected two way cycle lanes to improve the safety of cyclists.



Photo by Sonia Gallaher

Pedibus

The latest transport system to hit London is the 'Pedibus'.

With a seating configuration of up to eight, similar to that of a dinner table, the Pedibus is the most fun and sociable way to cycle, chat and hang out with friends you have just met.

The openness of the Pedibus delivers a lively sound and attracts on-lookers as it passes by with a party in full swing.



The Pedibus is based on a super strong aluminium lightweight chassis making the vehicle, it is claimed, to be as strong as a family saloon car.

A dual master cylinder develops hydraulic disc braking at each wheel and a 4 wheel parking brake ensure perfect control. Front and rear lights with indicators and braking lights tell other road users where you are and what you are doing. It can move at a cruising speed of 8.5km/hr with a peak speed of 12km/hr.

The company operating the Pedibus has seven vehicles available in its fleet and currently runs them on five different London routes each summer weekend. They may also be booked for promotion and advertising events all over the UK.

Full information can be seen on the website www.pedibus.co.uk

Colin Last - New Committee Member

I joined the committee this year and would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself.

I've been a supporter of CCNB ever since I moved back to Bedford about ten years ago, although until now I've been too busy with work and other things to take much of an active part. I've always had an interest in cycling, for getting about practically as well as for pleasure, and am keen to see what I can do to help improve cycling in the area. I have spent my career in forestry and arboriculture and am concerned about green issues, particularly about global warming and all that means for our futures, and I see cycling as part of the solution.

I do have a car but I mainly cycle on shorter journeys to get around, for example into town; it keeps me fit, is just as quick as going by car, easier to park and costs very little – and it's good for the environment.

I know Bedford well. I spent my childhood here in the 1960s and 1970s, starting cycling when I was very young.

I attended the Bedford Modern School when they were in the centre of town and regularly cycled the two to three miles to school every day. There were a lot of cyclists in those days, and I guess the traffic wasn't as busy. I only had three gears on my bike then, a far cry from the 21 on my current bike.

I went to university in Bangor in North Wales. That's when I bought my first proper road bicycle, with proper gears. Rock climbing was my main obsession though and cycling just a way of getting around. I was fit then and thought nothing of cycling 20 miles into the hills with a huge rucksack on my back. I might cycle 20 miles now, but it's on the flat and with no luggage, and then a rest rather than a prelude to more strenuous exercise.



My subsequent career caring for trees has taken me all over the country and I have always taken my bicycle with me. To Scotland, Wales, Yorkshire, Gloucestershire, Norfolk and many places in between. Although I've lived in some remote rural areas I've never really been into mountain biking, much preferring cycling on the road. Not as dirty.

Over the past 50 years I have seen many changes – the bicycles have improved immensely, as has the clothing. The cycling experience should be much more pleasurable now. Unfortunately the increase in traffic has made cycling more difficult and dangerous, and I'm sure puts a lot of people off. The future has to be to make cycling more accessible and safe for people, and I want to make my contribution to CCNB to help achieve this.

New Cycling Minister after Brexit

Harrogate and Knaresborough Conservative MP, Andrew Jones, was appointed as a Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Transport by Theresa May in the re-shuffle following her appointment as Prime Minister in July 2016. In this position he is responsible for cycling and walking under sustainable transport as well as local transport and traffic management and a number of other topics.

Andrew replaces Robert Goodwill who had been responsible from a previous re-shuffle in October 2013 and is now a Minister of State in the Home Office.

Other people in the Department for Transport are:

Chris Grayling MP, Secretary of State for Transport,
Rt Hon John Hayes MP, Minister of State for Transport,
Paul Maynard MP, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Transport and
Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Transport.

The Department for Energy and Climate Change (DECC) has now been abolished and incorporated into a new Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) which has replaced the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills. This is now overseen by Royal Tunbridge Wells Conservative MP, Greg Clark. Environmentalists have been critical of these changes in which they see as a downgrading of climate change.

The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) now has South Northamptonshire Conservative MP, Andrea Leadsom, as Minister of State replacing Liz Truss.

Middlesborough Labour MP, Andy McDonald continues to be Shadow Minister of State for Transport with Cambridge Labour MP, Daniel Zeichner, Shadow Minister for Transport with responsibility for cycling.

CCNB Christmas Dinner

Thursday 8 December 2016

Please put the date in your diary. A booking form with the location and the menu details will be sent to all members in November 2016.

See <http://www.ccnb.org.uk/diaryb.shtml> for other events

Local Cycle Rides Contact:

Cycling UK (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)